

REPORT TO EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE – 17th MARCH 2022

1140 UPDATE

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 This report seeks to update Education and Children's Services on the 1140 roll out. This report outlines the key areas of 1140 and progress in relation to those areas. The report also identifies additional actions/projects that are in development.

1.2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 Acknowledge work to date and actions and provide any comments, observations or recommendations.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 The previous update on 1140 went to ECS Committee on 26th August. Given the level of change and investment in the programme, it was thought that it would be beneficial to provide a high-level interim update followed by a more comprehensive update on 1st September 2022.

3 Discussion

Capacity – Funded Providers

3.1 Aberdeenshire Council Early Years' Service has continued to work to increase the number of funded providers commissioned to deliver Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). Aberdeenshire Council have followed a 'Funding Follows the Child' approach since 2015, in that those childcare providers that met criteria were able to apply to become a funded provider. There was an ongoing application process in place to ensure timeous procurement of services and increased accessibility and flexibility of offering to families residing in Aberdeenshire.

3.2 Since April 2018, Aberdeenshire Council has increased from 74 to 182 funded providers. In April 2019, funded providers were able to offer up to 1140 hours. There has been a significant increase in uptake of hours beyond 600 hours from families since April 2019, as can be seen in table1 Below.

Table 1: Overview of change in funded providers and ELC offering through comparison of the last four academic years (21/22 is representative up to 31st March 2022).

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22*
Number of Providers	74	132	180	182
Number of Children accessing ELC with Providers	2,006	2,348	2,467	2,258
Total number of ELC hours delivered	291,948	533,125	1,891,808	1,293,398
Total number of lunches provided	87	23,000	166,108	123,915

*2021/22 information is up to the end of March 2022. The figure for the full 21/22 academic year will be higher than what is stated, given that the academic year for ELC finishes the day prior to the start of the 22/23 academic year.

Capacity – Aberdeenshire Council

3.3 Prior to 1140 commencing, Aberdeenshire Council delivered ELC through 88 term time settings that operated on a 9am to 3pm model. The changes are as follows:

- 62 settings are open 8am to 6pm.
- 46 settings are open all year, excluding the two weeks over Christmas and New Year.

These changes have allowed families residing in Aberdeenshire greater choice in terms of flexibility, accessibility and affordability in relation to ELC.

Take up

3.4 Prior to the expansion, approximately 3750 children accessed 600 hours funding without self funding wrap around care. This translates to 37% of children accessing more than 600 hours of formal childcare. Also, there was a consultation exercise carried out in 2018 in order to gain feedback on ELC delivery and to understand parents/carers thoughts on the expansion. 49% of parents/carers stated that they wouldn't access the full 1140 entitlement once 1140 was a statutory entitlement. Over 2000 parents/carers completed the consultation exercise and it included parents with children aged 0 to 4. As can be seen from table 2, the take up of 1140 has increased to 78.3%.

3.5 The principles underlying 1140 are flexibility, accessibility, affordability and quality. As Aberdeenshire has increased the flexibility and accessibility to such a degree, which is very beneficial for families, it makes predicting demand quite challenging at times. There are a range of processes and data collection exercises that take place in order to improve planning and with time there will be more trend information available to further support planning.

Table 2: Take up of 1140 hours by banded uptake, as of February 2022.

Banded Uptake	2-Year-Olds		3- and 4-Year-Olds		5-Year-Olds		Total uptake by banded uptake measure	% of total uptake by banded uptake
	Local Authority Settings	PVI Settings	Local Authority Settings	PVI Settings	Local Authority Settings	PVI Settings		
600 hours or fewer	3.0	5.0	37.0	193.0	0.0		238.0	4.3%
>600 hours, <900 hours	13.0	20.0	94.0	210.0	51.0		388.0	7.0%
≥900 hours, <1140 hours	23.0	22.0	221.0	227.0	77.0		570.0	10.3%
1140 hours	46.0	63.0	2,641.0	1,427.0	125.0	14.0	4,316.0	78.3%

ASN Support

Funded Providers

- 3.6 The Scottish Government carried out a [financial sustainability health check of the childcare sector in Scotland](#). To create the health check, the Scottish Government collated [information](#) from every local authority in Scotland. From the review, it was identified that Aberdeenshire Council is one of three local authorities in Scotland that has an enhanced hourly rate in place, if additional support is agreed for a child in a funded provider setting.
- 3.7 The enhanced rate ranges from £9.30 to £10.31, is applied based on the level of need. To date, there have been over 37 successful applications, which have allowed for approximately £340,000K in support for children with additional support requirements.
- 3.8 The settings will also be supported through guidance and support from the Early Years Principal Teachers and Education Support Officers, as well as targeted/bespoke training and development, where required. Funding for resources has also been supported.

Aberdeenshire Council

- 3.9 Aberdeenshire Council has funded approx. £670K for children with ASN that are accessing Council provision. As with the funded providers, the settings have also be supported through guidance and support from the Early Years

Principal Teachers and Education Support Officers, as well as targeted/bespoke training and development, where required. Funding for resources has also been supported.

Quality of Provision

- 3.10 We know that the earliest years of life are crucial for every child, and the evidence tells us that if our early learning and childcare offer is to help give children the best start in life and contribute to closing the poverty-related attainment gap, it must be of high quality. Quality has been at the heart of the 1140 Expansion and in order to ensure that quality remained an integral principle in driving the expansion, the Scottish Government introduced the [National Standards for early learning and childcare](#).

National Standards

- 3.11 To ensure the delivery of a 'provider neutral approach', the National Standard applies to all providers regardless of whether the funded hours are provided by a setting in the public, private or third sector, including provision offered by childminders. The National Standard is aligned to the guiding principles for the expansion to 1140 hours: quality; flexibility; accessibility; and affordability. It is also underpinned by the regulations in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 which applies to all care services across Scotland, including day-care of children and childminding settings.
- 3.12 Nurseries and Playgroups (Voluntary providers) must achieve Care Inspectorate quality evaluations that are good (4) or better on themes that relate to quality of staffing, management and leadership. If this isn't achieved, then there is a period of time which the provider is allowed to improve. It is important to state, that in order for there to be improvement, there must be capacity for such improvement and engagement with services and organisations that can support such improvements. Prior to the current contract being in place and the National Standards, the ELC contract required a level 3 or above (satisfactory).
- 3.13 Aberdeenshire Council is currently working with Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Government to target those settings most at risk of not meeting the National Standards. Other changes that have taken place to improve quality include, the creation of the Early Years Senior Practitioner post and targeted support by the Quality Improvement staff in Early Years i.e. Education Support Officers, Quality Improvement Officer and Principal Teachers.
- 3.14 At February 2021, a total of 27 settings weren't meeting the National Standard, which has since reduced to 20 settings. It is important to note that most of these settings that aren't meeting the standard haven't been inspected in over 2.5 years and over that time, most of them have put in place and embedded a range of improvements.
- 3.15 Meetings have been taking place between Aberdeenshire Council Early Years representatives and the ELC settings, whether they are a funded provider or

local authority setting. These meetings have been to discuss the areas for improvement and the support that is in place and how this can change to better meet the needs of the setting.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 In developing the revised priorities, the Early Years' Service considered the following documents:

- The Funding follows the Child,
- GIRFEC,
- Children and Young People Act 2014,
- UNCRC articles 3,18,20,23,26,28.

4.2 Early Learning and Childcare is cross cutting and as such should impact positively on all three Council pillars and all six priorities.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Education Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Infrastructure Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation

4.3 This report helps deliver against Aberdeenshire Children's Services Plan Priorities – Early Years and Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing.

This report helps deliver on the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) Priority – Reducing Child Poverty in Aberdeenshire.

4.4 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			x
Staffing			x
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			x
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			x
Climate Change and Sustainability			x
Health and Wellbeing			
Town Centre First			x

4.5 There are no staffing implications and the financial implications directly arising from this report.

- 4.6 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken. This paper is stating the progress on the actions that have already been approved by ECS Committee, the Early Years Board and/or the ECS Senior Leadership Team.
- 4.7 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:
- ACORP005 - Working with other organisations (e.g. supply chains, outsourcing and partnership working)
 - ACORP006 - Reputation management (including social media).

The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

- ECSSR002 – ECS Directorate Risk – To secure continuous improvement in outcomes for children and young people.
- LOIP Priorities
 - Reducing child poverty
 - Connected and cohesive communities

5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section E3.4 and E3.7 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as the report refers to the provision of early years child care to provide the service either internally or externally through commissioning of services in terms of Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

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