

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Capital Programme Committee
DATE	28 January 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	ELC Programme Progress Report
REPORT NUMBER	RES/20/208
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	John Wilson
REPORT AUTHOR	Colin Kemp
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the progress of ELC Capital Projects. These projects 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 Council's 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 that the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme of works forms part of the overall Aberdeen City Council Capital Plan.
- 2.2 Note the progress made with the overall delivery of projects in lieu of the Covid-19 pandemic impact.

### 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 Local Authorities' duty to provide 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare for eligible two-year olds and all three and four year olds by August 2020 has been revoked by the Scottish Parliament. However, a new date has now been agreed, refer to paragraph 3.12. 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.

- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 In September 2017 the Education & Children's Services Committee endorsed a provisional ELC Delivery Plan which detailed three proposed phases of work.

### **Committee Approvals**

- 3.5 Following the ELC Programme Board approval of the preferred options these were referred to elected members for approval at the following meetings:
- Council Budget Meeting 05 March 2019 (Phase 1 projects)
  - City Growth and Resources Committee 26 September 2019 (Phase 2 Projects)
  - City Growth and Resources Committee 05 December 2019 (Phase 3 Projects)

### **Consultation**

- 3.6 Prior to the reports being prepared for the committee meetings consultations were held with stakeholders, as part of the design development further consultation will be carried out with stakeholders.

### **Site Assessments**

- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 Following confirmation of the Early Learning and Childcare Capital Grant Allocation to Aberdeen City Council the Capital Cluster 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 Clusters for consultation.
- 3.9 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.

### **COVID-19 Impact**

- 3.10 Following the Prime Minister's lockdown instruction on the 23 March 2020, and the subsequent Scottish Government guidance clearly indicating that all non-essential construction work should cease, the main contractor notified Aberdeen City Council they had taken the decision to stop work and close down all ELC construction sites with immediate effect.

This action, together with the stay at home advice, had a direct impact of the ability of the majority of the external consultants to maintain a continuity of service and their ability to provide a full service supporting the ELC programme of work.

- 3.11 The Scottish Government on the 30 March 2020 removed the duty on Local Authorities to make available 1140 hours of ELC to all eligible 2-year olds and all 3 and 4-year-old children from August 2020. On the aforementioned date, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No.2) Revocation Order 2020 was enacted. The Order revoked the change to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, which required education authorities to secure 1140 hours of ELC provision for all eligible children from August 2020. The removal of the statutory duty was in recognition of the negative impact of coronavirus (Covid-19) restrictions and the ongoing response to the pandemic on planned work to deliver 1140 hours

### **Revised Timeline: ELC Joint Delivery Board Recommendation**

- 3.12 The implementation of ELC expansion is overseen by the ELC Joint Delivery Board. The ELC Joint Delivery Board met on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 to consider a report on the revised date for full implementation of the expansion to 1140 hours. The Joint Delivery Board has recommended to Scottish Ministers and COSLA leaders that August 2021 should be the date to reinstate the 1140 hours duty. On 14 December 2020, this recommendation was agreed by Scottish Ministers and COSLA Leaders.

Further recommendations by the ELC Joint Delivery Board are the following:

- Agree that where there is potential to deliver expanded hours ahead of that date, this will be delivered to families;
- Agree the end goal of the expansion is “That all eligible children whose families wish to access up to 1140 hours should be able to do so, in a way which meets the national standard and the principles of funding follows the child”;
- Agree that from August 2021 the eligibility for the 2-year-old ELC offer is extended to include children with a parent with care experience. Legislation for this commitment will be developed by the Scottish Government in due course.

### **Programme Milestones**

- 3.13 Since Aberdeen City Council moved into Tier 4 restrictions works onsite have continue following a review of health and safety measures and in compliance with Scottish Government guidance
- 3.14 The design team and main contractor continue to evaluate the impact on the programme of Government guidance and the requirement to comply with physical distancing measures.

3.15 Since the update to the committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 one further project has been completed bringing the total completed to five. Appendix 2 summarises the current projected programme dates of all 27 No. projects, these are subject to Scottish Government exercising their statutory authority and understanding that there could be further lockdowns or restrictions.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme of works forms part of the Aberdeen City Councils Capital Programme.

4.2 All staffing and other support costs associated with the ELC Delivery Plan are being funded from the Early Learning and Childcare revenue grant funding allocation.

4.3 The introduction of, and the requirement to comply with, Government guidance and statutes has added significant additional costs to both legally committed and future projects. The impact on these were reviewed by the design team and main contractor in June 2020 and a report was submitted to the ELC Project Board at the end of June 2020.

The report highlighted the potential financial impact and made recommendations to keep the overall programme within the approved budget. The recommendations re-profiled the individual projects and suggested potential savings that did not require projects to be cancelled and maintain the additional capacity requested by Education.

4.4 Since the update to the committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November one tender has been returned and is being evaluated. Appendix 1 has a breakdown of the project allocations and current estimated final account figure. The current estimated costs reflect ongoing design development and discussions with the design teams and main contractor to reduce the Covid-19 impact costs and potential delays while maintaining the quality of the finished designs.

4.5 The current budget spend is as follows;

<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>Spend to date</b>
<b>£23.04m</b>	<b>£ 13.50m</b>

#### **Contingency Planning**

4.6 There are ongoing discussions with the Early Learning, Corporate Landlord and Capital teams to development options to ensure the 1140 hour entitlement is available in the event a project is delayed or programmed completed beyond any new date the Scottish Government set for Local Authorities to deliver 1140 hours of early learning and childcare.

Where appropriate, contingency planning has been included in the current estimated final account.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The legal implications arising out of the recommendations are referred to within the body of the report.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	<p>Late delivery will impact on the level of learning provision which can be provided.</p> <p>The statutory duty for local authorities to provide 1140 hours is now August 2021.</p> <p>The risk is that the time limit introduced is not met</p>	M	<p>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.</p>
<b>Compliance</b>	<p>Not meeting the statutory date for delivery.</p>	M	<p>All teams are working towards delivering the projects as soon as possible taking cognisance of work restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
<b>Operational</b>	<p>Covid-19 pandemic restrictions impacting on work practices.</p>	M	<p>All teams are working towards delivering the projects as soon as possible taking cognisance of work restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
<b>Financial</b>	<p>The expansion of funded Early Learning and Childcare will require very careful budget monitoring and financial planning to mitigate the risk of funding being insufficient to realise the expansion.</p>	M	<p>Cost checks will be carried out throughout the design stage to monitored estimates against the allocated budget. These will also be reported monthly to the ELC Programme Board.</p> <p>Costs reviewed and adjusted to cover potential</p>

	Government exercising their statutory powers to manage their Covid-19 health response including future lock downs		costs associated with compliance with current Government guidance. VE engineering exercise carried out to keep costs within the approved budget.
<b>Reputational</b>	The reputational risk of not being in a position to offer sufficient 1140 hours places to meet demand from August 2021.	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.
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	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.

## 7. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Programmes in the Policy Statement include working with our partners to ensure the city has the required infrastructure; completion of school estate review (P1) and development of estate strategy for next 5-10 years (P2); work with the Scottish Government to provide flexible and affordable childcare for working families on the lowest incomes; commit to closing the attainment gap in</p>	<p>The projects 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 childcare education learning targets.</p>

education while working with partners across the city;	
<b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>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.</p>
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>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.</p>
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<p>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</p>

	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.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b> Strategic Development Plan; Local Development Plan	The proposals in this report will impact on the consideration of future regional and city strategies with respect to education and learning.
<b>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</b> Legislation which places a range of statutory duties on the Council, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.	The statutory duty for local authorities to provide 1140 hours by August 2020 has been revoked and the new date is August 2021.

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Item 10.02 Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan; Education and Children's Services Committee 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- 9.2 Item 4(b) General Fund Revenue Budget - 2.1.3; Council Budget Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## 10. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Project Estimated Final Accounts  
Appendix 2 – Project Milestones

## 11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix 1 – Project Estimated Final Accounts

Project	Initial Allocation from the Capital Grant	Re-profiled project costs	Budget Variation **	Current Estimated Final Account
Duthie Park	£ 0.65m	£1.10m	£ 0.00m	£1.10m
Seaton Nursery	£ 2.10m	£1.73m	-£ 0.05m	£1.68m
Tillydrone Nursery	£ 1.25m	£2.35m	£ 0.04m	£2.39m
Northfield Cummings Park Nursery	£ 2.40m	£2.65m	£ 0.09m	£2.74m
Quarryhill Nursery	£0.47m	£0.63m	-£ 0.06m	£0.57m
Westpark Nursery	£ 0.50m	£0.25m	£ 0.00m	£0.25m
Kingsford Nursery	£ 1.75m	£1.95m	-£ 0.19m	£1.76m
Woodside Nursery	£ 2.00m	£2.17m	£ 0.16m	£2.33m
Tullos Nursery	£ 0.65m	£0.82m	£ 0.28m	£1.10m
Culter Nursery	£ 1.40m	£1.73m	£ 0.00m	£1.73m
Cults Nursery	£ 1.82m	£1.85m	£ 0.06m	£1.91m
Hazlehead Park	£ 0.25m	£0.25m	£ 0.00m	£0.25m
Kingswells Nursery	£ 0.05m	£0.09m	£ 0.00m	£0.09m
Kirkhill Nursery	£ 1.75m	£0.55m	£ 0.00m	£0.55m
Broomhill Nursery	£ 1.61m	£1.85m	£ 0.04m	£1.89m
Charleston Nursery	£ 0.12m	£0.07m	£ 0.00m	£0.07m
Gilcomstoun Nursery	£ 2.00m	£2.38m	£ 0.01m	£2.39m
Loirston Nursery	£ 0.13m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Danestone Nursery	£ 1.67m	£0.55m	£ 0.00m	£0.55m
Dyce Nursery	£ 0.07m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Glashieburn Nursery	£ 0.07m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Forehill Nursery	£ 0.07m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Fernilea Nursery	£ 0.07m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Scotstown Nursery	£ 0.07m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Kittybrewster Nursery	£ 0.07m	£0.10m	£ 0.00m	£0.10m
Greenbrae Nursery	£5k	£6.4k	£ 0.00m	£6.4k
Walker Road Nursery	£5k	£11.2k	£ 0.00m	£11.2k

### Note

1. The above figures includes an allowance for contingencies
2. The above figures do not include £1.1m of revenue grant allocation for staffing and support costs
3. The Budget variation is the difference between the current estimated final account and the re-profiled project cost

Appendix – 2 Project Milestones

Project Status : January 2021									
			Estimated Site Start	Estimated Practical Completion	Estimated Handover	Tendering Status	Accepted	Works Completed	Comments
Phase 1	7969	Duthie Park	Winter 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Returned	No	No	The tender has been returned and is being checked
	7974	Seaton Nursery	Winter19/20	Winter 20	Winter 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Complete
	7975	Tillydrone Nursery	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	7990	Northfield Cummings Park	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	7991	Quarryhill School	Winter19/20	Autumn 20	Autumn 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	7992	Westpark School	Re-design TBC	Re-design TBC	Re-design TBC	Not Started	No	No	New proposals agreed and being developed, work planned for Summer 2021
	7993	Kingsfords School	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	7996	Woodside School	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	7997	Tullos School	Winter19/20	Autumn 20	Autumn 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
Phase 2	8000	Culter School	Autumn 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	8001	Cults School	Autumn 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	8004	Hazlehead Park	Spring 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Planning Application submitted
	8006	Kingswells School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8007	Kirkhill School	Spring 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	New proposals agreed and being developed
	8017	Broomhill School	Winter 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	8018	Charleston School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	New proposals agreed and being developed
	8019	Gilcomstoun School	Autumn 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	8020	Loirston School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	New proposals agreed and being developed
Phase 3	8022	Danestone	Spring 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	New proposals agreed and being developed
	8002	Dyce	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8014	Glasheburn	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8015	Forehill	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8016	Fernielea	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8023	Scotsown	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8024	Kittybrewster	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Not Started	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Summer 2021
	8003	Greenbrae	Summer 20	Summer 20	Summer 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8026	Walker Road	Summer 20	Summer 20	Summer 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed

Colour Legend	
	Design Complete
	Legally Committed
	VE re-design ongoing
	Completed