

ITEM No ...3.....

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE -
24 JANUARY 2022

REPORT ON: SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE UPDATE

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 31-2022

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides an update on the plans for the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) for 2022-23 to 2025-26. The Attainment Challenge is a centrally funded Scottish Government programme which aims to support recovery from the pandemic and accelerate progress in closing the gap.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Children and Families Services Committee is asked to:-

- i note the content of the report;
- ii instruct the Executive Director of Children and Families Service to monitor progress and continue to provide regular updates with regard to the funding allocation and the implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge in Dundee.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Scottish Attainment Challenge programme is a fully funded specific grant from the Scottish Government Attainment Fund. The most recent press announcement had detailed the funding to be allocated to Dundee City Council for the next four financial years. Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the funding allocations.

3.2 The Scottish Attainment Challenge fund for Dundee City Council's is £4,993,490 in 2022-23 which is a reduction in grant allocation of £1.23m for 2022-23. There are similar reductions for the next four years. Section 4.7 provides information on how the allocation of funding will be targeted in financial year 2022-23. Officers will continue to work on plans for subsequent years' reductions and provide updates to Children and Families Service Committee.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills set out to Parliament on 23 November 2021 plans for SAC for 2022-23 to 2025-26. This next phase of the SAC has been developed in partnership with and agreed by COSLA and builds on the evidence and progress as detailed in the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, OECD and Audit Scotland reports. It will continue to provide support for children and young people impacted by poverty through funding to local authorities, Pupil Equity Funding, Care Experienced Children and Young People funding.

4.2 The plans for SAC include a clearer and funded strategic role for all local authorities, recognising the impact of poverty and the pandemic across every local authority area in Scotland compared to the funding which was previously distributed across nine local authorities of which Dundee was one.

4.3 In order to manage the change in distribution, the allocations will taper over four years towards a fully equitable distribution in 2025-26, ensuring children and young people are supported across the country.

4.4 The grant for 2021-22 is allocated to different support interventions and used for either staffing or contract work. The current allocation of SAC funding and the direct staffing employed is allocated as follows:

Table 1 – SAC grant funding 2021-22

Intervention	FTE	Total
Pedagogy team and central support	25.9	£1,966,042
Speech and Language Therapy	5.5	£255,744
Targeted support **	20.0	£654,946
Learning provision – health and wellbeing	44.8	£1,761,899
Parental engagement	25.0	£1,061,400
Coaching and Mentoring		£100,000
Supporting Improvement lever	7.6	£423,435
TOTAL	128.8	£6,223,466

**includes part year funding

- 4.5 The impact of the changes for Dundee, as stated in paragraph 3.2, results in a reduction in funding of £1.23m each year. A review of all the projects and their impact was undertaken by Officers. Current staffing posts were reviewed to identify if there were any vacancies which could be removed. A similar exercise was undertaken to review contracts and resources procured to date and decisions were made regarding these contracts reducing or ceasing and identification of resources no longer required.
- 4.6 The review also recognised that some projects had part year funding in 2021-22 and it was agreed that these projects would continue in 2022-23 but would need the full year funding. This would result in an increase in budget for this area.
- 4.7 The table below details the areas where the allocation of funding for 2022-23 will be targeted:

Table 2 – SAC – proposed areas of spend in 2022-23

Intervention	FTE	Total
<p>Pedagogy team and central support</p> <p>This budget areas covers the Central pedagogy team with additional support in schools. There are vacancies in the central team and in schools that will not be replaced and there are resources that can now be procured directly by schools and therefore no need to continue to be centrally SAC funded.</p>	16.9	£1,267,082
<p>Speech and Language Therapy</p> <p>Over the last four years Early Years staff have been trained in bespoke models for Early Literacy acquisition by our Speech and Language therapy colleagues. As capacity has been increased and staff upskilled there is no longer a requirement for the input in early years. The need for Speech and Language therapy in our primary schools will continue to augment the core contract. The Early Years part of the Speech and Language contract will cease in June 2022.</p>	2.0	£122,744
<p>Targeted support – full year budget</p> <p>The spend in this targeted support area will increase to reflect the requirements of a full year budget for those targeted additional ASN projects that started part way through 2021-22.</p>	20.0	£809,907
<p>Learning provision – health and wellbeing</p> <p>There will continue to be a focus on health and wellbeing in schools, in particular in the area of emotional and mental wellbeing. Staff will continue to provide this service across upper primary and the secondary sector. There are vacant posts that will not be replaced and all contracts are now on the central procurement framework and schools can purchase individually.</p>	37.8	£1,427,247
<p>Parental engagement</p> <p>We will continue to support the valuable work that the school and family development workers undertake in our schools. The</p>	25.0	£1,026,400

targeted partnership work will no longer be centrally funded from this funding as schools can now procure this service if required through the procurement framework.		
Coaching and Mentoring Over the last four years we have delivered this leadership programme to all schools' Senior Leadership Teams. We are now in a position to withdraw part of this contract and schools can purchase through the procurement framework if they wish to continue to develop their own teams. This funding will allow the current project to cease at the end of the academic year.		£37,000
Supporting Improvement lever This funding will allow continued support to be provided to schools by Education Officers and central support staff Vacant posts will not be replaced and resources which were given as start-up packs are no longer required.	5.1	£303,110
TOTAL	106.8	£4,993,490

4.8 Further work will take place prior to the end of this financial year to review the projects and the impact of the ongoing reductions in future years and follow up reports will be submitted to Children and Families Service Committee.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness and poverty, environment and corporate risk. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

Audrey May
Executive Director of Children and Families Services
January 2022

APPENDIX 1 – FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Year	Amount
2021/22 – final year of SAC funding	£6,223,466
2022/23 – allocation	£4,993,490
2023/24 – allocation	£3,763,513
2024/25 – allocation	£2,533,537
2025/26 – allocation	£1,303,561

