

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 28 MAY 2002

### SUPPORTING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

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

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for a proposal to strengthen service delivery within the Department of Educational & Social Services.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 When the Department of Educational and Social Services was established on 1 July 2000, the senior management structure for the new department was established to include the posts of Director of Educational & Social Services, Head of Social Work, Head of Community Support, Head of Resource Support and Head of Schools.

This structure has served the needs of the department well in its initial phase. However, considerable additional activity has developed steadily across the department since it was established. This has resulted in enhanced workload and pressure on already busy senior staff remits. While the increased activity is to be welcomed, the structure of the Heads of Service posts in the department now requires some adjustment to deal with increased commitment at senior level and to ensure that there is efficient and effective monitoring and implementation of the key strategies being introduced in a number of areas for development.

- 2.2 Recently, there has been an enhanced focus on a wide range of initiatives including:

- the development of innovative learning and teaching strategies
- the detailed attention required to be given to the implementation of the McCrone agreement for teachers
- the need for a more coherent, better balanced and forward looking approach to quality management in education and across the department
- the facilitation of the dissemination of good practice in education and Social Work
- the departmental initiative to establish learning partnerships
- the need to provide more detailed analyses of progress being made in integrated service delivery

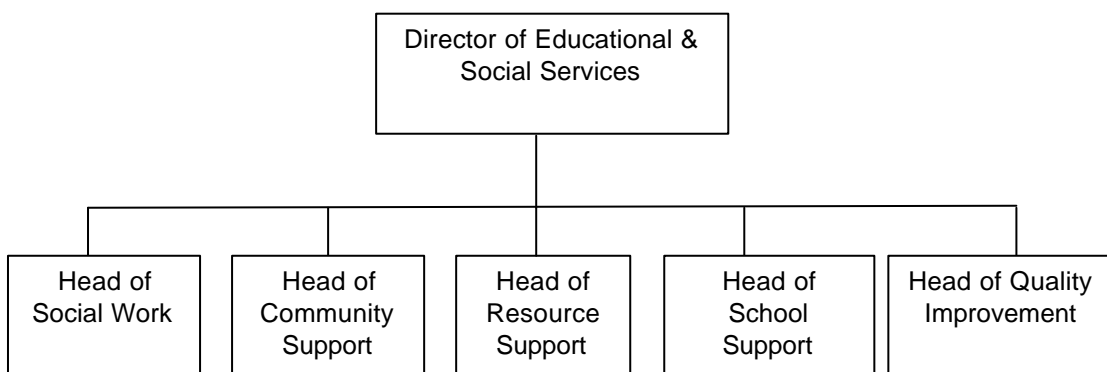
#### 3. HEADS OF SERVICE

- 3.1 To facilitate the delivery of these and a wide range of complementary developments, it is proposed to reallocate some of the responsibilities of the

department's Heads of Service posts. Also, the introduction of an additional Head of Service post would serve the sharing of responsibilities in a more balanced way and meet the increasing workload and commitment that has arisen.

A particular emphasis is now required at Head of Service level on quality improvement, analysing progress in the department, identifying and disseminating good practice, undertaking quality reviews and surveys, pupil tracking, expanding and supporting quality improvement in Social Work and community learning and, the development of learning partnerships.

If it were agreed to establish an additional post, the number of Heads of Service working to the Director would be increased by one to five and the outline framework for responsibilities would be as follows:



Establishing this additional post would reduce the range of commitments presently held in particular, within the post of Head of Schools.

#### **4. QUALITY DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1** Further, consideration is now required to be given to the operation of the existing Quality Development Team. At the start of East Ayrshire Council, the Education Committee approved the formation of a Quality Development Team to support the work of schools and other educational services. At the subsequent meetings of 09 October 1997 approval was given to refine and re-focus the work of this group of staff.
- 4.2** Members will recall that on 11 April 2002 approval was given to a proposal for the establishment of Learning Partnerships. These would develop the present co-operative work going on between schools and would better capitalise on the availability of support services in order to improve educational delivery for children and all learners. A key part of that proposal was the role of the Quality Development Officer in facilitating the work of the Learning Partnership.
- 4.3** As part of "A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) released circular SNCT/12. This gave details of the "Salaries and Conditions of Service Agreement for Education Advisers". The term "Adviser" has been applied for negotiation

purposes to centrally-employed staff who are teachers but who in practice provide a variety of support services. In East Ayrshire, the staff affected by SNCT/12 are known as Quality Development Officers. A copy of SNCT/12 is available in the Members' Library for reference.

## **5. PRESENT POSITION**

- 5.1** The original paper that established the Quality Development Team gave officers 3 roles: pastoral support to schools, educational development and quality assurance. In practice, the role of the team has extended well beyond what was originally envisaged, with officers engaging in the management of a number of operational areas. Officers have operated across all educational sectors and have exercised a general role in relation to broad areas of the service. It has also proved necessary to take account of areas of provision where the pace of change is particularly rapid such as Information Communications Technology (ICT) and special educational needs (SEN). Specialist staff have to concentrate on these areas in order to best support schools.
- 5.2** Currently reporting to the Principal, Quality Development are six Quality Development Officers.

## **6. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

- 6.1** Under the proposal, full account has been taken of SNCT/12 and the Authority strategy on Learning Partnerships. These documents in turn take full account of the developing needs of the service.
- 6.2** It is proposed to refocus the work of the present Quality Development Team as a retitled Quality Improvement Team. The Team will be managed by the holder of the proposed post of Head of Quality Improvement.

It is proposed that the team will be 9 Quality Improvement Officers who will discharge the function detailed in Appendix 3 of SNCT/12.

Quality Improvement Officers will be allocated to a Learning Partnership in order to directly support service improvement at this level. This will be a much more focused and dynamic function than is presently exercised under the heading of "pastoral support". In addition, these officers will exercise a strategic role in the life of the Authority and will contribute directly to wider developments within the Department of Educational and Social Services and corporately. It is anticipated that Service Improvement Officers will divide their work supporting Learning Partnerships working in schools assisting develop quality improvement strategies in partnership with all staff and on a range of functional tasks.

## **7. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** Nil.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1** These proposals will be met from within existing budget allocations. In particular the budget for the present Quality Development Team will be used to finance the proposed re-arrangement.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1** It is recommended that Members :

- (i) agree these proposals for supporting service improvement;
- (ii) refer the proposal to the Corporate Sub-Committee of the Policy & Resources Committee; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew  
Director of Educational and Social Services

GRS/GRS  
17 May 2002

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

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1.** SNCT/12. "Salaries and Conditions of Service Agreement for Education Advisers", 10 April 2002

**Implementation Officer: John Mulgrew**

**AGENDA**