
THE EXPANSION OF FUNDED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND– ARGYLL AND BUTE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN, FUNDING AND EARLY YEARS GRADUATE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update for members on the progress being made by the Education Service in preparing for the proposed expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and the implementation of 1140 hours of funded ELC in Argyll and Bute per year by 2020.

1.2 Specifically the report provides information on:

- The Draft Delivery Plan submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017 (Appendix 1);
- The Financial Template submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017 (Appendix 2), and
- The Additional Graduate Plan submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017 (Appendix 3)

1.3 The Argyll and Bute Plans have been framed around a delivery based model and a robust mapping exercise has resulted in a clear outline of the opportunities and challenges around ELC delivery within each of the localities of Argyll and Bute. Specific challenges include capacity in certain areas of the Local Authority and the recruitment of a suitably qualified workforce.

1.4 In addition the paper presents an overview of the financial planning challenges set out in the Financial Template. Whilst the Scottish Government has committed in principle to funding the expansion, no detailed financial agreement with Authorities has been made beyond 2017-18. Full funding from Scottish Government will have to be available to Argyll & Bute Council to enable delivery of the plan.

1.5 As progress is made within the implementation of the Draft Delivery Plan, the following factors will inform future developments of the service delivery:

- Consultation and engagement of parents, partners, practitioners and wider community members;
- Continued support of and investment in our Partner Providers;
- The expansion of the Early Years Workforce;
- Ongoing ELC capital programme, and
- Allocation of ELC capital and revenue funding from the Scottish

Government to deliver key aspects of the Plan.

1.6 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the contents of the Argyll and Bute ELC Draft Delivery Plan submitted to Scottish Government on the 29th of September 2017;
- b) Note the contents of the Argyll and Bute Financial Template submitted to Scottish Government on the 29th of September and note the potential financial risks for Council if full funding from Scottish Government is not available to Argyll & Bute Council to enable delivery of the plan;
- c) Note the Additional Graduate Plan submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017 and its dependence on appropriate funding from Scottish Government for full implementation, and
- d) Request that the Executive Director, Community Services bring forward progress updates in relation to the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to future meetings of Community Services Committee.

**THE EXPANSION OF FUNDED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN
SCOTLAND – ARGYLL AND BUTE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE
DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN**

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update for members on the progress being made by the Education Service in preparing for the proposed expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and the implementation of 1140 hours of funded ELC in Argyll and Bute per year by 2020.

2.2 Specifically the report provides information on:

- The Draft Delivery Plan submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017;
- The Financial Template submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017, and
- The Additional Graduate Plan submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017

2.3 The Argyll and Bute Plans have been framed around a delivery based model and a robust mapping exercise has resulted in a clear outline of the opportunities and challenges around ELC delivery within each of the localities of Argyll and Bute. Specific challenges include capacity in certain areas of the Local Authority and the recruitment of a suitably qualified workforce.

2.4 The paper also presents an overview of the financial planning challenges set out in the Financial Template. Whilst the Scottish Government has committed in principle to funding the expansion, no detailed financial agreement with Authorities has been made beyond 2017-18. Full funding from Scottish Government will have to be available to Argyll & Bute Council to enable delivery of the plan.

2.5 The paper also presents an overview of the Additional Graduate Plan which outlines plans to make most effective use of funding for three additional graduates using 'Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SiMD) data to target nurseries with higher levels of deprivation.

2.6 As progress is made within the implementation of the Draft Delivery Plan, the following factors will inform future developments of the service delivery:

- Consultation and engagement of parents, partners, practitioners and wider community members;
- Continued support of and investment in our Partner Providers;
- The expansion of the Early Years Workforce;
- Ongoing ELC capital programme, and
- Allocation of ELC capital and revenue funding from the Scottish Government to deliver key aspects of the Plan.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the contents of the Argyll and Bute ELC Draft Delivery Plan submitted to Scottish Government on the 29th of September 2017;
- b) Note the contents of the Argyll and Bute Financial Template submitted to Scottish Government on the 29th of September and note the potential financial risks for Council if full funding from Scottish Government is not available to Argyll & Bute Council to enable delivery of the plan,
- c) Note the Additional Graduate Plan submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017, and
- d) Request that the Executive Director, Community Services bring forward progress updates in relation to the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to future meetings of Community Services Committee.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1.1 The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare – Scottish Government Policy Commitment and Requirement for a Local Authority Delivery Plan

The Scottish Government announced as a policy commitment the expansion of the provision of funded ELC from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020.

4.1.2 The expansion prioritises a high quality experience for the child to capitalise on the significant contribution that ELC can make to a child's development and to closing the poverty related attainment gap. The 1140 hours of ELC will be offered by a range of providers across Argyll and Bute, including Local Authority, Private, Voluntary, Independent and Childminders.

4.2 The ARGYLL AND BUTE DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

4.2.1 The key features within the Draft delivery plan are set out as follows:

Section One – Introduction and Executive Summary

Section Two – ELC Provision in Argyll and Bute – Current Supply and Demand

Section Three – Consultation with Stakeholders

Section Four – Future Provision – summary of proposed changes to

Service design and local innovation
Section Five - Implementation Plan

- 4.2.2 Section Three outlines the consultation activity which has been undertaken to capture the views and opinions of parents, partners and practitioners. A consultation of parents has recently been carried out, with responses from a total of 577 parents, representing approximately 17% of parents of children aged 0-5 years in Argyll and Bute. Further analysis of the consultation will inform plans for ELC delivery within each locality of Argyll and Bute.
- 4.2.3 Section Four provides an outline of the anticipated demand for ELC within each locality. This includes:
- The number of children entitled to ELC for session 2017-18 and the anticipated number of children entitled to ELC for sessions 2018-19 and 2019-20;
 - Predicted number of additional Local Authority staff required for full implementation, and
 - Predicted property works required for full implementation
- 4.2.4 Section Five contains a series of action plans to support effective implementation and robust communication between partners.

4.3 Phasing Delivery of 1140 Hours of ELC

- 4.3.1 In order to ensure full implementation of the expansion of ELC by 2020, a plan has been developed to phase 1140 hours of ELC sustainably across Argyll and Bute. A criteria based on SIMD data, accessibility to wraparound childcare and suitability of property was used to plan the phased expansion. ELC settings on the Isle of Bute and a cluster of nurseries in Mid Argyll will offer 1140 hours as of January 2018. Thereafter, each phasing period will be initiated in August 2018, August 2019 and August 2020, subject to Scottish Government funding.

4.4 Scottish Government Financial Template

- 4.4.1 A Finance Template, produced by the Scottish Government, was required to be completed by each Authority and submitted by 29th September 2017. This is to ensure consistent presentation across Scotland of the multi-year financial and workforce estimates requested in the ELC Expansion Planning Guidance and to support Government review of the estimated costs of delivering the expansion. The Scottish Government consulted with members of its Finance Working Group in producing the template and sought to incorporate feedback from authorities, while collecting the information required to underpin development of Spending Review estimates and subsequent allocation of funding to individual authorities.
- 4.4.2 The Template details the projected estimated costs over the period 2017-18 to 2021-22 for implementing the Draft Delivery Plan for the expansion of early learning and child care across Argyll and Bute. The estimated costs are highly indicative and are subject to changing local circumstances, population fluctuation and the needs and wishes of parents. Profiled on the

template are estimated staffing costs, revenue costs including cost of providing lunches and running costs, and a detailed breakdown of potential capital project costs.

Projected:

- Capital Costs £8.9 million
- Revenue Costs £14.2 million

4.5 ELC Additional Graduate Plan

4.5.1 Scottish Government funding has been made available to each local authority to support the quality of provision through an allocation of 'Additional Graduates'. This allocation has been based on the 'Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SiMD) profile of each nursery within each local authority. Argyll and Bute has been allocated three Additional Graduates and plans are underway to ensure most effective use is made of this resource to enhance the quality of learning experiences and close the attainment gap. A plan has been submitted to Scottish Government for implementation within Argyll and Bute. Full implementation of the plan will be dependent on funding from the Scottish Government.

4.5.2 Based on SiMD data, it is the intention to allocate an additional graduate to work with ELC settings in Campbeltown, Dunoon and Bute. The additional graduates will be in place to support settings as of August 2018. The additional graduates will model effective practice through working with children and supporting colleagues with their professional development. The additional graduates will promote and deliver the key features of high quality ELC as outlined in the Quality Action Plan issued by the Scottish Government on 31st October and the Argyll and Bute ELC Draft Delivery Plan.

4.5.3 The Argyll and Bute Additional Graduate Plan was submitted to the Scottish Government on 29th September 2017

4.6 National Support Networks

4.6.1 The Scottish Future's Trust and the Scottish Government both have teams who can provide guidance and expertise to local authorities in planning and implementing ELC Draft Delivery Plans. In particular, direct support is being made available through the national 'ELC Delivery Team' in ensuring local authority delivery plans are robust and make most effective use of local assets. As part of an ongoing timeline of support and challenge activities from the Scottish Government, there will be a one-to-one meeting with Scottish Government representatives from the ELC Delivery team and members of the Argyll and Bute 'Early Years Strategy Group' to receive feedback on the ELC Draft Delivery Plan.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Scottish Government is committed to expanding the provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) from 600 hours to 1140hours by 2020. The expansion will prioritise a high quality experience for the child to capitalise on the significant contribution that ELC can make to a child's development and to closing the poverty related attainment gap
- 5.2 This paper outlines how Argyll and Bute will work towards delivery of 1140 hours and introduces the Authority's ELC Draft Delivery Plan for consideration by Community Services Committee.
- 5.3 The Argyll and Bute ELC Draft Delivery Plan will support the implementation of 1140 hours of ELC by 2020 through the engagement and support of a range of partners and Local Authority departments.
- 5.4 The Argyll and Bute ELC Draft Delivery Plan has been designed to reflect the differing opportunities and challenges within each of its localities. A high quality of ELC provision in Argyll and Bute will be achieved through focusing on Health and Wellbeing and family learning and engagement, as well as planning around outdoor learning, culture and partnerships
- 5.5 There are a range of factors, as outlined in the introduction, which will impact on and model future ELC service delivery.
- 5.6 The Draft Delivery Plan for 1140 hours was submitted to the Scottish Government on the 29th September.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy The ELC Draft Delivery Plan will assist the Education Service to implement and develop practice in line with 'Our Children, Their Future: Education Vision and Strategy', and Argyll and Bute Council's Education Annual Plan.
- 6.2 Financial Expansion is dependent on capital and revenue funding from the Scottish Government and its protection within a local context. At this stage the full details of the settlement are unknown. Full funding from Scottish Government will have to be available to Argyll & Bute Council to enable delivery of the plan.
- 6.3 Legal The ELC Draft Delivery Plan will assist the Education Service to implement the relevant sections contained within the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014. The Council was required to submit the ELC Draft Delivery Plan to Scottish Government by the end of September 2017.
- 6.4 HR Considerable workforce development and recruitment will be required to deliver the expectations set out in the Draft Delivery Plan.
- 6.5 Equalities The Draft Delivery Plan aims to respond to the challenge

- of reducing inequality and improving outcomes for children and their families within the diverse geographical and social context of Argyll and Bute.
- 6.6 Risk A number of risks exist at this stage including as yet no confirmed financial allocations beyond 2017-18, workforce recruitment and development and, as yet unknown levels of uptake within communities.
- 6.7 Customer Service Our youngest children and eligible 2 year olds will benefit most from the expansion of ELC. There are significant benefits for families with parents/carers able to use the extended hours to enable them to return to employment, reduce childcare costs and access training.

Ann Marie Knowles
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Argyll and Bute Early Years Strategy – 1140 Hours 2017-2020 (Draft Delivery Plan).

Appendix 2

Argyll and Bute Financial Template.

Appendix 3

Argyll and Bute Additional Graduate Plan.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

'A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland' - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/10/1665>

Early Learning and Childcare Trials – <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/early-years/ELCTrials/ELCTrials>

Additional Graduate Commitment –
<http://news.gov.scot/news/early-years-workforce-expansion>

‘Space to Grow’ – ELC Design Guidance -
<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/549001/space-to-grow.pdf>