



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SERVICE UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING, POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Education Executive with an update on the Instrumental Music Service (IMS). A charge of £354 for instrumental music tuition was introduced in August 2018. An initial drop in student numbers was anticipated; but taster sessions undertaken in November 2018 attracted a significant new intake. This report provides an overview of IMS service provision, registered student numbers and financial projections for 2018/19 and 2019/20. With effective resource management it is anticipated that an instrumental music service can be sustained in all disciplines, with opportunity to participate in bands and ensembles, within approved council resources from financial year 2019/20.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Education Executive:

1. Notes the number of students receiving instrumental tuition and associated financial projections for 2018/19 and 2019/20;
2. Notes that with effective resource management, the IMS service can be continued within approved council resources for financial year 2019/20 onwards.
3. Agrees that a further IMS update will be reported to Education Executive in the autumn term and includes service development proposals to consider opportunity to provide more musical experiences.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on customers' needs, being honest, open and accountable, making best use of resources, working in partnership.
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The council is required to approve a balanced revenue budget for each financial year. Audit Scotland and CIPFA best practice guidance recommends medium term financial plans are prepared for at least five years in duration.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	No implications at this stage.
IV	Impact on performance and performance indicators	Ongoing government funding constraints will have implications for the council's budget and performance.

V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes. Local outcome –our children have the best start in life and ready to succeed.
VI	Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)	At the budget setting meeting of 13 February 2018, the council agreed a five year revenue budget strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23. The budget report highlighted an estimated budget gap of £65.329 million over the five years, and agreed budget reduction measures totalling £60.102 million, to assist with balancing the budget. Introduction of charging for the Instrumental Music Service is budgeted to generate income of £288,000 in financial year 2018/19, increasing to £493,000 in 2019/20.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Not applicable.
VIII	Other Consultations	Financial Management Unit and Corporate Transformational Change Programme Team.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Introduction

At the budget setting meeting of 13 February 2018, the council agreed a five year revenue budget strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23, incorporating a reduced provision for the Instrumental Music Service (IMS). Further detail of a reduced model of IMS provision was presented to Education Executive on 17 April 2018. At that meeting, officers were asked to undertake a family survey and pupil engagement exercise, prior to the Education Executive making a decision on a revised model of delivery. Following completion of the family survey, the Education Executive on 29 May 2018 approved the retention of IMS in its existing form, and introduction of an annual charge. It was recognised that introduction of charging would result in an initial reduction in student numbers. The charge of £354 was based on 1,393 pupils paying a full fee. The meeting on 29 May also agreed a scheme of concessions to be implemented, with an interim review to take place in December 2018 with the outcome to be reported to a future meeting of the Education Executive.

D.2 IMS Student Numbers

As at 20 December 2018, 1,325 students were registered for IMS. Total student numbers comprised 756 pupils continuing from 2017/18 and 569 new registrations. A four week taster session to promote the service was undertaken during November, which proved very popular, with over 800 students involved in the sessions. The comparator figures for December 2017 was 2,065 students participating in instrumental music.

At the beginning of November, 748 pupils had opted to continue with IMS under the new arrangements. An initial reduction in student numbers was anticipated following the introduction of charging. However, the actual drop in student numbers was significantly in excess of the 20% reduction originally predicted. Withdrawal from instrumental tuition was noted in families who were now required to pay a charge for the service and also in those who qualified for free tuition. All families leaving the IMS were provided with the opportunity to participate in an exit survey. Of the 172 responses received, 43.6% made specific reference to the introduction of a fee; the

remaining respondents quoted a variety of reasons.

The taster sessions in November proved very popular with over 800 students participating across the authority. Of the new students who have registered for IMS following the taster sessions, 15.8% qualify for low income eligibility as defined by Free School Meals. A number of students who initially withdrew from the service following the introduction of charging have now opted to return and continue with instrumental tuition. A school by school analysis, detailing the profile of IMS student numbers before charging, after charging and following taster sessions is provided in Appendix 1.

It is fully expected that through time student numbers will gradually increase. This is the general trend experienced following the introduction of any charge. Subject to capacity across individual disciplines, student numbers for 2019/20 is estimated to be around 1,412 pupils. This figure anticipates both further intake and natural drop-off at the end of the academic year. The relevant figures, split across disciplines, for 2018/19 and 2019/20, are detailed in the table below.

Discipline	August Students	December Students	2018/19 Students	2019/20 Projected	Dec 2017 Comparator	(%) Uptake
Percussion	71	27	98	97	190	51.1%
Brass	351	304	655	709	944	75.1%
Woodwind	167	115	282	298	416	71.6%
Strings	129	95	224	238	372	64.0%
Bagpipes	38	28	66	70	143	49.0%
Total	756	569	1325	1412	2065	68.4%

With regard to the profile of students participating in instrumental music, as at 20 December 2018, 68.1% of pupils were eligible for the full IMS charge, with a further 9.4% attracting an additional sibling discount. 22.5% of students receive free tuition; 10.7% qualify for low income eligibility criteria and 11.8% of students receive a relevant SQA discount.

The number of IMS students from low income families, measured by receipt of Free School Meals, has remained broadly unchanged between December 2017 and December 2018. Prior to charging, 10.6% of IMS students were in receipt of Free School Meals. Following the introduction of charging, 10.7% of students now qualify for low income eligibility criteria.

D.3 Changes to the Instrumental Music Service

The instrumental music service continues to provide instrumental music lessons to primary and secondary pupils; students are guaranteed a minimum of 30 lessons within an academic year. It also provides the opportunity for these pupils to play in bands and ensembles that take place throughout the year. However, given the reduction in student numbers, the service has been responsive to the change in student numbers.

West Lothian previously had 13 area bands and ensembles. As at December 2018, following mergers of senior and junior bands, it is likely that there will be eight bands:

- West Lothian Schools Wind Ensemble
- West Lothian Schools Concert Band
- West Lothian Schools Brass Band
- West Lothian Schools String Ensemble
- West Lothian Schools Folk Group
- West Lothian Schools Big Band
- West Lothian Schools Juvenile Pipe Band
- West Lothian Schools Novice Juvenile Pipe Band

There has also been a realignment of resources to more closely align staff capacity with student demand. As at April 2018 there was a budgeted establishment of 21.04 FTE within the IMS structure. Staffing has been reduced to 17.6 FTE as from January 2019 to ensure that the service remains affordable within approved council resources. The staff position includes a reduction in the central team, cessation of three fixed term contracts and non-filling of vacancies. In December 2017 the ratio was 98 students per 1 FTE; in 2019/20, the forecast ratio will be 68.4 students per 1 FTE.

D.4 Financial Projections

A financial forecast has been undertaken for both the current and next financial year. Projections have been based on 1,325 IMS pupils for 2018/19 and an estimated 1,412 students for 2019/20. The financial forecast for 2018/19 is based on the current number of students and associated level of income to be generated. In 2019/20, a natural drop-off in student numbers is anticipated at the end of the academic year, but a new cohort of students is also expected, which will positively influence income projections. Service expenditure takes into account known staffing changes during 2018/19 and the full year impact of such reductions in 2019/20. The tables below show the projected outturn for both the current and next financial year.

2018/19 Projected Outturn

	2018/19 Budget	2018/19 Projection	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Expenditure	1,039	967	(72)
Income	(319)	(191)	128
Net Expenditure	720	776	56

In 2018/19, there is a projected deficit of £56,000. A £128,000 income shortfall is partially offset by action taken to reduce expenditure. A reduction in staffing costs of £72,000 is expected. A central post remains unfilled. Three fixed term appointments were terminated in January 2019, where spare capacity existed within relevant disciplines.

2019/20 Projected Outturn

	2019/20 Budget	2019/20 Projection	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Expenditure	1,039	884	(155)
Income	(524)	(355)	169
Net Expenditure	515	529	14

In 2019/20, there is a projected deficit of £14,000. The full year impact of TYC savings will come into effect, with a further £205,000 to be applied to income targets. The projected outturn indicates an under recovery in income of £169,000; offset by staff savings of £155,000. Further options to consider early retirement or voluntary severance measures remain. Any uplift in the charge will be considered and determined by full council at the budget-setting meeting in February in accordance with the revenue budget strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23. It is considered that with effective resource management, the service can achieve a breakeven position in 2019/20.

As at 18 December 2018, £113,128 had been received through online student accounts. Parents and carers have been provided with an option to pay annually in advance or through 10 instalments through the online school payment system. Financial reports indicate that regular payment is being made, with only 29 accounts indicating no payment activity as at 18 December. These accounts are under review. Regular reminders are issued to individual account holders who are not up to date with payments.

D.5 Next Steps

The IMS provides instrumental music lessons to primary and secondary pupils; tuition is distinct and separate from the teaching of Music, delivered by teachers in a classroom setting, as part of the Curriculum of Excellence. It was recognised at the Education Executive on 29 May 2018 that the introduction of charging would impact on uptake. While the initial impact was greater than was first anticipated, the taster sessions have demonstrated that there is a continuing demand for instrumental music on a chargeable basis within West Lothian. It is encouraging that over 800 pupils participated in taster sessions during November 2018 and 569 new students registered.

As the service moves forward, it will continue to monitor uptake and be responsive to demand. Consideration will be given to capacity to grow the service and promote future uptake. Within the primary sector, any capacity within IMS will be utilised during 2018/19 to provide sessions for whole class groups. Opportunity will be sought to provide young people with a musical experience in areas of relative deprivation, particularly where there has been limited uptake, or a significant reduction in student numbers. All secondary school pupils will continue to have the opportunity to learn an instrument within the Curriculum for Excellence.

The service continues to be responsive to student demand following the introduction of charging; it is still relatively early in the process to accurately project future student numbers. However the service is committed to providing as many pupils as possible with a musical experience, within existing resources. It is encouraging that many pupils participated in the November taster sessions and the current numbers strongly suggest that there is a sustainable model of service delivery for the instrumental music service. A further report on the service will be scheduled for a future meeting of the Education Executive.

E CONCLUSION

At the Education Executive meeting of 29 May 2018 an annual charge of £354 for instrumental tuition budget was agreed for instrumental tuition. While it is difficult to accurately project future numbers so early in the process, it is clearly demonstrable that there is a demand for continuation of instrumental music on a chargeable basis.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Revenue Budget 2018/19 -2022/23, Report to West Lothian Council 13 February 2018.

TYC - Instrumental Music Service, Report to Education Executive 17 April 2018.

TYC - Instrumental Music Service - Report to Education Executive 29 May 2018.

Appendices/Attachments: One

Appendix 1 – School Analysis of IMS Uptake

Contact Person: zelia.hope@westlothian.gov.uk – Tel No 01506 281297

James Cameron

Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)

15 January 2019