

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 2 APRIL 2001

THE EXCELLENCE FUND FOR SCHOOLS – CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

SUPPORTING BEHAVIOUR INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS – APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL OUTDOOR EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR (Remit from Education Committee Meeting of 6 February 2001)

H.M. PRISON, KILMARNOCK : ADDITIONAL POST OF SOCIAL WORKER (Remit from Social Work Committee of 29 March 2001)

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AND POLICY OFFICER (DEVELOPMENT) POSTS (Remit from Housing Committee of 31 January 2001)

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To refer to the Sub-Committee for approval, staffing proposals that have been considered at recent Service Committee meetings.

2. EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

2.1 CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

- 2.1.1 The Education Committee at its meeting on 28 January 1999 approved the Excellence Fund for Schools Core Programme which included the establishment of Classroom Assistants in Primary Schools. This programme is being funded by the Scottish Executive.

- 2.1.2 The Personnel and Property Sub-Committee of 25 May 1999 approved the establishment of 26 FTE classroom assistants in Primary Schools in order to meet the initial Scottish Executive targets.

Proposal

- 2.1.3 In order to meet the Scottish Executive target of 1 adult : 15 pupils in primary schools by the beginning of session 2001/2002, a further 75 classroom assistants require to be employed.
- 2.1.4 In addition, the Council has been given an uplift in funding and will be able to employ a further 25 FTE classroom assistants in primary schools specifically in schools which are not achieving their target for 5-14 reading, writing and mathematics. Monitoring and evaluation of this initiative will be carried out at the end of next session.

Financial Implications

- 2.1.5 The costs of employing an additional 100 FTE classroom assistants in Financial Year 2001/2002 inclusive of employers costs will be £900,476. All costs associated with these appointments can be met from the Excellence Fund for Schools – Classroom Assistants.

2.2 OUTDOOR EDUCATION

2.2.1 A report on supporting behaviour initiatives in schools was considered by the Education Committee on 6 February 2001 and referred to this Committee in relation to the proposal to appoint an Outdoor Education Instructor.

2.2.2 Presently there are two staff employed in the Outdoor Education Service. Over the past few years the demands for work from this team have increased significantly. This has arisen partly from routine contacts with schools, contributions to the overall work programme of the department, and the introduction of new programmes such as the New Community Schools, Action Plan and Alternatives to Exclusion.

2.2.3 Through its involvement in the Youth Care Strategy and New Community Schools, the Outdoor Education service has developed significant expertise and experience in meeting the needs of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Their services are now in increased demand from schools, particularly in the context of Alternatives to Exclusion. Their input offers young people the opportunity to take responsibility to manage their own behaviour, to face challenges and succeed, and thereby to raise their self-esteem. These experiences are linked to the overall provision of the school and are planned in association with senior and guidance staff.

Proposal

2.2.4 In order to meet the demand from schools, there is a need to increase the staffing of the Outdoor Education Service which presently is composed of a Principal Officer and an Instructor. Under this arrangement, an additional Instructor would be appointed, initially on a temporary basis and together this team would fulfil the following main tasks:

- provision of general advice to schools and other services on outdoor activities
- all activities related to the Authority's license in outdoor activities
- first aid training for the Council
- direct provision for Youth Care Strategy groups
- provision to schools-based alternatives to exclusion programmes

Financial Implications

2.2.5 The employment costs arising from the appointment of a Temporary Outdoor Education Instructor grade AP5 (£21,036 - £22,959) initially for one year would be £25,276 (including employer's costs). These costs will be met from the Excellence Fund for Schools, Alternatives to Exclusion programme.

2.3 H.M. PRISON, KILMARNOCK

2.3.1 This matter is to be considered by the Social Work Committee at its meeting on 29 March 2001 and this report assumes approval of the Director of Educational and Social Services' related recommendation.

2.3.2 The Personnel and Property Sub-Committee at its meeting on 2 March 1999 approved the establishment of a Social Work Unit of one Senior Social Worker post and two Social Worker posts at Kilmarnock Prison in line with the introduced service level agreement. The Prison funds this arrangement.

2.3.3 The Chief Inspector of Prisons Report on H.M. Prison, Kilmarnock, published in August 2000, while positive on many aspects of the management and operation of the prison indicated a tacit acceptance of East Ayrshire's position that the staffing level limited the ability of the Social Work Unit to provide a more comprehensive range of services. The Inspector's report made one recommendation specifically relating to social work: "There should be an entire review of the Social Work Unit including staffing resources in order to ensure effective social work input".

Proposal

2.3.4 In response Premier Prison Services Ltd agreed to participate in a review of the Social Work Unit and this work concluded in December 2000. The review report, amongst other things, pointed to the need for additional social workers. Following discussion with East Ayrshire on the conclusions of the review report, and further consideration within their management structure, Premier Prison Services Ltd agreed to fund an additional Social Worker post.

Financial And Personnel Implications

2.3.5 The full costs associated with this additional Social Worker post (£18,378 - £23,430) are £29,117 per annum and will be met by Premier Prison Services Ltd. The authority's arrangement with Premier Prison Services Ltd is for a considerable period and the posts should be filled on a substantive basis.

3. HOMES AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

3.1 The Housing Committee at its meeting of 31 January 2001 approved the need to establish a housing forum to serve the interest of the authority in terms of the new Housing Bill, which is currently before the Scottish Parliament. The housing forum will provide a platform for the local authority, as lead housing agency, and other agencies to discuss and agree upon strategic housing issues. The forum will act in advisory or consultative basis and will ensure that the Council is fully informed on all housing related strategic issues prior to any decisions being made by the Council.

Proposal – Administrative Assistant

3.2 In support of this forum the Housing Committee approved in principle the establishment of a new post to act as an Administrative Assistant, AP2/3 (£14,484-£17,796) to the Housing Forum, subject to this Sub-Committee's consideration. The postholder's key responsibilities will include administration of the Forum's activities; liaison with outside agencies; preparation of reports for the Housing Committee; provision of administrative support for the Forum's meetings, working groups etc.

3.3 The Housing Committee at its meeting on the 31 January 2001 also considered the local housing development issues which will confront Homes and Technical Services department in meeting the further requirements of the Housing Bill. The Director of Homes and Technical Services highlighted similar challenges to the last Sub-Committee meeting which face the department's Policy and Strategy Section.

Proposal – Policy Officer (Development)

3.4 The Housing Committee approved the establishment of a Policy Officer (Development) post, SO1 (£23,430-£25,476) within the Policy and Strategy Unit of Homes and Technical Services department to meet the above requirements. The postholder's key

responsibilities include assisting in the local development issues arising from the Housing Bill, particularly in relation to the strategic local housing budget; extension to the improvements and repairs grants system; liaison with the new Single Regulatory Agency; and partnership working with housing providers.

Financial and Personnel Implications

- 3.5** The staffing costs arising from this proposal are £47,515 per annum including employers' costs. These costs can be met from the Housing Revenue Account.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** The staffing proposals have been supported by the service committees in the recognition that they will enhance the Council's response to the respective policy areas.

5. TRADE UNIONS

- 5.1** The proposals are subject to consultation with trade unions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1** The Sub-Committee is asked to approve the staffing proposals referred to in sections 2 and 3 of this report.

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources
21 March 2001

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Education Committee meeting of 6 February 2001 entitled Supporting Behaviour Initiatives in Schools.
2. Report to Social Work Committee meeting of 29 March 2001 entitled H.M. Prison, Kilmarnock: Additional Post of Social Worker
3. Report to Personnel and Property Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee of 2 March 1999 entitled H.M. Prison, Kilmarnock – Service Level Agreement with the Social Work Department
3. Reports to Housing Committee meeting of 31 January 2001 entitled Housing Development Resources and Establishment of a Housing Forum.

Anyone wishing further information should contact Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel, telephone 01563 576092.

H/reports/2apr01/joint report

AGENDA