

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE17 November 2022Report by Director of EducationSCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE STRETCH AIMS**PURPOSE**

1. To seek Education Committee approval for the proposed Scottish Attainment Challenge Stretch Aims.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) approve the proposed Stretch Aims; and
- b) ask the Director of Education to bring regular reports to Education Committee on the progress towards these.

BACKGROUND

3. The Education Department's vision statement "*Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*" reflects the commitment and expectation that all learners will be supported to realise their potential.

4. The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched by the First Minister in February 2015. This included establishing the £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund. The Scottish Attainment Challenge is about achieving equity in education; specifically by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

5. In September 2022, Education Committee approved the department's [Delivering Excellence through Equity: Strategic Equity Funding Plan](#) (SEF).

6. The SEF Plan takes full account of the National Improvement Framework [Education - Achieving Excellence and Equity: national improvement framework and improvement plan 2022](#), East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Community Plan, the Fairer East Ren Plan and Locality Plans, the department's contributions to the Council's Outcome Delivery Plan 2022 – 2025 and the department's Local Improvement Plan 2022-2025.

7. Local authorities were asked to set 'Stretch Aims' for the Scottish Attainment Challenge for academic year 2022-23, embedding these within existing local authority plans, with a view to evaluating progress towards attaining these stretch aims, updating annually and reporting to the Scottish Government as part of statutory plans and reports.

8. Education Committee requested that the department provide further detail around the Stretch Aims submitted as part of their SEF plan.

REPORT

9. Specific requirements for setting local stretch aims are set out in the [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#).

10. Robust evidence-informed self-evaluation enables ambitious stretch aims to be developed, as part of the SEF plan and existing planning across the Council and the Education Department.

11. In order to ensure national consistency a “core plus” model has been developed. The “core” is for aims measurable by a sub-set of the National Improvement (NIF) key measures and an aim for improvement in pupils’ health and wellbeing.

12. As a minimum the core stretch aims for both overall progress and for reducing the poverty-related gaps should include:

- a) Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (literacy combined and numeracy combined);
- b) The proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 5 based on the “Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations” publication/dataset;
- c) The proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 based on the “Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations” publication/dataset;
- d) The proportion of 16 – 19 olds participating in education, employment or training based on the Annual Participation Measure produced by Skills Development Scotland; and
- e) A locally identified aim of health and wellbeing, to be measured using local datasets.

13. These aims have been chosen to help measure the impact and outcomes locally of the activities which we will undertake to deliver the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

14. Nationally, aims a), b), c) and d) will be aggregated so that a national picture for progress on the poverty-related attainment gap can be identified.

15. The Education Department, in partnership with our schools, has been setting local stretch and gap reducing aims (targets) for some time. This two-way process is part of existing local authority quality improvement processes and very much agreed as part of an interactive and collaborative process.

16. In developing stretch aims, the Education Department took account of 5 key principles:

- Ambition for All – Any stretch aims should improve outcomes for all learners and close relevant equity gaps;
- Alignment - The agreed stretch aims should enable strategic council (Outcome Delivery Plan and Fairer East Renfrewshire Plan), departmental (Local Improvement Plan) and school improvement plans to reflect the ambitious and achievable aim to improve outcomes for all learners, whilst closing the poverty related attainment gap;
- Reliability – measures should be based on reliable and robust data, including national benchmarking data, which supports improvement;

- Relevance – stretch aims need to reflect the East Renfrewshire context and take account of the Education Department’s self-evaluation evidence;
- Subsidiarity - It is important that the East Renfrewshire Stretch Aims are relevant and support improvement at all levels of the system, from the classroom to national level.

17. National guidance on the setting of stretch aims indicated a need to identify equity gaps in the core measures on the basis of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Whilst it was indicated that it was anticipated most local authorities would set gap targets on the basis of children residing in SIMD 1 and 2 residences in comparison to those residing in SIMD 9 and 10 residences, it was also noted that there would be flexibility for local authorities to set differing gap targets on the basis of their local contexts.

18. East Renfrewshire Council does not have an equal distribution of residences across the SIMD scale, with a significantly higher proportion of residence in SIMD 9 & 10 (circa 58%) than in SIMD 1 & 2 (circa 5%)¹. Consequently the Education Department initially set targets on the basis of children residing in SIMD 1 to 4 (circa 15% of cohort) against those residing in deciles 9 and 10 in order to support a greater impact for learners, and to be more in keeping with a national proportion for SIMD 1 & 2.

19. The Education Department has been advised that it is necessary to submit gap targets on the basis of deciles 1 & 2 versus deciles 9 & 10 and so targets have been set on that basis. A copy of the Stretch Aims aligned to the SEF plan can be found as part of Appendix 1 of this document.

20. The department’s Quality Improvement Officers will provide ongoing support and challenge to ensure impact in terms of improved outcomes for learners.

21. Given the importance of ensuring that targets are linked to the barriers faced by all disadvantaged groups, the department intends to set additional stretch aims (core plus) at both an authority and school level, as part of its operational business in bringing about improvement for all learners. These will include additional targets which focus on raising attainment and outcomes, such as: raising the bar for the lowest attaining; more appropriately challenging targets reflecting the current outcomes for our learners; raising the bar for other equity groups on basis of free school meal entitlement; and attainment at points of exiting secondary education.

22. Progress in meeting the stretch aims will be reported on an ongoing basis through the Council’s Outcome Delivery Plan, Fairer East Ren Plan and departmental Standards and Quality Report.

23. In addition, as part of the Standards and Quality Report, the Director of Education will report annually to Education Committee and wider stakeholders.

24. Regular reports will be provided to Education Scotland and Scottish Government.

25. As a consequence of the impact of Covid, several differing approaches to assessment methodology have been employed in recent years. As we continue to return to more traditional assessment approaches this makes setting stretch aims more challenging and consideration of this should be exercised when making year on year comparisons, or evaluations of progress towards targets.

¹ Annual Participation Measure Dataset of 16-19 year olds residing in East Renfrewshire

CONSULTATION

26. The department has carried out extensive engagement on the priorities identified within the Local Improvement Plan 2022 – 2025. In addition a range of stakeholders have been consulted in response to the introduction of *Strategic Equity Funding*.

27. To enable a credible set of measures, extensive analysis of performance data, both qualitative and quantitative, in a range of areas was undertaken, leading to the identification of stretch aims. In addition discussions took place with Education Scotland before final targets and aims were agreed.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

28. In East Renfrewshire, we have developed a preventative approach to service delivery. This approach requires services, both individually and collectively, to continue to re-prioritise resources of time, money and expertise towards raising attainment for key equity groups. The funding to support Strategic Equity (SEF), Pupil Equity (PEF), Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYPF), aligns closely to this approach.

29. Setting ambitious but achievable stretch aims over the four year period of the SEF plan, will drive improvements in literacy and numeracy and support health and wellbeing.

30. The funding is short-term therefore it is vital that any improvements have a focus on both sustainability and an 'exit strategy' throughout its existence.

31. Scottish Attainment Challenge funds will support East Renfrewshire's continued focus on achieving the stretch aims identified. East Renfrewshire's allocation for 2022 to 2026 is detailed in table 1 below:

Table 1

| Local Authorities | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| East Renfrewshire SEF | £134,591 | £267,565 | £400,538 | £533,512 |
| East Renfrewshire PEF | £1,488,515 | £1,488,515 | £1,488,515 | £1,488,515 |
| East Renfrewshire CECYPEF | £96,389 | 92,880 | 92,880 | 92,880 |

32. Alongside *SAC Refresh*, and also announced on 23 November 2021, schools' Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) will remain in place. Under the direction of Head Teachers, schools will continue to benefit from Pupil Equity Funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) approve the proposed Stretch Aims; and
- b) ask the Director of Education to bring regular reports to Education Committee on the progress towards these.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
17 November 2022

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Background Papers

1. [Education - Achieving Excellence and Equity: national improvement framework and improvement plan 2022](#)
2. [East Renfrewshire Education Department Local Improvement Plan 2022 – 2025](#)
3. [Delivering Excellence through Equity \(East Renfrewshire's SEF Plan 2022 – 2026\)](#)

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Identified Targets for ERC (Core and Core+):

| | Measure | Target (Core) | Type | Target Level | Duration |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------|
| 1. | P1, P4, P7 (Combined) Curriculum for Excellence: Numeracy | Core (A) | Stretch & Gap | ERC | 2022-23 |
| 2. | P1, P4, P7 (Combined) Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy | Core (A) | Stretch & Gap | ERC | 2022-23 |
| 3. | Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more SQA awards at credit and qualifications framework level 5 (A-C Awards) | Core (B) | Stretch & Gap | ERC | 2022-23 |
| 4. | Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more SQA awards at credit and qualifications framework level 6 (A-C Awards) | Core (C) | Stretch & Gap | ERC | 2022-23 |
| 5. | Annual Participation Measure (APM) | Core (D) | Stretch & Gap | ERC | 2022-23 |
| 6. | HWB Measure - Attendance Primary & Secondary | Core (E) | Stretch & Gap | ERC | 2022-23 |

| Target: Core A | Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels: P1, P4, P& Combined: Numeracy | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2020-21) | 89.9% | 77.1% | 93.7% | 16.6% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 91.0% | 79.5% | 94.5% | 15% |
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 1.1pp | 2.4pp | 0.8pp | -1.6pp |

| Target: Core A | Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels: P1, P4, P& Combined: Literacy | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2020-21) | 86.2% | 69.1% | 90.3% | 21.2% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 87.0% | 71.5% | 91.0% | 19.5% |
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 0.8pp | 2.4pp | 0.7pp | -1.7pp |

| Target: Core B | Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more SQA awards at credit and qualifications framework level 5 (A-C Awards) | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2020-21) | 96.5% | 88.4% | 98.4% | 10.0% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 97.0% | 89.5% | 98.8% | 9.3% |
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 0.5pp | 1.1pp | 0.4pp | -0.7pp |

| Core C | Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more SQA awards at credit and qualifications framework level 6 (A-C Awards) | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2020-21) | 86.6% | 74.1% | 92.4% | 18.3% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 86.8% | 74.5% | 92.5% | 18.0% |
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 0.2pp | 0.4pp | 0.1pp | -0.3pp |

| Core D | Proportion of 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training: Annual Participation Measure (APM) | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2021-22) | 97.0% | 90.7% | 98.0% | 7.3% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 97.2% | 91.5% | 98.4% | 6.9% |

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|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 0.2pp | 0.8pp | 0.4pp | -0.4pp |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|

| Core E | A locally identified aim for health and wellbeing, to be measured using local datasets: Attendance – Primary | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2021-22) | 93.9% | 89.6% | 94.8% | 5.2% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 96.0% | 92.5% | 96.5% | 4.0% |
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 2.1pp | 2.9pp | 1.7pp | -1.2pp |

| Core E | A locally identified aim for health and wellbeing, to be measured using local datasets: Attendance – Secondary | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | Overall Levels | SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q5 | Gap (Q1 vs Q5) |
| Current Level (2021-22) | 91.2% | 87.8% | 92.2% | 4.4% |
| Stretch aim to be achieved | 93.5% | 90.5% | 94.2% | 3.7% |
| Improvement Stretch/Gap | 2.3pp | 2.7pp | 2.0pp | -0.7pp |