

REPORT TO: CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 22 JANUARY 2024

REPORT ON: SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE UPDATE

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 29-2024

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides an update on Dundee’s Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) allocation for 2024/25. SEF is a funding stream in the Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF), which supports the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC).

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Children, Families and Communities Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) is a fully funded specific grant from the Scottish Government’s Attainment Scotland Fund.

3.2 The Strategic Equity Fund allocation for Dundee City Council for 2024/25 is £2,533,537. This is a reduction in grant allocation of £1,229,976 from the funding level of 2023/24. Table 2 provides an overview of the allocation of funding in 2024/25.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched in February 2015 with the strategic aim of “closing the poverty-related attainment gap between children and young people from the least and most disadvantaged communities”. The Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF), which supports the Scottish Attainment Challenge, prioritises improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing of those children adversely affected by poverty in Scotland’s schools. Achieving excellence and equity in education are the key aims.

4.2 In November 2021, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills set out plans for a refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) from April 2022. The mission of this refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) is: to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap.

4.3 The refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge introduced several changes to the programme at national, regional, and local level. This included changes to the ASF with the introduction of Strategic Equity Funding (SEF), which replaced Challenge Authority and Schools Programme Funding. The ASF is now made up of the SEF, the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding,

4.4 Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) is £43 million annually to be shared by all 32 local authorities to invest in approaches to achieving the mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). A link to further information about SEF, including the SEF allocation for each of the 32 local authorities, is included in Appendix 1.

4.5 The £43 million in SEF is distributed based on Children in Low Income Families data for the 2019/2020 financial year. As a result of the change from Challenge Funding (for 9 challenge authorities, including Dundee) to SEF, Dundee City Council’s funding allocation to achieve the mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge is tapering over four years from £6,223,466 in 2021/22 to £1,303,561 in 2025/26 (See appendix 1). Therefore, Dundee’s allocation will reduce by a further £1,229,976 from 2024/25 to 2025/26. As yet, there is no confirmation of any SEF beyond 2025/26.

- 4.6 Dundee's SEF for 2023/ 24 is allocated to different interventions and activities and used for either staffing or contract work/providers/resources to build capacity and provide targeted support. Plans for sustainability are built into this. SEF for 2023/ 24 is allocated, broadly, as follows:

Table 1 – SEF grant funding 2023/24

| INTERVENTION | STAFF - FTE | OTHER ALLOCATION OF FUNDING e.g., contract work/providers/resources | TOTAL |
|--|--------------------|--|-------------------|
| Pedagogy Team and Central Support - Learning Provision lever | 12 | £10,000 (Resources) | £849,340 |
| Speech and Language Therapy - Learning Provision lever | | £80,000 | £80,000 |
| Targeted Support - Learning Provision lever | 20.0 | | £850,402 |
| Health and wellbeing - Learning Provision lever | 17.8 | | £904,885 |
| Parental Engagement and Family Support – Families and Communities lever | 25.0 | | £893,970 |
| Supporting improvement lever | 3.7 | | £184,916 |
| TOTAL | 78.5 | £90,000 | £3,763,513 |

- 4.7 As part of the budget setting process for 2023/24 the Children and Families Service was allocated £150,000 to help tackle educational inequalities. As a result, the overall SEF plan (table 1) for 2023/24 also included the following additional projects:

- 'Leading Learners' programme to provide targeted support for senior phase pupils with teachers being trained as coaches to work with pupils at risk of not achieving their target grades in exams.
- Enhancing 'AIM': Anxiety in Motion (AIM) is a provision in Education, Learning and Inclusion for secondary school pupils who are unable to attend school due to significant anxiety and related mental health needs. The additional money is being used to:
 - enhance the curriculum offer for pupils who attend AIM.
 - enhance outreach to support an increased number of young people whilst building in-school capacity to allow for sustainability beyond 2023/ 24.

- 4.8 Table 2 details the broad areas where the allocation of funding for 2024-25 will be targeted; these figures include an estimate for the pay award. Plans for sustainability beyond 2024/25 are built into the strategic plan where possible.

Table 2: SEF – overview of areas of spend in 2024/25

| INTERVENTION | STAFF - FTE | OTHER ALLOCATION OF FUNDING e.g., contract work/providers/resources | TOTAL |
|---|-------------|---|-----------------|
| <p>Pedagogy Team and Central Support – Learning Provision lever</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed by data, the pedagogy team will provide targeted support related to specific improvement themes (e.g., Moderation); it will also work with targeted schools to improve the quality of learning, teaching, and assessment. There will also be a focus on embedding the 'Every Dundee Learner Matters' (EDLM) improvement strategy, which is underpinned by principles of equity. | 7.0 | | £597,377 |
| <p>Speech and Language Therapy – Learning Provision lever</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued partnership with Speech and Language Therapy Service to provide support to Primary 1 pupils in targeted schools, and to build staff capacity in the supporting pupils with speech, language, and communication. | | £80,000 | £80,000 |
| <p>Targeted Support - Learning Provision lever</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide targeted support to pupils to overcome barriers to learning and to build capacity around supporting young people with additional support needs. Provide additional learning pathways to ensure all pupils make appropriate progress in achieving planned outcomes | 13.0 | | £549,393 |
| <p>Health and wellbeing - Learning Provision lever</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional support for targeted health and wellbeing support in the primary and secondary sector. Continue to support children and young people to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be present – attend school regularly Participate – be engaged in learning Make progress – attain and achieve in their learning, meeting milestones as appropriate | 10.8 | | £561,840 |

| | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Parental Engagement – <i>Families and Communities lever</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Teachers involved in determining where School and Family Development Workers (SFDWs) can have greatest impact. SEF and Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) will be used to fund SFDWs to provide targeted support to pupils and families, with a particular focus on school attendance. | 12.2 | | £552,399 |
| <i>Supporting improvement lever</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Officer, Research and Information Analysis Officers, and Educational Psychologist provide support directly to settings and schools to ensure that interventions are planned and implemented as effectively as possible. | 3.0 | | £192,528 |
| TOTAL | 46.0 | £80,000 | £2,533,537 |

- 4.9 The reduction in FTE in the 2024/ 25 SEF plan will be managed, where necessary, through the redeployment of staff to other roles, retirements, or the end of temporary contracts; or, through using other funding streams.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment to identify impacts on Equality & Diversity, Fairness & Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. An impact, positive or negative, on one or more of these issues was identified. An appropriate senior manager has checked and agreed with this assessment. A copy of the Integrated Impact Assessment showing the impacts and accompanying benefits of/mitigating factors for them is included as an appendix to this report.

6 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The Council Leadership Team was consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Audrey May
Executive Director of Children and Families Services

Paul Fleming
Head of Education, Learning & Inclusion

29 December 2023

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| AIM | Anxiety in Motion |
| ASF | Attainment Scotland Fund |
| EDLM | Every Dundee Learner Matters |
| FTE | Full Time Equivalent |
| PEF | Pupil Equity Funding |
| SAC | Scottish Attainment Challenge |
| SEF | Strategic Equity Fund |
| SFDW | School and Family Development Worker |
| SQA | Scottish Qualifications Authority |

GLOSSARY

| | |
|------------|---|
| AIM | AIM (Anxiety in Motion) is a provision within for secondary school pupils who are unable to attend school due to significant anxiety and related mental health needs. |
| ASF | The ASF is an additional, targeted investment to be used strategically alongside existing funding at and across local authority and school level, with local authorities and schools collaborating to achieve the shared, national mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Resources for the Scottish Attainment Challenge, through the ASF, will be provided to all 32 local authorities through Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) and Care Experienced Children and Young People funding (CECYP); and to schools through Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). |
| PEF | Pupil Equity Funding is allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. This funding is to be spent at the discretion of the head-teacher working in partnership with each other and their local authority, with Pupil Equity Funding: national operational guidance designed to help support those plans. |
| SAC | The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched in February 2015 with the strategic aim of “closing the poverty-related attainment gap between children and young people from the least and most disadvantaged communities”. |
| SEF | Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) is £43 million to be shared by all 32 local authorities to invest in approaches to achieving the mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). |

APPENDIX 1**STRATEGIC EQUITY FUNDING ALLOCATIONS**

| Year | Amount |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| 2021/2022 – final year of SAC funding | £6,223,466 |
| 2022/2023 – allocation SEF | £4,993,490 |
| 2023/2024 – allocation SEF | £3,763,513 |
| 2024/2025 – allocation SEF | £2,533,537 |
| 2025/2026 – allocation SEF | £1,303,561 |

STRATEGIC EQUITY FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FOR EACH LOCAL AUTHORITY

[Pupil attainment: closing the gap - Schools - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

APPENDIX 2

Integrated Impact Assessment

Committee Report Number: 29-2024

Document Title: Scottish Attainment Challenge Update

Document Type: Service

Description:

This report provides an update on how the Children and Families Service will use Dundee's Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) allocation for 2024/25.

Intended Outcome:

Report is noted.

Period Covered: 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025

Monitoring:

Chief Education Officer and Education Managers will review and evaluate the impact of the remaining Strategic Equity Fund.

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Equality, Diversity And Human Rights

Impacts & Implications

Age: No Impact

Disability: No Impact

Gender Reassignment: No Impact

Marriage & Civil Partnership: No Impact

Pregnancy & Maternity: No Impact

Race / Ethnicity: No Impact

Religion or Belief: No Impact

Sex: No Impact

Sexual Orientation: No Impact

Are any Human Rights not covered by the Equalities questions above impacted by this report?

No

Fairness & Poverty

Geographic Impacts & Implications

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Strathmartine: | Not Known |
| Lochee: | Not Known |
| Coldside: | Not Known |
| Maryfield: | Not Known |
| North East: | Not Known |
| East End: | Not Known |
| The Ferry: | Not Known |
| West End: | Not Known |

Household Group Impacts and Implications

Looked After Children & Care Leavers: No Impact

Carers: No Impact

Lone Parent Families: No Impact

Household Group Impacts and Implications

Single Female Households with Children: No Impact

Greater number of children and/or young children: No Impact

Pensioners - single / couple: No Impact

Unskilled workers or unemployed: No Impact

Serious & enduring mental health problems: No Impact

Homeless: No Impact

Drug and/or alcohol problems: No Impact

Offenders & Ex-offenders: No Impact

Socio Economic Disadvantage Impacts & Implications

Employment Status: No Impact

Education & Skills: Negative

With the reduction in the allocation of Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) to Dundee, there will be interventions that will either cease or be reduced in terms of their reach. Whilst this has been planned for – and plans for sustainability in place – there may still be an impact.

Plans are in place to minimise the impact of the reduction of funding. This includes the effective use of all Attainment Scotland Funds (e.g., working with Head Teachers to use SEF and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) together. Learning from evaluations of impact will also help inform interventions for 2024/25 and allow for better targeting of resources.

Income: No Impact

Caring Responsibilities (including Childcare): No Impact

Affordability and accessibility of services: No Impact

Fuel Poverty: No Impact

Cost of Living / Poverty Premium: No Impact

Connectivity / Internet Access: No Impact

Income / Benefit Advice / Income Maximisation: No Impact

Employment Opportunities: No Impact

Education: Negative

With the reduction in the allocation of Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) to Dundee, there will be interventions that will either cease or be reduced in terms of their reach. Whilst this has been planned for – and plans for sustainability in place – there may still be an impact.

Plans are in place to minimise the impact of the reduction of funding. This includes the effective use of all Attainment Scotland Funds (e.g., working with Head Teachers to use SEF and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) together. Learning from evaluations of impact will also help inform interventions for 2024/25 and allow for better targeting of resources.

Health: No Impact

Life Expectancy: No Impact

Mental Health: No Impact

Overweight / Obesity: No Impact

Child Health: No Impact

Neighbourhood Satisfaction: No Impact

Transport: No Impact

Environment

Climate Change Impacts

Mitigating Greenhouse Gases: No Impact

Adapting to the effects of climate change: No Impact

Resource Use Impacts

Energy efficiency & consumption: No Impact

Prevention, reduction, re-use, recovery or recycling of waste: No Impact

Sustainable Procurement: No Impact

Transport Impacts

Accessible transport provision: No Impact

Sustainable modes of transport: No Impact

Natural Environment Impacts

Air, land & water quality: No Impact

Biodiversity: No Impact

Open & green spaces: No Impact

Built Environment Impacts

Built Heritage: No Impact

Housing: No Impact

Is the proposal subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?

No further action is required as it does not qualify as a Plan, Programme or Strategy as defined by the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Corporate Risk

Corporate Risk Impacts

Political Reputational Risk: Not Known

It is not known how this report may be perceived by members of the public, media etc and as such the likelihood of political or reputational damage to the Council is not known.

Economic/Financial Sustainability / Security & Equipment: No Impact

Social Impact / Safety of Staff & Clients: No Impact

Technological / Business or Service Interruption: No Impact

Environmental: No Impact

Legal / Statutory Obligations: No Impact

Organisational / Staffing & Competence: No Impact

Corporate Risk Implications & Mitigation:

The risk implications associated with the subject matter of this report are "business as normal" risks and any increase to the level of risk to the Council is minimal. This is due either to the risk being inherently low or as a result of the risk being transferred in full or in part to another party on a fair and equitable basis. The subject matter is routine and has happened many times before without significant impact.