
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

25 September 2018

Audit and Scrutiny Committee

Title: Early Learning and Childcare Expansion

Purpose: a) To provide an update to the Committee following consideration by Cabinet of the Early learning and Childcare Expansion programme on 01 May 2018

Recommendation: That the Committee notes the progress that North Ayrshire Council is making on the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an update to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee submitted on 27 March 2018. The report relates to the 6 recommendations contained in the Audit Commission's report to Scottish Government in February 2018 on the expansion of early learning and childcare in Scotland.

1.2

- Scottish Government capital funding allocation
- The evaluation of the Councils 2 pilot sites at Loudon Montgomery Primary School and Glencairn Primary School Early Years Classes.
- Work to consider the impact of 1140 hours on partner providers

2. Background

- 2.1 On 27 March 2018, the Audit and Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Executive Director of Education and Youth Employment on an Audit Commission Report which highlighted "significant risks" surrounding the Scottish Government's ambition to increase ELC from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020.
- 2.2 Since then, a report has been approved by Cabinet on [01 May 2018](#) which provided an update on the progress of the early learning and childcare expansion plans in North
- 2.3 This report has been prepared to provide an update to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the 6 recommendations contained in the Audit Commission Report.

- 2.5 **Recommendation:** Scottish Government and councils should develop links between the increase in funded hours and programmes to support parents, at a local and national level, into work, training or study.

North Ayrshire Council's position on this is as advised in previous report.

- 2.6 **Recommendation:** Scottish Government and councils should provide clearer information for parents to help them understand how funded ELC is provided locally.

North Ayrshire Council's position on this is as advised in previous report.

- 2.7 **Recommendation:** Councils should develop commissioning strategies for funded ELC that

North Ayrshire Council's position on this is as advised in previous report.

- 2.8 **Recommendation:** Scottish Government and councils should urgently finalise and implement plans for changes to the workforce and infrastructure to address the significant risks of not being able to deliver on time.

Update: As previously advised, North Ayrshire Council has established the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme (ELCEP) board to oversee the delivery programme. There are 2 workstreams, dedicated to infrastructure and workforce planning, that report to this Board. The Board has developed its expanded delivery model, and a programme of workforce planning and infrastructure works is already underway.

As noted in the Cabinet paper, a capital works programme has been developed with estimated costs totalling £12,975,161. Since then North Ayrshire Council has received confirmation from Scottish Government of capital funding for the expansion programme totalling £11,440,000. As a result, an extensive value engineering exercise is underway. The current costs status for the projects that make up the ELC capital programme

- 2.9 **Recommendation:** Scottish Government and Councils should collect better information on the cost of different models of ELC and their impact on children's outcomes to allow them

Update: The impact of the Council's delivery model on children's outcomes in the two pilot sites where 1140 hours are currently being delivered: Loudon Montgomery and Glencairn early years classes, has been evaluated using a 3 stage evaluation plan between January 2018 and June 2018. The outcomes of this 3 stage evaluation programme are reported at Appendix 3.

- 2.10 **Recommendation:** Scottish Government and councils should work with partner providers of both funded and non-funded ELC to understand the impact of decisions on the wider system of ELC and reduce the impact of unanticipated consequences for these providers.

Update: In June 2018 Cabinet approved an increase the hourly rate paid to the Council's partner Early Learning and Childcare providers to £4.00 from August 2018. As part of the

financial planning for the ELC expansion programme, the Council has provided for phased

- 2018-19 £4.00 per hour
- 2019-20 £4.50 per hour
- 2020-21 £5.31 per hour

Thus, annual payments will increase as follows:

- 2018-19 - 600 hours: £2400/ 1140 hours: £4560
- 2019-20 - 600 hours: £2700/ 1140 hours: £5130
- 2020-21 - 1140 hours: £6053

These payments form part of a package of additional supports provided by the Council to the sector that include: teacher access; funded staff CPD training; a senior staff network for Council and private/third sector staff to share best practice; child protection support and training for staff and managers; additional staff to support children with ASN in private and voluntary provider settings and a specialist resource to support planning for children with ASN.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The Audit and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the content of this The Directorate of Education and Youth Employment will provide updates to this committee in line with significant Scottish Government ELC policy changes or announcements or termly, whichever is soonest.

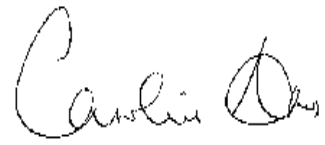
4. Implications

There are no implications relating directly to this report

Financial:	
Human Resources:	
Legal:	
Equality:	
Children and Young People:	
Environmental & Sustainability:	
Key Priorities:	
Community Benefits:	

5. Consultation

- 5.1 No consultation was required for this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Amos'.

Caroline Amos
Head of Service (Inclusion)

For further information please contact **Doreen Walkinshaw** on **01294 324175**.

Background Papers

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