

The background of the slide features the coat of arms of the Government of Nunavut. It is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a stylized building. The top-right quadrant shows a caribou head with antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a sailing ship on wavy lines representing water. The bottom-right quadrant shows a bird with spread wings. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. Below the shield is a banner with the text "ANĖ FOR A'".

Agenda Item 9

Early Learning and Childcare – 2020 Expansion Plan

Falkirk Council

Title: Early Learning and Childcare – 2020 Expansion Plan

Meeting: Education Executive

Date: 23 January 2018

Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Education Executive of:-

- feedback from the recent liaison meetings held with the Scottish Government's Early Years Team; and
- proposed updates and changes to Children's Services Strategic Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Expansion Plan.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Education Executive is asked to:-

- (1) note the feedback on recent liaison meetings held with the Scottish Government's Early Years Team;**
- (2) endorse and agree the proposed changes to be made to the Strategic ELC Expansion Plan; and**
- (3) agree that the Director of Children's Services submits further data as requested by the Scottish Government (section 4.3 (v) and provides regular updates to the Education Executive on plans and progress with ELC expansion plans as they develop.**

3. Background

3.1 Submission of Strategic ELC Expansion Plan

As discussed and endorsed by the Education Executive on 7 November 2017, the initial ELC Expansion Plan was submitted to the Scottish Government by 29 September 2017.

In addition, detailed statistical and financial information was also submitted within a set “Financial Template” document.

3.2 Liaison Meeting with Scottish Government’s Early Years Team

As previously stated at Education Executive, it is fully accepted that our Expansion Plans will be working documents which will develop, change and evolve over time and as certainty is received from the Scottish Government regarding future financial resources.

Officers from Children’s Services met with Scottish Government’s Early Years Team (SGEYT) on 30 October 2017 to discuss and review Falkirk’s initial Strategic ELC Expansion Plan.

4. Considerations

4.1 Feedback from Liaison Meeting on 30 October 2017

The key points arising from this meeting were that Local Authorities:-

- (1) should ensure that their actual planned capacity is proportionate to the expected demand from all qualifying children;
- (2) should maximise the use of existing properties, partner provision and outdoor space before extensions or new build options are considered;
- (3) received clarification on the most appropriate way to undertake some of the estimated cost calculations relating to a range of expansion plan options using a range of financial indices. This included assessing the level of flexible provision options that should be embedded in expansion plans; and
- (4) are encouraged to utilise and develop outdoor areas as a key component of their expansion plans, and as future funding announcements are made.

4.2 Further Scottish Government Guidance

Following up the initial liaison/engagement meetings held with all 32 Local Authorities, the Scottish Government wrote to all Local Authorities on 30 November 2017. This letter sought to:-

- (1) provide an update on the initial engagement process;
- (2) confirm that there were significant differences between initial revenue and capital cost estimates prepared by the Scottish Government and those reflected in Local Authorities’ expansion plans;

- (3) provide further advice and clarity to Local Authorities on what elements and areas within their initial plans needed further information, review, development and re-assessment; and
- (4) confirm that Scottish Government will announce a one year revenue and funding package for 2018/19 as part of the Scottish Draft Budget proposals.

4.3 Proposed Key Changes in Falkirk's ELC Strategic Expansion Plan

Following feedback received from the SGEYT, and considering the further guidance recently received from the Scottish Government, particularly around:-

- parental flexibility levels;
- capacity levels compared to demands (in annualised hours); and
- maximising use of existing assets (including outdoor space).

Children's Services have reviewed existing expansion plans and are proposing the following changes:-

(i) Maximum Demand (Annualised Hours)

Projected uptake in 2020 : **4,068** (Number of eligible 2s, 3 & 4 year olds)
Maximum Annual Demand (Hours) : **4,637,520** (4,068 x 1,140)

(ii) Falkirk's Establishments ELC Availability

Taking account of the expected levels of parental flexibility to be incorporated into expansion plans, the following proposals are now being made:-

<u>Establishment</u>	<u>Opening Hours</u>	<u>Term Time</u> (38 weeks)	<u>Full Year</u> (50 weeks)
Nursery Classes (TBC)	09:00–15:00	Yes	No
Nursery Classes (TBC)	08:00-18:00	Yes	No
ELC Centres/Day Nurseries	08:00-18:00	No	Yes
Private Nurseries	08:00-18:00	No	Yes

These proposed changes will allow Children's Services to:-

- align 1,140 hour provision to that of the primary school day in relation to nursery classes;
- offer full day provision at some nursery classes where there may be some distance to the nearest ELC centre or Day Nursery or where rurality may be a factor; and
- offer parents the provision that best suits individual family needs. Appendix 1 summarises this position and will be included in the next expansion plan update.

Children's Services are currently re-assessing this revised pattern of availability on an equitable ward by ward basis and will provide further details on this to the next Education Executive meeting.

(iii) Revised Planned ELC Capacity In 2020

If the current proposals are approved by Education Executive, Children's Services will prepare an analysis of planned capacity provision on a ward by ward basis, which will cover:-

- Nursery Classes – Term Time (09:00 – 15:00);
- Nursery Classes – Term Time (08:00 – 18:00);
- ELC Centres / Day Nurseries – 50 weeks (08:00 – 18:00); and
- Private Nurseries

(iv) Financial Resources for 2018/19

The Scottish Government as part of their Draft Scottish Budget, have allocated the following total resources for 2018/19:-

Revenue	£ 52.2m
Capital	£ 150m

At the time of writing this report, the exact allocations for each Council have not been released. Once these are provided, Children's Services will prepare a report for the Education Executive with the proposed infrastructure investment plans for 2018/19.

(v) Submission of Further Expansion Plan Data

The Scottish Government have intimated that they will be asking Councils to re-submit expansion plan information and data in February 2018. Although (at the time of writing this report), the exact format of this data submission has not been received, it very much re-emphasises the fact that these Expansion Plans remain "work in progress" and as reported previously, will constantly change and evolve throughout the coming months.

The Education Executive is however asked to approve that the Director of Children's Services submit these plans by the required date and report on this to the next Education Executive meeting.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial/Resources

These are shown in section 4.3(iv).

5.2 Legal

Statutory guidance has been issued in relation to early years learning and childcare duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

5.3 Risk

The key inherent risks associated with this major project are:-

- delivery of infrastructure expansion projects on time;
- ensuring there is sufficient financial resources available; and
- ensuring that staff are recruited on time.

5.4 Equalities

None

5.5 Sustainability/Environmental Impact

None

6. Conclusions

6.1 The proposed amendments to the ELC Expansion Plans reflect the changes adopted following discussions with the SGEYT and reflect the need to have provided additional infrastructure capacity to enable parents to have a reasonable and proportionate level of flexible choice options.

- Children's Services Early Years Team will continue to liaise and work Collaboratively with teams from our Regional Collaborative partners and internally with Development Services teams engaged in the Strategic Property Review and Architectural Design to ensure expansion is undertaken in a co-ordinated and pragmatic manner, which can demonstrate best value.
- It is expected that these Expansion Plans will remain as 'work-in-progress' and will continue to evolve and develop throughout the lifetime of this major investment project.

Director of Children's Services

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Date: 8 December 2017

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Falkirk's EY1140 Planned Provision

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:

- None

Options Available to Parents

The table below shows the various options that will be offered to parents to deliver 1140 hours. Further flexibility will be offered during school holiday periods through existing ELC Centres and a selection of nursery classes where demand exists.

Establishment-type	Options to parents	No. of hours per year
Nursery Class within a Primary School Open 9am-3pm (38 weeks per year) Term Time	Core hours aligned with the primary school day 9am – 3pm	<u>1140 Available Hours</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 hours per day • 30 hours per week • Term Time only
Nursery Class within a Primary School Open 8am-6pm (38 weeks per year) Term Time	Flexible option for 6 hour sessions within the opening hours available <i>Further flexibility can be offered in addition to the above (wraparound care) at a charge to parent</i>	<u>1900 Available Hours</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 hours per day • 30 hours per week • Term Time only
Early Learning and Childcare Centres Open 8am-6pm (50 weeks per year) Full Year	Attendance times are negotiated with the provider – Falkirk Council fund a maximum of 1140 hours <i>Further flexibility can be offered in addition to the above (wraparound care) at a charge to parents</i>	<u>2500 Available Hours</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible hours • negotiated between parent and centre
Voluntary/Private Provider and Childminders (up to 50 weeks p.a.)	Attendance times are negotiated with the provider – Falkirk Council fund a maximum of 1140 hours	Flexible hours negotiated between parent and provider

Demand for school holiday provision is met currently through ELC Centres and these will continue to operate 50 weeks per year in the 1140 model. School holiday provision is also made in private partner nurseries and this will continue.