

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 19 MAY 2014

REPORT ON: EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE ENTITLEMENT TO 600 HOURS FOR CHILDREN AGED 2 YEARS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 193-2014

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report is to inform Committee of the Scottish Government's proposal to extend the entitlement to 600 hours of Early Learning and Childcare to children aged 2 years and to seek approval of the proposed implementation approach in Dundee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- note the content of the report;
- agree the approach to the implementation of the extension in the entitlement to nursery provision for children aged 2 years as detailed in this report; and
- instruct the Director of Education and Head of Human Resources to take forward the staffing issues arising from this proposal.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Scottish Government has allocated £15 million in revenue budget for 2014/15 and £44 million in 2015/16 to fund the policy. In addition the Scottish Government have announced an extra £31 million capital funding over the next two years for Local Government to further develop the capital infrastructure needed to increase early learning and childcare provision. The distribution method of this funding is still to be determined and therefore the financial support available to Dundee City Council for the extension of early learning and childcare to children aged 2 years has yet to be finalised.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 The First Minister announced on 7 January 2014, the Government's intention to extend the provision of early learning and childcare for two year olds from August 2014.

The announcement of Government's intention to extend early learning and childcare to two year old children goes beyond what was previously discussed in the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Bill. The announcement stated that it was Government's intention from August 2014 that councils offer two year old children in workless households (estimated to be 15% of all 2 year olds – approximately 8,400 children) 600 hours of early learning and childcare. Working definition of those families entitled will be confirmed by the Scottish Government by May 2014.

4.2 The estimated numbers for Dundee from August 2014 are approximately 320 eligible children with an additional estimated 53 children aged 2 who come under the Looked After Category.

4.3 The children will start in nursery the term after their second birthday. The following cohorts, based on national figures, will be:

- 1/2 will start in August 2014 in term 1
- 1/3 will start in January 2015 in term 2
- 1/6 will start in April 2015 in term 3

4.4 **Progress Towards an Implementation Model for August 2014**

Physical Infrastructure

To accommodate the children a number of locations have been identified across our primary school estate. City Development is developing schemes to alter some settings to provide suitable accommodation. The City Development Committee gave approval for this on 21 April 2014 and work is scheduled to take place during the summer holidays with a view to opening each provision as close to the start of term in August 2014 as possible. It should be noted that adaptations and variation requests will be required to be approved by the Care Inspectorate. A meeting was held with the Care Inspectorate on 1 May to share plans and discuss next steps.

Proposed locations to accommodate the additional 2 year olds requiring alteration are:

- Dens Road Primary School
- Ardler Primary School
- St Ninian's RC Primary School
- Ballumbie Primary School
- Mill of Mains Primary School

Proposed locations to accommodate 2 year olds requiring no alteration are:

- Downfield Early Years Centre
- Rowantree Early Years Centre
- Claypotts Castle Early Years Centre
- Fintry Early Years Centre
- Woodlea Children's Centre
- Ballumbie Early Years Centre

4.5 The department is currently conducting a staffing review however approximately 30 additional staff will be required for this age group. In order to be prepared for the forthcoming recruitment, the department has arranged for an open advert for early years staff, closing date 16 May 2014.

4.6 **Engagement with UNISON and UNITE**

A meeting took place in March 2014 when representatives had the opportunity to hear about progress to date. This was positively received.

4.7 Implementation for 2 year olds within Nursery Classes and Early Years Centres

As a result of the increase in entitlement to 600 hours for children aged 2 years the following implications have been identified:

- the need for alteration within 6 primary schools; and
- the need to review procedures for nursery admissions, including developing systems for checking eligibility to entitlement as a workless household.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

LG/MW

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