

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE– 18 MARCH 2004

### LEARNING PARTNERSHIP - SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

#### Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide elected members with information on the proposed appointment of a Support Assistant to each Learning Partnership and to seek approval for recommendations regarding this development.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Nine Learning Partnerships were established in East Ayrshire in 2002. They bring together the main partners who deliver services to children and young people in each of the nine secondary school catchment areas. Their overall aims are to raise attainment and achievement and to better integrate service delivery, for children and young people.
- 2.2 There are four guiding principles for Learning Partnerships, namely
- putting children first
  - working together
  - intervening early
  - devolved management
- 2.3 The main partners involved in Learning Partnerships include Education Services (Education Establishments and Community Learning and Development) Social Work Services, Community Services and NHS Ayrshire and Arran.

#### 3. LEARNING PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 There has been positive comment by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education on Learning Partnerships and in 2003 there was an external evaluation following their first year of operation, which highlighted key strengths as:
- the leadership at both senior management and Partnership level
  - the willingness of all parties to work to the four guiding principles
  - examples of redirection of services following assessment of children's needs
  - the agreement of shared outcomes.
- 3.2 The evaluation is the subject of a separate Committee report to both Social Work Committee (18 March 2004) and Education Committee (23 March 2004).

- 3.3** The evaluation raised issues about the future development of Learning Partnerships. Some of these issues need to be dealt with by enhancing current support available to the most vulnerable children, young people and their families through the development of core support teams available over a 52 week period which focuses on multi-disciplinary working.
- 3.4** Consultation has taken place with Learning Partnerships following the publication of the evaluation about how best to further support Learning Partnerships meet their aims. Further membership of the core support team will be determined by Learning Partnerships from within their existing staffing.
- 3.5** It is proposed to establish a core support team for each Learning Partnership which will comprise Support Assistant, Community Link Worker and will continue with the temporary posts of 0.5FTE Children's Service Co-ordinator.
- 3.6** Social Work Committee has a particular interest in the post of Support Assistant. It is intended to establish a dedicated Support Assistant to each Learning Partnership with a remit which includes:
- A high quality social work service to children and their families in a designated Learning Partnership;
  - Working collaboratively with other professionals to offer a co-ordinated and comprehensive support service based on assessed need;
  - Working in a preventative manner which reduces the need for onward referral;
  - Being the social work representative at School Assessment Teams and Partnership Assessment Teams where there is no allocated social worker;
  - Working to high standards and relevant policy/legislation regarding; family casework, child protection, looked after children, special needs, youth justice, substance misuse, behaviour support, school attendance and exclusion.

The post of Support Assistant will be temporary until March 2006 and can be funded through integrated community school roll out budget.

- 3.7** The Support Assistants will be located within the Learning Partnership Team and will be managed by a Social Work Team Manager within Children and Family Services.
- 3.8** Each Learning Partnership will have a nominated Team Manager who will attend Partnership Meetings and contribute to the development of Partnership priorities.

#### **4. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** The proposals contained in this report are entirely consistent with the objectives set out in the Children and Young Persons Service Plan 2001-2004.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** The full year costs of establishing the temporary new posts of Support Assistant is £192,150 and can be met from East Ayrshire's settlement of integrated community school roll out funding 2004/2005 and 2005/2006. These monies are allocated to allow an integrated community school approach to be adopted by all educational establishments by 2007. Total travel costs of £12,000 can also be met from this allocation.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1** Members are asked to :

- i) Approve the proposals set out in section 3 of the report;
- ii) Remit the staffing implications to Corporate Governance Committee for consideration;
- iii) Ask the Director of Education and Social Services to return to Committee with a progress report
- iv) Note the contents of this report

John Mulgrew  
Director of Education and Social Services  
24 February 2004

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Evaluation of Learning Partnerships in East Ayrshire: Learning Unlimited

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Service: Community Support, Tel (01563) 576104 or Hugh Carswell, Integration Manager Childrens Services, Tel (01563) 549280

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR**