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**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
8 MARCH 2017**

**SUBJECT: SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE REVIEWS**

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share the findings of the Schools for the Future review visits to the Lossiemouth Associated Schools Group (ASG) which took place in November and December of 2016.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Council in terms of Section III (C) 1 of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the functions of the Council as Education Authority with regard to nursery, primary and secondary education.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee scrutinises and notes the report attached as Appendix 1 and agrees the recommendations as follows:**
- i) all schools in Lossiemouth are sustainable;**
  - ii) if the Headteacher vacancy at Burghead is not filled then the Federation Policy should be used to consider a pairing with Hopeman Primary School; and**
  - iii) due to the improvements required at Burghead Primary, Hythehill Primary and Lossiemouth High Schools, follow-up visits should be undertaken by December 2018 in order to assess the extent of progress and impact.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 2 March 2016 the Committee agreed to note the outcome of the consultation and pilot work done on the draft 'Schools for the Future Policy' and to refer the draft policy to The Moray Council for approval (paragraph 7 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 As a pilot, all schools in the Forres ASG were audited against the schools for the future criteria. Indicators for Criterion 2 - School Rolls and Criterion 3 - Financial Position are statistical and the data is held centrally. Criterion 1 -

Quality of Educational Experiences was audited by teams of central officers and peer head teachers who spent up to one day in each school observing learning and teaching; interviewing head teachers, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and pupils; and examining documentation and samples of pupils' work. The size of the team was proportionate to the size of the school, and ranged from two to four people. This audit process was very similar to the Quality Audit process previously operated by Educational Services and School Reviews carried out by the then Continuous Improvement Team.

- 3.3 Full details of the pilot reviews were discussed at a Members' workshop on 16 February 2016.
- 3.4 The final policy was approved at a meeting of the Moray Council on 25 May 2016 (paragraph 9 of the minute refers). At this time it was also agreed that two ASGs would be visited per year to undertake reviews. Over session 2016/17 the chosen ASGs were Lossiemouth and Buckie.
- 3.5 Prior to the start of the session there was an invitation to Headteachers, Depute Headteachers and Principal Teachers of Additional Support Needs to undertake Peer Reviewer training so that the pool of Peer Reviewers was increased. This also provided an opportunity for current reviewers to undergo refresher training. This went ahead in the Autumn of 2016 with over 40 reviewers receiving training from Moray's Attainment Adviser who works with Education Scotland. As a result there is a larger pool of reviewers and the plan is to extend this further next session to include opportunities for Principal Teachers from both primary and secondary schools.
- 3.6 The Head of Schools and Curriculum Development and the Quality Improvement Officer team reflected on the experience of the pilot reviews and made minor adjustments to the review process. This included templates of review documentation to be sent to the schools prior to a visit as well as question banks for focus groups and meetings and a classroom observation sheet linked to the department's updated Learning and Teaching strategy. They also put in place a pre-visit briefing for those involved in the process.
- 3.7 The final review report (as seen in **Appendix 1**) for the ASG is similar to that produced for the pilot. After the pilot review it was also decided that identified strengths and areas for improvement would be included to support the self-evaluation processes being undertaken by the school.
- 3.8 As a result of this review the sustainability of the schools is accepted. There are concerns that there is a vacant Headteacher post at Burghead Primary and should a permanent Headteacher not be appointed after readvertisement then consideration should be given to a Federation headship.
- 3.9 Considering the financial position of Lossiemouth High School, there requires to be a lot of hard work to ensure that the overspend comes back in line with the permitted amount of 5%.
- 3.10 Due to the required improvements in Lossiemouth High, Burghead Primary and Hythill Primary, it is recommended that a follow-up visit takes place no

later than December 2018 in order to assess the amount of progress made and any impacts which can be measured.

- 3.11 The next ASG to be reviewed will be Buckie and this will take place during February and early March this year with a separate report being brought to Committee once the reports are finalised.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015-2017**

The contents of this report relate to Priority 3 – ‘Ambitious and confident young people’.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

The policy is designed to provide the Council with clear criteria which will guide the Council in formulating any proposals for changes to the school estate under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

(c) **Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However, there may be financial impact in implementing this policy should Committee wish to consider the recommendations of individual reports, particularly with regards to Lossiemouth High School.

(d) **Risk implications**

Implementing a criterion based approach to assessing school sustainability should reduce the risk of further deterioration in school building condition and suitability. The strategy outlined in the policy should optimise educational benefits for pupils and ensure equality of opportunity in terms of access to educational provision and facilities.

(e) **Staffing implications**

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) **Property**

There are no property issues arising directly from this report.

(g) **Equalities**

None arising directly from this report

**(h) Consultations**

Senior Officers in Education and Social Care, Grant Cruickshank, Senior HR Adviser, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, Legal Services Manager (Litigation and Licensing), Caroline Howie, Committee Services Officer, Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) Union side joint chair, Lossiemouth ASG Headteachers and the Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The policy and subsequent review reports are designed to provide a transparent basis from which Moray Council can review its school estate to ensure it provides equality of opportunity for children and young people in terms of access to high quality educational provision and facilities.**

Author of Report:  
Background Papers:  
Ref:

Signature: