

ITEM No ...4.....

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 9 MARCH 2020

REPORT ON: EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE ENTITLEMENT TO 1140 HOURS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 88-2020

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report is to provide Committee with updated information following the previous Committee report in May 2019 (Article IV of the minute of this committee held on 13 May 2019, report no 192-2019 refers) regarding the planned expansion of Early Learning and Childcare from 600 hours to 1140 hours by August 2020.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- note the content of the updated progress report including Appendix 1 detailing feedback;
- remit to the Executive Director of Children and Families Service to bring a further report on the progress of the implementation in 12 months' time.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Scottish Ministers and COSLA agreed a multi-year revenue and capital funding package of £476.1m. The Council's share with a capital allocation is included in the 2020-25 Capital Plan. The Revenue funding allocated amounts to £16.931m by 2021-22.

3.2 The overall projected capital costs for the 1140 Hours Childcare Entitlement is £13.0m with the Capital Plan 2020-2025 allowance being £11.096m.

3.3 The Council will seek to manage the programme of remaining projects outlined in paragraph 4.6 by using revenue and programme management within the Capital Plan.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Scottish Government (SG) is committed to increasing entitlement to free Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) to 1140 hours per year for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds by 2020.

By August 2020, a new funding follows the child model will be introduced. This provider neutral approach will seek to ensure all settings provide high quality Early Learning and Childcare, regardless of whether the funded hours are delivered by a setting in the public, private, third sector or through provision provided by a childminder.

A provider of Early Learning and Childcare in the private, third sector or through provision provided by a childminder must meet all of the Early Learning and Childcare National Standard; be willing to enter into a contract with the local authority and accept the rate set locally by the local authority.

4.2 LOCAL CONTEXT

The Council has concluded a flexible framework agreement relative to the provision of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). As a result, the Council has offered a contract to 36 providers who have been successful in their tender application to become Funded Providers. The duration of the contract will be 3 years only from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2023 (option to extend for up to a further 2 years). The framework will be opened on a yearly basis for those not already on the framework to apply to become a Funded Provider.

4.3 PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF 1140 HOURS

To prepare for full implementation by August 2020, 1140 hrs of funded ELC provision has been made available to eligible children attending 15 Local Authority Nurseries since August 2019. Families have been offered either a term time or full year funded place and feedback from staff, children and families remains positive detailed in Appendix 1.

4.4 HIGH QUALITY PROVISION

During January 2019 to January 2020, 9 Local Authority nurseries were inspected by the Care Inspectorate. A summary of 7 external Care Inspectorate Inspection reports for Local Authority Nurseries January 2019 to June 2019 were reported to Scrutiny Committee on 25 September 2019. The external reports demonstrate that during the transition period to the full implementation of 1140 hours of ELC, quality grades remain high.

100% of Local Authority nurseries inspected in 2019 and Jan 2020 were rated Very Good or Excellent for their Quality of Environment.

100% of Local Authority nurseries maintained or improved their grading from their previous inspection for the Quality of Environment, Quality of Staffing and Quality of Management and Leadership themes.

100% of Local Authority nurseries scored Good or higher across all themes both in their 2019 inspections as well as their previous inspection.

89% of Local Authority nurseries inspected in 2019 and Jan 2020 were rated Very Good or Excellent for their Quality of Care and Support.

7 out of 9 Local Authority nurseries maintained or improved their rating for the Quality of Care and Support theme.

4.5 WORKFORCE

A high quality, diverse and well trained professional workforce is key to delivering the expansion.

Modern Apprentices into Permanent Early Years Educator

In August 2019, 5 modern apprentices moved into permanent employment with the Children and Families Service.

Future Skills College Students

Four students are on track to become Modern Apprentice Early Years Educators in August 2020 subject to completion, application and references.

Modern Apprentices

8 Modern Apprentice Early Years Educators are on track to complete their Modern Apprenticeship in June 2020.

10 Modern Apprentice Early Years Educators will move into year two of their modern apprenticeship in August 2020 and are on track to complete their MA Early Years Educators in 2020-21.

Recruitment to a number of permanent posts is currently underway and includes:

Early Years Centre Managers
Senior Early Years Practitioners
Early Years Educators
Early Years Support Assistants
Nursery Teachers

4.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

The committee will note that the remaining projects are on programme. Of the 9 projects outlined in the previous report, 5 have been completed and are now operational with 2 under construction and 2 at the design stage which will be tendered and submitted to City Development committee for approval in due course.

In February 2020, plans for Coldside Nursery (Caird Avenue site) were shared and positively received by the Coldside Community Planning Partnership.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness and poverty, environment and corporate risk. A copy of the Impact Assessment is available on the Council's website at www.dundee.gov.uk/ia/reports.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

Paul Clancy
Executive Director of Children and Families Service

Lesley Gibb
Education Manager (0-5)

Staff, children and family feedback summary

Comments from Staff

"Relationships continue to be core to practice and the longer time spent in nursery allows for real, positive relationships to be embedded which shows in children's engagement, emotional wellbeing and knowing they will be listened to"

"Children are forming secure attachments to their peers and developing key relationships with each other"

"Secure bonds between the children within each group, there is a real sense of them looking after each other"

"More opportunities to revisit learning opportunities throughout the day"

"Children have access to new situations, for example lunch time, which is having an impact on their social skills as well as the opportunity to try different foods"

"Settling in periods have more flexibility, routines are clear and less transitions within the one day for children"

"The children have more time to develop their learning and explore and investigate their interests"

"Educators have more time to observe and identify significant learning and to scaffold this effectively for the children"

"Children and educators have more time to plan together to add depth and breadth and identify next steps"

"Developing strong friendships in a variety of situations"

"Access to daily meals and snacks that provide a balanced diet"

"It is easier for staff to ensure better continuity of learning for children as the majority of children now attend Monday – Friday"

"Children revisit their learning daily and have the consistent security of familiar relationships within the setting.

"They spend more time here – greater access to free flow outdoor learning (this is freely available 9.30-2.30 each day)"

"Some children now have fewer transitions in their week e.g. one ELC setting rather than split place"

Comments from Families

"I would like to say that the 1140 hours has been extremely beneficial to my family, it has allowed me to work extra hours and earn a decent income, it has also benefited my daughter massively, she has a good weekday routine and I feel like this will make her transition to school easier as she has already been doing full days at nursery."

"I would say that this definitely has benefits. I feel that my son has had more opportunities for learning which can be extended rather than cut short due to time constraints of AM or PM slots. I feel that he is definitely getting his teeth stuck in to lots of activities and has opportunities to see through the learning he is involved with. I feel that it has been beneficial to spend lunch with his friends and feel that this has set him up to cope well with school lunches! It has also been great that the lunches are now free the same as p1.

"My daughter being in full time nursery 9-3 has made a massive difference to our life, as a single parent I struggled with doing shifts at work. With having these hours I have now been able to find a

new job that suits around nursery hours. Meaning that I can spend quality time with my daughter after nursery and at the weekends which we never had before. Thank you for these hours I really appreciate it."

"The hours are great and my son seems to love going."

"Fantastic, gives more opportunities to families for tasks as the option is there for childcare if needed."

"Really good, my son sometimes gets a bit tired but I think this is the best way to prepare him for school. He has the opportunity to learn more with you."

"Great, gives my son the opportunity to spend more time at nursery."

"It has been really good, my son always comes home from nursery in a good mood."

"Very good, my child has started to settle into the nursery well. It has been a smooth transition."

"It has been very useful and cost effective."

"Excellent. It has allowed me to go back to work full-time."

"I was worried at first how my child would cope but the hours are working really well for her and I believe it's helped her development."

"I feel this is great and my child loves it. It's also beneficial to me as I am at college studying."

Comments from Children

"I like being in nursery all day because it's so fun here"

"I used to go away in the afternoon, but now I like to stay"

"I know all the people now."

" I like it but I liked having lunch with my mum too".

"Being friends with.....in the garden. I like sitting down with my band and drinking water and milk and eating my cheese roll."