

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE : 21 NOVEMBER 2000**

### **APPOINTMENT OF ICT CO-ORDINATOR WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

#### **Joint Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Educational and Social Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To seek approval for the appointment of an ICT Co-ordinator to the Department of Educational and Social Services subject to consultation with Trade Unions.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Members will be aware that the Government is committed to a number of key targets in the area of information and communication technology (ICT) within the education service. These include a vision of increasing the number of computers in schools in order that all children have easy access to a machine that is less than three years old. In the very near future all children in schools will have their own e-mail address. Through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) substantial additional funds have been ear-marked for this purpose.
- 2.2** In East Ayrshire there has already been substantial progress towards these targets. The Council was one of the first Education Authorities in Scotland to have an ICT strategy. All schools are now linked to the Council network. Schools are becoming increasingly active in their use of the Internet and e-mail. Kirkstyle Primary School in Kilmarnock was the first school in Scotland to take advantage of the ICT training for teachers and school librarians financed by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF).
- 2.3** In terms of administration in schools, excellent use is made of ICT. All primary secondary and special schools are linked through an administrative network that is central to the Council's strategy for Delegated Management of Resources which is now a statutory responsibility. Audit Scotland in partnership with her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) have conducted a national investigation into administrative burdens on schools. It was a key finding of that study that best use should be made of ICT. In common with other Councils, East Ayrshire is now subject to follow-up work from Audit Scotland on the action being taken.
- 2.4** The use of ICT also goes beyond schools in the Education Service. Internet links are, for example increasingly important within the context of Community learning. Again, East Ayrshire has done pioneering work in providing access to ICT within communities.

#### **3. PROPOSAL**

- 3.1** Until now the bulk of the administrative and managerial work associated with educational ICT network has been undertaken by a Quality Development Officer (QDO). While this arrangement was satisfactory in the past it can no longer be sustained. However, this QDO was not appointed to manage a computer network, rather his job is to develop the aspects of ICT as they directly relate to the improvement of classroom learning. The ICT network and issues associated with its management have grown immeasurably, and

is no longer a task that can be undertaken as a supplementary duty. A number of issues are emerging that are of a technical ICT nature, such as the security of systems when all children have an e-mail address. In the future, schools will require to embark on a major programme of equipment renewal and maintenance. These factors indicate that it is necessary to seek an appointment of a network co-ordinator to progress these technical issues.

**3.2** It is therefore proposed to appoint a network co-ordinator graded SO5 (£24,789 - £26,769).

**3.3** This officer would be responsible, along with the Chief Technician for allocating work to the ICT technicians employed by the Department of Educational and Social Services. The appointee would report to the Head of Resource Support. The postholder will also have a critical role to play in liaising with the Head of Information Technology to ensure the most effective use of the Education Services computer networks and their compatibility and support within the Council's Corporate IT network.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** The costs to the department of appointing a network co-ordinator will be £7,590 in financial year 2000/2001 inclusive of employer costs and £30,365 inclusive of employer costs per annum thereafter. All costs associated with this appointment will be met from the Excellence Fund for Schools, National Grid for Learning.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1** The Sub-Committee is asked to:-

- (i) approve the appointment of a network co-ordinator in the Department of Educational and Social Services subject to consultation with the Trade Union; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report

Fiona Lees  
Depute Chief Executive/Director of  
Corporate Resources

John Mulgrew  
Director of Educational  
and Social Services

GRS/GRS  
9 November 2000

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel, Tel: 01563 576092

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**AGENDA**