

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
9 APRIL 2008**

SUBJECT: EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT MONITORING 2007/08

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress in respect of the Council's Efficient Government agenda as it affects Educational Services for the period to 29 February 2008.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D(1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is proposed that the committee scrutinises and notes the position as at 29 February 2008 set out in section 4 of this report and Appendix 1.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Policy and Resources Committee on 1 March 2006 a report on Efficient Government was presented by the Chief Financial Officer and was subsequently approved (para 6 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 A requirement of this report is that Service Committees receive an update on progress in implementing the Efficient Government agenda at every meeting using a standard proforma.

4. ANALYSIS

- 4.1 The committee should note the following information which relates to the information set out in **Appendix 1**:
 - 4.1.1 Item 1 - Procurement : Following approval at Policy and Resources Committee on 17 January 2007 (para 14 of the minute refers), additional support has been provided to the Payments Section to help progress this initiative. Across Educational Services there has been wide take-up of Purchasing Cards as part of the Council's aim to drive down transaction costs. The focus now needs to shift to ensuring that the Council's electronic ordering system is used more widely. A further focus has been on ensuring that all contracts are included on the Council's Contract Register, which will assist with the future potential for collaborative procurement. Educational Services will continue to support the corporate procurement initiative with the aim of delivering against the challenging savings targets that have been established.

4.1.2 Item 2 - Job Advertising/Vacancy Management : the anticipated annual savings figure at this time remains at £325,725.

4.1.3 Item 3 - Pre-school Provision : The Best Value Review of Pre-school Provision has been concluded and was reported to the Educational Services Committee on 4 April 2007 (para 5 of the minute refers). The outcome represents a saving of £77,000 in this financial year (full year effect will be £115,000).

In the course of implementing revised arrangements, falling rolls has lead to a lower requirement in staffing terms than was anticipated at the outset of the review. Consequently, a further £25,000 has been identified as a saving in this financial year.

4.1.4 Item 4 - Library Service : a Best Value Review has been completed, the outcome of which was reported to the August committee (para 11 of the minute refers). Committee will be aware that the proposals in the consultation documentation were abandoned in favour of maintaining existing libraries in their communities, co-located in schools where possible. While this may result in savings in the longer term, it will not achieve savings in this financial year. Overall, savings in the Library Service for this year will therefore be reduced to £7,000.

4.1.5 Item 5 - Out of Area Placements : this has been the subject of a significant review of service delivery involving both Educational Services and Community Services. The outcome of the review is that, in many cases, it is more beneficial, both in terms of meeting the needs of individuals and financially, to put together specific programmes of support on a local basis. While this is still costly, it is more effective in terms of outcomes for young people and can be done at less cost than an out of area placement

4.1.6 Item 6 - Administration Review : As part of an Efficient Government Review of administrative support across the Council, Educational Services was involved in a pilot exercise. This has resulted in a draft set of proposals for change, which have been discussed and agreed by the Efficient Government Working Group. Subsequent to this, a Change Management Plan has been produced and is now being implemented. However, some elements of this plan may be subsumed into the Designing Better Services process now underway.

4.2 In addition to the above, all staff/team meetings are now required to have "Efficient Government Savings" as a standing item on their agenda for ongoing and regular consideration.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

This activity is in accord with the Council's Corporate Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

None.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

There are no financial implications arising from this report other than those reported above and in Appendix 1.

(d) Consultations

The Chief Financial Officer and the Educational Services Senior Management Team have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its content.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee scrutinises and notes the position as set out in Section 4 of this report and in Appendix 1.

Author of Report: Donald M Duncan, Director of Educational Services
Background Papers: None
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