

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Education Officer****Committee: Educational Services Committee 19 March 2025**

Subject: Senior Phase Curriculum Update**1 Purpose**

- 1.1** This report updates members on the offer of courses and awards to young people through the Senior Phase curriculum for session 2025/26, and provides an update on progress with plans to ensure an equitable offer across all establishments.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Committee:
- Note the breadth of the offer to young people by our partner providers; and
 - Note progress of a common Senior Phase timetable across our all of our secondary schools.

3 Background

- 3.1** Our individual secondary schools each offer their own range of courses, based largely on the availability of staff working in their establishment. Courses range from National 2 to Advance Higher. The range of courses for session 2025/26 is presently in development, with schools undertaking their course option processes with Senior Phase students. The courses being offered in our schools will be reported to committee in June 2025.
- 3.2** For the past 16 years, our secondary schools have worked together to provide a 'Consortium' offer – where subjects are more specialist in their nature, or where uptake in an individual school is low, schools work together to provide the opportunity to study a subject. This has largely been at the upper end of the qualifications framework, making it possible for a number of young people to travel to a neighbouring school to participate in a Higher or Advanced Higher subject not available in their own school.
- 3.3** Once the school option choice processes have been completed, the range of consortium courses and the number of young people taking them will be reported to committee in June 2025.
- 3.4** Working with partners, we provide our young people with access to a wider range of qualifications and awards, such as college courses, Skills for Work, Foundation Apprenticeships and other bespoke courses offered in partnership

with employers, where young people spend part of their week in school, part in college and part of their time working directly with an employer.

- 3.5 We are working in partnership with West College Scotland (Clydebank and Paisley campus), Glasgow Clyde College (Anniesland), City of Glasgow College, New College Lanarkshire, Working4U and Strathclyde University. We are in discussion with University of the West of Scotland to explore the offer of their online provision for our young people.
- 3.6 The range of courses on offer with our partners for session 2025/26 is shown in **Appendix 1**. Courses offered through partners range from SCQF Level 4 up to Level 7, with 45 separate learner pathways running. For the first year ever, we are offering 5 courses online, partnering with e-Sgoil and New College Lanarkshire.

4 Main Issues

- 4.1 Our existing timetabling models align two columns across all of our schools. Whilst this brings huge benefit for our consortium and our partners, it presents a bottleneck of a huge number of subjects being presented only in these columns.
- 4.2 During this session we have been exploring a shared approach to timetabling in our Senior Phase. We have undertaken development work with Education Scotland, Aberdeen City Council, East Renfrewshire Council and North Lanarkshire Council to explore different approaches and models.
- 4.3 In our exploratory work, it has been possible to further expand the areas of commonality across our schools to bring into alignment a third column within existing timetabling models. This will allow for a wider offer of subjects across our schools, and we are presently working with timetablers in schools to ascertain the subjects being offered. We will be able to report this to committee in June 2025, once agreed.
- 4.4 Further work will take place over the coming session with our timetablers to explore greater alignment, or to determine if the alignment of three columns gives us the required flexibility. Early indications suggest that the alignment of three columns will give us a wide offer across the Senior Phase, without impacting on any schools individuality, or introducing constraints for their timetabling of the Broad General Education classes beyond the Senior Phase.

5 People Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct people implications arising from this report.

6 Financial & Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

7 Risk Analysis

7.1 Failure to deliver a high quality Senior Phase may have a direct impact on the delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to an economy that is strong and flourishing.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment

8.1 Screening and impact assessments will be carried out proposals to alter the delivery of the Senior Phase.

9 Consultation

9.1 Secondary Head Teachers, Legal and Finance were consulted in the development of this paper.

10 Strategic Assessment

10.1 An equitable, high quality Senior Phase contributes directly to the council's strategic priority of an economy that is strong and flourishing.

Chief Officer: Laura Mason
Service Area: Education
Date: 20 February 2025

Person to Contact: Andrew Brown andrew.brown@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1: Senior Phase Partnership Offer

Background Papers: none

Wards Affected: All

