

The background of the slide features a large, faint, light blue outline of the Seal of the State of Alaska. The seal includes a crown at the top with four stars, a shield with a ship on the left and an eagle on the right, and a banner at the bottom with the motto "A NE FOR A".

Agenda Item 6

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)
– Expansion to 1140 Hours by 2020
- Update Progress Report

Falkirk Council

Title: Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) – Expansion to 1140 Hours by 2020 - Update Progress Report

Meeting: Education Executive

Date: 5 September 2017

Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report updates the Education Executive on progress Children's Services have made on the planning and stepped implementation of their Early Years Expansion plans and seeks approval for several specific actions associated as set out in paragraph 2 below.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Education Executive is asked to:-

- (1) note the content of the report;**
- (2) agree the strategic approach to increase early years capacity within the private and voluntary sector as detailed in section 4.1;**
- (3) agree the proposed increase in Modern Apprenticeships (per 4.2);**
- (4) agree the recruitment of five Principal Early Years Officers (PEYO's) (per 4.2);**
- (5) agree that the Director of Children's Services progresses the deployment of childminders and report on progress with this to a future Education Executive meeting (per 4.5);**
- (6) agree that £120,000 is allocated to expand partnerships with private and voluntary sector nurseries (per 4.6);**
- (7) agree the increased hourly rate paid to partner nurseries from 2017/18 (per 4.6);**
- (8) agree that the quality standard criteria for private/voluntary sector nursery partnership is adopted as outlined in section 4.6;**
- (9) agree to the proposed changes in the Council's Early Years Admissions Policy as outlined in section 4.8.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Education Executive agreed plans on 13 June 2017 for the current year (2017/18) expansion projects and plans. Since then, the Scottish Government has published its guidance: *"Space to Grow - Design Guidance for Early Learning and Childcare and Out of School Care Services"*. Children's Services, along with colleagues in Development Services, have been working on producing information that will be used to prepare an Early Years Expansion Plan, which is due to be submitted to Scottish Government by 29 September 2017.

4. Considerations

An update on some of the key project work stream areas is provided below:-

4.1 Strategic approach to delivery of expansion to 1,140 hours by 2020

- Since August 2014, Falkirk has offered 600 hours per year of early learning and childcare to all 3 and 4 year olds (approximately 2,600 children) and eligible 2 year olds (approximately 100 children). The latest expansion to increase this entitlement to 1,140 hours per year provides an opportunity to build on and review further how early learning and childcare is delivered in Falkirk.
- Falkirk Council is committed to a model of delivery that adequately and flexibly meets the needs of children, families and staff while realising the ultimate aim of a fully expanded provision to 1,140 hours. To do so effectively, Children's Services will introduce a phased/stepped programme of implementation over the next three years 2017 - 2020.
- Children's Services proposes to continue with a mixed economy of childcare provision for 3 and 4 year olds with the Council provision being augmented by an additional **10%** of capacity being delivered through a partnership approach with private and voluntary nurseries and childminders'. Based on current capacity figures, this will mean an additional **214** places being available within the private and voluntary sector. The undernoted table summarises current and future proposed capacity figures:-

EARLY YEARS CAPACITY – 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS (600 HOUR PLACES)			
Falkirk Council Current Provision		Target by 2020 for Private & Voluntary Nurseries & Childminders	
Nursery Classes	3,479	10% Target	393
Early Learning & Childcare Centres	<u>448</u>	Less: Current Provision	<u>179</u>
TOTAL CURRENT CAPACITY	<u>3,927</u>	Targeted Additional Growth	<u>214</u>

- Action plans for local delivery in Falkirk are aligned to the national principles for expansion with the aim of achieving:-

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Quality- Accessibility- Flexibility- Affordability |
|---|

- Children's Services has established an ELC Expansion Project Board, which is chaired by a Head of Service and has key officers as members, including officers from a number of Falkirk Council services that are integral to the delivery of key aspects of provision.

- The Project Board has identified four operational priorities in the form of delivery work streams. Each work stream represents an area of priority that requires specific actions within identified timescales. The work streams are:-

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure - Workforce - Consultation and Communication - Partnerships and Community |
|---|

- Project teams have been established to progress each of these workstreams. Each project team reports to the Project Board as required.
- Phased planning requires work to be undertaken in stages beginning in 2017 for implementation by 2020. Children's Services is committed to prioritising areas of deprivation in Falkirk and continues to take account of the ranking of primary schools. Appendix 1 shows the current primary school deprivation rankings, based on both SIMD ratings and Free Meal entitlement rates.

4.2 Workforce Expansion and Development

- Children's Services is committed to increasing the early learning and childcare workforce to meet future service demands while supporting the current workforce to develop further their skills and practice.

Modern Apprentices

- There is a well-established tradition in Falkirk of supporting trainee early years officers to gain the entry level qualification. Trainees progress either via a college route (HNC Early Education and Childcare) or as Modern Apprentices (Level 3 SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People)). An audit to determine the capacity within ELC settings for supporting student early years officers has highlighted scope to increase the number of students in training at any one time.
- Children's Services proposes to incrementally increase the number of trainees via the Modern Apprenticeship route by **16** or **55%** over a 3 year period from 2017/18.

	Number of MAs	Increase from previous year (number)
2016-17	29	-
2017-18	37	8
2018-19	40	3
2019-20	45	5
	TOTAL	16

- To support the quality aspect of pre-service training and support, Children's Services has begun to review the programme for the training of Modern Apprentices. The secondment of two centrally-based SVQ assessors will allow for the moderation of standards among assessors who are based in ELC settings. In support of this revised model of delivery and of 1140 plans more generally, the Employment and Training Unit (ETU) has agreed to fund one secondee for 1 year.

As well as increasing the workforce with Modern Apprentices, mainly young people under 21 years, Children's Services is currently exploring opportunities to attract more mature people to the profession. To do this, Children's Services will work with the Employment Training Unit (ETU) to identify suitable adults whose prior experience or training are well matched to early learning and childcare. As well as this approach, Children's Services has begun to identify employees already working within the Service, for example as Support for Learning Assistants and who are interested in undertaking additional training and support to become an Early Years Officer.

- In response to the views of senior managers in ELC settings as to what should feature as core training for pre-service staff, the training programme has been improved and will be delivered by partners from Children's Services, Falkirk Council services and NHS partners.

Forth Valley College

- Children's Services has worked closely with Forth Valley College officers to support the increase in intake of HNC students. In session 2016/17, **16** students were supported to undertake part-time study. In 2017/18, an increased number of students undertook full and part-time study towards HNC.
- The table below shows the number of students that have been supported in Falkirk nurseries over the last 3 years.

Academic session	Student intake Full-time	Increase from previous year	Student intake Part-time	Increase from previous year
2015-16	32	-	0	-
2016-17	32	0	16	16
2017-18	48	16	32	16
TOTAL	112		48	

- Plans are underway to explore ways of working jointly with the College in the delivery of training programmes to all students.

Additional Graduate Commitment

From August 2017, Falkirk Council will receive Scottish Government funding for eight additional graduates to support young children who are at risk of low attainment. Graduates will be located in settings from August 2018 and will either be primary teachers with a specific early years qualification or hold a BA in Childhood Practice.

- In readiness for this implementation in 2018, Children's Services has committed to supporting staff undertaking the following qualifications in 2017/2018:

MEd in Early Years Pedagogue	2
BA Childhood Practice	5
PDA Childhood Practice Level 9 - SQA	10

Leadership development

- Children's Services recognises the existing level of skill and expertise within the existing workforce and regards these staff as central to supporting workforce development generally.
- Children's Services will over the course of the next year be considering and developing a new staffing structure across all ELC provision. This will be influenced by future capacity requirements and by collaborative working with other councils after Scottish Government consideration of each council's expansion plan. A report with proposals for this revised structure will be brought to a future meeting of the Education Executive.
- In the interim Children's Services proposes to appoint five Principal Early Years Officers (PEYOs) and initially deploy these staff to day nurseries, allowing experienced managers to undertake key tasks out with their own setting as determined by the Workforce Project Team and to provide management cover during periods when managers are on leave. Among the proposed key tasks are:-
 - provide management and leadership support in settings undertaking tests of change pilots;
 - offer training and support to practitioners in associated cluster settings, for example, to offer experience of working with developmentally younger children or in the provision of lunches to children;
 - provide quality assurance support.
- Teaching staff who have gained or are currently undertaking the Early Years Pedagogue post-graduate qualification will be invited to contribute to professional learning and development activities for early learning and childcare practitioners.

4.3 Current Year (2017/18) Infrastructure Expansion Plan Projects

Work is progressing on the delivery of the four projects, agreed at the June Education Executive meeting, at Langlees, Slamannan, Easter Carmuir and Avonbridge to ensure that service provision can commence as planned for the August 2018 intake.

4.4 Test of Change Pilot Projects

- The decision to offer parents greater flexibility of choice within four of our nursery classes from August 2017 has proven to be extremely popular as highlighted below:-

Nursery Class	Capacity AM : PM	Enrolments	No. taking Flexible Options		Additional Staffing (FTE)
Bantaskin PS	49 : 49	68	32	(47%)	1.6
Nethermains PS	37 : 37	39	15	(38%)	-
Victoria PS	50 : 50	63	17	(27%)	1.0
Wallacestone PS	80 : 80	96	15	(16%)	0.5
TOTALS	216 : 216	266	79	(30%)	3.1

- The Service will continue to review these figures with Headteachers throughout the term. Other schools with an existing nursery setting and with capacity suitable for flexible arrangements, will be considered as pilots in future phases.

Childminders

- Children's Services regards childminders as central to the delivery of 1,140 hours of high quality early learning and childcare. Since 2000, our third-sector partnership has provided childminding services for up to **12** children aged 0-5 years and has provided invaluable support to children and families who are in need or crisis.
- This partnership has created a strong foundation to explore the use of childminders for the delivery of core entitlement within a blended model of childcare. All childminders who are registered in the Falkirk area have been contacted as to whether or not they would like to participate in the 1140 expansion. Initial plans are likely to prioritise the use of childminders to families who live in more rural communities and whose access to services and amenities is a potential barrier to them receiving their full entitlement. A future report will be brought to Education Executive to update members on progress.

4.5 Use of Private & Voluntary Sector Nurseries

- Falkirk Council currently have Partnership Agreements with six local nursery establishments. The existing arrangements provide for:-

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for 3 & 4 year olds : 89,000 hours (148 FTE places) • Current Annual Cost : £295,000 |
|---|

In order to provide parents with increased flexibility of choice in a "stepped" manner, it is proposed that:-

- Any local private and voluntary nursery that meet Falkirk's quality/eligibility criteria (see below) will be able to apply for a Partnership Agreement.
- Partnership Agreements will be awarded, subject to demand levels and the level of budget that has been allocated. We expect new agreements initially to provide between **6 - 15** additional places or **3,600 – 9,000 hours** per establishment.

These agreements will be reviewed annually based on actual demand and the level of budget available.

- iii. For 2017/18, a further **£120,000** is allocated for this purpose which will provide for a further **48,000 hours** or **80 fte** places. This represents a **54%** increase on existing partnership arrangements.

Support for the expansion of the private and voluntary sector will also be offered by Development Services Business Gateway Team.

- iv. For 2017/18, it is proposed that the hourly rate paid to partner nurseries is increased by £0.05 from £3.70 to **£3.75** (1.3%).

This brings the hourly rate paid in-line with the hourly rate Children's Service currently charge for childcare provision.

Quality Standard Criteria for Private/Voluntary Sector Nursery Partnership

It is proposed that Children's Services adopts the undernoted criteria as the minimum standards that have to be met before a Partnership Agreement is considered:-

- i. The most recent Care Inspectorate Inspection report for the nursery must show a grading of "Good" or above in all of the 4 quality indicators.
- ii. All staff must be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and adhere to the SSSC Code of Practice.
- iii. Should subsequent Care Inspectorate gradings fall below the above standard, then Children's Services will review the Partnership Agreement in liaison with the nursery management.

4.6 **Proposed Changes to Existing Early Years Admissions Policy**

In order to provide parents with additional support and increase flexibility of choice, Children's Services has reviewed the current Admissions Policy and proposes making the following changes:-

i. Admission Policy – Proposed Changes

The current policy allows 3 year olds access to a nursery place from the start of the term following their 3rd birthday.

The proposed changes to the Admissions Policy, as shown in Appendix 2, will allow the majority of 3 year olds to have earlier access to an Early Years place.

Children's Services can accommodate this positive change within the resources currently available.

5. **Consultation**

- Discussions have taken place with local Private Nursery providers regarding how they can support the Council with the expansion plans.
- It is planned to have further meetings/discussions with local Private Nursery providers throughout the year.
- It is also planned to meet with the SCMA to discuss what support they can offer with childminding provision.

- Consultation on the property expansion options is already taking place with the Council's Asset Management Team to ensure that these align with the Council's Strategic Property Review.
- Meetings have also taken place with both the Scottish Government's Early Years Team and also the Scottish Future's Trust to ensure that they are aware of Falkirk's plans for further expansion.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial/Resources

(a) 2017/18 Current Estimated Capital Budget Plans £000's

Agreed Projects

• Langlees Primary School	800
• Slamannan Primary School	380
• Easter Carmuir's Primary School	20
• Avonbridge Primary School	20
• Contingency	33

FUNDING FOR 2017/18 **£ 1,253**

The above projections reflect the year 1 projects agreed by Education Executive in June 17 and allow some element for contingency.

(b) 2017/18 Current Estimated Revenue Budget Plans £000's

• Additional staff support for key central service teams	80
• Appointment of 5fte x PEYOs	225
• Additional 3.1fte x EYO's for Pilots	90
• Increased Modern Apprenticeships	70
• Childminders' Expansion (Provisional)	30
• Increased Private Nursery Partnerships Capacity	120
• Contingency	38

FUNDING FOR 2017/18 **£ 653**

Note

All of the above additional Revenue and Capital funding has been directly provided by the Scottish Government for Early Years expansion.

6.2 Legal

N/A

6.3 Risk

N/A

6.4 Equalities

- Where it is possible to do so, the deprivation rankings will be used as a basis to prioritise early years expansion plans. This demonstrates a clear commitment to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes in a targeted manner. The test of change projects were identified in schools that had sufficient available capacity.

6.5 Sustainability/Environmental Impact

N/A

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This is the second of what will be a regular update report to the Education Executive on how Children's Services plan to increase infrastructure and staffing resources to meet the Scottish Government's 2020 target. One of the next key milestones for this project will be the announcement of capital and revenue funding for 2018/19 later in 2017, following which Children's Services will confirm the next phase of expansion plans.

The infrastructure expansion plans are being progressed as a component of the Council's Strategic Property Review to ensure that investment in assets makes the most efficient use of Council property assets and offers creative solutions for early years provision. Children's Services and Development Services officers are working closely on this aspect of the programme and will bring forward proposals for agreement by the Executive.

Director of Children's Services

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Date:

Appendices

Appendix 1: Primary School's Nursery Class – Deprivation Rankings 2016/17
Appendix 2: Proposed Changes to Admissions Policy (Early Years)

List of Background Papers:

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

- A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland – Consultation Analysis Report (March 2017).
- Scottish Government Revenue and Capital Funding Letters.
- Response to Scottish Government Consultation – A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland (Special Education Executive 10 January 2017).

PRIMARY SCHOOL'S NURSERY CLASS – DEPRIVATION RANKINGS 2016/17

PRIMARY SCHOOL	DEPRIVATION RATING	NOTES
Limerigg	1	No nursery class
Slamannan/Heathrigg	2	
Whitecross	3	
Avonbridge	4	
Carmuir	5	
Langlees	6	
Hallglen	7	
Victoria	8	
Easter Carmuir	9	
Bainsford	10	
Bowhouse	11	
Beancross	12	
Sacred Heart	13	
Nethermains	14	
Drumbowie	15	No nursery class
Westquarter	16	
Denny	17	
Grange	18	
Antonine	19	
St Francis	20	
Kinneil	21	
Ladeside	22	
Bantaskin	23	
Moray	24	
St Joseph's	25	
Stenhousemuir	26	
Bankier	27	
Bo'ness Public	28	
Bonnybridge	29	
Carronshore	30	
St Andrew's	31	
St Patrick's	32	
St Mary's	33	
Bothkennar	34	No nursery class
Maddiston	35	
California	36	
Deanburn	37	
Laurieston	38	
Larbert Village	39	
Dunipace	40	
St Bernadette's	41	
Comely Park	42	
St Margaret's	43	
Carron	44	
Head of Muir	45	
Shieldhill	46	
Airth	47	
Blackness	48	No nursery class
Kinnaird	49	
Wallacestone	50	

Notes:

Ranking is calculated using on the percentage of the school roll living in SIMD deciles 1-3 and those with free meal entitlement (FME)

PROPOSED CHANGES TO ADMISSIONS POLICY (EARLY YEARS)

Current Policy (Aug 15)

Section 2.3

A child in his/her ante-pre-school year will be eligible for entry to early learning and childcare after the child's third birthday on three agreed dates. The dates have been set by the Scottish Government and are:-

- for entry in the autumn term (August), children born from 1 March to 31 August;
- for entry in the spring term (January), children born from 1 September to 31 December;
- for entry in the Summer term (April), children born from 1 January to 29 February.

Proposed Change to Policy

Section 2.3

A child in his/her ante-pre-school year will be eligible for entry to early learning and childcare after the child's third birthday as follows:-

- for children who reach 3 years of age between 1 March to 31 July, the start date will be at the beginning of the Autumn Term (August);
- for children reaching 3 years between 1 August to 29 February of the following year, the start date will be the month after the child's 3rd birthday.