

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Report by Chief Education Officer**

**Education Services Committee: 4 September 2019**

---

**Subject: Early Years Implementation Update**

**1. Purpose**

**1.1** This report details an update of the plan for expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC).

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1** It is recommended that committee:

- (i) Notes the contents of the current phasing of the Early Learning & Childcare Expansion (Appendix 1 – Early Learning & Childcare Phasing Plan 2018 -2020)
- (ii) Agrees that a further update be provided to committee at the next meeting in December 2019.

**3. Background**

**3.1** Members have previously been advised through regular reports to committee that the WDC Early Learning & Childcare Expansion Plan has developed a service model for delivery of 1140 hours of high quality early learning and childcare which will be phased in by school session 2020 - 2021.

**4. Main Issues**

**4.1** Progress across the key objectives of our Implementation Plan remains on track, with target dates set for delivery of each project; agreed with the Implementation Board.

**4.2** The suite of supporting technical guidance and information developed by Scotland Excel has been used to work with Funded Private Providers to implement the new approach: Funding Follows the Child, sustainable rates and business sustainability.

**4.3** Relevant documentation and new systems for applications, contracts, communication, procurement, monitoring procedures and evaluation of fair work practices has been set up. A new Funding Follows the Child contract for Funded Private Providers has been agreed. This contract will ensure that criteria for the National Standard are met by all funded private providers.

- 4.4** As the guarantor of quality WDC has a specific role in ensuring business sustainability. We have updated our systems and processes to monitor Partner Providers compliance with the criteria for the National Standard. We are building our capacity to ensure that our systems are in place to carry out this role. This has involved intensive work with ELC officers, our finance business partner and partner private providers. We have met with individual partner private providers to ask them about their service model of delivery for 1140 hours: business sustainability, criteria for the national standard, payment of the real living wage to those staff delivering the entitlement, fair work practices, provision of food and the hourly rate. We now have a shared understanding of the cost of delivering the funded entitlement to set a local sustainable rate. Setting a sustainable rate to pay the real living wage remains the main issue for funded private providers to continue to offer a high quality service.
- 4.5** Our expansion plan has been revised and is on target to deliver the entitlement of 1140 hours for all three, four year olds and eligible two year olds. This is the final stage of the phasing of the Implementation Plan which is reliant on the creation of new nursery classes within schools and refurbishment of ELC stock. In each area as ELC is created within a school, it is predicted that families will move their children to the new nursery classes from neighboring early learning and childcare centres. This will enable our current ELCC's to deliver 1140 hour as their numbers of children reduce. See Table 1. The delivery of most classes in our plan will be on time for August 2020. However, as St. Joseph's and Edinbarnet are likely to be delayed this part of the plan has been revised to ensure delivery of 1140, on time, in Faifley, for children who attend Auchnacraig ELCC. Refurbishment of Auchnacraig ELCC out of use facility, has been scheduled into the plan to replace the classes planned for Edinbarnet and St. Joseph's. This will make full use of the existing building at Auchnacraig, which can be reinstated before the planned nursery classes can be delivered. This will ensure that we are on target to provide the entitlement for all three and four year olds in Faifley.

**Table 1**

<b>New School ELC</b>	<b>Local ELC</b>
Our Lady of Loreto PS	Dalmuir
Carleith PS	St. Mary's Duntocher
Dalreoch PS	Brucehill
St. Ronan's PS	Lennox Bonhill
Whitcrook PS	Clydebank Whitcrook
Linnvale PS additional 40 places	Kilbowie

- 4.6** The number of eligible two year olds who will have 1140 hours when our legacy kitchens are refurbished will increase. This refurbishment will allow those nurseries to serve the free meal entitlement for eligible two year olds. The nursery kitchens requiring refurbishment are: Lennox ELCC Faifley and Ladyton ELCC. Ferryfield ELCC, Riverside ELCC and Clydebank ELCC have the required standard in place. Meadowview ELCC will increase its numbers to 45 two year olds when the refurbishment is complete.
- 4.7** There is no change to the numbers of parents requesting the blended model from childminders for entitled three and four year olds. Some childminders are interested in delivering early learning and childcare for eligible two year olds.
- 4.8** A key focus of the Criteria for the National Standard is inspection evaluations. The National Standard sets a minimum quality threshold for providers delivering the funded hours of 'good'. The funded provider will be given a 'fair service improvement period' if grades drop below the required quality criteria of the National Standard. Thereafter, funded provider status will be removed. The service will be inspected again by the Care Inspectorate within 6 to 12 months. If the Care Inspectorate is satisfied that the setting is still fit to operate, the setting will have until their next inspection to return evaluations to good. There are funded providers including WDC settings who have grades below good. Our Improvement Framework has been revised to take account of this. Training has also been arranged for leaders to ensure that they understand what is required. Our local authority funded providers are in the same position and will be subject to the same conditions.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are significant implications for people in WDC. Our recruitment programme for the settings opening between June - October 2019 for 1140 hours is complete. They are: Andrew B Cameron, Balloch, Bellsmyre, Dalmonach, Gartocharn, Levenvale, Riverside and St. Eunan's. For the next phase our planning for recruitment is well underway to meet target opening dates. We have recruited facilities staff and the early years practitioners that we need. For the next phase we require approximately thirty facilities staff, and sixty qualified ELC practitioners. We continue to compete with other councils to recruit suitably qualified staff, in particular principal officers. The programme to target adult returners and career changers as well as school leavers through a series of information sessions jointly provided by EY, HR and West College Scotland resulted in approximately twenty bespoke individual pathways to a suitable qualification. The apprenticeship programme continues to provide training on the job, for workers who do not have the relevant entrance qualifications for the HNC in Childhood Practice. Fifteen childminders have signed up to complete a combination of SVQ2 and 3 training to get them to the required level; some are already qualified.

## 6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1 There is no change to the multi-year funding of the expansion plan which guarantees our delivery of 'Funding Follows the Child' for the entitlement to 1140 hours of ELC for all three and four year olds by their eligible date in school session 2020/2021. Our model of delivery has had a revision to ensure that we deliver 1140 hours on time. This has necessitated a change to our capital and revenue funding plan which is reflected in the revised phasing. See Appendix 1.
- 6.2 As previously reported the financial template submitted to Scottish Government in February 2018 has been reviewed and used in deciding the multi-year funding allocation to this authority. Each year's funding is included in the previous year's figures. The multi-year allocations were announced in May 2018 and are as follows for West Dunbartonshire:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Revenue £m</b>	<b>Capital £m</b>
2018/19	1.410	0.580
2019/20	5.268	2.380
2020/21	8.717	4.480
2021/22	9.723	5.880

- 6.3 There are no new financial implications with this update report, officers continue to review the Early Years Expansion programme to ensure that plans for year two and three align with multi-year funding. We are on track with our expansion plan and financial spend for each project.

## 7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1 The key risks to the project remain:

- delays in delivery of infrastructure expansion
- recruiting and developing a skilled and committed workforce
- ensuring that all ELC settings meet the criteria for the National

Plans are in place to mitigate risks to the plan. The infrastructure plan and dates for delivery of our nursery classes and refurbished ELCC have been revised for delivery by August 2020. It is widely acknowledged that all councils will compete to recruit and develop a skilled workforce. Our recruitment plan, training and individual pathways are in place for the workforce. Early Years Scotland will provide training for leads, principals and head teachers; this will ensure that we can meet the criteria for the national standard.

## 8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1 An EIA for the Expansion Plan was undertaken previously. There was no requirement to undertake another EIA for the purposes of this report as it is providing an update to Committee on the expansion.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** Regular consultation with stakeholders including parents, ELC staff, Unions, Council partners in the project and partner ELC providers continues through various forums and regular meetings.
- 9.2** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1** This report reflects the Council's aspiration to have a strong local economy, improved employment opportunities and efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents. These are strategic priorities for 2017-2022.

**Laura Mason**  
Chief Education Officer

**Person to Contact:** Kathy Morrison, Lead Officer, Education, Learning and Attainment  
Telephone No: 01389 737684  
Email: [kathy.morrison@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:kathy.morrison@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** Appendix 1 – Early Learning & Childcare Phasing Plan 2018 - 2020)

**Wards Affected:** All

