

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

11 November 2021

Report by Director of Education

EDUCATION REFORM CONSULTATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To seek approval from Education Committee for the proposed approach and timescales to responding to the Scottish Government's Education Reform Consultation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:
- a. Note the Education Reform Consultation;
 - b. Note that changes to Scotland's national education agencies is likely to have significant implications for education in East Renfrewshire;
 - c. Agree to the establishment of short life working group comprising Councillors Lafferty, Buchanan and Wallace to agree the East Renfrewshire response prior to submission; and,
 - d. Agree that the final submission be submitted for homologation to the next Education Committee meeting on 3 February 2022.

BACKGROUND

3. The OECD recently published two reports on aspects of Scottish education. The first, [Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future](#) was published in June 2021. This report highlighted the impact of Curriculum for Excellence in terms of quality and equity in Scottish schooling but also commented on areas where further change or development could add value to ongoing educational improvement.

4. In response to the OECD report, the Scottish Government accepted all the recommendations and took the decision that the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) would be replaced and that the functions of Education Scotland would be reviewed with the removal of the Inspectorate from its remit.

5. The second OECD report, [Upper-Secondary Education Student Assessment in Scotland: A Comparative Perspective](#) was published in August 2021. This report complements the first OECD report and sets out a number of possible ways in which improvements could be made to align the curriculum and assessment in the senior phase.

6. Professor Ken Muir was asked to take forward the reform of SQA and Education Scotland in his role as independent advisor to the Scottish Government. A key element of the work being undertaken by Professor Muir is a consultation, designed to seek views of stakeholders and inform the recommendations relating to the future shape of Scotland's

national education agencies. The process will conclude with an independent report by Professor Muir to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills in early 2022.

REPORT

7. The national Education Reform consultation was published on 30 September and runs until 26 November 2021.

8. The [consultation document](#) and associated documentation informs stakeholders of the current roles and responsibilities that Education Scotland and SQA have in Scottish education.

9. To enable the department to reflect the views of East Renfrewshire stakeholders a number of forums will be held during the consultation period including:

- Elected members and members of Education Committee;
- Community Learning and Development;
- Head Teachers;
- Staff groups including representation from the LNCT;
- Quality Improvement Officers; and,
- Head Boys and Girls.

10. A meeting will be held with Parent Council Chairs, with a presentation outlining the scope of the consultation. Parent Councils will be encouraged to respond and feedback from this group incorporated in the East Renfrewshire response.

11. Views will be collated from the meetings held and used to form the response by East Renfrewshire to the consultation.

12. As the next meeting of the committee will not be until after the consultation ends it is proposed to establish a short term working group to consider the responses from stakeholders as outlined above, and to finalise and submit a response on behalf of the Council. The response would be submitted to the next meeting of the committee for homologation. Membership of the working group would comprise of the Convener (Councillor Lafferty) Leader of the Council (Councillor Buchanan) and Leader of the Conservative Group/Education Spokesperson (Councillor Wallace).

CONSULTATION

13. The response will reflect the views of East Renfrewshire stakeholders and will focus on four key areas:

- Vision;
- Curriculum and Assessment;
- Roles and Responsibilities; and,
- Replacing the SQA and reforming Education Scotland.

14. Professor Muir is engaging with and seeking feedback from a wide group of stakeholders including ADES and COSLA.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

15. There are no financial implications relating to this paper

RECOMMENDATIONS

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- d. Agree that the final submission be submitted for homologation to the next Education Committee meeting on 3 February 2022.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
11 November 2021

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Background Papers

Education Scotland and the SQA: Consultation

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-review-education-scotland-scottish-qualification-authority-professor-kenneth-muir/documents/>

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