

Doran National Commissioning Group
4 September 2018 14:00 – 16:00
Conference Room 4, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

Present

- Margaret Orr (Chair)
- Kevin Barr (Secretariat) Scottish Government
- Laura Meikle, Scottish Government
- Melanie Lowe, Scottish Government
- Alison Herbet, for Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS)
- Andrew Jeffries, from Edinburgh City Council representing Social Work Scotland (SWS)
- David Barr, representing Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) and Educating Through Care Scotland (ETCS) Member
- Laura Battles, Chief Executive Officer at Donaldson's School representing GASS
- Paul Nisbet, representing Communication, Acces, Literacy and Learning (CALL)/Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC)Enquire

Apologies

- Caroline Amos, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
- Jane O'Donnell, COSLA
- Owen Derrick, National Parent Forum Scotland
- Deborah Walker, Scottish Government
- Laura Caven, COSLA
- Alison Newlands, for Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS)
- Alex Little, on behalf of NHS Chief Executives
- Steven McPherson, Education Scotland
- Barry Syme, representing Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Margaret Orr (**MO**) welcomed members and thanked them for attending. MO invited Melanie Lowe (**ML**) to the meeting, the new Team Leader for the Support and Wellbeing Unit in the Scottish Government.

2. Chairs Update

2.1 Margaret advised the group of a very positive meeting with Graeme Logan, the new Deputy Director for the Strategy and Performance Division in the Scottish Government. Graeme has a particular interest in ASL and is very keen to bring pace to the Doran agenda. Although he could not attend today's meeting he will meet with the group at a future date.

3. Analysis report on the public consultation to 10 year strategy

3.1 MO invited ML to provide an update on the analysis report on the public consultation to the 10 year strategy.

3.2 It was noted that the consultation analysis report has been cleared, with publication due in September. A direct link will be sent to the group.

3.3 ML informed the group that we will then need to look at refreshing and publishing in the new year, and members will be asked for comments. MO noted that the challenge for the group will be taking the info we have and the strategic direction and moving the work forward. The group discussed timescales and the need to get engagement from as broad a stakeholder group as possible, as this is work that has to be progressed. It was noted that the report will be circulated to allow members to comment before it comes to the next meeting of the Commissioning Group. MO stated that this should be a substantial item on the January agenda.

ACTION – Mel to send link to the analysis report to the group.

4. AGASL Update

4.1 MO invited Laura Meikle (**LM**) to provide an update on the Advisory Group for Additional Support for Learning (AGASL).

4.2 LM noted that AGASL met on 29 August 2018. LM provides updates on both groups, for both groups. The main items on the agenda were around ASL implementation.

4.3 LM informed the group that in response to recent challenges around the implementation of ASL, a range of proposals were put forward to DFM. One of the suggestions proposed was a separate strategic board for ASL with the intention of raising the profile in this area. However DFM has indicated that work to support implementation on ASL should be overseen by the Scottish Education Council. This will allow AGASL to be included within the context of wider education improvement. A further ask of DFM was for AGASL to explore physical intervention and exclusion in schools. The group were originally asked to explore this, however the Scottish Advisory Group for Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (**SAGRABIS**) have now been asked to take this work forward with AGASL providing an oversight role.

4.4 AGASL have also been considering the implementation report to parliament. The final statistics have been produced and AGASL have provided sign off.

4.5 LM noted that the Grant Aided Special School rep on AGASL had raised questions in relation to commissioning funding, and where the £250,000 for commissioning had come from. It was noted at the meeting that this was a direct result of individual conversations with each of the GASS, and not a result of the Scottish Government cutting grant funding across the schools and services.

5 Update on National Commissioning Funding

5.1 MO invited LM to provide an update on National Commissioning Funding.

5.2 LM noted that 1:1 meetings with the GASS had continued, and were positive. There is a variety of states of readiness in terms of their consideration of the move to full cost recovery over time. LM will continue to work with the GASS.

5.3 It was noted that the Excel framework has been put in place and discussions have concluded. All GASS are part of this and LM informed the group that the framework focuses on the fees framework and ministers have to agree which fees can be charged.

5.4 LM advised that a joint conversation between the Scottish Government, COSLA, ADES and Scotland Excel has taken place focussing on what commissioning will look like. A discussion focussing on the impacts and benefits has not been done previously so this was helpful. LM has committed to a further set of discussions about the impact. It was noted that as there is a need to clarify the purpose of the grant to ensure a consistent understanding across all organisations.

5.5 LM again noted that individual conversations with each of the GASS has resulted in possible funding of £250,000 to become available for commissioning in 18-24 months. It was again stated that SG has not applied a percentage grant reduction with the schools or any other partners. LM did, however, state that budget processes are undertaken each year and so she cannot guarantee that there will be no reduction in funding next year.

5.6 The group discussed what the money will be used for. LM noted that it may be useful to revisit some themes, and proposed the group explore some of the potential vehicles for commissioning, timescales and how we do that at the next meeting. Need to also think about what might be commissioned. LM proposed to bring a paper to the next meeting taking information from the 10 year strategy plus anything else relevant on areas discussed in the 10 year strategy. This needs to include any developments which may change the landscape, such as mental health which will attract separate funding under the Programme for Government. The group discussed the need for the focus to be on looking forward, acknowledging that information arising from the strategy should be at the centre with any additional areas being taken into account. The information will be drawn together in advance of the January meeting.

5.7 LM asked what members would need to support these discussions, and asked that email requests are sent to her at laura.meikle@gov.scot

ACTION – Members to email Laura regarding the support required to undertake discussions.

5.8 The group discussed the need to be creative in their thinking, and not limit themselves to what procurement offers. The cost of the procurement process was also recognised as a factor.

5.9 The group discussed the parameters of the options available. LM stated the only limit was the £250,000 and hoped the next discussion may assist this. MO noted that this may be an opportunity to explore flexible approaches. MO also noted that engagement comes with accountability. She stressed that the group needs to keep the intent of the strategy high profile.

5.1.1 There was also scope to consider partnerships with other organisations to drive the work forward. LM asked that members share information about successful

partnership working as this can be a way to achieve cost neutral work. The group noted that there is an appetite for it however some organisations may not be clear as to what success looks like in this field. LM agreed to explore. It was noted that promoting a holistic approach with co-operation between parties doesn't require the need for additional funding.

ACTION – Members to share information on successful partnership working

5.1.2 Members discussed procurement and if it was required. LM noted that procurement is not used for grants, so it may not need to be used. LM advised that they will continue to look for creative measures for procurement with a need to revisit this discussion at a future meeting. The group also reiterated that this shouldn't overload the thinking and should not be the group's primary focus. The group noted that procurement can often compromise the service, and the focus doesn't need to be on this.

ACTION - LM and ML to speak to colleagues in Procurement for up to date advice on option available to the Group.

5.1.3 Laura Battles (**LB**) asked if there had been any development in the themes of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives (**RIC**). LM noted that the RICs are at too early a stage, however she will revisit the conversation with them. The group agreed to discuss this at a future meeting.

ACTION – LM to continue dialogue with RIC.

6. Next Steps

6.1 MO provided an overview of the next steps which included:

- ML to finish the consultation paper, with direct copies to be sent to the group and members being asked for responses prior to a finalised version being tabled at the January meeting.
- Review of strategy and updating. Strategy will be sent to group at the end of September/October for the group's feedback. Discussions with procurement team, involving seeking advice about commissioning.
- In anticipation of the January meeting, group need to think about strategy and think about what the focus needs to be. MO reiterated the need to stay focussed on the areas endorsed by the consultation process. Need to keep stakeholders sighted.

7. AOB

7.1 David Barr (**DB**) noted that there was a meeting between CCPS in between this Doran meeting and the last, LM was in attendance. It was noted that LM will be asked to attend a future meeting.

*A position statement for stakeholders from LM can be found in **Annex A** of this minute.*

8. Date of Next meeting

8.1 The next 2 meetings of the group are in the calendar and scheduled for 29th January and 18th April 2019. MO suggested that the January meeting be a full day meeting with lunch provided.

8.2 MO thanked members for attending. It was asked that if any membership is to be amended or if anything else the group felt would be useful to share, that they send proposals to the Secretariat.

Action	Person responsible	Comments
1. Extend invitation to members asking to confirm attendance at the group.	Secretariat	By a future meeting
2. Send link to Analysis report to group	Mel Lowe	When available
3. Members to email Laura regarding the support required to undertake future discussions	Group	Before next meeting
4. Group to explore and share evidence of successful partnership working	Group	Before next meeting
5. Engage in discussions with Scottish Government procurement regarding commissioning	Laura Meikle & Mel Lowe	By next meeting
6. Continue to update group on RIC updates	Laura Meikle	On-going

Statement from Laura Meikle

The Scottish Government's commitment to the implementation of the Doran Review recommendations continues.

The review report made 21 recommendations. The Scottish Government accepted or partially accepted 19 recommendations (16 accepted, 3 partial). 2 recommendations were not for the Scottish Government. Those which were partially accepted were because the principle of the recommendation was accepted but not the suggested detail of how it should be delivered. There has been significant progress in delivering the recommendations of the Doran Review as a whole, with many of the recommendations delivered in full.

There is a continued need to focus on the delivery of the recommendations on the strategic commissioning of national services for children and young people with complex additional support needs (recommendations 7, 17-21). There has been significant work undertaken by the National Commissioning Group and Project Board towards the delivery of these recommendations. This year the National Commissioning Group has met again to consider a renewed [refreshed] approach to the delivery of these recommendations. The National Commissioning Group is working towards beginning commissioning within the next 18 months, and the transition to commissioned services will increase over time, in line with the 10 year strategy (2017-2026) for national commissioning of services for children and young people with complex additional support needs.