

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Capital Programme Committee
DATE	22 September 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	ELC Programme Progress Report
REPORT NUMBER	RES/21/209
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	John Wilson
REPORT AUTHOR	Colin Kemp
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

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 1140 hours. The timeline for delivery was originally in 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic has since been extended to August 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 note that the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme of works forms part of the overall Council Capital Programme; and
- 2.2 note the significant progress made with the overall delivery of projects despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is committed to expanding the provision of funded early learning and childcare from 600 hours to 1140 hours. The timeline for delivery was originally in 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic has since been extended to August 2021. 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.

Progress Summary

- 3.2 At the start of the new term beginning on 17 August 2021, we welcomed children and families into our new Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) facilities. The capital programme comprises of work to 27 ELC settings. In the event of

any delays to building completion times, robust contingency arrangements are in place and no child is at risk of not receiving their 1140 hours entitlement.

The ELC board continue to monitor and manage building works due to Covid restrictions that are impacting on the construction sector. However, we were able to deliver 1140 hours of ELC to all eligible families by August 2021. We achieved this by having mitigation plans in place to manage and support the temporary placement of children in other support settings.

The capital programme is comprised of 27 projects:

- 8 are new standalone facilities,
- 2 are extensions and significant refurbishments of a standalone nursery,
- 1 is an extension to a school to form a new nursery,
- 2 are significant refurbishments within an existing school nursery,
- 1 is a significant refurbishment of a non-operational building to convert it into a new nursery,
- 1 is a significant refurbishment and extension to non-operational building to convert it into a new nursery, and
- 12 are minor work refurbishments of existing nursery settings.

Programme

- 3.3 Works onsite from have continued since June 2020, health and safety measures are reviewed to ensure compliance with Scottish Government guidance.
- 3.4 The design team and main contractor continue to evaluate the impact on the programme with regard to Scottish Government guidance and the requirement to comply with physical distancing measures.
- 3.5 As of work week ending 10 September 2021, 24 projects have been completed and handed over and 1 is onsite and 2 will be starting in the next month
- 3.6 The programme is still being impacted by supply chain issues, material shortages.

Facilities in Use

- 3.7 We have continued to work with the settings after handover to ensure they get the best possible experience from their new or refurbished nursery. The feedback so far has been good with particular emphasis on how the settings can offer a positive learning experience for the children, regardless of if being a new build or a smaller refurbishment.

Staff have also commented positively on the facilities and the opportunities this will give them to work with families and also support staff working in settings that have extended operational hours.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme of works forms part of the Council's Capital Programme following a successful bid to the Scottish Government for early learning and childcare funding.
- 4.2 As detailed in previous reports to Capital Programme Committee, the pandemic has impacted on the delivery of various projects in the Capital programme and resulted in extended timelines for delivery. With regards to the ELC programme, officers have kept these challenges under review, and also the procurement routes available for delivery as the various projects involved have developed and been taken to market.
- 4.3 For transparency, it has been determined that all infrastructure requirements of the ELC programme should be consolidated within the Capital programme. This also now aligns with the procurement route for the supply, delivery and installation of the new furniture being arranged through the main contractor for the ELC construction works.
- 4.4 The financial envelope for the ELC Capital programme can therefore be updated to be:

	£m
Original ELC Capital programme budget	23.040
Spend to date	20.414

- 4.5 As the programme of works nears completion, we are in a better position to estimate the monetary impact of COVID. Extracting the costs across the whole programme of works, as of the end of August 2021, the estimated cost is circa £1.1m.
- 4.6 As a result of the covid impact on internal and external staff resources across the full ELC Programme, at the present time it is impossible to predict the actual final costs of each project. This task is on-going and the project team are working with their appointed cost advisors and the appointed contractor to close out each project's final costs.
- 4.7 In the meantime, the ELC Programme Board are continuing to monitor and to adjust resource allocations.

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
Strategic Risk	<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>	L	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.
Compliance	Not meeting the statutory date for delivery.	L	All teams are working towards delivering the projects as soon as possible taking cognisance of work restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.
Operational	Covid-19 pandemic restrictions impacting on work practices.	M	All teams are working towards delivering the projects as soon as possible taking cognisance of work restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.
Financial	<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> <p>Government exercising their statutory powers to manage their Covid-19 health response including future lock downs</p>	H	<p>Cost checks will be carried out throughout the design stage to monitor estimates against the allocated budget. These will also be reported monthly to the ELC Programme Board.</p> <p>Costs are reviewed and adjusted to cover potential additional costs associated with compliance with current Government guidance. Value engineering exercise carried out to keep costs within the approved budget.</p>

Reputational	The reputational risk of not being in a position to offer sufficient 1140 hours places to meet demand from August 2021.	L	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.
Environment / Climate	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

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</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 education while working with partners across the city;</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>
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p>	<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</p>

	<p>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>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<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>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<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 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.</p>

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

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 14th September 2017
- 9.2 Item 4(b) General Fund Revenue Budget - 2.1.3; Council Budget Meeting 5th March 2019

10. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Project Milestones
Appendix 2 – Progress Photographs

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1 – Project Status and Progress

Project Status : May 2021									
			Estimated Site Start	Estimated Practical Completion	Estimated Handover	Tendering Status	Accepted	Works Completed	Comments
Phase 1	7969	Duthie Park	Spring 21	Autumn 21	Winter 21	Complete	Yes	No	Works progressing onsite
	7974	Seaton Nursery	Winter19/20	Winter 20	Winter 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	7975	Tillydrone Nursery	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Buildings works completed, road junction works nearing completion
	7990	Northfield Cummings Park	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	7991	Quarryhill School	Winter19/20	Autumn 20	Autumn 20	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	7992	Westpark School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Autumn 21	In progress	No	No	Project scope of work agreed, work planned for Autumn 2021
	7993	Kingsfords School	Spring 20	Spring 21	Spring 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	7996	Woodside School	Spring 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	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	Yes	Project Completed
	8001	Cults School	Autumn 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8004	Hazlehead Park	Spring 21	Summer 21	Winter 21	In progress	No	No	Planning Approval in place, tender being finalised
	8006	Kingswells School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8007	Kirkhill School	Spring 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8017	Broomhill School	Winter 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8018	Charleston School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8019	Gilcomstoun School	Autumn 20	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
Phase 3	8020	Loirston School	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8022	Danestone	Spring 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8002	Dyce	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8014	Glasheburn	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8015	Forehill	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8016	Fernielea	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8023	Scotsown	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	8024	Kittybrewster	Summer 21	Summer 21	Summer 21	Complete	Yes	Yes	Project Completed
	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							

Appendix 2 – Photographs Of Completed Major Projects

Links Hub Nursery



Quarryhill Nursery



Tullos Nursery



Kingsford Nursery



Northfield Nursery



Tillydrone Nursery



Gilcomstoun Nursery



Culter Nursery



Woodside Nursery



Broomhill Nursery



Cults Nursery



Duthie Park – East Lodge Extension Progress Photograph

