

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 11 APRIL 2002

THE NATIONAL DEBATE ON EDUCATION

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1** To advise the Members of the Education committee of the recently launched national debate on education and consider initiatives to promote the debate within East Ayrshire.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1** On 20 March 2002, the Minister for education and young people launched a national debate on the future of school education in Scotland. The focus of the first stage of the debate, from now until the end of June, is on facilitating debate and receiving an indication of issues which would be considered for inclusion in a more detailed debate in the winter leading to the formation of a national vision and strategy for the future. For the present the Minister wishes to encourage debate in as wide a range of groups with an interest as possible and, as a consequence, to hear how best to shape the education service for the future and to prepare a strategy to get there. Feedback forms are available for making comment and a website has been established.

- 2.2** Suggestions for discussion are grouped around the following questions:

- WHY?...why we educate children and young people.
- WHAT?...what children learn and what takes place in schools
- HOW?...how learning and teaching are delivered
- WHO?...who can help children and young people to learn
- WHEN?...when learning takes place
- WHERE?...where education takes place

Clearly the potential exists for a wide ranging debate on the education system in Scotland.

3. COMMENT

- 3.1** A wide range of interested groups and individuals in East Ayrshire will wish to contribute to the debate. They can participate in the debate by gaining access to Scottish Executive material and making their own submissions and comments. Nevertheless, to promote the debate in our area it is proposed that the following facilitating role should be taken forward by the department:

- pupil councils in schools should consider their vision for the future of education in Scotland

- school board members will wish to formulate views
- Head Teachers and staff in schools will wish to contribute and encourage partner organisations to submit views
- community learning will facilitate the expression of views from the wide range of groups who and individuals who participate in their activities
- a conference for parents is planned in late April, when the Minister will be in attendance to hear views expressed
- debate in schools will be facilitated by developing links with local drama groups
- opportunities to facilitate debate in the local media should be taken
- the Council website will contain information and guidance

It is regarded as important to facilitate the debate in East Ayrshire.

4. FINANCIAL/POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Finance is available from the Scottish Executive to facilitate this stage of the debate.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- (i) welcome the national debate on education;
- (ii) agree that the director proceeds to facilitate the debate in East Ayrshire as outlined in this report; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

JM/JP
25 March 2002

Members wishing further information should contact John Mulgrew, Director of Educational and Social Services, Tel (01563) 576017.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Implementation Officer : John Mulgrew

AGENDA