1 SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress in taking forward shared Education and Social Services and to seek political endorsement of the proposed future development of the shared approach.

2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council agrees:-

2.1 to note the progress which has been made in shared Education and Social Services in the past year;

2.2 to note the paper which is appended to this report which summarises the discussions which took place at the recent stock-take exercise;

2.3 to reaffirm its commitment to delivering Education and Social Services jointly with Clackmannanshire Council;

2.4 the principle of integration of services below the management tiers in both Education and Social Services where this would contribute to the agreed objectives of the shared services initiative;

2.5 to instruct officers to bring forward for approval three year strategic delivery plans for Education and Social Services;

2.6 to note that proposals for deeper integration will be set out in the strategic delivery plans and that business cases will be prepared for Councils setting out specific recommendations for any related reconfiguration of services (including the creation of new posts or deletion of existing posts);

2.7 in principle, and within the context of retaining local governance, that policies should be harmonised and aligned where relevant and appropriate and where this will contribute to the agreed objectives of the shared service initiative;
2.8 in principle that practices, processes, systems and protocols should be harmonised and aligned where relevant and appropriate and where this will contribute to the agreed objectives of the shared services initiative; and

2.9 to instruct officers to bring forward for approval a strategic agreement for an ongoing shared services partnership which details a refreshed vision and principles, as well as a range of protocols as appropriate.

3 CONSIDERATIONS

Background

3.1 Council agreed in December 2010 to manage Education and Social Services jointly with Clackmannanshire Council within the terms of the Local Government Scotland Act 1973 and to appoint joint heads for Education and Social Services.

3.2 These appointments were made in March 2011, and a progress report was considered by the Council at its April meeting. A further report was considered by the Council on 30 June 2011, when the Scheme of Delegation in respect of jointly managed Education and Social Services was agreed. Most recently, Council noted a progress report at its meeting in December 2011.

3.3 Since that time, significant progress has been made in embedding shared management of the two services. Joint management structures are in place, service managers are co-located and the management teams are working effectively across both Council areas.

3.4 In the past three months, a taking-stock exercise has taken place, involving separate sessions with stakeholders as follows:-

- Chief Officers
- Service managers
- Trade Unions
- Leaders, Depute Leaders, Opposition Leaders, relevant Conveners/Spokespersons plus opposition equivalents
- All Elected Members

3.5 The purpose of the stock-take was to conduct an independently facilitated exercise to review progress made in taking forward shared education and Social Services, to determine the Councils’ commitment to shared services and to consider the future development of these services.

3.6 The remainder of this report summarises the main high level themes from the stock-take and sets out proposals for the future development of shared Education and Social Services. A fuller report of the stock-take sessions is attached as an Appendix to this report and reports of the individual events are available as background papers.
Considerations - Progress

3.7 Overall, stakeholders reported general satisfaction with progress in developing the two shared services and expressed a strong commitment to continuing with them and a keenness to realised potential future benefits.

3.8 At a strategic level, shared services were felt to have made considerable progress, though it was acknowledged there is still much to be addressed, and were felt to have:-

- improved outcomes
- achieved cost savings
- enabled a more strategic approach to service provision
- strengthened the position of Clackmannanshire and Stirling on a range of broader partnership matters (such as health and care integration).

3.9 In relation to the two services more specifically, the following progress was reported:-

**Education**

- improving outcomes (e.g. SQA results)
- Smooth transition to shared management with no disruption to frontline services
- No negative feedback from parents
- Efficiency savings with fewer managers (equivalent to 10.1FTE)
- Positive engagement and dialogue with the trade unions
- Working relationships have developed
- Sharing of skills, knowledge and experience
- Joint Head Teacher meetings embedded
- Joint professional development opportunities embedded
- Business support in place for management and teams
- Clearer understanding of shared service/service needs

**Social Services**

- Service standards have been maintained in difficult and changing circumstances
- Efficiency savings with fewer managers
- Building capacity through pooled expertise, experience and knowledge
- Staff strongly bought in to shared service concept and have a commitment to make it happen
- Collegiality developed within wider groups and establishment
- Specialist teams being managed jointly (e.g. children with disability; through care and after care)
- Integrated approach to adult support and protection
Considerations - Barriers to Progress

3.10 As with any significant organisational change, the development of shared services has not been without its challenges and articulation of barriers to progress was actively encouraged as part of the stock-take.

3.11 At strategic level, the main challenges were around:-

- balancing current service challenges with the progression of shared services
- providing clarity in relation to the intended depth and breath of integration and the future direction of shared services now the initial phase has been achieved
- ensuring there is no perception of ‘local loss’ in pursuit of overall gain and no move to the lowest common denominator in terms of service standards
- working within differences in basic operating procedures/systems across the two councils
- ensuring adequate political control of the two services
- resisting making shared services or their governance an industry in themselves

3.12 There were also a range of management and operational challenges (set out in the notes of the various sessions) which will be reviewed and taken forward at the appropriate levels.

3.13 Despite the challenges, there was universal recognition that these could be overcome by continuing to take the pragmatic political and managerial approaches to problem-solving which have been adopted to date. In addition, there was optimism that the strength of the relationships at a range of levels were robust and would enable appropriate solutions to be found so that the desired outcomes for service improvement can be achieved.

Considerations - Moving Forward

3.14 The overall view from the various stock-taking sessions is that the councils have made a positive start to shared Education and Social Services. To maximise the opportunities afforded for improved outcomes, however, there is a need to further develop shared approaches across both services.

3.15 Accordingly, it is proposed that the two Councils explicitly confirm that integration below the level of service management should be pursued where this would result in improved outcomes and more effective, efficient services. Proposals for such integration would be set out in strategic delivery plans for both services which would be submitted to the Councils for approval. Business cases would, subsequently, be prepared for Councils setting out specific recommendations for the reconfiguration of services (including the creation of new posts or deletion of existing posts). Councils would further be informed in regular reports of any associated redeployments.
3.16 It was recognised at the various sessions that such deeper integration could bring with it additional challenges around the alignment of policies, processes, structures and protocols and that opportunities for harmonisation should, thus, be pursued to improve consistency while still allowing for legitimate local variation.

3.17 As such, and always within the context of two independent Councils, there was a willingness to review political and corporate governance arrangements as well as service delivery models to establish whether there is scope for streamlining approaches to allow for improved outcomes.

3.18 Given the progress which has been made in embedding shared management across the two Councils in Education and Social Services, it is also proposed that a strategic partnership agreement should be drafted which sets out a refreshed vision and set of principles and includes a range of appropriate protocols, based on experience since 2010, to provide guidance for various scenarios which might arise.

Conclusions

3.19 Good progress has been made in sharing the management of Education and Social Services across Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils. This arrangement is unique in Scotland and it is no small achievement that the services have reached the stage they are at.

3.20 Now that the initial phase of this has largely been completed, both Councils need to consider the future direction and nature of the shared approach. It is anticipated that further gains can be found from developing the shared arrangements and the proposals in this report will provide a solid foundation for the Councils to embark on this process.

4 POLICY/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single Outcome Agreement</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity (age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation)</td>
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<td>Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)</td>
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<td>Land and Property or IT Systems</td>
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<td>Internal or External Consultations</td>
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Equality Impact Assessment

4.1 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Council’s Equalities Impact Assessment processes and were assessed as not relevant for the purposes of Equality Impact Assessment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

4.2 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Single Outcome Agreement

4.3 The desired outcomes are consistent with the priorities for ‘Serving Stirling’ and will also contribute to the National Outcomes Framework, e.g. National Outcome 15: Our public services are high quality, continuously improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs.

Resource Implications

4.4 Detailed work on the costs of changes to services provided by both Councils will be discussed with the Programme Board and Steering Group in the first instance.

The appropriate Portfolio Holder has been consulted on this report

Tick (✓) to confirm

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<th>The appropriate Portfolio Holder has been consulted on this report</th>
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The Chief Executive has been consulted on this report

| The Chief Executive has been consulted on this report | ✓ BJ |

5 BACKGROUND PAPERS


5.2 Stirling Council 1 December 2011 (SC770). Update on Shared Services.

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 - Taking Stock: Programme Board’s report on findings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Jack</td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
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<td>Elaine McPherson</td>
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**Approved by**

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**Date** 5 December 2012

**Service Reference**
APPENDIX 1

SHARED SERVICES
TAKING STOCK 2012
PROGRAMME BOARD’S REPORT ON FINDINGS
3rd December, 2012

Introduction

Taking Stock was instigated at the request of the Chief Executives of Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils to conduct a full and frank review of progress in the introduction of shared Education and Social Services across Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils. The review aimed to determine whether and how sharing services are meeting the expectations of both local authorities and how they might help meet future ambitions.

On 4 October 2012 the Shared Services Programme Board met and agreed the scope of the Taking Stock exercise. In addition the Board agreed that a series of consultation meetings be established, so as to ascertain the views of the Senior Managers involved in the management of the programme, Service Managers from Education, Social Services and Support Functions, Trades Unions, the Shared Services Steering Group and Elected Members from both Councils.

This report collates the independent views gathered during the process. While there were notable similarities in the feedback obtained from various groups, the intent of this report is to collect and present the evidence collected, not establish a policy position. It is anticipated that the views expressed will feed into future actions by both councils and inform future decisions and policy.
**Approach to Taking Stock**

The Taking Stock exercise sought to review the progress made to date in establishing and delivering services on a shared basis between Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils. Throughout the exercise, there was excellent engagement from all groups consulted and a wealth of feedback from a variety of sources. In particular feedback was sought from key stakeholder groups, according to the timetable set out below.

During the exercise, deliberately challenging questions were raised in order to assess progress against the original objectives of the shared services programme, and the degree to which changes have been embedded across both Authorities. In each group discussion, participants were asked to reflect on two broad themes:

**Theme 1: Commitment to sharing services.** This theme explored satisfaction with the nature and rate of progress against the original aims of the shared services initiative and sought to test the validity of those aims. Specific questions were raised in relation to commitment to shared services, the option for further integration and what might be needed to achieve this. In addition, discussion was encouraged on enablers and barriers to progress.

**Theme 2: Principles and methods of approach.** This theme explored the nature and effect of current political and managerial governance arrangements. Discussions explored possible governance models and considered the effects of their operation on future shared services arrangements. In addition, the degree of and approaches to engagement with various stakeholder groups were assessed.

Discussion was also encouraged in relation to specific challenges that were perceived by the various groups, for example in relation to barriers to progress, difficulties that affected the delivery of services and perceptions of the value of shared services more widely. Independent facilitation of these discussions was invaluable in drawing out the key themes.
Scope
At the planning meeting on 4th October, the scope of Taking Stock was agreed as follows:

“Conduct a full and frank review of progress in the introduction of shared Education and Social services in Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils.

Aim
Determine whether and how the sharing of services can meet the ambitions and expectations of both local authorities.

Objectives of the Review
- Determine progress towards the original aims and objectives of the shared services initiative (see below)
- Assess and, if necessary, revise and re-state the purpose, imperatives, benefits and delivery of shared services
- Confirm political and professional commitment to progressing with the shared services agenda
- Identify and propose actions to address changing circumstances and any barriers to progress
- Revise delivery plans, with objectives, clear accountabilities and realistic time-scales that will meet both councils’ aspirations for shared service.
- Prepare a concise statement of intent on the purpose, extent and benefits of shared services in Education and Social Services.”

Original Objectives of the Shared Services Programme
The purpose of the partnership is to improve services to our citizens and communities by closer joint working, while retaining the independence of each Council.

The original objectives of the programme were to:

a) Develop and implement shared models that maximise the effectiveness of service provision to meet the needs of both Councils’ populations.

b) Align support functions where appropriate to support shared service delivery models and structures, while continuing to support the wider functions of both councils.

c) Align policies, systems, processes and management structures between organisations, so far as is practical in the interests of efficient service delivery.

d) Maintain existing service improvement activity in each council, including responses to inspection regimes.
Findings

While the detailed feedback emerging from the taking stock exercise is set out in this report, the broad conclusions from the various stakeholder groups were:

- Good progress has been made in several areas, with measurable improvements against quantitative and qualitative measures.
- The original aims of effective and efficient delivery remain valid.
- A clear commitment to the principles of shared services was evident. The benefits of proceeding with shared services were assessed as outweighing the disadvantages and there was no desire abandon the initiative
- There was recognition that some refinements in the approach will be required for the initiative to maximise the achievement of its objectives.
- Clarity of the purpose, extent and depth of integration are needed to ensure that the parameters around service delivery models are clear and managers are empowered to operate within these parameters
- Strong leadership is needed to ensure that the services are not affected by unnecessary impediments to progress.
- There is a need to remove duplication of functions and activity. Clear management actions will be needed to address duplication of effort.
- Political and managerial governance arrangements should be reviewed to ensure both that effective and efficient support is provided for the services and that the services are operating within appropriate governance parameters. There is a need for those leading the programme and the services to communicate their desires, intentions and requirements clearly and at appropriate times.

Addressing the items set out in the scope of the exercise in turn, the findings of the Taking Stock process are set out below. These findings represent the range of views which were expressed across the various sessions and not a formally agreed position of either council. It is anticipated, however, that the views expressed will feed into future actions by both councils to develop their shared approach.
a) Determine progress towards the original aims and objectives of the Shared Services Programme

As set out in the report to both Councils in December 2010, the purpose of the partnership was to improve services to our citizens and communities by closer joint working, while retaining the independence of each Council.

The original objectives of the programme were to:

a) Develop and implement shared models that maximise the effectiveness of service provision to meet the needs of both Councils' populations.

b) Align support functions where appropriate to support shared service delivery models and structures, while continuing to support the wider functions of both councils.

c) Align policies, systems, processes and management structures between organisations, so far as is practical in the interests of efficient service delivery.

d) Maintain existing service improvement activity in each council, including responses to inspection regimes

Feedback indicated that the shared services initiative has made considerable progress towards the original objectives - though much remains to be addressed - and has many benefits, which include:

- Placing both Councils in a stronger position to reduce costs
- Providing a more strategic approach in dealing with issues
- Facilitating better informed decision-making
- Offering a stronger position for Clackmannanshire/Stirling on issues in partnership arrangements
- Continued strength, resilience and optimism of senior management (perhaps not a direct benefit of the initiative per se)
- Staff understanding of the agenda and their will to progress more quickly (again, not a direct benefit of the initiative, but good news nonetheless)

Overall, these points contributed to a general understanding that ‘It is now how we do things’ and the collective view that the more relevant questions to ask were in relation to ‘how’ not ‘why’.

Education

Education Service management integration has been completed and the co-located team are now focused on improving attainment and addressing wider issues for young people across Clackmannanshire and Stirling. Specific achievements include improved attainment, evidenced by improved exam results in both Council areas in the first academic session of the new arrangements; reduced management costs; a 10.1FTE decrease in the number of senior posts and associated financial savings for both Councils.

There has been a smooth transition with no disruption to front line service as a result of the shared management arrangements and no negative feedback from parents.
Social Services

Service standards have been maintained in difficult and changing circumstances and within significant staffing and funding restrictions. There have been some good examples of early, seamless integration in some areas, for instance in Criminal Justice. Likewise, specialist teams are being managed jointly in both Adults’ (Mental Health; Adult Support and Protection) and Children’s services (children with disability; Through Care and After Care and Residential Care).

Overall, the complexity of integration challenges are better understood by the service, with managers more able to identify (and address) problems and do things differently. This is allowing the delivery model to be refined, for example ensuring different approaches/solutions are found to meet different needs – not ‘one-size fits all’ solutions. It was recognised that the impact of changes has been buffered by the professionalism of staff.

Progress has been supported in no small measure by the willingness of staff to buy-in to the shared service concept and their commitment to make it happen. Put very simply, many just want to get on with it. The advantages of pooled expertise, experience and knowledge and collegiality developed within wider groups and establishment were reported by managers and acknowledged by other groups.

Support Functions

Both progress and challenges have been reported in relation to the arrangements of support functions.

Progress was reported in all areas of support, with particular reference to HR, Finance, IT, Administration and Legal Services. However it was recognised that many of these have been interim solutions that need to move to more permanent and sustainable arrangements. The ability to do so is in part dependent on the current and future development of the services taking into account the local (and wider corporate) governance and support requirements within each council.

Challenges were identified in relation to a number of external factors, e.g. public sector reform, and the financial context in which the Councils operate. These mean it is important that there is clear and explicit articulation of the priority and nature of activity to be taken forward in the shared services. One of the challenges faced to date has been the evolution of thinking on the respective delivery models and consequently their support needs requiring a degree of flexibility in proposals and solutions. Communication continues to be an issue - the greatest challenge being the communications associated with implementing decisions and embedding these within practice. More direct engagement of service managers in leading the development of proposals needs to be encouraged.
b) Confirm political and professional commitment to progressing with the shared services agenda

Chief Officers of both councils were in no doubt that deeper integration of the management and delivery of education and social services would achieve and maximise the outcomes set out for the shared service initiative.

Within staff groups, especially in Social Services, there is evidence of ongoing commitment to shared services across the board but morale is believed to be suffering because of a perceived slow speed of progress related to the lack of clarity around the assumed depth of service integration. Trades Unions were fully supportive of shared services – with the important proviso of increased engagement and consultation earlier in decision making processes.

The Steering Group reflected wider commitment to shared services in their comments that they remain ‘100% behind the initiative’, but recognised the need for greater clarity of purpose in order to better engage with staff and Trades Unions. Comments at the Steering Group discussion reflected the need for:

- all (politicians) to sign up to it and provide appropriate political direction
- acknowledgment that there may be costs – possibly spend to save
- current resource challenges across both councils needed to be addressed

This commitment is not without limits; specifically the Steering Group discussion noted a desire to avoid:

- the creation of a monster where the ‘the tail wags the dog’
- the creation of a single council
- the smaller council being ‘swallowed up’ by the larger council

Likewise, some Trades Unions noted particular concerns in relation to the deployment of staff between councils or the levelling down of terms of employment.

At the discussion with Elected Members from both Authorities, there was an expression of general satisfaction and continued commitment to Shared Services, noting that the outcomes (such as improved attainment) were more important than the specific vehicles for delivery. Members reflected on the need to be clear about benefits, but allow for evolution of services, so long as their appropriate involvement was maintained.

Overall, discussions indicated a general willingness to consider measures that would reduce the pressures on the leadership and administration of the services, and reflected that the two councils have more in common than they have differences. A willingness to work towards both complementary council policies (while allowing for legitimate variation) and to consider options for improving governance arrangements was noted. However, it was also clear that considerable value is associated with retaining accountability and local autonomy.

To address these points, cross-party engagement, commitment and support were regarded as essential by Members and officials alike.
c) The purpose, imperatives, benefits and delivery of shared services

Throughout *Taking Stock*, feedback from managers, Trades Unions, and executives endorsed the validity of the original principles behind sharing services. Fundamentally, the view that this was the right thing to do was evident at many levels, whether in terms of streamlining business processes to avoid duplication, share and develop professional practice, or to address wider service improvements.

After a wide-ranging discussion, the Chief Officers were unanimous in their belief that the original objectives remain attainable but that they would require honesty, resilience and persistence in dealing with a number of challenging issues which slow progress. Overall, their view was that the benefits of progressing with shared services far out-weighed the challenges presented and the consequences of abandoning the initiative. This view was supported in all of the consultation exercises, and while the option of extracting from shared services was widely examined, there was no evidence of a desire to do so.

Balancing current service challenges with the progression of shared services remains complex. In this regard, a number of points were noted:

- there is a risk of cross contamination of negative service issues (which are not specifically related to sharing services) affecting the perception of the shared service initiative
- Political perspectives/impacts of failure (and risk to reputations)
- the importance of working to highest, not lowest denominators, in terms of aligned service standards
- the need to avoid the actual or perceived dominance of one council over the other
- the need to have assurance about governance and corporate risk within each individual council

Collaborative working, not just within the two councils, but also with other public organisations, such as health and police authorities and Community Planning Partnerships, is essential. While integration with other agencies would demand that a number of difficult issues are addressed and resolved, it is considered critical to:

- Achieving the high quality of efficient, effective services and outcomes that councillors are seeking
- Optimising staff engagement and opportunity
- Optimising value for public sector funding of these services
- Ensuring capacity to address the scale of improvement agenda
d) Prepare a concise statement of intent on the purpose, extent and benefits of shared services in Education and Social Services.

Clarity of purpose, nature and extent

Most groups expressed a degree of confusion over the intended extent and nature of service integration. They also reflected that this had impeded progress, particularly in discussions with trade unions and in achieving flexibility of staff engagement across both authority areas.

A lack of clarity has led to perceptions of a hidden agenda. All groups recognised the value of addressing these perceptions, through for example, clear and credible communication. In particular, the Steering Group raised the need for strong political and managerial leadership moving forward.

Future Emphasis

A change of emphasis is needed to focus on delivery of and support for services, now that shared management is in place and now a given.

Better prioritisation is required: there is a need to address problem areas, and develop clearer understanding of dependencies between activities. In particular, there is a need to examine support functions and ensure they operate as an enabler not a barrier, and explore wider corporate capacity to accommodate change.

A unified approach is needed to ensure that aims can be met and the opportunities to divide opinion are removed. This mutually supportive approach would:

- Remove compartmentalisation
- Simplify and improve operational and support activity
- Assist in addressing complex issues
- Support the fundamental philosophy underlying integrated services

Service and support managers would need to identify outcomes and act accordingly. This may mean that a few complex areas become the priority and a task force approach is used to address them. However, structures and culture should not be the driver for activity.

To support this approach a clear statement of aims, political agreement of approach and a disciplined focus on activities in support of these are needed. The material presented here, and the recommendations made to the Councils form the first steps in addressing these requirements.
e) **Identify and propose actions to address changing circumstances and any barriers to progress**

**Priorities**

- Clear direction and strong leadership to drive deeper integration as appropriate
- Efficient, effective, synthesised governance (local, management, political)
- Reduced bureaucracy, increased delegation and empowerment and faster decision-making
- Efficient support for services
- Better communication

During *Taking Stock* discussions a number of frustrations and barriers to progress were raised. Broadly these related to the priorities set out above, as well as a number of specific issues, although it is recognised that these reflect a balance of symptoms and underlying causes. Perhaps unsurprisingly, not all groups shared the same views, for example the need for clarity of purpose and leadership was reflected differently between groups.

**Emerging Themes**

Overall, the groups consulted reflected a need to reduce the reactive nature of work and improve long term planning.

Service Managers in particular voiced a considerable degree of frustration at not being able to take ideas forward – in their view operational and resource integration was needed to address this.

During discussion with the Steering Group, it became clear that some of these issues could be addressed by:

- An articulated vision – i.e. an end game
- Statement of intent/written guidelines/protocols on
  - Extent of integration within social services and education
  - Infrastructure arrangements
  - Definition of lead authority and the implications of that
  - Formal commitment to shared services for political terms and an exit strategy if the shared approach is to cease

**Removing barriers to progress**

The activities identified in the Action Plan are intended to address the issues which emerged from the *Taking Stock* consultations.

- Establish a clear vision of the future and intended outcomes
- Eliminate frustrations – create process for logging frustrations and fast-tracking solutions
- Tackle those holding onto control (when it is no longer appropriate)
- More frankness of challenge is required
Leadership

Discussion in relation to leadership took place at a number of levels, most conspicuously in relation to the need for political endorsement of scale, depth and implications of service integration. Service managers (and others) reported that routine decisions were complicated by the shared services agenda, giving the example that what would have been managers’ decisions previously are now sometimes Chief Executives’ decisions. There was a desire for greater empowerment, which would coincide with clearer ownership of items identified in action plans.

Programme Board

Operational challenges relating to the effectiveness of the Programme Board were raised at the Trades Union consultation, where concerns were raised about pre-engagement/consultation on material coming before the Board..

There was a feeling that lip service was being paid to Trades Union involvement in the Board and that outward communication from the Board was poor; for example the cancellation of meetings at short notice and the timing of delivery of papers were concerns.

In terms of addressing the support provided to services and the duplication in elements of that support, the Chief Officers’ group discussed the need to consider external support to facilitate infrastructure engagement and deliver more effective infrastructure support.

With particular reference to the programme board, work was needed to

- clarify/define remit – strategic or operational?
- ensure appropriate feedback on papers
- address the lack of consistency of message that can cause confusion
- improve communications on expectations: what, who, when and how
- improve speed of decision-making and communication to avoid knock on delays/uncertainty

Communication

Effective communication is an essential element in pursuing the integration of services. The initiative was perceived to have progressed and be sufficiently embedded for services to stand on their own as Education and Social Services, rather than shared services.

Consideration could be given to reinforcing the services as jointly-managed by the two local authorities, presented as a single service entity with which staff can associate themselves. This would help to cut across some of the inherent Stirling – Clackmannanshire culture boundaries which are hindering progress

The final formal communication on the shared service initiative should follow Taking Stock, after which communication support should focus on supporting the operational needs of the two services.

Communication of the Taking Stock outcomes must be planned and effectively implemented to ensure maximum impact/engagement of elected members, management and staff. Clear, explicit communication was essential to re-assure and motivate stakeholders.
Realism was imperative in the complexity of the challenges of integrating social services more deeply and in setting the time-scales required to effect change. Each of the services, but particularly social services, should develop a delivery programme that identifies what needs to happen quickly, what will take time to address and what, if anything, needs to be uncoupled in the best interest of providing good front line services.

**Governance**

The Chief Officers believed that the current approach to shared services could be revised and strengthened to speed and facilitate deeper integration and maximise outcomes and benefits. Cross-party engagement could be pursued in order to explore and assess the options that might be available to support the services. This approach would also examine any knock-on effects on the management of the programme, for example in the role of the Programme Board and Steering Group.
f) Revise delivery plans, with objectives, clear accountabilities and realistic time-scales that will meet both councils’ aspirations for shared service.

In addressing the aims and objectives of the programme, four areas of activity emerged that would form the basis of the Action Plan for the programme over the coming months:

- Service needs: Develop strategic delivery plans for Education and Social Services for the next three years.
- Governance: review political and management governance arrangements, and bring forward any improved options for consideration.
- Delivery: Identify options for service improvement, including, where appropriate, harmonisation of policies and service standards to support equity of access.
- Ongoing arrangements: Examine how shared services proposals are assessed for inclusion within the scope of an ongoing shared services partnership.

The principles set out below are intended to inform the pursuit of these activities, and are intended to guide both discussions and behaviours. They are based in the clearly reported desire by all groups consulted during Taking Stock to provide services that are: effective (they achieve the intended result) and efficient (they do so with the least waste of effort or resource). Therefore they reflect the singular entity of individual services, and the general principle of ‘why have two when one will do’.

Principles of approach to supporting Social Care and Education:

- Mutual shared working across the two Authorities remains to our collective benefit so will be regarded as the default position in planning, shaping and commissioning activities in Education and Social Services. (Effective)
- Cross over between areas is needed to remove any unwarranted differences in access to services, and to ensure continuity of provision. (Effective)
- Compatibility of employment will be pursued to ensure that equivalent access to services can be provided as appropriate between council areas, and that continuity of service can be supported (Efficient)
- Consistency or compatibility of policy will be pursued unless there are specific local reasons otherwise (Effective, Efficient)
- Duplication of activities or effort will be removed wherever possible, e.g. in reporting service performance, replicating meetings between authority areas, or interacting with support services (Efficient)
- Open and honest engagement and communication will be pursued with all groups, to avoid the perception of hidden agendas and support the development of professional relationships based on mutual, sustained trust (Effective, Efficient)
- Corporate and political governance processes will be reviewed to ensure the needs of the services are met as effectively as possible within the context of retaining two independent councils (Effective)

The material below illustrates how the detailed findings from the Taking Stock consultations coalesce around these seven principles.
Mutual shared working across the two Authorities remains to our collective benefit so will be regarded as the default position in planning, shaping and commissioning activities in Education and Social Services. (Effective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES REPORTED</th>
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<th>ACTIONS / OUTCOMES REQUIRED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity in relation to intended depth and breath of integration.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good public perception of the services</td>
<td>Base increased efficiency based on good practice in Stirling, Clackmannanshire or elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need clarity on what our end goal is - what does shared services look like-what do we want from them?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Know what ultimate shared services will look/feel like</td>
<td>Pace of change – progress more quickly where integration is less complex, but take adequate time to plan and integrate the most difficult service element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity on the rationale for and intent in the total integration of social services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Refreshed key principles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the parameters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Access to bigger and better services than we could provide/afford on our own</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead authority approach best way forward?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improved outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit to deal with issues as they emerge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Money invested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perpetuating loyalty to originating council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>effectively(not about saving)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of direction?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Empowerment and accountability to deliver against aims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of ‘local loss’ in pursuit of overall gain and acceptance of change.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide transitional support/resource to invest in and make time to plan and implement change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualise goals – planning for a sense of place</td>
<td></td>
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Cross over between areas is needed to remove any unwarranted differences in access to services, and to ensure continuity of provision. (Effective)

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<tr>
<td>Equalisation on standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collective support for services; differences should not be visible to those receiving services</td>
<td>Equity of access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realism in protecting services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Different basic operating procedures/systems differ</td>
<td></td>
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Compatibility of employment will be pursued to ensure that equivalent access to services can be provided as appropriate between council areas, and that continuity of service can be supported (Efficient)

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<tr>
<td>Address difficult issues together (with open minds) e.g. implications of deeper integration; alignment of Terms and Conditions Disparities in salary scales etc Address the basics of integration, align structures, processes, protocols, loyalties, pay and conditions, recruitment Address different cultures; agree compatible remits/ways of working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Set same Terms and Conditions to facilitate integration? Pool budgets/staff to support full integration A protocol to protect the interests of any staff temporarily working in the other authority area (as above) A clear procedure for informing staff of both councils what is expected of them in emergencies / weather crises</td>
<td>Increase delegation and empowerment of managers and staff; increase autonomy to speed progress</td>
</tr>
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Consistency or compatibility of policy will be pursued unless there are specific local reasons otherwise (Effective, Efficient)

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<tr>
<td>Recognition and clarity that models will differ between services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarity on policy and political convergence</td>
<td>Complementary policies, common standards/criteria of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differing approaches to industrial relations between councils.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Align policies – but preserve independence</td>
<td>Clear, well-articulated aims that relate to Councils' desired outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current bi-partite and tri-partite meetings reasonably effective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agree compatible policies on e.g. charging/eligibility criteria (if different, clarity in</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>communication essential; elected members need to be fully aware of differences and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>implications</td>
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Duplication of activities or effort will be removed wherever possible, e.g. in reporting service performance, replicating meetings between authority areas, or interacting with support services (Efficient)

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<tr>
<td>Address ‘it can’t be done’ perceptions and ‘self-imposed’ barriers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A partnership agreement/protocol on how the Executive/managers are expected to engage with</td>
<td>Clarity on what is needed/expected from infrastructure support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking time to understand systems, processes, accessing learning – making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>trades unions (formally and informally)</td>
<td>A joint Stirling/Clacks Unison meeting with Social Services executives to share/discuss emerging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress slower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Efficiency in service delivery</td>
<td>agenda for 2013 and beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have appropriate IT across Stirling and Clacks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Determine what can be streamlined – e.g., business planning, performance reporting and</td>
<td>One HR team for social services (as in education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current structure leads to working in isolation – eg Care Inspectorate reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>timescales</td>
<td>Compatible reporting requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>held in strategic team not owned across the service</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delays due interdependent decisions/actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Added workload, pressure on resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duplication- reporting, reports, meetings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Different procurement/contract systems</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Two systems of business planning (e.g., double budget - governance meetings)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– and other processes</td>
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Open and honest engagement and communication will be pursued with all groups, to avoid the perception of hidden agendas and support the development of professional relationships based on mutual, sustained trust (Effective, Efficient)

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<tr>
<td>Clear vision has not been articulated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clearly articulated vision / terms of reference / process / end-game / outcomes in sharing services</td>
<td>Effective cascade communication process Understanding of end-goal and vision Better explanation of rationale for proposals or decisions Improved communication/engagement with councillors - increased understanding/transparency A channel/process for fast-tracking objections to actions/decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assurance there are no hidden agendas on further sharing of services (Are current initiatives pilots for more integration? TUs not necessarily opposed but want honesty and transparency from executives/councillors)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognise morale and frustrations among staff and managers ‘Lead authority’ issues (e.g. HR/Finance)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Any progress in sharing of services has not been promoted; no one knows whether or not shared services are working A mature, modern working relationship with executives / managers; a partnership based on trust and belief in one another Desire for inclusion during development of ideas, rather than after decisions had been made e.g. should Board require that proposals have been discussed before being brought forward. Clear, timely communication with Trades Unions and staff on Programme Board/significant management decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Need to refine communication to support operational decisions</td>
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Corporate and political governance processes will be reviewed to ensure the needs of the services are met as effectively as possible within the context of retaining two independent councils (Effective)

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<td>Need to reduce reactive nature of work and improve long term planning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Address political structure - no fiddling at edges</td>
<td>Full time commitment to making infrastructure work — devising protocols and leading culture change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two models/Councils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Implementation of decisions</td>
<td>Leadership by example is required (political/executive/management) — encourage individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing political/operational priorities absorbing resource and time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarify role of the Programme Board</td>
<td>contributions to change Joint political governance/joint engagement with special interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align 2/3 key themes for strategic planning within each area of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Embed arrangements for risk management</td>
<td>(eg school parent organisations) Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(must have political buy-in)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Project planning needs to improve</td>
<td>political/management scrutiny of progress with the shared services agenda Programme Board - Two way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure management and staff are better informed on political ambitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add experience in change management</td>
<td>flow of ideas needed. Need to spell out agenda / remit clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Decisions to be based on properly argued cases which balance various factors including</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Set realistic timescales for initiatives and tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>service need, corporate impact and governance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Open to considering ways of stream-lining governance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity on agreement/extend of integration; equity of service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint committees/working groups?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review role/agendas of Steering Group – more strategic, big issue discussions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political group discussions to ensure understanding/support of key parties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoid abortive/duplicate work by officers</td>
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