

REPORT TO: CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 19 NOVEMBER 2014

SUBJECT: AUDIT SCOTLAND NATIONAL REPORT – SCHOOL EDUCATION

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the findings from the Audit Scotland National report "School Education".
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III D (1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee considers and notes the content of this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

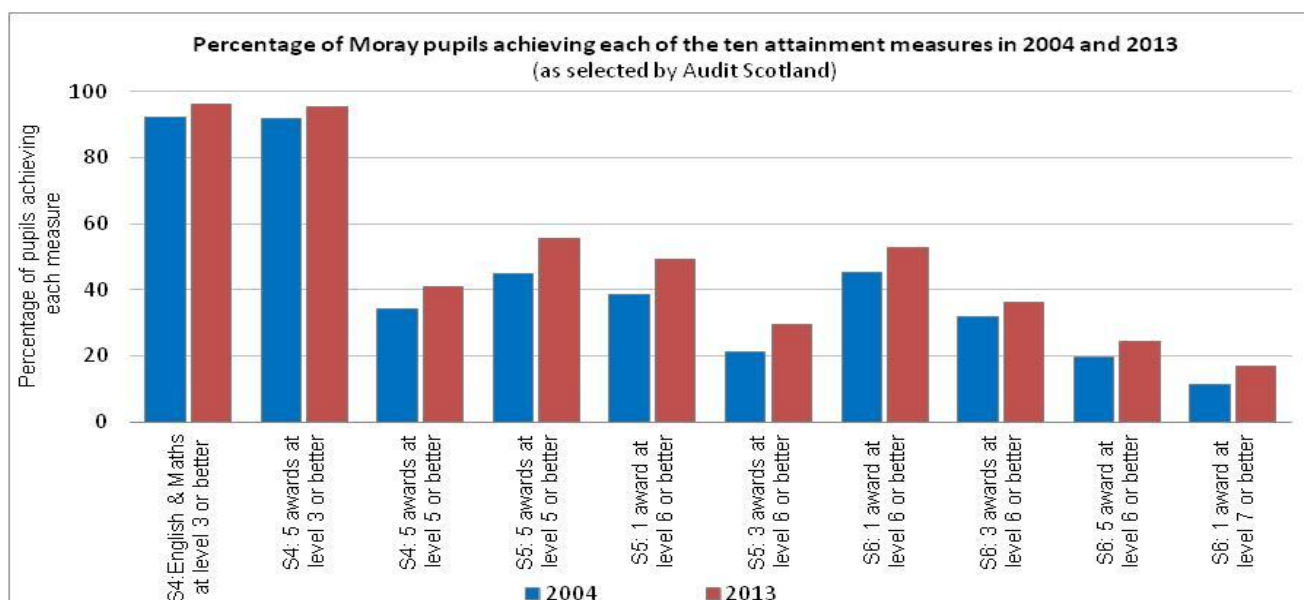
- 3.1 The Accounts Commission published a report written by Audit Scotland on *School Education*. The key messages taken from the report are:
 - 3.1.1 In 2012/13, councils spent £4.8 billion on education services, of which £3.8 billion was spent on primary and secondary education. Around two-thirds of this expenditure (68 %) was on staff costs. Council's spending on education fell by 5% in real terms between 2010/11 and 2012/13, largely as a result of employing fewer staff. Councils' education services are likely to continue to face budgetary pressures, and they need to be alert to the potential impact of increased workloads on remaining staff.
 - 3.1.2 Performance has improved against all ten of the attainment measures examined over the last decade. However, there is significant variation in attainment between individual councils, schools, and groups of pupils; and there is a considerable gap between Scotland and the top performing countries. Current measures at both national and council level focus on the attainment of secondary pupils at S4-S6 level. There are no comparable measures available at a council and national level on wider achievement, or the performance of pupils from P1-S3.

- 3.1.3 Levels of deprivation have a large influence on attainment. Some schools have achieved better attainment results than their level of deprivation would indicate, suggesting that the gap between the lowest and highest performing schools cannot be wholly attributed to different levels of deprivation. Closing the gap in performance between schools is likely to be critical to improving overall attainment levels.
- 3.1.4 Councils that have made the most improvements have focused on areas such as developing leadership skills, and improving both teacher quality and systems for monitoring and tracking pupil data. There are also increasing opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills for living and working in the wider world. Councils are starting to target resources to improve both attainment and wider achievement but there is scope to improve strategic planning and strengthen the role of elected members in holding education services to account.
- 3.1.5 The full report can be read on Audit Scotland's website;

http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2014/nr_140619_school_education.pdf

4. **MORAY COUNCIL UPDATE**

- 4.1 The following paragraphs summarise the current Moray position in relation to the 'key messages'.
- 4.1.1 In 2012/13, Moray spent £78.3M on education services, of which £61M was spent on primary and secondary education. Around (£36.7M) of this expenditure was on staff costs. Moray's spending on education fell by 2.6% in real terms between 2010/11 and 2012/13, largely as a result of employing fewer staff.
- 4.1.2 Moray has recorded improvements in all ten attainment measures examined in the Audit Scotland report for the period 2004 to 2013. The graph below shows the overall improvement for each measure over the 10 year period.



On average S4 attainment improved by 5% between 2004 and 2013, while S5 attainment improved by 10% and S6 attainment by 6%. Based on the 2012/13 exam results Moray performed above or in line with national and comparator authority average for S4 and S5 stages, however Moray continued to perform below the national and comparator average for the majority of S6 measures.

- 4.1.3 Deprivation is a significant factor when analysing attainment results and needs to be considered when reporting on individual school results. In Moray the attainment gap between the highest and lowest performing schools is relatively small, for example in terms of S4 pupils achieving five awards at level five (2013), the gap in Moray was the second smallest when compared against all other councils.
- 4.1.4 Moray continues to focus on leadership and professional development of senior school staff and those aspiring to senior positions. A Leadership Framework has been developed and a leadership and management course is being piloted this session along with the continuation of Flexible Routes to Headship. The capacity of the authority's development officers has increased and a comprehensive programme of professional learning for teachers is in place for 2014/15. The authority has seconded a teacher whose dedicated role is to further develop a tracking and monitoring programme with all schools.
- 4.2 The report also makes a number of recommendations for councils. These are summarised, along with statements on the current Moray position in **Appendix 1**.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

- (a) **Moray 2023: A Plan for the Future/Service Plan**
The contents of this report relate to Moray 2023 Priority 2 – 'Ambitious and confident children and young people'.
- (b) **Policy and Legal**
None
- (c) **Financial implications**
There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
- (d) **Risk Implications**
There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.
- (e) **Staffing Implications**
There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.
- (f) **Property**
None
- (g) **Equalities**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the report is to inform Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) and members of the Education and Social Care Senior Management Team; Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant; Margaret Forrest, Legal Services Manager; Katrina McGillivray, Senior Human Resources Adviser; Don Toonen, Equal Opportunities Officer and Caroline Howie, Committee Services Officer have been consulted on this report and agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Committee considers and notes the content of this report and the current Moray position in relation to the recommendations from Audit Scotland in the '*School education*' report.

Author of Report: Paul Watson (Continuous Improvement Team Manager)

Background Papers:

Ref: