

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	CLH 42/18

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Care, Learning and Housing

**Date:** 18 October 2018

**Report Title:** **Early Learning and Childcare Update**

**Report By:** Director of Care and Learning

### **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides members with an update on the developments within the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). It also offers a summary of the progress of the current sites who are delivering 1140 hours.
- 1.2 Within the report there is also an outline of the capital programme requirements in relation to the expansion.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
  - i. Note the position of the Scottish Government Expansion Programme
  - ii. Note the local progress on the Delivery Plan
  - iii. Note the update on the sites delivering 1140 hours

### **3. Introduction**

- 3.1 High quality Early Learning and Childcare is an entitlement for all children and is crucial to ensure that the aspirations of the government to reduce the poverty related attainment gap is actioned at the earliest stages through high quality pedagogy.
- 3.2 To effectively support children, we require a skilled and knowledgeable ELC workforce who are supported through strong inspirational leadership and by staff who truly understand child development and the impact that poor attachment and ineffective transitions can have on children's wellbeing and ability to learn and succeed.
- 3.3 Since the last report to this committee in May 2018, the full funding of the expansion plan, as detailed in the financial templates submitted to the Scottish Government in March 2018, has allowed us to progress on the required elements to ensure Highland Council is able to successfully deliver on the expansion of ELC.
- 3.4 Although the first year of funding did not allow us to offer every child in Highland an increase in hours from this year to 760, it has allowed us to move forward with pilot sites to deliver 1140 hours, and to evaluate and consider all of the learning as we move forward into next year.

### **4. Scottish Government Expansion Programme**

- 4.1 The Government has established a new Directorate for Early Learning and Childcare, with Joe Griffin as Director leading this programme of transformational change. Mr Griffin visited services in Lochaber at the commencement of his appointment.
- 4.2 A new ELC Programme Joint Delivery Board will be co-chaired by Maree Todd, the Minister for Children and Young People, and Cllr Stephen McCabe, COSLA spokesperson on children and young people. The Delivery Board will review and monitor progress towards the implementation of 1140 hours across all 32 authorities through a set of indicators that will be used to provide evidence based analysis of progress.
- 4.3 The Delivery Board will be supported by a Steering Group, involving a senior lead officer from each of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives. There will also be a new Partnership Forum, where the Northern Alliance will be represented by a lead ELC officer.
- 4.4 Specific data that will be collected from authorities will be gathered through a Dashboard that will capture, track and monitor progress to ensure that local plans are delivered timeously, and any risks or threats addressed.
- 4.5 Work is ongoing on the transformation of the ELC census with SEEMis, ScotXed and local authorities working together to find solutions to staff data requirements. This is a substantial piece of local administrative work that takes place in each authority every year and any streamlining of this is welcomed.
- 4.6 The Scottish Government has also committed to full funding of a new management information system, which will transform our capacity to manage ELC processes.
- 4.7 We are awaiting the publication of the National Standard, which will detail the requirements for local authority and partners to deliver ELC. The premise for this will be

based on evidence to support a high quality provision that includes gradings from the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland and a provider neutral approach.

- 4.8 The National Standard will detail amongst other things how funding will follow the child, and set out criteria such as: how we support children with additional support needs; catering requirements; workforce qualification and learning requirements; outdoor learning; and how the principles of ELC are to be delivered in every setting. Technical guidance to assist local authorities to undertake this function is being developed alongside the National Standard, and Scotland Excel has been commissioned to take this forward.

## **5. Local Delivery Plan**

- 5.1 The philosophy for the delivery of ELC in Highland continues to be strong, with the needs of children at the forefront of the expansion programme. Early Years Education and Support Officers, exercising the peripatetic teacher function, are well placed to help maintain and improve the quality of provision through the period of change. As reported previously, expansion poses a range of challenges to maintaining the quality of provision but also opportunities to bring about step changes in improvement, including in provision for children with additional support needs. We will need to ensure that there is sufficient strategic capacity to bring about necessary improvement and ensure equity of quality provision around Highland, and continuity of pedagogy through Early Level curriculum.
- 5.2 Continuous professional learning and training remains a priority, and is being refined and adjusted to meet the needs of the growing workforce. A career structure in ELC is beginning to take shape through the introduction of the modern apprentice, support worker and senior practitioner roles. With the national focus on the ELC workforce and qualification requirements, we are well placed to continue to shape and deliver a workforce for the future, albeit there are continuing concerns about the provision of Gaelic medium practitioners at all levels.
- 5.3 We are working closely with the Learning and Development team in Highland Council, and have provided placements and mentoring for 5 ELC modern apprentices in local authority settings with plans to introduce many more next year. We need to be able to offer assessors to the modern apprentices, and are encouraging current ELC practitioners to consider this role as part of their own career progression. We are currently looking to support the assessor role in each of the 4 areas of Highland, and are keen for one of those assessors to be a Gaelic speaker.
- 5.4 The 6 additional graduates that Highland was tasked to employ in areas of deprivation have been appointed. The Government has funded these posts across Scotland, in order to address the poverty related attainment gap, and the impact of the posts including the outcomes for children will be closely monitored. An induction programme has been developed, with an expectation that the graduates provide strong leadership and strengthen early years pedagogy in the nurseries where they are placed, and influence wider practice in all ELC settings.
- 5.5 The graduates have been appointed to:
- Newton Park, Wick
  - Lundavra, Fort William
  - Millbank, Nairn
  - Merkinch Family Centre, Inverness

- Hilton, Inverness
- Park and South Lodge, shared post

- 5.6 The Northern Alliance is working together to ensure that where the graduate posts are introduced, the impact on the outcomes for children is measured, shared and developed to inform best practice across all settings.
- 5.7 Highland Council is one of the 8 local authorities selected to work with Inspiring Scotland to develop outdoor learning. The benefits of being outdoors cannot be overstated, and an opportunity for children to learn through play in nature is something we want to embrace. We have had several meetings with Inspiring Scotland and discussed potential sites, including some that are fully outdoors, free flow (in and out), and satellite provision.
- 5.8 We already have settings that offer a full outdoor experience in Highland and others that take children to woodland and outside areas within local communities, with many opportunities to explore further and expand on this. Another exciting opportunity we are exploring is an outdoor provision for children in the grounds of a day care centre for older people in Inverness. This intergenerational approach is still at the planning stages, but is generating a lot of excitement around the huge benefits that this could offer.
- 5.9 Enabling outdoor learning does however require a workforce that is willing to provide the enhanced skills and mind-set that often involves a shift in culture, to enable the best outdoor experience for children. With this in mind, we are having discussions with one of our partner providers that already possess a wealth of knowledge and experience around outdoor learning, about training staff who want to drive this forward.
- 5.10 As Members will appreciate, in order to satisfy the government that we are delivering this programme of change requires that any planning, monitoring, tracking, data gathering and financial reporting back to the government is becoming more complex and more detailed. This is not without its challenges in an early years' service that is primarily concerned with ensuring that 1140 hours of high quality ELC is provided to all children across Highland in a short period of time.
- 5.11 The risks to implementation are being managed by a committed workforce who are tackling the challenges where they arise and who are solution focused in their approach. However, enabling flexibility of provision has not been without its difficulties and refinement of the arrangements to provide this requires adjustments and procedures to be put in place. Staff should not be distracted by the systems and processes required to provide this programme of transformational change and should be offered the assurance that our priority is to address any of the business side of the expansion that is getting in the way of us delivering the entitlement.
- 5.12 As costed in our Delivery Plan the requirement for a business officer to ensure we have the expertise within the team required for setting up, monitoring and streamlining systems and assisting in the operational provision of an effective and efficient business that supports the requirements of the programme is now being progressed.
- 5.13 **Appendix 1** lists the Highland Council settings where capital investment has been confirmed as being necessary at this stage, in line with the projections and costings in the initial plan submitted to Government. The Appendix identifies projects that have been completed or are currently underway, along with particular issues at some settings. Additional internal resources will be required within the Estates Team and the

delivery teams within Development and Infrastructure, in order to have all of the necessary extra accommodation and improvements in place by August 2020.

- 5.14 It is intended that a significant number of the capital projects will be procured through existing framework contracts that allow the early engagement of contractors to work alongside the Council project teams. This will reduce the procurement lead-in times and will also help to establish a consistent approach across batches of similar projects. Traditional tendering methods will also be used where considered appropriate, particularly in areas of Highland where local contractors may be better placed to deliver best value.
- 5.15 It is intended that regular updates will be provided to Members on the investment programme (using an expanded template similar to Appendix 1) by the Estates team and/or Area Care and Learning Managers via Ward Business Meetings, commencing in November 2018.

## **6. 1140 hours implementation**

- 6.1 After consultation with Members and managers, six settings were identified to take forward the offer of 1140 hours in 2018/18. This was based on socioeconomic and SIMD indicators of disadvantage, child poverty data and free school meal entitlement. The implementation of this offer to parents commenced in August 2018, at the following locations:
- Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar
  - Flipperz Day Care Centre, Merkinch
  - Kyle Primary School
  - Merkinch Family Centre
  - Merkinch Primary School
  - Obsdale Primary School
- 6.2 Whilst planning for this over the summer, it was identified that there could be a negative impact on one of our partner providers, where parents might withdraw their children from existing placements, in favour of the enhanced provision elsewhere. This was mitigated by children who were on a split placement between two settings in Fort William being included in the 1140 hours offer.
- 6.3 Project teams have been established in each of the four localities – Kyle, Alness, Fort William and Merkinch. Membership comprises of staff that support each of the settings including the head teacher or manager, together with the ELC project manager. The uptake of the full 1140 hours across all settings is currently around 65%, which is an increase in the initial forecast of 45% before the school holidays. The expectation is that this will rise as more families choose to benefit from the offer.
- 6.4 Catering is an issue that has required a great deal of planning, and this has included discussion around dining facilities and staffing, meal times, food choices and wastage - as eligible 2, 3 and 4 year olds are now on site all day. This will be amplified in 2020, therefore learning acquired now will be essential for forward planning.
- 6.5 The project teams have worked hard to ensure sites were ready at the start of the summer term and should be commended for their positive and collaborative approach. As they evolve over the months to come, the next stage will be to share practice across Highland via regular communication and expansion workshops and to work with area

teams to determine the sites that will deliver 1140 hours from August 2019.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Resource**

The Government has awarded full capital and revenue funding for 1140 hours, based on Highland Council's plan. There is a challenge to ensure all capital funding is utilised in time.

### **7.2 Legal**

The requirement to provide 1140 hours to eligible children is part of the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

### **7.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)**

It is envisaged that 1140 hours will impact significantly on inequalities.

### **7.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever**

None

### **7.5 Risk**

Risks are described in this report.

### **7.6 Gaelic**

There are continuing challenges regarding capacity for Gaelic medium provision, as described in this report.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 5 October 2018

Author: Sandra Harrington

Background Papers:

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Ardross	Alness	Mid	No	No		
Bridgend	Alness	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Coulhill	Alness	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Kiltearn	Alness	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Obsdale	Alness	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Ben Wyvis	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	At design stage.
Dingwall - EM/GM	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Ferintosh	Dingwall	Mid	No	No		
Marybank	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Mulbuie	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	Does not have dedicated nursery room.
Strathconon	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Strathgarve	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Strathpeffer	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Tarradale	Dingwall	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Avoch	Fortrose	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Cromarty	Fortrose	Mid	No	No		Possible opportunity to relocate nursery to school if roll numbers continue to fall.

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Culbokie	Fortrose	Mid	Yes		No	
Munlochy	Fortrose	Mid	No	No		
North Kessock	Fortrose	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Resolis	Fortrose	Mid	Yes		No	
Tore	Fortrose	Mid	No	No		
Milton	Invergordon	Mid	Yes		No	
Newmore	Invergordon	Mid	No	No		
Park	Invergordon	Mid	Yes		Yes	
South Lodge	Invergordon	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Craighill - EM/GM	Tain	Mid	Yes		Yes	Investment in English Medium only.
Edderton	Tain	Mid	Yes		No	
Gledfield	Tain	Mid	Yes		No	
Hill of Fearn	Tain	Mid	No	Yes	Yes	Complete.
Hilton of Cadboll	Tain	Mid	Yes		Yes	
Inver	Tain	Mid	No	No		
Knockbreck	Tain	Mid	No	No		



School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Tarbat Old	Tain	Mid	Yes		No	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Bonar Bridge	Dornoch	North	Yes		Yes	Complete.
Dornoch	Dornoch	North	Yes		Yes	Complete.
Farr	Farr	North	Yes		Yes	Works underway.
Melvich	Farr	North	Yes		Yes	Works underway.
Tongue	Farr	North	No	Yes	Yes	At design stage.
Brora	Golspie	North	Yes		No	
Golspie	Golspie	North	Yes		Yes	Minor works required.
Helmsdale	Golspie	North	Yes		No	
Lairg	Golspie	North	Yes		No	
Rogart	Golspie	North	Yes		No	
Rosehall	Golspie	North	No	No		
Durness	Kinlochbervie	North	No	No		
Kinlochbervie	Kinlochbervie	North	No	No		
Scourie	Kinlochbervie	North	Yes		No	
Castletown	Thurso	North	Yes		No	
Crossroads	Thurso	North	No	No		
Halkirk	Thurso	North	No	No		

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Miller Academy	Thurso	North	Yes		Yes	
Mount Pleasant	Thurso	North	Yes		Yes	
Pennyland	Thurso	North	Yes		Yes	
Reay	Thurso	North	No	No		
Bower	Wick	North	No	No		
Canisbay	Wick	North	Yes		No	
Dunbeath	Wick	North	No	Yes	Yes	Complete.
Keiss	Wick	North	Yes		Yes	At design stage.
Lybster	Wick	North	Yes		Yes	Minor works required.
Newton Park	Wick	North	Yes		Yes	
Noss	Wick	North	Yes		Yes	Complete.
Thrumster	Wick	North	Yes		No	
Watten	Wick	North	No	No		

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Beauly	Charleston	South	Yes		Yes	
Dochgarroch	Charleston	South	Yes		No	
Kinmylies	Charleston	South	Yes		Yes	
Kirkhill	Charleston	South	Yes		Yes	
Muirtown	Charleston	South	Yes		Yes	
Teanassie	Charleston	South	Yes		No	
Tomnacross	Charleston	South	Yes		Yes	
Ardersier	Culloden	South	Yes		Yes	
Balloch	Culloden	South	Yes		Yes	
Cradlehall	Culloden	South	Yes		Yes	
Croy	Culloden	South	Yes		Yes	
Duncan Forbes	Culloden	South	Yes		Yes	See comment on Stratton below.
Smithton	Culloden	South	Yes		Yes	Underway as part of larger project
Stratton	Culloden	South	No	Yes	Yes	Considering the establishment of new provision on the reserved school site.
Balnain	Glenurquhart	South	No	No		
Cannich Bridge	Glenurquhart	South	Yes		No	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Glenurquhart - EM/GM	Glenurquhart	South	No	Yes	Yes	Considering the establishment of Gaelic Medium provision.
Abernethy	Grantown	South	Yes		No	
Carrbridge	Grantown	South	Yes		Yes	
Deshar	Grantown	South	Yes		Yes	Joint initiative with Community.
Grantown	Grantown	South	Yes		Yes	
Bishop Eden	Inverness High	South	No	No		
Central	Inverness High	South	Yes		Yes	
Dalneigh	Inverness High	South	Yes		Yes	Underway as part of larger project
Merkinch	Inverness High	South	Yes		Yes	Underway as part of larger project
St Joseph's	Inverness High	South	Yes		Yes	
Aldourie	IRA	South	No	No		
Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Inbhir Nis	IRA	South	Yes		Yes	At design stage.
Cauldeen	IRA	South	Yes		Yes	Complete.
Farr	IRA	South	Yes		No	
Foyers	IRA	South	No	No		
Hilton	IRA	South	Yes		Yes	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Holm	IRA	South	Yes		Yes	New Primary School at Ness Castle to be operational for August 2021. Reviewing requirements for Holm and Lochardil in the meantime.
Lochardil	IRA	South	Yes		Yes	
Ness Castle	IRA	South	No	Yes	Yes	
Stratherrick	IRA	South	No	Yes	Yes	Complete.
Alvie	Kingussie	South	No	No		
Aviemore	Kingussie	South	Yes		Yes	To be considered once updated school roll forecasts are available.
Gergask	Kingussie	South	Yes		No	
Kingussie	Kingussie	South	Yes		No	
Newtonmore - EM/GM	Kingussie	South	Yes		Yes	English and Gaelic Medium provision currently in shared room.
Crown	Millburn	South	Yes		Yes	
Daviot	Millburn	South	No	No		
Drakies	Millburn	South	Yes		No	
Inshes	Millburn	South	Yes		No	
Milton of Leys	Millburn	South	Yes		Yes	At design stage.
Raigmore	Millburn	South	Yes		Yes	
Strathdearn	Millburn	South	Yes		No	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Auldearn	Nairn	South	Yes		Yes	
Cawdor	Nairn	South	Yes		No	
Millbank	Nairn	South	Yes		Yes	
Rosebank	Nairn	South	Yes		Yes	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Acharacle - EM/GM	Ardnamurchan	West	Yes		Yes	English and Gaelic Medium provision currently in shared room.
Ardgour	Ardnamurchan	West	Yes		Yes	
Kilchoan	Ardnamurchan	West	Yes		Yes	Minor works required.
Lochaline	Ardnamurchan	West	Yes		Yes	Possible relocation to school building.
Strontian	Ardnamurchan	West	Yes		No	
Bualnaluib	Gairloch	West	Yes		No	
Gairloch - EM/GM	Gairloch	West	Yes		Yes	English and Gaelic Medium provision currently in shared room.
Kinlochewe	Gairloch	West	Yes		No	
Poolewe	Gairloch	West	Yes		No	
Shieldaig	Gairloch	West	Yes		No	
Kilchuimen	Kilchuimen	West	Yes		No	
Ballachulish	Kinlochleven	West	Yes		No	
Duror	Kinlochleven	West	No			
Glencoe	Kinlochleven	West	No			
Kinlochleven	Kinlochleven	West	Yes		No	
St Brides	Kinlochleven	West	Yes		No	



School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Banavie	Lochaber	West	Yes		No	
Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar	Lochaber	West	Yes		No	
Caol	Lochaber	West	Yes		No	
Invergarry	Lochaber	West	Yes		Yes	At design stage - part of larger project
Inverlochy	Lochaber	West	Yes		Yes	Minor works required.
Lundavra	Lochaber	West	Yes		No	
Spean Bridge	Lochaber	West	Yes		No	
St Columba's	Lochaber	West	Yes		No	
Arisaig	Mallaig	West	Yes		Yes	
Canna	Mallaig	West	Yes		No	
Eigg	Mallaig	West	Yes		No	
Inverie	Mallaig	West	Yes		No	
Lady Lovat	Mallaig	West	Yes		No	
Mallaig	Mallaig	West	Yes		Yes	English and Gaelic Medium provision currently in shared room.
Muck	Mallaig	West	Yes		No	
Rum	Mallaig	West	Yes		No	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Applecross	Plockton	West	Yes		No	
Auchtertyre	Plockton	West	Yes		Yes	Complete.
Glenelg	Plockton	West	Yes		No	
Kyle	Plockton	West	Yes		Yes	
Kyleakin	Plockton	West	Yes		No	
Loch Duich	Plockton	West	Yes		No	
Lochcarron	Plockton	West	Yes		No	
Plockton	Plockton	West	Yes		No	
Broadford - EM/GM	Portree	West	Yes		Yes	English and Gaelic Medium provision currently in shared room.
Bun-Sgoil Ghaidlig Phort Rìgh	Portree	West	Yes		Yes	Complete.
Bun-Sgoil Shleite - EM/GM	Portree	West	Yes		Yes	
Carbost	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Dunvegan - EM/GM	Portree	West	Yes		Yes	English and Gaelic Medium provision currently in shared room.
Edinbane	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Elgol	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Kilmuir	Portree	West	Yes		No	

School/Setting	ASG	Area	HC Nursery Prior to 1,140?	Establish HC Nursery?	Investment Required?	Comments
Knockbreck	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Macdiarmid	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Portree - EM	Portree	West	No		Yes	Relocation to vacated space in Primary School being considered.
Raasay	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Staffin	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Struan	Portree	West	Yes		No	
Achiltibuie	Ullapool	West	Yes		No	
Badcaul	Ullapool	West	Yes		No	
Lochinver	Ullapool	West	Yes		No	
Scoraig	Ullapool	West	Yes		Yes	Minor works required.
Ullapool - EM/GM	Ullapool	West	Yes		Yes	At design stage.