

# **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services**

**Education and Lifelong Learning Committee: 14 September 2011**

---

**Subject: Proposal to Cease Providing Out of School Care Provision within Auchnacraig Early Education and Childcare Centre (EE&CC)**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To update members on the provision of early education and childcare, and support to children and families within the Faifley area and to seek approval to cease the provision of the out of school care service currently based within Auchnacraig EE&CC.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1** There are currently 2 early education and childcare centres serving the Faifley area, and also providing early years provision for the Duntocher and wider Clydebank area. Previous proposals put before members have included an amalgamation of Lennox and Auchnacraig EE&CCs which are located geographically close to each other. Further consideration and discussion of this option, however, indicates that it would create a very large early years centre catering for children from 0 - 5 years and would present logistical difficulties in terms of management given the existing management structure within early years. It was also felt that, given the different service which each of the centres offers and the continuing high demand for provision within the Faifley, Duntocher and wider Clydebank area, there is a strong case for retaining both centres.
- 2.2** Auchnacraig EE&CC, located within the campus of Edinbarnet Primary school currently provides for 64 3 - 5 year olds in relation to early years education entitlement and limited childcare. It also provides an out of school care service, and a static crèche which is used to support the Council's Parenting Strategy.
- 2.3** Lennox EE&CC provides for 11 children 0 - 3 years within limited accommodation within the Skypoint building. It also caters for 60 3 - 5 year olds within its own main building. The centre has a key role in supporting vulnerable families through provision of childcare for children under the age of 3 referred through the multi-agency admissions panel.
- 2.4** Both Auchnacraig and Lennox EE&CCs provide places for 3 - 5 year olds living within the Duntocher area who are unable to access a place at St Mary's EE&CC which has limited capacity due to space restrictions.

### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** The Auchnacraig building and management arrangements are well suited to continuing to provide the static crèche provision and to support the multi-agency parenting support programme.

Following the development of good quality outdoor play facilities at Lennox EE&CC, and with some internal re-organisation, it is now possible to relocate the under 3s provision within the main nursery building. Arrangements to take this forward are underway and it is anticipated that the 0 - 3 facility will move to Lennox EE&CC in October. Consultation with parents and staff indicate that this is a popular development. The space freed up within the Skypoint building may be utilised by other Council services.

- 3.2** The out of school care service within Auchnacraig is poorly used and currently over staffed. Last session, while there were 8 children registered with the service, only 3 attended. Currently only 2 children are registered for the service from August 2011.
- 3.3** The service is staffed for a capacity of 24 children with 3 members of staff working a total of 17.5 hours each. Within the Faifley area there is a social enterprise provision which has capacity to meet the needs of families within Faifley and could accommodate the 2 children currently registered with Auchnacraig EE&CC. Having consulted with the parents of the children registered with our service, they are happy to register their children with the Gowdie Club. This is equally accessible to the families and the costs are the same.
- 3.4** Consultation with the 3 staff within the out of school care service indicates that 1 member of staff is keen to pursue retiral and this is currently being managed through HR. The other 2 members of staff have requested to move to morning only working to meet their family circumstances, and can be redeployed within Auchnacraig EE&CC.
- 3.5** The redeployment of the 2 additional staff for 17.5 hours each, would allow Auchnacraig EE&CC to provide up to 20 additional 3 - 5 places to accommodate children within the wider Duntocher and Clydebank area. St Mary's EE&CC is registered for 50 children and has reached its capacity with the first intake of 3 year olds in August each year. Any children reaching their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday after August, are unable to access their ante-pre-school year placement in January or April at St Mary's EE&CC. The additional capacity within Auchnacraig EE&CC would ensure that there is sufficient capacity to meet the needs of all 3 year olds should their parents wish to access it within the area.

#### **4. People Implications**

- 4.1** The proposal to close the out of school care service based in Auchnacraig EE&CC has an impact on the 3 existing members of staff. Consultation with the staff indicate they are happy to be redeployed within the nursery or seek retiral.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** The relocation of the 0 - 3 provision within the Lennox EE&CC building provides a saving to Educational Services of £12,000 in annual rental which is currently paid to HEEDS. The minor adaptations to the Lennox building will cost £18,000 which will be funded through the existing early years capital budget.

- 5.2** The removal of the out of school care provision will result in a net saving of £12,500 which is the cost of the existing staffing minus the lost income. The breakdown of the saving is as follows:

|                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Current Staff 1.5 FTE                 | £40,370 |
| Redeployed to mainstream nursery 1FTE | £26,913 |
| Anticipated income                    | £900    |
| Saving 0.5 FTE                        | £13,457 |

Through redeployment the 35 hours (2 x 17.5 hrs) of staff time would be relocated within Auchnacraig EE&CC, which means that the £26,913 saving would be moved to support early years provision within the Auchnacraig budget.

## **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** These proposals do not represent a risk to the early years service within the Faifley area. Provision of out of school care is not a statutory service. The needs of the existing users of the service can be equally well met through other local provision.

## **7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 7.1** Screening for equalities impact indicates no issues , since the children currently using the service can be accommodated elsewhere.

## **8. Strategic Assessment**

- 8.1** This proposal addresses the issue of an under-used and over-staffed service. The removal of the service would allow more productive use of both human and physical assets.

## **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 9.1** Through minor realignment of services within Lennox EE&CC and consolidation of the existing early years and multi-agency provision within Auchnacraig EE&CC, there is a commitment to providing high quality early education and childcare to meet the needs of the Faifley community, both at a universal and targeted level.
- 9.2** The removal of the underused out of school care provision within Auchnacraig supports the Gowdie Club, Social Enterprise out of school care provision and frees up space and staffing within the Auchnacraig building to provide additional early years places for families within the wider Duntocher/Clydebank area.
- 9.3** Having consulted on these proposals both staff and service users are happy with the alternative arrangements which can be put in place to support the closure of the out of school care provision.

- 9.4** It is therefore recommended that members approve the closure of the out of school care provision located within Auchnacraig EE&CC from 1 October 2011 and agree that service users should be supported to access alternative out of school care provision within the area.

---

Terry Lanagan  
Executive Director of Educational Services

**Person to Contact:** Lynn Townsend, Head of Service (Support), Educational Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU. Telephone (01389) 737387  
e-mail: [lynn.townsend@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:lynn.townsend@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1:** None

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** Ward 4