

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Capital Programme Committee
DATE	12 September 2019
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Seaton Nursery Progress Report
REPORT NUMBER	RES/19/281
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	John Wilson
REPORT AUTHOR	Colin Kemp
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the progress of Seaton Nursery. This project will help meet Aberdeen City Council's Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan objectives by working with the Education Operations teams to help meet the Councils commitment to expand funded early learning and childcare from 600 hours to 1,140 hours by 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Note the updates to the programme milestones and the financial implications.
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Officer Capital to prepare an update to the 22 January 2020 Committee

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is committed to expanding the provision of funded early learning and childcare from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020. The expansion should prioritise a high-quality experience for the child to capitalise on the significant contribution that Early Learning and Childcare can make to a child's development and to closing the poverty related attainment gap.

- 3.2 All Local Authorities were asked to develop an Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Delivery Plan to guide expansion plans. The Aberdeen City Plan highlights a focus on the provision of outdoor learning to support wellbeing, on accessibility to increase uptake, on delivery of Family Learning to fully capitalise on the expansion programme and on the provision of a 'localised offer' to meet the needs of families within each community.
- 3.3 In September 2017 the Education & Children's Services Committee endorsed a provisional ELC Delivery Plan which detailed three proposed phases of work.

Site Assessments

- 3.4 Following approval of the delivery plan a review of capacity and demand across the city was carried out and several properties were identified with the potential to deliver the projects objectives and included in the grant submission for ELC funding.
- 3.5 Following confirmation of the Early Learning and Childcare Capital Allocation to Aberdeen City Council the Capital Section were appointed to carry out feasibility studies to determine the options available at each site. On completion these were submitted to the Corporate Landlord and Operations for consultation.
- 3.6 Following a review of the options, including a further review of demand and capacity, the preferred option was presented to the ELC Programme Board for discussion and approval. The Project Board agreed to take forward the works to reconfigure and refurbish the interior of the former Woodlands School.

Design Development

- 3.7 Following the decision at the Council Budget meeting on 5th March 2019 appointments have been issued to the appropriate consultants to progress the design and undertake all necessary procurement exercises to deliver the project in accordance with the Early Learning and Childcare expansion programme and in accordance with the principals of the specific Capital Grant award.

Consultation

- 3.8 Prior to the Council meeting in March consultations were held with stakeholders, as part of the design development further consultation will be carried out with stakeholders.

Programme Milestones

Key Milestone	Programmed Date	Progress
Design Sign off by Client	May 2019	Completed
Planning Consent	August 2019	Completed
Building Warrant	August 2019	Progressing

Issue Tender	October 2019	No Change
Site Start Date	November 2019	No Change
Completion Date	July 2020	Following a review of the project outcomes the design has been updated to reflect the current and future demand and proposed operational models. These changes have reduced the estimated programme period

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Seaton Nursery project forms part of the overall Aberdeen City Council's Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme of works.
- 4.2 All staffing and other support costs associated with the ELC Delivery Plan will be funded from the Early Learning and Childcare revenue grant funding allocation for 2019-20 to 2021-22.
- 4.3 It should be noted that current tender returns across the public sector have had variances of up to 30%.

Allocated Budget from the Capital Grant		Change Orders	Estimated Final Account
£2.1m	Following a review of the project outcomes the design has been updated to reflect the current and future demand and proposed operational models. These changes have reduced the estimated final account	£-200k	£1.9m

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All Local Authorities will have a duty to provide 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare for eligible two-year olds and all three and four year olds by 2020. This project forms part of the ELC Delivery Plan that will help Aberdeen City Council manage the transformational change necessary to deliver expanded services by 2020.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	The expansion of funded Early Learning and Childcare will	M	Cost checks will be carried out throughout the design stage to

	require very careful budget monitoring and financial planning to mitigate the risk of funding being insufficient to realise the expansion.		monitored estimates against the allocated budget. These will also be reported monthly to the ELC Programme Board.
Legal	The risk of not being in a position to offer sufficient 1140 hours places from August 2020 as require by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.	M	This is being mitigated through early planning, clear governance arrangements and close working between teams across Aberdeen City Council to ensure that the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare is being planned for across all teams
Employee	Not being able to recruit sufficient numbers of Practitioners to support the delivery of the Expansion is a high risk.	M	A detailed workforce development plan has been included within the Delivery Plan. This plan includes the establishment of an Early Learning and Childcare Academy to increase the number of practitioners and also increase the number of routes into the profession to ensure that the risk remains low.
Customer	There are significant benefits for families who will be able to use the extended hours to enable them to return to employment or access training. There is a need to undertake research to determine how best to design services that will have the greatest impact on children and families to ensure that we maximise the reach of the expansion.	L	The Education Service will support this work to identify the features of expanded provision most likely to improve outcomes for vulnerable families to ensure that we capitalise on the opportunities offered through this expansion to directly improve outcomes for children and families. Intergenerational approaches will be supported wherever possible due to the significantly positive impact this has on all parties. This approach will ensure that the risk remains low.
Environment	Environmental assessments will be considered prior to confirming any sites for expansion or extension and feasibility studies will be undertaken where appropriate	L	This level of scrutiny and by following of Aberdeen City Council's Building Performance Policy will ensure that environmental risks remain low.
Technology	There is a risk that technology is not in place to support the transformation and particularly the 'funding follows the child' model being advocated.	M	Work is on-going across The Scottish Government and The Northern Alliance to mitigate this risk to ensure it remains low.
Reputational	The reputational risk of not being in a position to offer sufficient 1140 hours places to meet demand from August 2020.	M	This is being mitigated through early planning, clear governance arrangements and close working between teams across Aberdeen City Council to ensure that the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare is being planned for across all teams.

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	The project outlined in this report is part of Aberdeen City Council's Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Expansion Programme. The expansion of ELC requires an investment in our Early Years Estate as well as an investment in staffing to ensure we are providing high quality provision that meets the needs of children and families in all localities. To this end, the proposals within the report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 1 – 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026. The investment in our estate is interlinked with the investment in our workforce. To staff the expanding estate the Early Years team will contribute to the diversification of the local economy by offering flexible pathways into the Early Years Sector and increasing the number of people employed in this growth sector.
Prosperous People	The proposal within this report supports the LOIP Stretch Outcome 3 – 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026. The project(s) outlined in this report will be designed to support outdoor learning and the free flow of direct access to the outside environment. Outdoor learning, exercise and play benefits pre-school children by encouraging them to be physically active. This will help address many of the health challenges outlined in the LOIP. Children will have daily access to outdoor play and will regularly experience outdoor play in a natural environment as part of their ELC funded offer. Outdoor learning will significantly contribute to a child's development and wellbeing.
Prosperous Place	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026. To deliver the 1140 funded hours necessitates the building of several new ELC settings and a reconfiguration and extension of current provision. Increasing the accessibility of provision will contribute to transforming the lives of families across Aberdeen City. There are gaps in the provision in our three Priority Areas, which are home to the highest proportion of pre-school children and the highest concentration of families living in poverty. Every child attending a funded early learning and childcare (ELC) session will receive a healthy meal. The accessibility of provision will lead to an increase in the uptake of the ELC funded offer and help ensure that no child in ELC will go hungry.
Enabling Technology	

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	The Duty of Due Regard applies to all pupils in receipt of early learning and childcare provided under section 47 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 The proposals have considered inequalities of outcomes for those pupils experiencing them and plans to address them and comply with the (Education (additional support for learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 Section 3B.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Item 10.02 Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan; Education and Children's Services Committee 14th September 2017

Item 4(b) General Fund Revenue Budget - 2.1.3; Council Budget Meeting 5th March 2019

Item 8.7 ELC Seaton Nursery; Capital Programme Committee 03 June 2019

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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