



Education Authority

Strategic Plan 2017-2027

Summary of Consultation

June 2017

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Acknowledgement

The Education Authority would like to acknowledge those people who took part in this consultation. Their valued and constructive thoughts and suggestions on this draft Strategic Plan have helped us to further develop and finalise the Plan in a way that reflects the views of the Authority's valued stakeholders including our schools, our staff, our partners, parents and young people.

Executive Summary

In April 2017, the Education Authority (EA) published its draft Strategic Plan for public Consultation. This high level Plan sets out what EA will do over the next decade through its Strategic Priorities, to achieve key goals, deliver consistently high-quality services to the community across the entire region and produce positive outcomes for all children and young people.

It is rooted in the wider context of the NI Executive's proposed new Programme for Government (PfG), which is outcomes-based and recognises the need to work across boundaries, organisations, groups and communities for the common good. The Strategic Plan is supported by a three-year Corporate Plan and Annual Business plans. These plans will enable EA to incorporate new priorities and respond to new challenges as they arise.

The Strategic Plan also contains the Vision, Mission and a set of Values that have been developed for the EA, which are significant for the success of our organisation.

This consultation exercise opened on 3 April 2017 and closed on 30 May 2017. The aim of the consultation was to invite comment on the draft Strategic Plan. The draft Plan and the consultation documentation were hosted on the EA website; information was sent to all Section 75 Equality Consultees and to all schools and key stakeholders and partners throughout Northern Ireland. Information about the consultation was also posted on social media via twitter using the hashtag #EAYoursay

One hundred and thirty-three responses were received to this consultation. One hundred and thirteen via the on-line survey and twenty-one in e-mail format. In total, seventy-three respondents used the consultation to make comment about the draft Strategic Plan and these comments made have been represented in this Summary Report.

There was agreement from the majority of those who responded that the Vision, Mission and Values and key Strategic Priorities in the draft Plan were appropriate for EA. A significant number of comments were received from the general public, parents/guardians

and from staff, who consider that the Vision – *‘to give our children and young people the best start in life’* is too narrow in its focus and should be more aspirational. Staff who responded welcomed the Values as outlined in the draft Plan and a small number considered that there could be challenges for the EA to embed these Values throughout the organisation. A few respondents made suggestions for inclusion in respect of the Values.

Positive and constructive feedback was received from consultees about the Strategic Priorities presented in the Plan, which they considered will provide an effective framework for strategic, corporate and business planning across the organisation.

A number of respondents considered that the Strategic Plan contains limited detail around how the Strategic Priorities will be achieved. Other respondents recognised that the Plan is a broad, high-level direction-of-travel document which contains visionary and enabling concepts and acknowledged the policy parameters underpinning it.

A number of comments and suggestions were made which highlighted inaccuracies and omissions concerning the information provided on the informatics diagram included in the draft; references to the Youth Council Northern Ireland (YCNI); Student Finance; C2k; and to Centre of Procurement Expertise (COPE). Clarification was also sought around references to EA’s new duties in respect of Shared Education and the Community use of Schools.

EA is encouraged by the responses received about the draft Strategic Plan. The Authority recognises the issues highlighted by some respondents and will endeavour to take account of these in the final version of the Plan.

Section 1: Introduction

In autumn 2016, the Education Authority (EA) commenced work to develop its first Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2027. The development of this Plan supports EA's journey of service change and transformation; its establishment as a single regional organisation and to determine a vision, a mission and values which outline what we want to do; why we exist and the behaviours which will guide how we work. This activity has been important to help create a unity of purpose for all our stakeholders in delivering a strong, resilient, world-class education system for Northern Ireland.

EA's Strategic Plan sets out a framework for its activities that will guide it through this period of significant change. The plan outlines five EA key Strategic Priorities and how the organisation will achieve key outcomes and its core business objectives in both the short term, via the 3-year Corporate Plan and long term through to 2027. The plan also relates to the emerging Programme for Government (PfG), Department of Education's (DE) corporate goals and links to the annual corporate business planning process throughout the organisation.

A range of external factors have been considered in the development of the Plan. These include: legislative, technological and societal challenges; prevailing policies and practices; bridging the attainment gap; demographic trends; consideration of the existing education infrastructure; the current political and financial context and the impact of the ongoing EA transition and transformation processes. Following an extensive period of engagement with our Board Members; School Principals; Young People; our Employees and wider Education Partners, a draft Strategic Plan has been developed.

EA considers that the Strategic Plan will be crucial in ensuring that the challenges facing education, and the public sector in general, are addressed in a way which enables EA to continue to provide quality services whilst shaping the future of education in Northern Ireland.

This draft Strategic Plan outlines our vision for the future – **‘To give our children and young people the best start in life’**, a mission statement that identifies why we exist – **‘To provide a high quality education for every child’**, a set of values which will guide our behaviours - **Openness, Respect, Reflection, Responsibility, Excellence, Equality** and key Strategic Priorities which will underpin all our activities –

L	Meeting the LEARNING needs of our children and young people
E	Providing EXCELLENT education support services
A	Developing ALL OUR PEOPLE to carry out their jobs successfully
R	Managing our RESOURCES effectively and efficiently
N	NURTURING LEADERSHIP across the Education Authority to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment

EA considers that these key strategic priorities will:

- promote child centred education;
- define excellence;
- create an agreed future vision for EA which takes account of, and plans for, external factors;
- assist in the transformation from the current position to the future vision;
- help drive cultural change;
- enable strategy to be cascaded throughout the organisation down to individual level;
- link corporate priorities to finance and resources;
- assist EA in moving towards a new regional structure;
- take account of developments within Shared Education, Community Planning, Area Planning and School Improvement;
- acknowledge the needs of stakeholders;
- be accessible, user friendly, and meet the needs of Board Members, employees, and schools;
- align with the plans and strategies of stakeholders; and
- facilitate delivery and reporting on emerging Programme for Government outcomes, indicators and measures.

At its meeting on 30 March 2017 the EA Board agreed to an eight-week public consultation on the draft Strategic Plan. This consultation exercise commenced on **Monday 3 April 2017** and closed on **Tuesday 30 May 2017**.

Section 2: Methodology

Engagement

In developing this Strategic Plan EA carried out extensive engagement in the autumn of 2016 with key stakeholders, education partners, school leaders, staff and young people, to encourage participation at the earliest stages in its development.

This engagement ensured that relationships and partnerships were further enhanced to enable EA partners to have opportunities to influence the process. Examples of the engagement which took place included: engagement with Board members; workshops with over one hundred School Leaders, with Education Partners such as CCMS; CSSC; CnaG; GMB; Libraries NI; CCEA; NICIE; DENI, Trade Unions both teaching and non-teaching; young people representing the Youth Service and over one hundred employees representative of all levels and grades throughout the organisation.

As a result of this extensive engagement, a draft Strategic Plan was developed for consultation.

Consultation

EA acknowledges that:

“Effective consultation is a key part of the policy-making process. People’s views can help shape policy developments and set the agenda for better public services.”
(Code of Practice on Consultation, 2004)

EA is committed to consulting with and engaging local people in the planning and delivery of all services. The strategy adopted by EA for this consultation endeavoured to enable those who have an interest in education in Northern Ireland, to comment about the draft Strategic Plan, thus encouraging user involvement in the decision-making process.

Throughout the process, EA has attempted, to achieve a meaningful engagement with all stakeholders, having due regard for its Section 75 equality obligations.

The consultation process included:

1. A range of consultation documents published on the EA web-site at www.eani.org.uk
 - A copy of the draft Strategic Plan;
 - A link to the on-line Questionnaire; (**Appendix 1**)
 - Information about how to respond/make comment about the draft Plan;
 - A short video message from the Chair – Ms Sharon O’Connor launching the consultation exercise; and
 - A copy of the S75 Preliminary Equality Screening.
2. Communication with Equality Consultees by e-mail, via the Regional Equality Unit and at the May meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum;
3. Communication with all schools via e-mail;
4. Issue of a press release to all media locations;
5. Communication to all education partners and key stakeholders;
6. Information published via the C2k network;
7. Communication with all staff via an e-mail alert, link to the EA Intranet and via a short video message from the Chair – Ms Sharon O’Connor launching the consultation exercise;
8. Information published via social media – Twitter, using the hashtag #EAYoursay.

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary analysis of responses to this 8-week consultation.

Consultation Responses

The consultation process made use of an on-line survey that included a questionnaire with ten questions (**Appendix 1**). One hundred and thirteen responses to this on-line survey were received. In addition, twenty-one submissions from key education partners, equality consultees, a Political Party and Boards of Governors, were received via e-mail.

Table 1: Detail of how responses were received:

Method	Number	Percentage of Total
Survey (on-line)	113	84
Submission document (e-mail)	21	16
Total	134	100%

Table 2: The number and categories of respondents to the on-line survey:

Respondent Category	Number	Percentage of Total
Parent/Guardian	30	27
Young Person	1	1
Principal	18	16
Member of Staff	33	29
Education/Sectoral Support	3	3
General Public	10	9
Board of Governors	5	4
Other	13	11
Total	113	100%

Table 3: The number and categories of responses received via email:

Respondent Category	Number	Percentage of Total
Board of Governors	4	19
Education/Sectoral Support	9	43
Political Representative	1	5
Other	7	33
Total	21	100%

Three submissions were received after the consultation closed at 12.00 noon on 30 May and have not been included.

The responses received during the period of consultation provided a valuable insight into how respondents view the draft Strategic Plan. EA would like to thank respondents for taking the time to share their views.

Survey – analysis of quantitative data

The consultation response documentation was designed to offer respondents the opportunity to offer views on the content of the draft Strategic Plan. In addition, the survey included specific questions in a short questionnaire that would facilitate quantitative analysis of respondent’s views.

Table 4: Respondents were asked if:

1. The Vision ‘To give our children and young people the best start in life’ is appropriate?
2. The Mission ‘To provide a high quality education for every child’ outlines why the Education Authority exists?
3. The Values will guide the way the Education Authority should work and develop as an organisation?
4. There is agreement with the key Strategic Priority ‘Meeting the Learning needs of our children and young people’?
5. There is agreement with the key Strategic Priority ‘Providing Excellent education support services’?
6. There is agreement with the key Strategic Priority ‘Developing All Our People to carry out their jobs successfully’?
7. There is agreement with the key Strategic Priority ‘Managing our Resources effectively and efficiently’?
8. There is agreement with the key Strategic Priority ‘Nurturing Leadership across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment’?
9. There is agreement with the Outcomes as listed on Page 15 of the Strategic Plan?
10. There is agreement that the Strategic Plan provides a framework for the work of the EA as it seeks to improve outcomes for Children and Young People?

The quantitative analysis is based on those respondents who completed the questionnaire. The results indicated that a majority of those who responded in this way were positive about the statements relating to:

- the Vision (85% agree/uncertain);
- the Mission (96% agree/uncertain);
- the Values (88% agree/uncertain);
- the Key Strategic Priorities (average 93% agree/uncertain);
- the Outcomes (90% agree/uncertain) and
- that the Strategic Plan provides a framework for the work of the EA (85% agree/uncertain).

Full details are included in **Appendix 2**.

Analysis of qualitative responses

Qualitative findings reflect the views of the fifty two comments received via the on-line questionnaire and the twenty-one submissions received by e-mail. These comments and submissions received have been collated and summarised for each category of respondent and represent the findings of this consultation.

Section 3: Responses to Consultation

Respondent Categories

3.1. Responses from Parents/Guardians (10 comments)

A small number of parents who responded indicated consensus with the Mission, Values and Strategic Priorities outlined in the draft Strategic Plan. These parents did however, consider that the Vision – ‘to give our Children and Young People the best start in life’ while laudable, was narrow in its focus on early year’s provision as opposed to the latter stages in the lives of children.

Parents/Guardians commented on a range of issues. For example, a small number expressed the view that provision for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) should be referenced within the Plan, and that more information regarding the curriculum would be welcome.

EA should, it was suggested, encourage Integrated Education as a desirable model for all children and indicated that ‘a learning environment that is non-sectarian’ should be added as a desired outcome.

Some respondents expressed the view that it was disappointing that there is insufficient support and resources to address consistency of SEN support, bullying, transport and school meals issues within the Education Sector and would welcome more information in the plan as to how the EA plans to address these issues.

Parents of children with SEN Statements commented that they would appreciate further details on nurturing those children's individual educational needs. Also, details of mandatory training identified for all teaching staff who work with non-typical children, i.e. those on the autistic spectrum.

It was observed by a small number that the Strategic Plan contained limited detail around how the priorities would be achieved and that information regarding action/business plans, proposed measures and success factors should be provided.

3.2 Responses from Young People (0 comments)

The young person who completed the on-line survey did not make any additional comments.

3.3 Responses from School Principals (8 comments)

A significant majority of School Principals who responded to the consultation agreed that the draft plan was a 'comprehensive, understandable' document containing a Vision, Mission, Values and Priority areas that would be laudable for any education body. This group expressed the view however, that the 'outcomes' could be viewed as a 'wish list' especially due to depleted services to schools and lack of available funding.

Respondents used this consultation to express frustration about a number of issues. These included: autonomies around decision-making impacting the schools' estate, procurement; inadequate response times to requests from Schools; the lack of support and guidance and the escalation of Trade Union action on School Improvement. Comments were also made about the requirement for funding in support of school libraries and the need for a physical corporate presence for EA in the west of the Province.

Some respondents from this category, considered that there is an absence of clear specific targets outlining 'how' EA will achieve its strategic priorities and its 3-year Corporate Plan objectives, and how success will be measured as well as a clear indicative timeframe against which progress will be planned.

Comments were also received referencing the outcome – ‘a rights based culture for children and young people’. It was suggested that this should be more balanced and amended to include ‘a rights and responsibility based culture’.

It was observed that the phrase ‘an organisation where people want to work’ is unusual and suggested that it should be amended to read ‘A caring employer, with regular staff development opportunities’.

These respondents also expressed the view that the first strategic priority ‘meeting the learning needs of children and young people’ is too narrow and should apply to the lifelong learning of teachers as well as children. They suggested that for EA to support high quality learning experiences, they must ensure high quality teaching experiences. They also considered that they required high quality support on the key areas of learning, teaching and early intervention and support for children with significant, complex and challenging needs.

3.4 Responses from Staff (19 comments)

A range of responses were received from teachers, support staff and from Youth Service staff.

A majority of respondents from this category welcomed the fact that a Strategic Plan has been developed, that it is a positive development with ‘ideal’ priority areas and a focus on developing those who work within EA. It was emphasised that the next phase of the process of putting the plan and values into action, was crucial.

Concerns were highlighted in relation to limited staff resources to carry out essential work to achieve the desired outcomes outlined in the Plan. This included concerns around resources in support of continuing professional development and general staff training opportunities.

Staff from the Youth Service who responded, welcomed the production of a 'first class' strategic plan on paper, but considered that their service has been 'glossed over' in the Plan.

With reference to the Vision. This respondent group reiterated that the Vision 'to *give our children and young people the best start in life*' - is too narrow and should not just focus on giving children the best start in life. Consideration, they indicated, should be given to *all* the services EA provides for *all* stakeholders at various stages in their life and not just at the early stages. It was suggested that the Vision should be more aspirational and indicate EA's desire to support children and young people to reach their full potential.

Some of the respondents highlighted that there should be more detail of Early Years provision in the Plan and expressed the view that there was a lack of information regarding targets and timelines.

This respondent group also highlighted that in welcoming the Values outlined in the Plan, they recognised that there may be challenges for EA to fully embed them across the organisation.

Other respondents from this category indicated delight that the Plan has a suite of values at its core and are reassured that the Strategic Plan has not been presented as a business plan. They contend that while acknowledging and respecting the financial pressures affecting Education, the focus of EA should be children and young people.

Succession planning should, they considered, be promoted and managed across the organisation, to make best use of a very talented workforce, and enable staff to be able to apply for promotion opportunities within EA.

It was highlighted that consideration should be given to including a reference that ‘that EA has a role in lobbying and challenging government priorities to ensure that the educational and social needs of our children and young people are met’.

It was suggested by a minority of respondents, that greater use should be made of Outdoor Education Centres, to help increase community use of schools, which is a proposed outcome. To ensure that resources are used in a sustainable way, it was also suggested that a greater emphasis should be placed on recycling across EA.

One respondent expressed the view that there should be reference to the GTCNI in the plan as it is an advocate of the teaching profession.

3.5 Responses from Education/Sectoral Support

Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)

A detailed response to consultation was received from ATL. This response indicated that in general terms, they welcomed the Plan as a broad, high-level direction-of-travel document and found that the language used in the document to be both encouraging and enabling, while acknowledging the policy parameters, which underpin it.

They look forward to viewing detailed operational business plans as they emerge and would welcome opportunities to engage and participate in their development. They were supportive of the stated Values within the Plan and indicated interest in the operationalised intentions in respect of ‘reflection’.

Many suggestions were made which include: an amendment to the stated Mission – from ‘To provide a high quality education for every child’ to ‘To provide the best quality education for every child’; the view that the content of the ‘box chart’ on Page 9 may be misleading for some readers, especially in relation to the number of staff employed; that the General Teaching Council (NI) should be included as a partner on Page 8 of the document.

Department for the Economy (DfE)

The response from the DfE expressed concern in their response to consultation that the draft Plan appears to focus on the services that EA provides to the Department of Education and makes no mention of the significant services the EA provides on behalf of the DfE. They highlight that the EA is legally delegated to administer student finance on behalf of the Department and administers services in respect of Further Education, and the Department for Health.

Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC)

The CSSC agreed with and indicated support for the EA Vision, Mission and stated values as outlined in the draft Plan, as well the EA's intention to deliver the Plan in collaboration with schools.

With reference to the strategic priorities, they acknowledge that the Plan provides a framework, but not clarity on how the mission and vision will be secured and assume that subsequent business plans will provide such clarity.

CSSC recognise the challenging context and the need for change for EA in delivering on the strategic priorities, especially in providing excellent education support services and in managing resources effectively and efficiently. They also refer to the need for children with additional needs and challenges to have access to the necessary support and resources to ensure that EA's vision is achieved. In addition, they accept the financial challenges in establishing an ICT strategy which will drive service improvement and recognise the need for a strategy to address the imbalance in resources across school establishments.

They note that the strategic priorities, the planned outcomes and the medium term corporate objectives align to and are complementary with the PfG and highlight that the PfG may be refreshed during the period of this Plan.

With reference to the inclusion of ‘a rights based culture’ the Council would advocate that a ‘responsibilities based culture’ should be included, and that a priority should be linked to young people securing employment and improving the economy.

The CSSC sought clarification in relation to the reference to OECD within this draft and expressed the view that a central coordinated approach to enabling schools to become more autonomous and collaborate and support each other to improve is required.

They also welcome EA’s commitment to working with stakeholders to deliver viable and sustainable schools and to support the implementation of professional learning strategies for staff. They will, as a key education partner, endeavour to support and complement the work of EA to achieve these medium term corporate objectives and overall vision, in respect of controlled schools and contribute to the effective and efficient management of resources.

NAHT(NI)

The NAHT(NI) forwarded a substantial response to consultation highlighting several overarching concerns about the draft plan including: comment about the level of school leader involvement in the formulation of the document; about the language and style of the document; and the timing of the consultation over a year after the establishment of the Authority. They acknowledge that the future (PfG) will be a key driver in steering the focus of the plan and would welcome assurance that the EA will work jointly with health providers to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. NAHT(NI) welcome the fact that the Plan will be accompanied by three yearly corporate and annual business plans and would welcome information as to how EA proposes to review and monitor the plans to ensure that they are meeting the needs of children against each of the strategic priorities listed under the LEARN acronym.

They indicated that they would also welcome any information on the steps that EA has taken to evaluate the services they currently provide and contend that EA should be subjected to inspection overseen by the ETI.

They agreed that the mission of 'provision of a high quality education' for every child is essential but contend that EA's remit is broader than that. Additionally, the NAHT agreed that 'Managing resources effectively and efficiently' and 'Nurturing Leadership' should be priorities for EA but sought more detail as to how 'Provision of excellent education support services would be achieved'.

Regarding budgetary concerns, and acknowledging the current financial climate, the NAHT sought clarification on the budget figures in the document and that no information concerning the capital budget allocation is included and would welcome information about earmarked and previously earmarked funds. Comments were also made about the detail on EA duties for Community Use of Schools, information on staffing levels and proposals to determine expectations for Parents, Principals and Partners. The objective to establish a Principals working group was welcomed by NAHT.

Northern Ireland Voluntary Grammar Schools Bursars' Association

The NI Voluntary Grammar Schools Bursars' Association agreed with the general principles outlined in the document and that the aims, mission and values presented in the Strategic Plan are appropriate.

In their response, they indicated that there was insufficient detail in the medium term Corporate Objectives and made several suggestions for inclusion. They would like to see more detail on the extent of the rationalisation for the school's estate over the next three, and over the next ten years together with information on how specific savings will be made over the next three years and details on how EA will be embedded as the funding authority for all schools.

This respondent also made comment about the need for greater accountability at a financial level for individual schools; that there should be no reference to C2k in the Plan as this is currently a short term managed solution and that while collaboration across schools is to be encouraged as well as Shared Education arrangements, it was important to note that such arrangements result in significant costs and do not deliver savings which were anticipated.

Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC)

In their response to consultation the TRC welcomes the publication of EA Strategic Plan and is supportive of the Vision and Mission and the commitment by the EA to work in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders.

They appreciate that the Plan represents an overview of the way forward and that subsequent action plans will provide further detail on how objectives are to be achieved.

The TRC agrees with the Strategic Priorities outlined in the plan and welcomes the commitment to a child-centred approach to all activities. Within 'learning needs of children and young people' they considered that there should be a clearer acknowledgement of the importance of helping children and young people to develop socially, morally and spiritually as well as intellectually.

With reference to the inclusion of 'a rights based culture' the Council believe that 'a rights and responsibilities based culture' would be more appropriate. They also consider that there is little reference in the plan to preparing children and young people for the world of work, and believe that this is a key purpose of the education system to equip young people to participate in an increasingly competitive global market.

The difficult financial context that EA is operating in is acknowledged by the Council and they express concern for those who consistently underperform in the education

system and would encourage EA to ensure that resources are in place for those with additional needs.

Ulster Teachers Union (UTU)

A very detailed response was received from UTU. While they considered that the Vision was 'not inappropriate', the actual outworking of the Vision into actual policy was of particular interest to the UTU. They particularly referenced the challenges facing education, specifically austerity cuts, and the impact on teachers and the relationship with EA. While the Mission is commendable, they considered that it is no more pertinent to EA than to the ELBs in the past. They reiterated a range of concerns about resourcing; training; lack of capital investment; increasing class sizes; inadequate school funding; substandard and inconsistent access to ICT; SEN support and interference by the ETI; increasing bureaucracy faced by the teaching profession; the common funding formula and the absence of real action to address the shortcomings within the education sector generally.

Regarding the Values, they believe that they provide an optimistic and positive sentiment towards the style and dispositions that EA will adopt in its Strategic Planning over the next ten years but consider that the outworking's of these to be unclear.

With reference to the Key Strategic Priorities, UTU commented that meeting learning needs should not be specific only to EA but rather to be the priority of all those in the teaching profession. They also expressed the view that while the Plan pins importance on listening to children and young people there is no reference to listening to the teaching profession.

Regarding the Key Strategic Priority 'Providing Excellent Education Support Services', the UTU expressed the opinion that support services have continued to be eroded and removed from existence. They also commented that, in relation to 'Developing all our People to carry out their jobs successfully' they believe the quality of teaching

to be the most important aspect of success for any school and that the profession continues to experience severe financial cuts which challenge schools in a number of ways. They contend that teachers must have access to CPD as a key element in ensuring that professional practice remains current and enthused.

A focus on Managing Resources efficiently and effectively by EA is commended by the UTU. They believe it is timely to reconsider the use of resources, with the full expectation that funding and personnel will be redirected to schools.

They also note that strategic support for leadership – ‘Nurturing Leadership across EA... is timely given as the RTU has been disbanded coupled with uncertainties around Leadership courses from the school support service, including the apparent mothballing of the PQH(NI) qualification. Additionally they consider that support provided to schools is currently inadequate.

UTU consider that the Outcomes focus on the expectations to be placed on schools and to a lesser extent on what EA will do to lead the Education sector. They also believe that the outcomes phraseology does not allow for easy interpretation as to their exact meanings, neither, they consider do the Medium Term Corporate Objectives. In addition, they stated that there is no clear form of measuring success and no indication as to who will be involved, how they will be achieved, resourced or funded, in order to achieve the Vision and Mission. Key performance indicators would be welcomes as would information pertaining to a SWOT analysis.

UNISON

UNISON acknowledged the impact of austerity and that education services in NI are in a precarious financial position. They suggest that it is incumbent on EA to become a champion for a properly resourced education system and that a statement should be included in the Plan that EA will seek to secure the resources needed over the next 10 years. Regarding the reference to partnership working UNISON consider that

there should be a reference to working in partnership with Trade Unions included in the Plan.

With reference to the Strategic Priority 'Providing Excellent education support services', UNISON highlighted their opposition to any attempts to privatise or to outsource support services. Similarly, with reference to 'Developing all our people to carry out their jobs successfully', they contend that further detail is required in relation to training and development opportunities will be made available for staff at all grades. They consider that these priorities and the medium-term objectives in the Plan will require further discussion, public consultation and negotiation with UNISON and other Trade Unions.

It is the view of UNISON that the Plan must be amended to make a clear commitment to the implementation of children's rights contained with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNISON notes that the plan contains a commitment to Equality and they maintain that EA must promote equality of opportunity for all children and young people who use the education system. In addition, they are of the view that EA must recognise that the equality duty under section 75 applies to all policies, including employment policies; policies around service delivery however 'high level' they may be.

Youth Council for Northern Ireland

The Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) informed EA that the references to the YCNI in the draft Plan are inaccurate and should be amended to reflect that the statutory functions of YCNI remain with YCNI. There was also a query as to the accuracy of the figures presented relating to the number of Young People who take part in Youth Service activity by EA.

The YCNI commented that co-design of the Plan would have been welcomed and that more content and detail should be available. With reference to learning needs,

they highlighted that there are other capabilities that are part of the development of children and young people both in the formal and informal sectors. They would welcome specific action on improving the mental health of children and young people and indicated that developing and nurturing leadership should also apply to young people.

They also suggested that multi-disciplinary working groups must include voluntary/community representation and that there should be a clear indication of the role that young people and youth work play in each of the strategic priorities and outcomes. They consider that the Regional Youth Development Plan (RYDP) and the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) should be included in the Plan and that the proposed outcomes are broad and vague with no targets, budgets or clear actions.

The YCNI would welcome the establishment of a protocol for the relationship between YCNI and EA.

3.6 Political Representative (1 response)

The response received from Sinn Féin outlined a number of key points for consideration. These included:

- The Plan should be strengthened by the inclusion of specific proposals, objectives, or targets with respect to meeting the outlined Vision and outcomes focused approach with clear indicators of progress;
- There are no specific outcomes with respect to SEN, Irish Medium or the Youth Sector, this should be addressed to include a clear and cohesive strategy for each of these sectors;
- There is little reference to Early Years Education and Learning Provision, this should be addressed.

- There is no reference to the role of educational provision in addressing poverty and deprivation and should take account of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and the Child Poverty Strategy.
- The focus upon harmonisation is to be welcomed, but there is a lack of detail relating to how harmonisation will be achieved or will assist EA to achieve its strategic objectives nor what the aims and objectives which are to be achieved through harmonisation, or reference to levels of financial outsourcing or estimated savings. Also that proposals for harmonisation should be equality screened and rural proofed.
- Sinn Féin also considered that it is not clear what the relationship is between the range of associated policies highlighted in the Equality Screening document and the draft Strategic Plan.
- It was considered by this respondent that the draft Plan should be rural proofed and equality proofed with respect to income levels and geographical areas.

3.7 Responses from General Public (3 comments)

Observations were received about the Vision. It was commented that the responsibility of the EA is much broader than to purely provide young people with the best start in life, that this vision is much too narrow and encourages the reader to consider early year's provision only. The view was also expressed that this vision was a 'direct lift' from the draft programme for government and as such was not original. From the viewpoint of the Youth Service, it was the view that as this service supports young people up to the age of circa 23, that this Vision is not relevant to them.

Responses also highlighted concerns around how C2k is referred to in the document – Classroom 2000 and commented that C2k has not been referred to in this way since the year 2000.

It was viewed as disappointing that ‘the voice of the child (UNCRC Article 12)’ has not been mentioned as a priority in the EA Plan. Some members of the public would have welcomed a more holistic approach to developing the plan i.e. bringing views/opinions from Health; Sure Start; parents and young people.

The view was expressed that there was uncertainty as to whether the EA can deliver on this Plan and the demands of the education system in NI due to cuts to the education budget.

3.8 Responses from Boards of Governors (8 comments)

There were several key messages received from the Boards of Governors. One such message was that communication is an issue for EA. Work, they suggest, should be progressed to ensure effective communication with Schools, Parents and Governor’ to focus on effective sectoral engagement.

Other respondents from this group considered that while the Vision and Values espoused in the draft Plan were sound. They believed, that there is an absence of detail, especially the presentation of specific targets outlining ‘how’ EA will achieve its strategic priorities and its 3-year Corporate Plan objectives, and how success and progress will be measured. Concern was also evident around the possibility that EA will place an unrealistic burden on schools to provide them with data and is presently remote from understanding the services that schools need. Difficulties with the new finance system were highlighted, as well as recent changes in recruitment practices concerning Governors, and concerns around issues for schools regarding Community Use. Governors expressed the view that EA should fully consult with schools and Governors to determine levels of satisfaction with services provided.

Respondents also considered that the School Development Service appears to be increasingly distant and removed from the reality in schools and is poorly equipped in terms of knowledge and skills.

The view was also expressed that the plan is vague in places and ignores the necessity for subject specialist support, specifically support targeted at middle leadership. There is no mention of other bodies such as NICIE or CCEA, which EA will need to work with to drive educational excellence. There is, it was considered, a need to develop expertise within the EA.

The majority of respondents from this group indicated a welcome for the approach and the direction taken to develop the Plan, which sets out a framework to improve the outcomes, both educational and social of all our children and young people and for the broad educational values that EA seeks to uphold.

3.9 Responses categorised as 'Other' (12 comments received)

Twelve respondents categorised as 'Other' made a range of comments about the draft Plan. Included in the responses was the acknowledgement that the draft strategy is outcomes focused, supportive of the emerging PfG and the Young People's Strategy. In terms of presentation, this draft Plan was 'fresh' and its simplicity, brevity and style is to be welcomed. It is also user friendly and uncomplicated and reflects the focus of EA. The access to the preliminary equality-screening document was a welcome addition.

One respondent considered that the Vision, Mission and Values were narrow in focus and that children's educational needs cannot be separated from health, wellbeing and life skills and suggested that the values of collaboration, cooperation, co-production should be included.

It was suggested by one respondent that the Plan should recognise the importance of developing better travel options for education for better health, more active lifestyles, safer roads and an improved environment for children, as part of a partnership

arrangement. This, they suggest could be referenced under Strategic Priority 4 (Managing our Resources Effectively and Efficiently).

A comment was also made that the reference to the functions of the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) was inaccurate and a query around the figures presented relating to the number of young people involved in the youth service within EA (similar comments also received in response from YCNI see above).

The Princes Trust welcomed the development of the EA Strategic Plan and particularly the outcomes stated in the Plan. Specifically, improved educational attainment; young people develop aspirations for the future and the establishment of a learning environment that improves the outcomes for children and young people. They consider that the focus on outcomes and the direct links to the draft Programme for Government will create a structured, strategic, accountable process, and acknowledge that specific targets will need to be identified and that meaningful and effective partnerships established.

A range of views were expressed which included that:

- vocational training should be given equal status with academic studies;
- that there should be a stronger focus on children's rights as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- greater links to the draft Children's and Young People's Strategy;
- an emphasis on mental health support and nurturing;
- safeguarding training to be mandatory;
- stronger partnerships with Education Partners and the Voluntary and Community Sectors and
- greater support for those experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence and abuse.

Submissions were received from:

Autism NI

Autism NI referenced the immediate situation regarding the Autism community across Northern Ireland and how it touches many of the outcomes that have been set out in the draft Plan. They considered that there was an omission of any outcome relating to compliance with the Autism Act NI 2011.

They also commented that the Aims within the draft Plan are aspirational and that they would be *'more believable'* if they indicated *'how'* they could be met.

Compass Advocacy Network (CAN) Pathways

A detailed submission was received from Compass Advocacy Network (CAN). CAN is a user led charity of people with learning disabilities which enables young people and their families plan for life after school. This submission includes responses from three young people who commented on the Vision, Mission and Values. These young people indicated in their response that they agreed with the Vision and Mission and suggested that the EA replace the value – 'equality' with 'equity'. The young people commented on each of the Strategic Priorities and reinforced the view that consideration must be given to children and young people with disabilities as they may require more support; that specialised training must be provided for staff working with young people with autism, learning disabilities and mental health issues.

The young people considered that as every young person's needs are different, students with a disability need the right type of support depending on the nature of their disability. The importance of partnership working was also emphasised.

Overall CAN welcomed the developed of the Strategic Plan and considered that the varied needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs, do not

get lost in the increasingly complex and austere environment that education bodies find themselves in.

Community Relations Council (CRC)

In its response the CRC welcomed the proposed alignment with the Executives (PfG) and looks forward to seeing more detail on actions and approaches which will enable EA to make a positive and sustainable contribution towards reconciliation, respect and shared spaces. The CRC also acknowledge the reference to shared education and would encourage the Authority to take notice of potential emerging responsibilities following the Review of Integrated Education.

Regarding the Values section of the plan, CRC recommend that this be amended to include a commitment to good relations and ensure a commitment to Section 75 Duties.

They also recommended that the final Plan includes numbers pertaining to the infrastructure of youth services – number of staff and number of organisations to have a balance between the formal and informal educational structures supporting our children and young people.

Equality Commission

The Equality Commission expressed appreciation that the Plan is being developed against a backdrop of significant structural, service delivery and diminishing public sector budgets. The Commission emphasised however, the requirement for equality and good relations to be central to all public policy development and implementation especially at a time of reduced public spending.

They highlighted that every child should have access to a good quality school experience and can reach their full potential and that schools should promote the inclusion and participation of all.

The inclusion and links to the draft PfG were welcomed. A clearer commitment and detail to address key inequalities experienced across a range of Section 75 groups was recommended. They indicated that consideration should be given to including a clear reference to 'good relations' within the document.

The Strategic Priorities and the Medium Term Corporate Objectives which include: commitments to improving educational outcomes; the undertakings to establish approaches to improve the outcomes of all children and young people; working with schools and other partners to build an education system in which increasingly autonomous schools collaborate and support each other and reducing educational inequality; are appreciated by the Commission.

They added that systems to ensure that learning from interventions which have successfully advanced equality in education, should be developed so that lessons are disseminated and shared with other schools was also suggested by the Commission.

In general, the Commission welcomed the Vision outlined in the Plan and the reference to improving and to developing a regional approach to the delivery of the current SEN framework and to Shared Education.

Northern Ireland Council for Children and Young People (NICCY)

NICCY in their comprehensive submission recognise that the EA draft Strategic Plan 2017-27 is a very high-level document and appreciates the value of a document that is accessible, easy to read and succinct.

They acknowledge that as such, there is not a level of detail in the Plan to allow for informed and comprehensive comment at this stage. They look forward to having the opportunity to provide advice to EA on its three Year Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plans as this is where they envisage the detail of the word of EA will be contained.

Several recommendations for inclusion in the final version of the Plan were made by NICCY. These were:

Greater reference to Children's Rights to include specific commitments to Articles within the UNCRC; an explicit reference to the statutory obligations on EA to the Children's Services Co-Operation Act (Northern Ireland 2015); that the final version reflect the importance of the work of the Youth Service in the informal education of children and young people; specific commitment to the continuation of work on the delivery of the CRED programme; that a review of the approach to the determination of school sustainability is necessary as some schools are deemed unsustainable due to the impact of reduced funding by DE; a clearer focus on the wellbeing of children in schools and would welcome a commitment by EA in its final Plan to facilitate this; compliance by the EA with its stated Values of openness, transparency, good communications and accountability in carrying out its work over the ten-year period of its Strategic Plan and a reminder to the EA of its requirement to consult with children and young people when developing policy.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

NILGA broadly welcomed the EA Strategic Plan as it sets out a clear direction of travel for education in Northern Ireland outlining a Vision, Mission, Values, Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Medium Term Corporate Objectives.

They note that the document highlights the necessity for EA to work in partnership with other organisations and contribute to the PfG. NILGA would specifically welcome a reference to EA's role and involvement as a statutory partner in the council-led community planning process within the draft Plan.

NILGA members are keen to ensure that local visibility of EA is improved and that early action is taken to tackle perceived local disconnect because of the consumption of sub-regional ELB's into the regional Education Authority.

Recognising the increasingly constrained financial environment that EA is working in, NILGA recommends that EA works closely with councils to assist with this. They also welcome the inclusion of community use of schools, and are supportive of more efficient central-local use of the public estate.

Woman's Aid Federation Northern Ireland (WAFNI)

A comprehensive submission was received from the Woman's Aid Federation Northern Ireland (WAFNI). WAFNI welcome the EA draft Plan which includes a Strategic Vision for the next ten years and agree that EA is working in a challenging context and as such a clear plan is vital in terms of steering future direction. Overall, they considered that the document is clear, concise and easy to read well-structured and clearly laid out. They acknowledge that the Plan is set within a Northern Ireland context and has specific reference to and clear alignment with the draft PfG.

WAFNI outlined agreement with the proposed Vision, Mission, Values, Key Strategic Priorities, the Corporate Plan and Outcomes within the document and made suggestions for the final draft of the Plan.

These were:

- there should be a stronger focus upon children's rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC);
- there should be a greater cross referencing to the draft Children and Young People's Strategy;
- they wish to see a clearer emphasis on mandatory preventative and empowerment education initiatives for children and young people;
- a stronger focus on how participation of children and young people will be promoted and encouraged, especially in relation to the strategic priority Nurturing Leadership;
- the importance of mandatory safeguarding training for all education and youth service providers;

- a need to raise awareness of children's rights;
- a stronger partnerships to be established between education providers and the voluntary and community sector and
- more counselling services in schools for all children and young people.

Section 75 Questionnaire Qualitative Analysis – based on comments received

A preliminary Equality Screening of this Draft Policy was carried out in February 2017. No significant adverse impacts on any of the nine groupings were identified at that time. A final Equality Screening was carried out on 8 June 2017. The information obtained during this consultation was used to inform the screening exercise. Subsequently the EA Draft Strategic Plan was screened out.

*(The quantitative analysis of the Equality Questionnaire is presented at **Appendix 3**)*

Section 75 Categories:

1. Religious Belief

A minority of respondents believed that there should be a clearer acknowledgement of the importance of helping children and young people to develop socially, morally and spiritually as well as intellectually within the Plan.

2. Political Opinion

A minority of respondents believed that there should be a reference to working in partnership with Trade Unions included in the Plan.

3. Racial Group

No comments received

4. Age

A minority of respondents would welcome more reference to early year's provision in the Plan and to the need to meet the learning needs of children and young people at an early stage in their development.

5. Marital Status

No comments received

6. Sexual Orientation

No comments received

7. Gender

No comments received

8. Disability

A significant minority of respondents who commented considered that there is a need for children with additional needs and challenges to have access to the necessary support and resources to ensure that EA's vision is achieved.

Consideration must be given to children and young people with disabilities as they may require more support; that specialised training must be provided for staff working with young people with autism, learning disabilities and mental health issues.

9. Dependants

No comments received

Section 4: Authority response to issues identified through consultation

Introduction

The Education Authority (EA) acknowledges the helpful and considered responses to the public consultation on this its first Strategic Plan.

We welcome all suggestions and feedback especially that which informed us of any inaccuracies or omissions in the draft document.

The EA is a complex organisation, which is functionally and geographically diverse, and provides extensive services to a range of stakeholders including Boards of Governors, School Leaders, Teachers, Parents, Pupils, Young People, our Staff and Education Partners.

EA Strategic Plan is a high-level document and as such, it is not possible to capture everything we do or try to achieve, within a single, concise document. It is envisaged that this Strategic Plan will create a unity of purpose and a basis against which we can move forward during the next ten years.

The Strategic Plan will be supported by 3-yearly Corporate Plans and Annual Business Plans. These plans will be reviewed and monitored, during the life of the Strategic Plan, to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to take account of the long-term outcomes for our society, outlined in the emerging Programme for Government (PfG).

Accuracy of Information

In the informatics diagram on page 9 of the draft Plan we sought to outline, in an easily understandable format, the scale of the work we carry out. As previously stated, the EA is a complex organisation that works in partnership with a range of statutory and non-statutory bodies and is the employing authority for all staff at Controlled Schools and for non-teaching

staff at Catholic Maintained Schools. In addition the EA funds Grant Maintained Integrated and Voluntary Grammar Schools.

In the final version of the Strategic Plan, we will make amendments to this page to reflect School Census information (March 2017) and make reference to school enrolment figures for all schools; the number of Controlled Schools; the number of Grant Maintained Integrated, Grant Maintained Irish Medium, Voluntary Grammar and Catholic Maintained Schools. We will also clarify that EA is the employing authority for all staff at Controlled Schools and for non-teaching staff at Catholic Maintained Schools and make clear that these are included in the informatics diagram relating to the number of staff employed by EA.

Omissions and Clarifications

We welcome comments about the omission in the draft Plan, concerning the statutory obligation for EA to work with the Department of the Economy (DfE) in administering Student Finance on DfEs' behalf. This omission will be rectified in the final version and be represented pictorially on the informatics diagram page.

We acknowledge the response from the Youth Council for Northern Ireland, in respect of the terminology used to describe new duties of EA in relation to the YCNI (page 8). This inaccuracy will be corrected in the final version. The query regarding the figures presented relating to the number of young people involved in the youth service within EA is noted. The figures presented in respect of this (Page 9) are correct at time of publication and have not been amended.

We will clarify the situation regarding the 2014 Education Act, which established additional duties for the EA *"to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education and the community use of school premises"*. (Page 8)

We acknowledge responses highlighting references to Classroom 2000 and the Centre for Procurement Excellence (COPE), which should read C2K and Centre of Procurement

Expertise (COPE) respectively (Pages 16/17). These will be corrected in the final version of our Plan.

Level of Detail

The Strategic Plan sets out our Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Priorities for the period 2017-2027. This high-level document provides a framework for our work and showcases how we will develop and monitor our services to our stakeholders as we move towards improving educational achievement.

A number of respondents to the consultation consider that the Strategic Plan contains limited detail around how the Strategic Priorities will be achieved and that information regarding actions and business plans, proposed measures and success factors should be provided. Other respondents recognise that the Plan is a broad, high-level direction-of-travel document which contains visionary and enabling concepts and they acknowledged the policy parameters underpinning it.

We seek to reassure all respondents, that the clarity around ‘*how*’ we move towards the achievement of our key Strategic Priorities, will be set out in our Annual Business Plans, including individual Directorate Business Plans and functional business plans. These Plans will include references to specific functional areas across the organisation and will include the level of detail sought by consultees.

Vision, Mission and Values

We welcome those comments about the Vision, Mission and Values in the draft Plan regarding their appropriateness for the organisation.

A significant number of comments were received from the general public, parents/guardians and from staff, who consider that the Vision – ‘*to give our children and young people the best start in life*’ is too narrow in its focus and should be more aspirational. They believe that this Vision encourages the reader to think primarily about early years

provision and that it is not original or “owned” by the EA as it is a ‘direct lift’ from the draft PfG outcomes.

As a result of this feedback, the Vision “*To give our children and young people the best start in life*” will be revised in the final version of the Plan to: “*To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be*” (Pages 3 & 12).

The comments received which indicate that the Values presented in the Plan are sound and will be central to all that EA seeks to achieve in the future are appreciated. These Values are, we consider, underpinned by the five key Strategic Priorities and provide a comprehensive framework for the planning and delivery of our services.

As an organisation, we acknowledge the frustrations and anxieties experienced by staff over the last number of years, as we make the transition from five Education and Library Boards to a single EA and begin to transform our services for the future. We appreciate the views of those staff who responded to the consultation, and who acknowledged that there will be challenges to fully embed our Values. We envisage that the development of this Strategic Plan will help to create a unity of purpose and a basis against which all those who work within EA can move forward during the next ten years.

We thank those who made suggestions for inclusion in respect of Values but after lengthy deliberation consider that the proposed Values of Openness, Respect, Reflection, Responsibility, Excellence and Equality are appropriate and will guide the way we work, our development as an organisation and our decision making through the years ahead.

Key Strategic Priorities

Respondents believe the Strategic Priorities will provide an effective framework for strategic, corporate and business planning. This framework will facilitate a shared approach, within which all services across all Directorates will focus and align their activities towards the achievement of key outcomes linked to the emerging PfG and the DE Corporate Goals.

The positive and constructive feedback from consultees about the Strategic Priorities presented in the plan is appreciated, in addition to the many suggestions received. As previously stated, the Strategic Plan is a high-level document which provides clear guidance for our work and showcases how we will develop and monitor our services. Further detail pertaining to specific services, functions and the extensive legislative framework in which we operate will be incorporated in our Annual Business Plans, at a Corporate, Directorate and individual service levels across the organisation.

A number of respondents expressed the view that Outcome number six – *“a rights based culture for our children and young people”* (page 15) listed under Strategic Priority *“Meeting the Learning Needs of our Children and Young People”* should be amended to *“a rights and responsibilities based culture for our children and young people”*. This will be amended in the final version. Amendments to the wording, suggested by DE, *“Managing resources efficiently and effectively and Improving School Governance to empower school leadership”* will also be made.

Partnership working

The achievement of our key Strategic Priorities requires us to develop partnerships at a strategic and operational level.

We work in partnership with a significant number of organisations across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, including those from Education, Health, district Councils and those representing Equality Groups, Trade Unions and children and young people with special educational needs, to provide high quality education services for all children and young people.

It is not possible to list all the partnerships in which we are engaged. These will be referenced in the Annual Business Plans for each service area.

In Summary, the following amendments have been made to the draft Strategic Plan:

Page	Amendment
3	Vision amended to: <i>“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be”</i>
4	<p>First sentence amended to:</p> <p><i>“This is an exciting time as we publish our first Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2027.”</i></p> <p>First paragraph, last sentence amended to:</p> <p><i>“We are focused on ensuring that we will do the best we can for all our children and young people.”</i></p> <p>Third paragraph, amended to:</p> <p><i>“As we publish our Strategic Plan I want to acknowledge the thoughtful contributions of everyone who has contributed so far, Board Members, key Education Partners, Principals and Staff whose suggestions have been invaluable in helping us in developing our Plan.”</i></p> <p>Fourth paragraph amended to:</p> <p><i>“This Strategic Plan sets out our vision ‘To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be’.”</i></p>
5	<p>Last sentence amended to:</p> <p><i>“All of us have a shared interest in improving outcomes for children and young people within our society to help them be the best that they can be.”</i></p>

6	<p>First Column amended to include:</p> <p><i>“.....and the Department of the Economies’ policies and to develop strategies which help to improve the education system. We work in partnership with a significant number of organisations and stakeholders from Education, Health and district Councils.”</i></p> <p>Second Column first paragraph amended:</p> <p><i>“We will work towards this by educating and equipping our young people to reach their full potential as citizens.”</i></p> <p>Second Column third paragraph amended:</p> <p><i>“The Education Authority will deliver this plan in support of the Department of Education and the Department for the Economy and in collaboration with our schools and through a highly engaged and talented workforce of 40,000 teaching and support staff.”</i></p>
8	<p>First paragraph amended to include:</p> <p><i>“We are also legally delegated to administer student finance on behalf of the Department for the Economy.”</i></p> <p>Second paragraph inserted:</p> <p><i>“The EA is also the employing authority for all staff at Controlled Schools and non-teaching staff at Catholic Maintained Schools.”</i></p> <p>Fourth paragraph amended:</p> <p><i>“The 2014 Education act created additional duties for the EA to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education and the community use of school premises and is the funding authority for voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools. Responsibility for regional youth services funding and support transferred from the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) to the Education Authority on 1 April 2016, with funding for regional organisations earmarked.”</i></p>
9	<p>Amendments made:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are the funding authority for 1145 schools including: Controlled, Catholic Maintained, Voluntary Grammar, Grant Maintained, Integrated and Irish Medium</i> • <i>We are the managing authority for 560 Controlled Schools</i> • <i>Over 341,000 pupils are enrolled in schools in Northern Ireland</i> • <i>145,000 meals are served every day in schools</i> • <i>We support more than 60,000 Students in Further and Higher Education</i> • <i>We are the employing authority for around 40,000 teaching and support staff</i> • <i>We are the funding authority for and provide support and services for 467 Maintained Schools</i> • <i>Figures correct as at March 2017</i>
10	<p>Column 2 amended to:</p> <p><i>“..... our efforts to promote a more tolerant and equal society; bridging the existing attainment gap; reviewing systems of evaluation and optimising available data including from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);”</i></p>
12	<p>Vision amended:</p> <p><i>“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”</i></p>
15	<p>Outcomes amended:</p> <p><i>LEARNING NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</i></p> <p><i>6. “A ‘Rights and Responsibilities-based culture’ for Children and Young People”</i></p>
16	<p>Row 2. Corporate objective 3 amended:</p> <p><i>“Establish an ICT Strategy for the EA, its schools and C2k to drive service improvement, modernise and maximise the use of ICT for customer facing services and the delivery of high quality teaching and learning.”</i></p>

17	<p>Row 1 Corporate objective 4 amended:</p> <p><i>“Achieve full Centre of Procurement Expertise (CoPE) accreditation across goods, services and construction,”</i></p> <p>Row 1 Corporate objective 9 amended:</p> <p><i>“Improve processes to manage resources efficiently and effectively.”</i></p> <p>Row 2 Corporate objective 1 amended:</p> <p><i>“Improve School Governance to empower school leadership.”</i></p>
18	<p>Vision amended to:</p> <p><i>“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”</i></p>



On-Line Questionnaire

EA Draft Strategic Plan

April 2017

Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-27

Introduction

The Education Authority was established in April 2015 and since then we have been transforming the structures and functions bringing together the five former Education and Library Boards to create a single organisation.

This first Strategic Plan 2017 – 2027, sets out our priorities for how we will continue our journey to support and challenge schools as they work to achieve positive outcomes for Children and Young People. We want to hear your views on the proposed direction, outcomes and associated actions to help achieve these outcomes.

Our Vision: 'To give our children and young people the best start in life'

Our Mission: 'To provide a high quality education for every child'

Our Values:

- A culture of Openness
- Respect for all
- Reflection on our practice
- Responsibility for our actions
- Excellence in all we do
- A commitment to Equality

Our Strategic Priorities:

L Meeting the LEARNING needs of our children and young People
E Providing EXCELLENT education support services
A Developing ALL OUR PEOPLE to carry out their jobs successfully
R Managing our RESOURCES effectively and efficiently
N NURTURING LEADERSHIP across the Education Authority to give clear
direction in a dynamic and complex environment

Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-27

The content of this Strategic Plan has been developed through a programme of engagement with key internal and external stakeholders and takes account of the draft Programme for Government. Our Strategic Plan is a high level document, setting out the Vision, Mission, Values and Key Strategic Priorities for the EA for the next 10 years. The Plan will be supported by a 3-year Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plans. These plans will enable us to incorporate new priorities and respond to new challenges as they arise.

A preliminary equality screening is attached for your information.

[\(<http://www.eani.org.uk/resources/assets/attachment/full/0/53860.pdf>\)](http://www.eani.org.uk/resources/assets/attachment/full/0/53860.pdf)

This screening is still a provisional document, with work in progress to identify further data. The final equality screening will also be informed by replies to the equality questions in this questionnaire and will be refined in the light of the final version of the Plan.

How to Respond

Please respond by completing the questionnaire and by using the space provided to make further comment as required. You can also submit material for consideration by e-mail – EAYoursay@eani.org.uk or by post to:

The Corporate Development Officer
The Education Authority
17 Lough Road
Antrim
BT41 4DH

This consultation will close at noon on Tuesday 30 May 2017

Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-27

1. Please select the category that best describes you as a respondent (Please choose one option only):

Parent/Guardian

Political Representative

Young Person

General Public

Principal

Board of Governors

Member of Staff

Other

Education/Sectoral Support Group

Other (please specify)

2. Name/Name of Organisation/School (optional)

3. This questionnaire has been designed to help respondents to respond to our Strategic Plan 2017-2027. The following questions focus on the Vision, Mission, Values and each of the 5 key Strategic Priorities.

Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree that?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

The vision '**to give our children and young people the best start in life**' is appropriate for the Education Authority

4. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree that?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

The Mission '**To provide a high quality education for every child**' outlines why the Education Authority exists

5. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree that?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

The Values will guide the way the Education Authority should work and develop as an organisation

6. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree with the Key Strategic Priority?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

Meeting the **LEARNING** needs of our children and young people

7. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree with the Key Strategic Priority?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

Providing **EXCELLENT** education support serves

8. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree with the Key Strategic Priority?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

Developing **ALL OUR PEOPLE** to carry out their jobs successfully

9. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree with the Key Strategic Priority?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

Managing our **RESOURCES** effectively and efficiently

10. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree with the Key Strategic Priority?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

NURTURING LEADERSHIP across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment

11. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree with?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

The outcomes as listed on page 15 of the Strategic Plan

12. Having read the Education Authority Strategic Plan 2017-2027, do you agree that?

Agree

Uncertain

Disagree

The Strategic Plan provides a framework for the work of the EA as it seeks to improve outcomes for Children and Young People

13. Please use the space below if you wish to make a comment on any aspect of the Education Authority Strategic Plan (1,000 characters)

Equality Consideration

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 all public bodies are obliged to consider the implications of any decisions on nine different groupings before decisions are implemented. The two duties within this Equality Legislation include promoting Equality of Opportunity and Promoting Good Relations between all communities.

The Equality of Opportunity duty requires that the Education Authority shall, in carrying out all their functions, powers and duties, have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

1. Between persons of different religious belief.
2. Between persons of different political opinion.
3. Between persons of different racial groups.
4. Between persons of different age.
5. Between persons of different marital status.
6. Between persons of different sexual orientation.
7. Between men and women generally.
8. Between persons with a disability and persons without.
9. Between persons with dependants and persons without.

The Good Relations Duty requires that the Education Authority shall, without prejudice to their equality obligations have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations:

1. Between persons of different religious belief.
2. Between persons of different political opinion.
3. Between persons of different racial groups.

14. In light of these obligations do you consider that this Draft Plan will impact positively or negatively on either Equality Opportunity or the Promotion of Good Relations in any way?
(please select)

	Positive	Negative	I do not wish to provide an opinion
1. Between persons of different religious beliefs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Between persons of different political opinion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Between persons of different racial groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Between persons of different age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Between persons of different marital status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Between persons of different sexual orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Between men and women generally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Between persons with a disability and persons without	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Between persons with dependants and persons without	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish to comment about **any of the above categories**, please do so in the box below:

The Authority will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Unless individual respondents specifically indicate that they wish their response to be treated in confidence, their name and the nature of their response may be included in any published summary of responses. Respondents should also be aware that the Authority's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act may require that any responses not subject to specific exemptions under the Act, be disclosed to other parties on request.

15. I want my name and nature of response to be treated in confidence and not included in any summary of responses. (Please indicate below (yes/not applicable))

Yes/No

Acknowledgement

Thank you for your submission, I acknowledge receipt of your response.

Appendix 2

Draft EA Strategic Plan- quantitative analysis

EA Draft Strategic Plan -:	Agree % (No.)	Uncertain % (No.)	Disagree % (No.)	Total % (No.)
1. The Vision 'To give our children and young people the best start in life' is appropriate	75 (84)	10 (12)	15 (17)	100 (113)
2. The Mission 'To provide a high quality education for every child' outlines why the Education Authority exists	77 (86)	19 (22)	4 (5)	100 (113)
3. The Values will guide the way the Education Authority should work and develop as an organisation	67 (76)	21 (23)	12 (14)	100 (113)
4. I agree with the key Strategic Priority 'Meeting the Learning needs of our children and young people'	82 (92)	14 (16)	4 (5)	100 (113)
5. I agree with the key Strategic Priority 'Providing Excellent education support services'	78 (88)	16 (18)	6 (7)	100 (113)
6. I agree with the key Strategic Priority 'Developing All Our People to carry out their jobs successfully'	74 (84)	18 (20)	8 (9)	100 (113)
7. I agree with the key Strategic Priority 'Managing our Resources effectively and efficiently'	73 (83)	17 (19)	10 (11)	100 (113)

8. I agree with the key Strategic Priority 'Nurturing Leadership across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment'	72 <i>(81)</i>	19 <i>(22)</i>	9 <i>(10)</i>	100 <i>(113)</i>
9. I agree with the Outcomes as listed on Page 15 of the Strategic Plan	52 <i>(59)</i>	38 <i>(43)</i>	10 <i>(11)</i>	100 <i>(113)</i>
10. I agree that the Strategic Plan provides a framework for the work of the EA as it seeks to improve outcomes for Children and Young People	62 <i>(70)</i>	23 <i>(26)</i>	15 <i>(17)</i>	100 <i>(113)</i>

Appendix 3 – Results of Equality Questionnaire

Equality Responses Percentage Breakdown

Results based on responses to the on-line questionnaire:

Section 75 Category	% Positive (No.)	% Negative (No.)	% Total (No.)
Between persons of different religious belief	82% (49)	18% (11)	100% (60)
Between persons of different Political Opinion	82% (49)	18% (11)	100% (60)
Between persons of different Racial Groups	84% (49)	16% (9)	100% (58)
Between persons of different Age	78% (50)	22% (14)	100% (64)
Between persons of different Marital Status	87% (47)	13% (6)	100% (53)
Between persons of different Sexual Orientation	93% (49)	7% (4)	100% (53)
Between men and women generally	89% (50)	11% (6)	100% (56)
Between persons with a disability and persons without	87% (54)	13% (8)	100% (64)
Between persons with a dependants and persons without	86% (50)	14% (8)	100% (58)