Assistant Director of Education
Candidate Pack





Are you ready to shape the future and lead the way for South Ayrshire's next generation?

south AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Deas
Making a Difference Every Day

south-ayrshire.gov.uk




MAYBOLE COMMUNITY CAMPUS

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Foreword

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Assistant Director of Education.

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Assistant Director of Education. This is a unique opportunity for an ambitious, experienced, and values-driven leader to take on the pivotal role in leading Educational Services in South Ayrshire. You will join our Corporate Leadership Team to continue our vision where everyone benefits from high quality education and lifelong learning. In recent years, we have invested significantly in our school estate, developing modern state of the art schools and early years centres for children and young people.

Of course, it is not just the learning environment that we are passionate about, we are committed to ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. This means closing the poverty related attainment gap while ensuring that we challenge every learner.

The role of Assistant Director of Education will provide the strategic direction and leadership to ensure we continue to drive standards in education for all children and young people, but more quickly for children and young people facing the greatest adversities.

The successful candidate will have the creativity and ability to work across a range of different services including Council, NHS, Police and Third Sector to ensure we meet the needs of children, young people and families in our communities.

South Ayrshire is a great place to live and work. We want to make it even better. This is more than a role – it is a platform to influence lives, shape systems, and leave a lasting legacy. If you are ready to make a difference where your leadership will drive educational excellence, equity and innovation, we want to hear from you.



Councillor Brian Connolly,
Leader of South Ayrshire Council



Living and Working in South Ayrshire

South Ayrshire has a wonderful environment that sets it apart from other parts of Scotland and makes it an extremely desirable place to live, work and visit. Situated in south west Scotland, on the beautiful Clyde Coast, the area is home to around 112,450. people. While the majority of residents live in the coastal towns of Troon, Prestwick and Ayr, around one third live in the smaller towns of Maybole and Girvan, or in rural areas stretching from Symington in the north to Ballantrae and Loch Ryan in the South.

South Ayrshire benefits from beautiful scenery, both coastal and rural, as well as a wealth of cultural heritage, castles and historic buildings. These include, Culzean Castle and County Park near Maybole and the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and Burns Cottage in Alloway.

The area is renowned for having some of the finest golf courses in the world, including the prestigious Royal Troon and Turnberry. Scotland's premier horse racing centre, Ayr Racecourse, is based in Ayr and offers more racing days than any other Scottish course, including the Scottish Grand National and Ayr Gold Cup.

Given our coastal location, there are also plenty of opportunities to pursue water sports. Troon's picturesque harbour attracts many visitors and yachting enthusiasts who can enjoy the first-class facilities of the Troon Yacht Haven, one of the Clyde's leading sailing centres.

With such an abundance of leisure activities, culture and history, it's not surprising that tourism is one of the biggest economic drivers in the area.

For residents, South Ayrshire offers high quality schools, a number of which have been nationally recognised for their innovative design. In addition, the area offers further and higher education opportunities at Ayrshire College and the University of the West of Scotland (UWS).

As well as first class education opportunities, South Ayrshire offers an excellent transport infrastructure with easy access to Glasgow by road and rail.

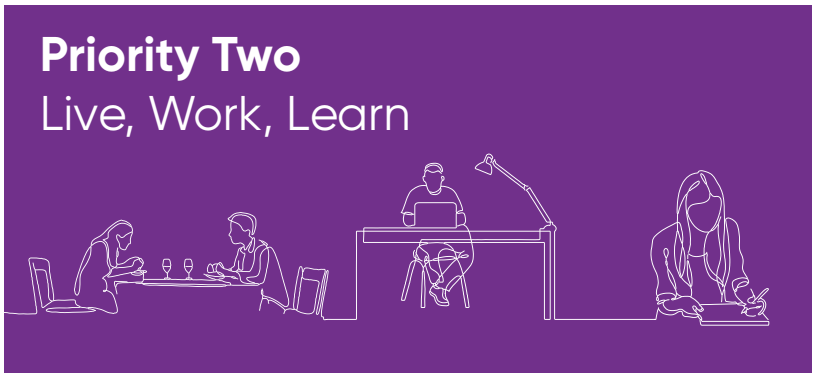
Add to this an abundance of high-quality housing, from modern to traditional, urban to rural and coastal, South Ayrshire is the ideal place to live and work.

Council Plan 2023 - 2028

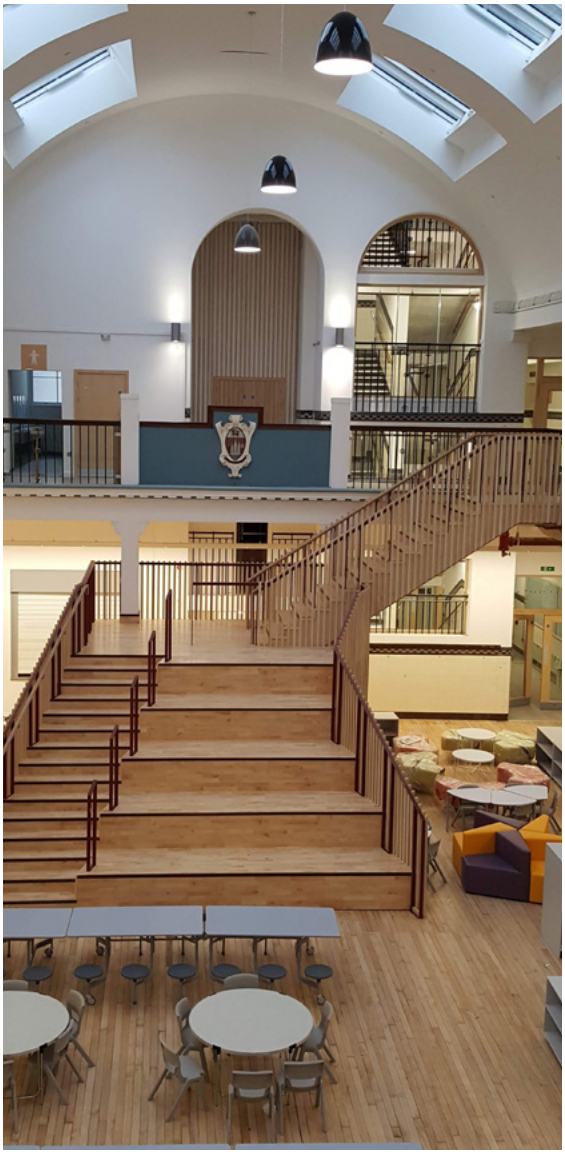
Our Purpose, Vision and Values

Council Plan Priorities and Outcomes









Enabling Services

South Ayrshire Council's Enabling Services provide the essential infrastructure, expertise, and operational support that underpin the delivery of high-quality public services across the authority. These services ensure that our frontline teams can operate efficiently, compliantly, and with a focus on continuous improvement. Enabling Services work collaboratively across services to ensure South Ayrshire Council remains resilient, responsive, and ready to meet the needs of our communities.

Our Council

South Ayrshire Council serves a population of 112,450 residents. The Council is the biggest employer in the area with around 6,000 employees who deliver a diverse range of services to the public.

The Elected Members, who represent the eight electoral wards, are an integral and vital part of the running of the Council. Elected Members have the authority for policy decision-making on all aspects of Local Government services for which South Ayrshire Council is responsible.

The current administration, is a partnership administration of Independents and Conservatives. The Council comprises 28 elected Members – 11 Independents, 5 Conservatives, 5 Labour, 5 SNP, 1 Alba and 1 Reform.

The Council is managed through the panel process. Elected Members attend panels throughout the Council's cycle of formal meetings. Through this process, Elected Members make decisions about the strategic direction of the Council as well as the direction of individual Council services. Elected Members also attend full meetings of South Ayrshire Council.

Our Cabinet meets as an Education Panel once every 8 weeks.

Population

112,450

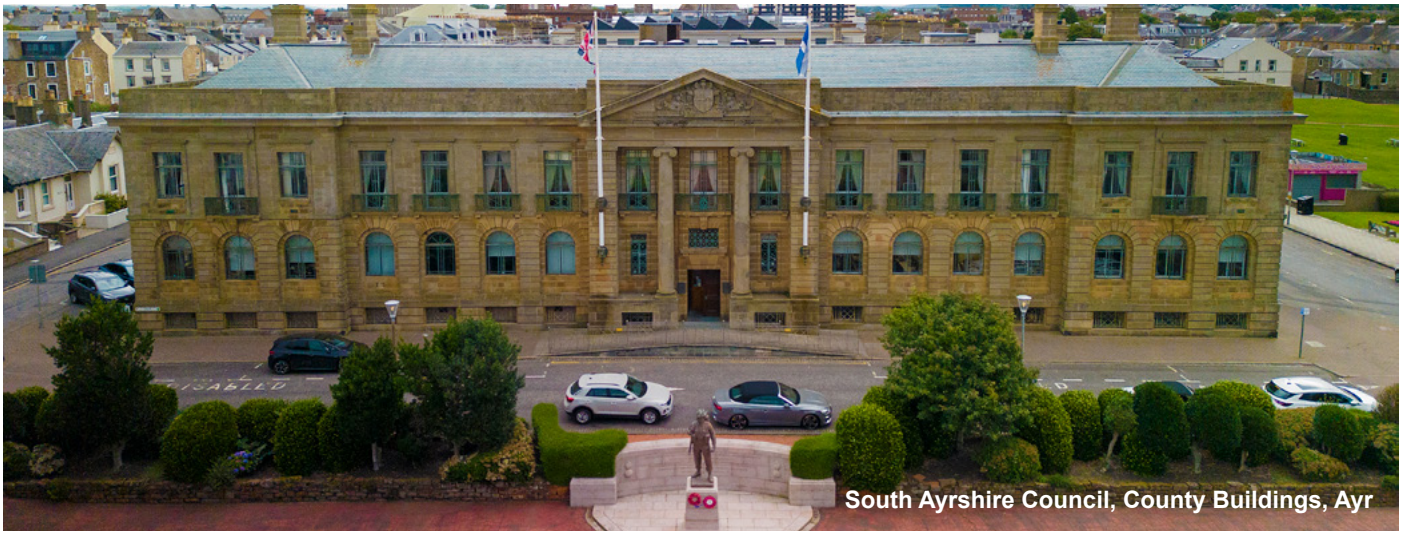
Elected members

INDEPENDENT **11**
CONSERVATIVE **5**
LABOUR **5**
SNP **5**
ALBA **1**
REFORM **1**



Staff

6000
(1 July 2025)


South Ayrshire Council, County Buildings, Ayr

Political Decision-Making Structure

Full Council (28) members)
Provost (Chair) Meets 8 week cycle

Cabinet
(Leader of the Council (Chair), Depute Leader of the Council (Vice Chair) and seven others)

Corporate and Strategic Portfolio	Health and Social Care Portfolio	Buildings, Housing and Environment Portfolio
Sport and Leisure Portfolio	Education Portfolio	Economic Development Portfolio
Finance, HR and ICT Portfolio	Tourism, Culture and Rural Affairs Portfolio	Developing South Ayrshire Portfolio

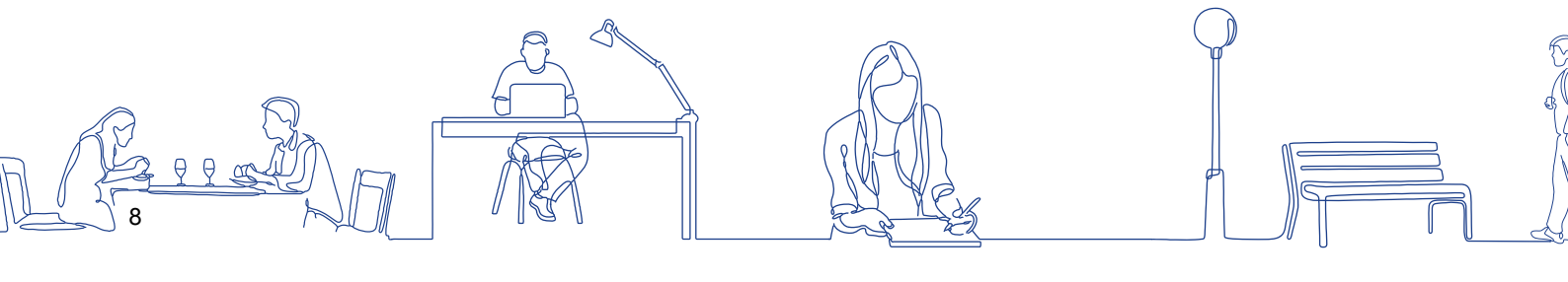
Portfolio Holders
Reflecting the Council's Strategic Vision, corporate aims and objectives set out in the Council Plan and Community Plan

Scrutiny Panel

- Audit and Governance Panel
- Service and Partnerships Performance Panel

Other Decision Making Panels

- Regulatory Panel (Planning and Licensing)
- Licensing Board
- Chief Officers Appointment/ Appraisal Panel
- Local Review Body
- Appeals Panel (various)



Our Corporate Leadership Team



Cleland Sneddon
Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)



Mark Inglis
Director - Health & Social Care Partnership



Scott Mulholland
Director of Education



Kevin Braidwood
Director of Housing, Operations & Development



Jane Bradley
Director of Communities & Transformation

Vacant Position
Head of Children's Health, Care & Justice Service



Stewart Marshall
Head of Community Health and Care Services

Vacant Position
Assistant Director Education



Chris Cox
Assistant Director Planning, Development & Regulation



Kenny Dalrymple
Assistant Director Housing & Operations



Tim Baulk
Chief Financial Officer



Catriona Caves
Chief Governance Officer



Kevin Anderson
Assistant Director Corporate Policy Strategy and Performance



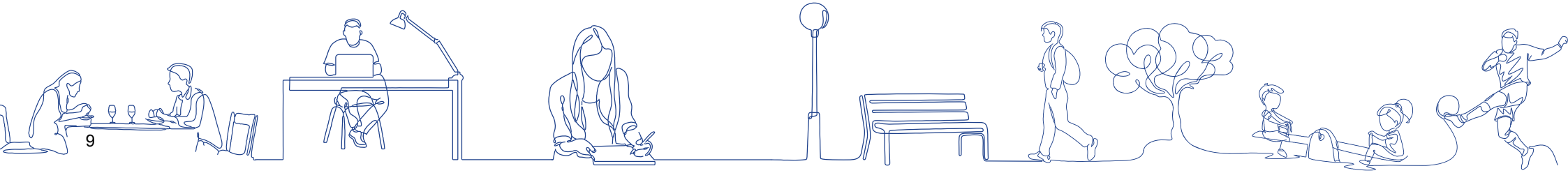
Wendy Wesson
Chief HR Officer



George Hunter
Assistant Director Communities



Louise Reid
Assistant Director Transformation



Our Budget

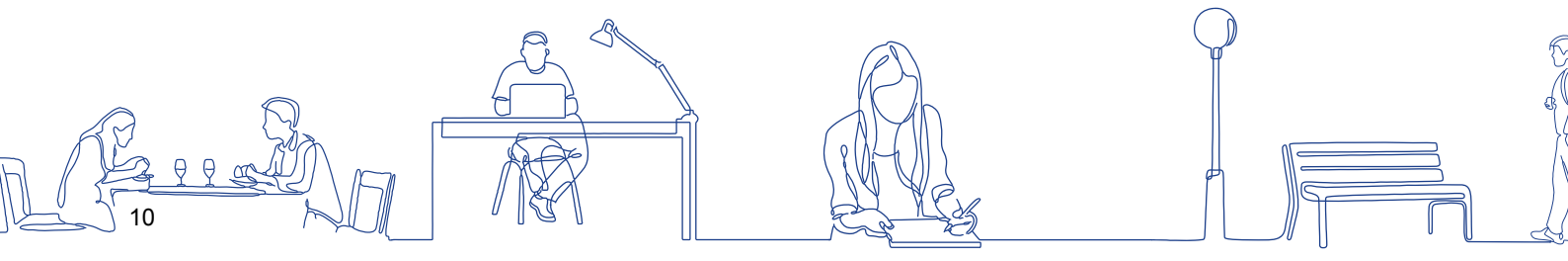
Directorate		2025/26 Total Net Expenditure
		£m
Chief Executive's Office		18.467
Education		159.273
Housing, Operations and Development		47.01
Communities and Transformation		23.049
Health and Social Care Partnership (funding delegated to South Ayrshire Integrated Joint Board		107.165
Miscellaneous Services		20.907
		375.871
	Financed by:	
	Government Grants	252.552
	Non-Domestic Rates	49.811
	Total Government support	**302.363**
	Funding required from Council Tax	**73.508**

General Services Capital

The Council plans to spend circa £344.5 million over the next twelve years on capital investment in its Education properties, Communities provison and other essential council assets, funded through a mixture of grants, borrowing and other contributions.

Housing Revenue Account

The Council also has approximately 8,300 social housing properties within it's Housing Revenue Account and plans to spend £38.770m in revenue in 2025-26, funded by housing rents. In addition the Council plans to spend circa £193m over the next five on capital investment in its housing stock, funded through a mixture of grants and borrowing.



Education Direcorate

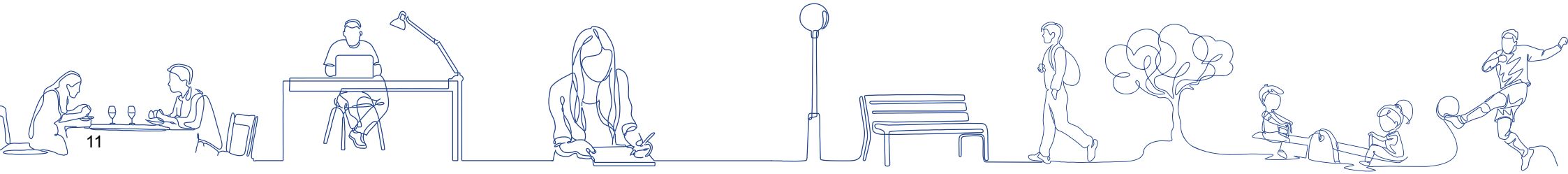
Leadership Team



Scott Mulholland
Director of Education

Vacant Position
Assistant Director
- Education

- Quality Improvement Manager
  Cluster x 2
  Marr/Ayr
- Quality Improvement Manager
  QMA Cluster
- Quality Improvement Manager
  Cluster x 2
  Belmont/Girvan
- Quality Improvement Manager
  Cluster x 2
  Carrick/Kyle
- Service Lead
  Education Support Services



Advertisement

Assistant Director of Education
Are you ready to shape the future and lead the way for South Ayrshire's next generation?

£105,966 per annum

The Assistant Director of Education plays a pivotal role in leading the strategic delivery of educational priorities across South Ayrshire. This leadership is focused on inspiring learners, supporting children and young people, transforming learning experiences, and strengthening collaborative partnerships.

South Ayrshire is home to approximately 15,000 children and young people across a diverse range of educational settings, including early years centres, specialist schools and bases, as well as primary and secondary schools.

South Ayrshire reflects the inclusive ethos of a comprehensive school, serving children and young people who are evenly distributed across all Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles. Our defining mission is to close the attainment gap while ensuring that every learner is stretched, challenged, and supported to achieve their full potential.

Our head teachers work in close partnership with a small but dedicated central team to advance this mission. We have been working collaboratively to explore What makes a school a learning organisation, with a shared focus on delivering consistently high-quality learning, teaching and assessment for every learner, in every setting.

South Ayrshire educational landscape comprises 8 secondary schools that collaborate effectively – particularly in delivering senior phase consortium arrangements in partnership with the South-West Educational Improvement Collaborative.

The region's 40 primary schools vary significantly in size, with enrolments ranging from fewer than 20 pupils to over 400.

Several smaller rural schools operate under shared headship arrangements to ensure strong leadership across communities.

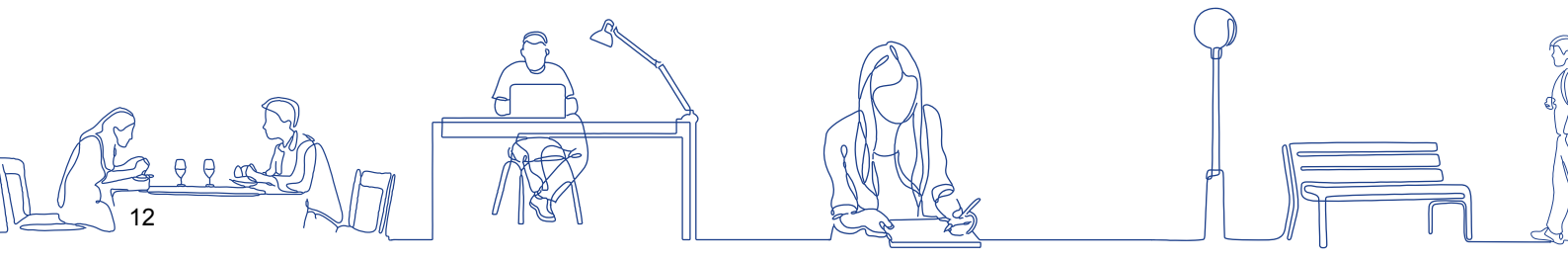
In addition to two dedicated special schools, mainstream schools host a number of specialist bases to provide tailored support. At the early years level, substantial investment in infrastructure continues to support the delivery of the 1140 hours entitlement, ensuring the flexibility parents and carers require. Alongside school-based early years classes, South Ayrshire operates four standalone early years centres and works with a number of funded providers to meet demand.

South Ayrshire's exceptional school leaver destination rates are a direct result of strong collaborative relationships between education services, the Council's Employability and Skills team, Skills Development Scotland and Ayrshire College.

Empowerment, collaborative partnership, and mutual respect between the central education team and schools are fundamental to South Ayrshire's ongoing progress and success. These values underpin a shared commitment to delivering excellence in education across the authority.

The Assistant Director of Education will provide strategic leadership for South Ayrshire's educations service, working in close collaboration with the Director of

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Education, central team and head teachers. This role also involves fostering

strong relationships with elected members and the corporate leadership team to ensure alignment with wider Council priorities.

South Ayrshire is a great place to live and work. We want to make it even better. This is more than a role – it is a platform to influence lives, shape systems, and leave a lasting legacy. If you are ready to make a difference where your leadership will drive educational excellence, equity and innovation, we want to hear from you.

You should be educated to degree level or equivalent appropriate professional qualification. Full registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and evidence of continuing professional development.

Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 this post is politically restricted. For an informal discussion about this opportunity, please contact Scott Mulholland, Director of Education on 01292 612504.

Closing date:	**7 December 2025**
Assessment Centre:	**18 December 2025**
Interview Date:	**19 December 2025**



Role Profile

Post Title	**Assistant Director of Education**
Reports to:	**Director of Education**
Grade	**Chief Officer SCP 33**

Job Purpose

As a member of the Educational Services Team, reporting directly to the Director of Education, you will make a major contribution to service development, driving forward service objectives by influencing, challenging and empowering others in pursuit of specific goals/ service improvements.

Take corporate responsibility for identified services within the Directorate. The specific areas of responsibility will be determined by the Council's priorities and may change from time to time but will include:

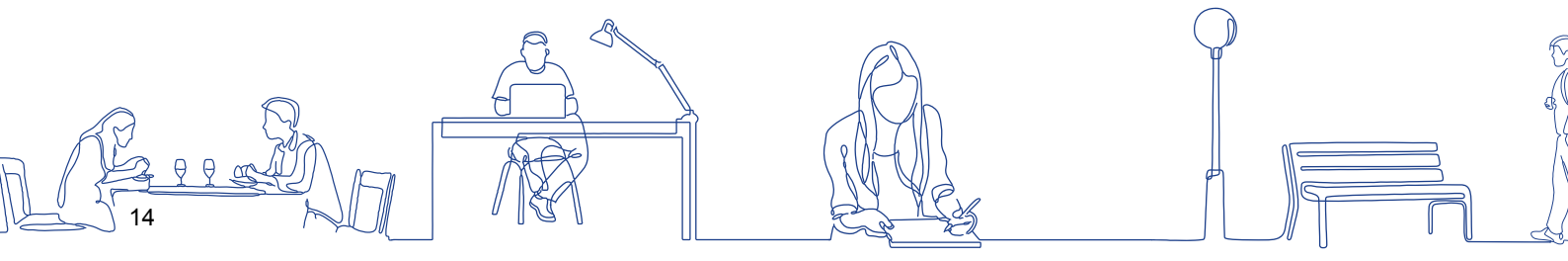
a) Ensuring efficient utilisation of resources, effective performance management and adherence to financial planning, monitoring and reporting arrangements;

b) Providing leadership, vision and direction and encouraging a positive organisational culture that has collaborative corporate working, continuous improvement, and the needs of citizens, customers, and communities at its heart;

c) Leading strategic plans and projects that drive transformational change by:
- promoting a positive organisational culture of empowerment, innovation and change;
- redesigning services to improve quality and efficiency; and
- establishing strong community networks and partnership that reduce poverty and disadvantage, provide targeted services for local people and make the most of local social and cultural economic opportunities.

d) Driving the partnership working and internal changes to service design and delivery necessary;

e) Developing and implementing strategies and processes that support and encourage Service Leads to drive forward significant improvement in Council services and make them more community responsive and customer focused.

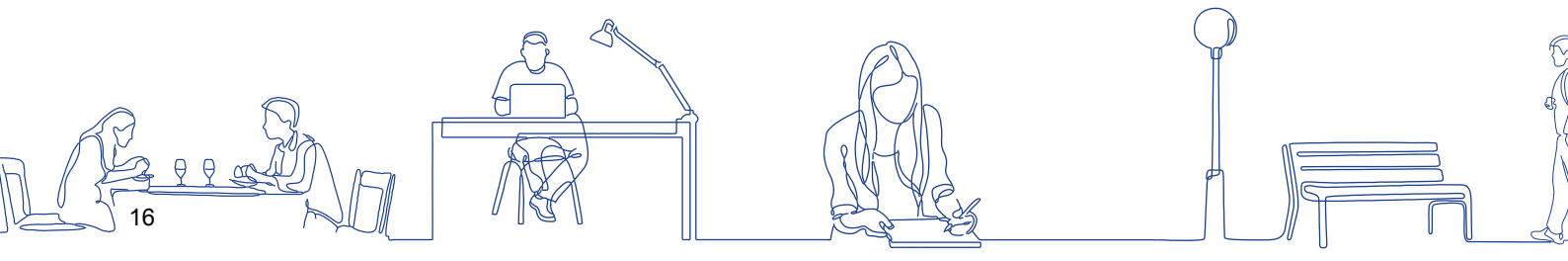


Principal Accountabilities

- Leading on the development and delivery of service excellence across schools and early years centres to achieve objectives within a defined geographical area of South Ayrshire.
- Contributing to the development of Educational Services by adopting a strategic approach including shared vision, inspirational leadership and strategic direction that will support the development of both individuals and the service.
- Driving forward strategic vision through communicating, leading, influencing and encouraging others to achieve success for the service and the Council.
- Leading on the strategic management and forward policy for own area of responsibility.
- Leading, developing, implementing and monitoring the impact of strategies and policy changes designed to improve the delivery of Educational Services.
- Leading service reform programmes and other projects, as required.
- Working cohesively and developing effective strategic partnership working with both internal and external stakeholders to achieve business objectives.
- Contributing to the development of the Educational Services Annual Service Plan and Budget through the Educational Directorate Team, ensuring team targets and key objectives are met.
- Responsibility for contingency business continuity planning.
- Identifying potential challenges that could impact on performance outcomes, taking the necessary action required, including developing business focussed strategies and innovative approaches.
- Representing Educational Services at Council and Cabinet as well as local and national working groups, as required.
- Communicating effectively with internal/external customers, including employees, peers, local community, service users, elected members, senior managers and partner organisations.
- Ensuring compliance with Council strategic objectives and standards.



Person Specification		
Category	**Essential**	**Method of Assessment**
Education/ Qualifications	• Educated to at least degree level in a relevant discipline. • Eligible for GTCS, SSSC registration • Evidence of continuing professional development.	Application Form
Knowledge, Skills and Competencies	• Strategic approach and vision to deliver service improvements. • Wide knowledge of government agencies and other partners relevant to Educational Services. • Seeking out opportunities to improve delivery of service, taking a collaborative approach to partnership working. • Excellent communication and influencing skills and the ability to manage relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders. • Ability to design and implement future development of services, generating options and understanding wider implications. Proactive in improving service delivery. • Ability to inspire and lead people and teams to contribute to change initiatives. • Make informed decisions based on research, information and experience. • Encouraging teams to work effectively together and to find new ways of delivering and developing services and to take the lead in implementation of change.	Application Form/ Interview (make sure one reference from Local Authority)
Other	Ability to: • Demonstrates commitment to Continuous Professional Development. • Excellent leadership skills particularly in an environment where managing change is constant	Application



Person Specification		
Category	**Essential**	**Method of Assessment**
Personal Attributes	Demonstrate: • Political sensitivity and the ability to operate effectively within the democratic process. • Self-discipline, with the ability to work to strict deadlines. • High standards of professional integrity. • Visible, innovative and perceptive leadership and a clear sense of direction. • The ability to work under pressure of budget and time constraints. • Decisive decision-making and the courage to make the right decisions and give the right advice to Elected Members. • Commercial acumen and the ability to identify, assess, manage and mitigate business risks.	Interview
Leadership Requirements	• ***Team Leadership and Collaborative Working***, with the ability to: • Clarify goals, objectives and responsibilities. • Provide a clear sense of direction; and build highly productive working relations. ***Communicating and Influencing***, with the ability to: • Present ideas and information in a manner most appropriate for ensuring understanding; and securing the commitment of the audience. ***Organisational Awareness and Problem Solving***, with the ability to: • Exercise effective judgment taking consideration of rigorous analysis, political awareness and cultural sensitivity. ***Quality and Delivery***, with the ability to: • Demonstrate resilience and energy in seeing a job through to conclusion, while maintaining standards across the process. ***Strategic Approach and Action***, with the ability to: • Link goals and actions to the achievement of strategic objectives. • Establish appropriate structures and processes to achieve objectives.	Application Form/ Interview

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