

REPORT TO: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON 28 APRIL 2010

SUBJECT: MORE CHOICES MORE CHANCES

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 Audit and Performance Review Committee have requested a focused report on More Choices More Chances Strategy that links to the Single Outcome Agreement and members are asked to consider progress on this work.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to committee in terms of Section G(9) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to scrutinising the policies of the Council and their effectiveness in meeting the action plans of the Council as set out in the Corporate Development Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Audit and Performance Review Committee are asked to scrutinise the performance to date of developments on ensuring that “more young people will develop to be successful adults”.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 ‘More Choices, More Chances’ is the Government Strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education employment or training in Scotland and seeks to stem the flow of young people ‘at risk.’ This has now been incorporated into the Employability Action Group and is an integral part of the employability action plan
- 3.2 The Moray More Choices, More Chances strategy was launched in 2007 and had 5 key aims:
- To establish accurate baseline figures in order to set targets and develop the Strategy for Moray.
 - Establish early intervention strategies
 - Develop and enhance partnership working including the detail of the key worker
 - Ensure strategic planning and integrated working
 - Establish a comprehensive shared system for tracking of young people
 - Celebrate success.
- 3.3 The original structure and membership of the More Choices More Chances (MCMC) Strategy group was revised last year and the Employability Action Group was formed. This group is responsible for overseeing the progression towards the actions and the milestones contained within the MCMC Local Delivery Plan. Much

of the activity of this group also contributes to the work of the 16+ Strategy group (NO4).

- 3.4 As part of More Choices, More Chances the following targets and actions have been agreed by the EAG from August 2009 to September 2010. Future targets to be agreed:
- Increased number of unemployed 16 to 19 year old clients receiving personal support through case management to secure training, work or learning opportunities (Baseline 2008/09: Moray accounts for 2% of national total: maximum target of 3.125% - even percentage share for all local authorities).
 - Increased number of unemployed young people aged 16 to 19 who Skills Development Scotland supported to progress into a positive outcome i.e. employment, education or training (baseline 2008/9 = 74.2%).
 - Increased number of unemployed young people aged 16 to 19 Skills Development Scotland supported, who have sustained their positive outcome for at least 3 months (baseline 2008/09 = 81.6%)
 - Target of no more than 12% of 2009/10 school leavers to be More Choices More Chances group (baseline currently 13.4%)
- 3.5 The group are answerable and report on progress to the Smarter group although a number of activities are funded by the Fairer Scotland Fund and are reported regularly to the Community Planning Board.
- 3.6 The original targets set within the MCMC Strategy were reviewed on a quarterly basis and positive progress was made in meeting those targets. The numbers which related to a total evaluation of the direct delivery activity indicated a great deal of success in achieving positive outcomes for the young people involved. Local targets to reduce the overall numbers of young people not in employment, education or training by 20% (100 young people) were agreed with the Scottish Executive. The original targets were based on a baseline of 500 as this included those young people who were categorised as unknown of whom there were 100 in 2004. Scottish Government figures indicate that Moray's More Choices, More Chances Strategy met the targets set for 2008
- 3.7 The latest school leaver's destination figures have indicated that Local Delivery plan target of no more than 12% of school leavers to be in the MCMC target group has been met.
- 3.8 Key achievements since the last report are as follows over 2009/10 are:
- The Employability Service contract was awarded to SCVO and it has been implemented and the employability service is operational. The aim is to find 30 clients for their supported employment service for young people. 20 young people have been engaged to date with 4 from areas of need and already have 10 other referrals. The project is working with Community Learning and Development, NEON and the Well project in Buckie to increase awareness of the project in the areas of need.
 - 16+ Learning Choices Development Officer in post since October 2009

- Future Jobs Funding for Moray Assisted Recruitment Scheme totalling £97,500 was approved will produce from 15 to 30 posts for young people more disadvantaged in the job market. 15 of the posts will be recruited this quarter. The project is waiting ESF funding.
- Surveys of jobcentre staff and services that refer people to the employment service and as agencies that identify issues that could influence the employability service have been undertaken.
- A review of MCMC vouchers scheme complete and new vouchers to the value of £3000 funded by Skills Development Scotland.
- Recognition by Scottish Government of the high quality of partnership working in Moray around this issue.
- A key area of the strategy was to bring together agencies and to address possible duplication a “ Pathways Mapping” event held in October 2009, looking at how preventative services work with young people was held in October 2009 at which 37 people attended
- Welfare benefits training for people working with this group of young people held November 2009 at which 32 people attended.
- Employability awareness for agencies training held on March this year at which 20 people attended

3.9 There is evidence of greater awareness of the MCMC agenda among education and other providers. Education are more responsive to the different needs of young people and 16+ learning Choices the senior phrase of Curriculum or Excellence will further develop this. Tracking of school leavers has improved with the numbers of unknown destination reduced from the original number of 100 to 41 (2008) to zero (December 2009).

3.10 The initial funded initiatives have provided a strong evidence base to inform decisions to address the needs of young people in Moray and this includes decisions around investment of the FSF resource.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan

This report relates to National Outcome 4” Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens” in the Single Outcome Agreement. It links to Local Outcome 9 – More young people will develop to be successful adults in the service Improvement plan

(b) Policy and Legal

The Moray Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government in Scotland Bill 2003 part 2 section 16 (1) to initiate, maintain and facilitate the process of Community Planning. The introduction of a 'Duty of Community Planning' through the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 emphasises the importance of considering social inclusion in the Community Planning process.

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

The main source of funding for the Social Inclusion is the Fairer Scotland Fund and the More Choices More Chances Initiative has been funded by the Fairer Scotland Fund

The allocation has been ring fenced in the first two years of the spending review period to ensure Community Planning Partnership engagement in driving "strategic investment of these resources". The ring fencing has been removed in 2010/11 as Single Outcome Agreements are concluded with Community Planning Partnerships.

The funding allocation for Moray from the Fairer Scotland Fund is:
2010/11 £410,000

The total amount spent from the Fairer Scotland Funding in 2008/9 was £197,216 (this includes staff and running costs). The unspent funds of £149,091 were approved by the Scottish Government to carry forward into 2009/10.

The total funding available for the two years 2009 to 2011 is £981,091, within which £216,617 relates to staffing and running costs, which leaves the balance of £763,474 available for allocation.

Projects	Funding Committed	Balance of funding available
Funding available to allocate 2009-2011		£763,474
Funding awarded to projects (as at 31/3/10)	£506,474	
Moray Assisted Recruitment Scheme (MARS)	£257,000	
Total funding allocated		£763,474

(d) Consultations

The Chief Financial officer was consulted and his comments have been incorporated into the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the committee scrutinises and notes the position in terms of More Choice More Chances in Moray

Author of Report: John Ferguson, Community Planning and Development Manager
Background Papers:
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