
CHILDREN'S SERVICES MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Cyndi Hughes,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Council approval for making a temporary appointment to cover the duties of the Assistant Directors for Schools, Improvement and Development from 1 September 2010 until 31 August 2011.

Summary

2. Andrew Dunn, the current Assistant Director for Schools, Improvement and Development with Darlington Borough Council has resigned with effect from the 31 August 2010 to return to Primary Headship. The service managed by the post holder is mainly concerned with local authority responsibilities for school improvement and is largely funded by government grants for the same purpose – the National Strategies.
3. On the 26 May the new Department for Education announced that all schools are to be invited to become Academies and that legislation would be brought forward to allow all outstanding schools to become Academies from September 2010. Schools becoming academies would be funded according to the local authority formula but with the addition of the money currently retained by the local authority to pay for some central functions. Currently, schools which are Academies cease to be the responsibility of the local authority for standards and improvement.
4. Legislation is also being brought forward to allow for the establishment of publicly funded 'free' schools which would be outside of local authority control
5. The National Strategies have provided funding, advice and monitoring to local authorities on school improvement and development but their contract has been terminated with effect from 31 March 2011. This will mean that the local authority will not receive any of the grant income from National Strategies previously used to fund school improvement functions.
6. Regardless of the uncertainty over scope and funding of the role, there is a current function to be carried out that will require some capacity. The local authority will continue to need a specialist school improvement lead for the management of School Improvement Partners, for the commissioning of school improvement support and for some direct support to

schools not yet deemed as good or outstanding. There are also additional duties carried out by the post holder which must continue, pending any longer term review of functions. These include the management of specific staff teams and service areas.

7. As a result of the need for continuing duties in this area, an approach has been made to the Chief Inspector of Schools to identify one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools who has good working knowledge of Darlington and of our schools, with a view to Ofsted seconding the inspector to the local authority for a fixed term period. Ofsted have indicated that they are willing to second an HMI to the local authority for a period of 1 year.
8. As a result of the uncertainty over the extent of the role (how many schools will become Academies and how many free schools may be established) and of the funding for the function, it is proposed that the post not be permanently appointed to for the school year 2010-2011 and that instead the post be filled by a seconded Inspector from Ofsted.
9. The cost of the secondment will be less than the cost of making a permanent appointment.

Recommendation

10. It is recommended that Council support the recommendation to fill the post of Assistant Director for Schools, Improvement and Development for the period 1/9/10 to 31/8/11 through a secondment from Ofsted.

Reasons

11. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The function must still be carried out
 - (b) There is uncertainty about the future scope and funding for the role.

**Murray Rose,
Director of Children's Services**

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Murray Rose Extension 2881

S17 Crime and Disorder	The recommendation in this report contributes to supporting schools to maintain good order and discipline
Health and Well Being	The recommendation in this report contributes to supporting schools to promote healthy lifestyles
Sustainability	The recommendation in this report contributes to supporting schools to promote sustainable environments and lifestyles
Diversity	The recommendation in this report contributes to supporting schools to promote community cohesion
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All children and young people
Budget and Policy Framework	Appointing Assistant Directors is a full Council responsibility and this report is brought to seek permission to waive this responsibility for a temporary secondment.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report ensures that work continues to narrow the gaps in outcomes
Efficiency	This report ensures that the local authority does not commit to spend funds which may be removed in 12 months time

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

12. Andrew Dunn, the current Assistant Director for Schools, Improvement and Development with Darlington Borough Council has resigned with effect from the 31 August 2010 to return to Primary Headship. The service managed by the post holder is mainly concerned with local authority responsibilities for school improvement and is largely funded by government grants for the same purpose – the National Strategies.

Outcome of Consultation

13. Consultation has taken place with Headteachers and with each of the 3 political groups. Headteachers were clear that they wanted the role to be filled but accepted that the local authority may have to fill the post in a way other than through immediate permanent recruitment.
14. Representatives from each of the 3 political parties have met the Ofsted inspector recommended by the Headteachers and by the Director of Children's Services.