

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE - 5 SEPTEMBER 2000

BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND TODAY

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise Elected Members of the forthcoming Conference on Bilingual and Immersion Education to be held in East Ayrshire in this school session.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Language teaching in Scotland is the subject of great debate at present. The Action Group on Modern Languages is preparing to launch its final report. Section 5 (2) of The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc (Scotland) Act, 2000, requires Education Authorities to have a policy on Gaelic Medium Education.
- 2.2** Both Modern Languages and Gaelic are of great interest to East Ayrshire teachers and school managers, with the introduction of Partners in Excellence, the continued expansion of Gaelic bilingual and immersion education in the authority and the first experiments in language teaching at the pre-5 stage.
- 2.3** East Ayrshire's Education Department plans to bring together some of the foremost researchers in the field, teachers and parents at its forthcoming Conference on Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 September 2000.

3. THE CONFERENCE

- 3.1** The Conference will take place over two days with day one devoted to presentations on bilingualism in Scotland by researchers from Edinburgh and Stirling Universities and an evaluation of East Ayrshire's Gaelic provision by a researcher from Paisley University. Day two will focus on the research currently being conducted at George Mason University into bilingualism and immersion teaching in the USA.
- 3.2** Both days will include an input from parents and opportunities for discussion. The evening of day one will feature a conference dinner and entertainment provided by young people from East Ayrshire and singer/songwriter Adam McNaughton.
- 3.3** Conference papers will be published later in the year.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications for the authority in this conference, which will be self-financing.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Not applicable.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The project arises from and supports the Council's core values and major strategies.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that elected members:-

- (i) agree to East Ayrshire hosting the conference on Bilingual Education; and
- (ii) note the contents of this paper.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

JN/TG
7 August 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should telephone Graham Short, Head of Schools, (01563) 576089 or Kenneth McKinlay, Principal, Quality Development (01563) 555650.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER GRAHAM SHORT, HEAD OF SCHOOLS

AGENDA