

Scottish Borders Council

Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment - Start Up

(For early proposals, Project Initiation. Start Up)

1	Title of Proposal:	Early Learning and Childcare 1140 hours Expansion
2	Service Area: Department:	Children and Young People People Department
3	Description:	<p>Ensuring that the delivery of the increase in number of hours for early learning and childcare entitlement from 600 to 1140 hours for all 3 and 4 year old children and eligible 2 year old children will be in place by August 2020. That any development of provision is in response to parental demand and is in line with the principles of quality, flexibility, affordability and accessibility; taking into account social, demographic and geographic needs of children and families. That the delivery of 1140 hours is manageable and affordable within available resources (workforce, assets, finances) and takes a 'provider neutral approach in supporting effective and sustainable structures to be developed and maintained across Scottish Borders ensuring statutory obligations and best outcomes for children continue to be met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Undertake work to enable an effective Early Learning and Childcare Delivery and Implementation Plan is produced in line with Scottish Government Guidance and timescales b) Identify and implement a phased approach to delivery of the 1140hrs between August 2017 and August 2020 c) Ensure plans reflect the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to ensure that the families who stand to benefit most from the expansion benefit first and are in response to parental demand, balanced with recognition of organisational priorities and business needs.

		<p>d) Facilitate operational models of delivery which are operationally sustainable within available resources</p> <p>e) Effective engagement and implementation of the People Planning process under advice and guidance from HR colleagues and including ongoing consultation and engagement with trade union representatives</p> <p>f) Encourage robust and valid stakeholder engagement and participation through meaningful consultation and feedback</p> <p>g) Develop and deliver an organisational model which is aligned to legislative, strategic and operational requirements; is flexible and proficient in meeting the current and future needs of children and families, the organisation and the ELC Community</p> <p>As a local authority we need to ensure approximately 2500 ELC places for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year old children in any one year; it is apparent that parents are seeking a mix of local authority, private and voluntary provision and childminders offering single and blended models of quality flexible Early learning and Childcare. This means that strong partnership working and planning with private and voluntary providers and childminders to procure funded places is key to the success of fulfilling parental choice.</p>
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4.	<p>Relevance to the Equality Duty.</p> <p>Do you believe your proposal has any relevance to the following duties of the Council under the Equality Act 2010?</p>	
	Duty	Yes/No
	<p>Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment. <i>(Could your proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)</i></p>	Yes
	<p>Promotion of equality of opportunity? <i>(Could your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)</i></p>	Yes
	<p>Foster good relations? <i>(Could your proposal help or hinder the council s relationships with those who have equality characteristics?)</i></p>	Yes

5

Which groups of people may be impacted (both positively and negatively) if the proposal is advanced?
(Please x all that apply)

Equality Characteristic	Impact			Description
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
Age (Older or younger people or a specific age grouping)		x	x	<p>There is strong evidence that high quality early childhood education and care is beneficial for children when they start primary school. The effects are evident throughout primary school, and international evidence suggests that the benefits can persist into secondary school.</p> <p>Pre-school experience enhances all round development in children, and may particularly benefit disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Duration of attendance and an earlier start are related to better intellectual development. The effects of high quality provision remain evident throughout primary school. The home learning environment also has a strong influence.</p> <p>International evidence suggests that the benefits can persist into secondary education. Results of international assessments show that pupils who have attended pre-primary programmes tend to perform better than those who have not.</p> <p>If provision of places diminishes locally or the local need diminishes there may not be equality of opportunity for children generally to access funded hours.</p> <p>Adults with parental/carer responsibilities for eligible children as well as parents to be will have increased access to places/ ELC funded hours in Care Inspectorate registered provision. The intention is to enable access to services which complements their personal/working arrangements more positively. Where family members/grandparents are used as part of a young child's early care, the new provision may reduce demand on their time and energy, although there is currently</p>

					<p>insufficient evidence to indicate what the impact of this might be.</p> <p>The ELC workforce within the Statutory, Private and Voluntary sectors (practitioners, head teachers, business managers/owners. Childminders (employed assistants/ self-employed). Expansion of business opportunities. This should have a positive impact upon all providers and upon employment opportunities as there is significant additional funding for staffing in that the hours of provision are significantly increasing; this should also enable the Council to include a specific focus on recruiting Modern Apprenticeships (positively impacting upon the 16-25 year old age group re job opportunities in their local communities).</p> <p>May negatively impact some businesses where parental choice may change their preference of provider. Provider may not be able to meet demand due to lack of capacity/unsuitable premises/other business related reasons. Provider may not wish to offer funded Early Learning and Childcare hours and withdraw their services.</p> <p>Financially - hours previously chargeable become free to parent and funded by Local Authority which may negatively impact revenue and financial sustainability.</p>
	<p>Disability e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring</p>		x	x	<p>This statutory change could have a positive impact on disabled children and their families by increasing financial support and flexibility. We want all Early Learning and Childcare providers to consider the needs of disabled children when developing their provision.</p> <p>Increase in Early Learning and Childcare funded places may create greater opportunities for people to return to education, training or employment. Equally increased provision is likely to require increased workforce and therefore present additional employment opportunities.</p> <p>The change could have a positive impact on disabled children and their families by increasing financial support and increasing the hours and flexibility of early learning and childcare Where children are able to access increased Early Learning and Childcare hours this may also offer increased respite hours from caring for childcare.</p> <p>Though not purely limited to children with disability - If provision of places diminishes locally or the</p>

					<p>local need diminishes there may not be equality of opportunity for children with individual needs to access funded hours.</p> <p>There is currently no data collected which details whether parents/carers accessing funded Early Learning and Childcare have a disability.</p>
	<p>Gender (Males, Females, Transgender or Transsexual people)</p>		x	x	<p>Anticipated to have a potential positive impact on women who are most likely to be primary carers in terms of cost and accessibility of childcare as a barrier to return to work. Expansion of early learning and childcare provision may also lead to an increased demand for numbers in early years workforce.</p> <p>At present, this workforce is predominantly female so this would impact significantly more on female members of the workforce. Increased provision is likely to increase workforce opportunities across Early Years sector/provision which is predominantly female staff but nationally there is recognition to change the dynamics of this.</p> <p>There will be a national campaign in response to this. However, a wide range of applicants is always actively pursued in our normal recruitment practice and will continue to do so. In July 2017, recruitment to Modern Apprenticeship opportunities in the Local Authority early learning and childcare workforce has seen both males and females recruited.</p> <p>Flexibility – the expansion will support more parents and carers in work, training or study, through greater choice of provider and patterns of provision that are better aligned with working patterns.</p> <p>Affordability – the expansion will increase access to affordable ELC which will help to reduce barriers to participating in the labour market which parents and carers face.</p> <p>If provision of places diminishes locally or the local need diminishes this may negatively impact female carers or workforce re employment and caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Early Learning and Childcare Admissions /Registration forms enable Male/Female characteristic to be captured.</p> <p>Transgender or Transsexual people - little or no evidence therefore difficult to gauge the likely impacts and</p>

				currently data relating to this is not asked for on Admission/Registration forms .
	Race Groups: including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)	x	x	<p>Could have a positive impact. Nationally there may be some evidence which indicates potential lower uptake of early learning and childcare by individual families within some groups. Early Learning and Childcare Admissions /Registration forms enable data on this characteristic to be captured.</p> <p>Although no local differential impact anticipated but a lack of take up could negatively impact child development and family employment opportunities.</p> <p>Increased provision may require increased workforce and therefore present additional opportunities for adults or young people with this characteristic</p>
	People with Religious or other Beliefs: different beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief)	x		<p>There appears to be little research looking at religion and belief in early years. No evidence to show, and there have been no representations made to suggest, that the funded hours generally will impact disproportionately on parents choosing a nursery or pre-school run by a faith organisation. No evidence to support that the expansion of hours will alter this. Early Learning and Childcare Admissions /Registration forms enable data on this characteristic to be captured.</p>
	Pregnancy and Maternity (refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth),	x	x	<p>The 1140 hours is seen as supporting the equality of opportunity between female parents, who wish to return to work or work more hours, and those who do not have maternal caring responsibilities. Increased funded hours and flexible services may assist with informative planning ahead for parents to be/planning for maternity leave/return to work arrangements/flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>May have a negative impact if Early Learning and Childcare information is not readily available or understood to enable planning ahead for those wishing to return to employment.</p>
	Sexual	x		<p>Whilst there is little evidence of what issues are faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender parents/carers</p>

<p>Orientation, e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual</p>				<p>specifically it is difficult to gauge the likely impacts of the statutory change to Early Learning and Childcare hours on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender adults, children and young people. However, it is considered that there will be no differential impact in relation to accessing the additional funded.</p>
<p>Carers (those who have caring responsibilities for someone with an equality Characteristic)</p>		x	x	<p>Continuation of services along with potential future service developments are aimed to have a positive impact through improved service access and delivery and benefit services users by better meeting current, emergent and future needs. Change may have an impact on carers by reducing the hours of care they provide, or by providing more flexibility in how they support formal early learning and care; but there is not sufficient evidence to indicate what this impact might be.</p> <p>The workforce is predominantly female, so additional employment opportunities will benefit this group. Alternative working patterns may present a difficulty to some workers.</p> <p>Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland states: ‘Affordability – the expansion will increase access to affordable Early Learning and Childcare which will help to reduce barriers to participating in the labour market which parents and carers face.’</p> <p>If places diminish this may negatively impact carers’ situation.</p>
<p>Poverty (people who are on a low income including benefits claimants, people experiencing fuel poverty, isolated rural communities etc.)</p>		x	x	<p>Development of provision in the first instance will recognise the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation and Rurality classification.</p> <p>The provision of universally accessible and high quality ELC enriches children with skills and confidence to carry into their schooling, and is a cornerstone for closing the poverty-related attainment gap between our most and least advantaged children.</p> <p>Increased hours and flexibility of how the funded entitlement is delivered in order to support more parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty.</p> <p>The expansion of funded hours is seen to support Scottish Government ambitions to reduce child poverty by contributing to the delivery of statutory targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill. Pre-school experience enhances all round development in children, and may particularly benefit disadvantaged children.</p>

				<p>Duration of attendance and an earlier start are related to better intellectual development. The effects of high quality provision remain evident throughout primary school. The home learning environment also has a strong influence.</p> <p>May negatively impact this characteristic if 'labelled' as poverty or disadvantaged. Sensitivity required when deciding how this will be marketed for this characteristic.</p>	
	Employees (those employed by the Council including full time, part time and temporary)		x	x	<p>Organisational change may result in some geographical changes in service delivery which may impact staff on an operational level. Additionally there are potential changes in roles and responsibilities which may impact staff. New working patterns, expansion of hours due to longer opening times and / or all year round contracts for some Local Authority nursery staff. This may be positive or negative – perceived or otherwise on an individual basis. Ensuring that staff are able to maintain their own work-life balance alongside meeting the needs of the service and service users.</p>

6.	Mitigation	
	Where you have identified a potential negative impact, please detail what mitigations will need to be put in place in order for your proposal to progress. If you are unsure of the answer please state this and recommend further investigation.	
	Characteristic	Mitigation
	Age/ Carers	<p>Increase in the number and availability of places in a mixed market of provision enables choice, accessibility, affordability and flexibility of extended funded hours.</p> <p>Strategy and phasing detailed in Service Delivery Plan. Public consultation with Service Providers/ Families and communities will inform future planning and decision making process. Review of hourly rate paid to providers in line with local and national guidance, trend and affordability.</p> <p>Support providers to increase capacity or business model to offer 1140 hours to enable sufficiency and access to places to meet needs</p>
Disability	<p>Increase in the number and availability of places in a mixed market of provision enables choice, accessibility, affordability and flexibility of extended funded hours. Strategy and phasing detailed in Service Delivery Plan.</p> <p>Ongoing consultation with families to track demand and working in partnership with ELC Providers to enable single, split</p>	

	<p>and blended placements.</p> <p>Investigate potential data source via Department of Work Pensions in relation to families with eligible children who are in receipt of disability benefits.</p> <p>Review information captured on Admission Registration form as well as locality information to identify if there is an opportunity or need to target specific groups or localities to ensure understanding of entitlement. Identify opportunities where information is better supplied in large print, various other formats or language translations to improve accessibility.</p>
Gender	<p>Participation in national recruitment campaign to increase gender balance in workforce.</p> <p>Review of own workforce & highlight opportunities for targeted marketing which may increase interest from males to work in sector. Review potential to capture information on Admission Registration form.</p>
Race Groups	<p>Review information captured on Admission Registration form as well as locality information to identify if there is an opportunity or need to target specific groups or localities to ensure understanding of entitlement. Identify opportunities where information is better supplied in large print, various other formats or language translations to improve accessibility.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Highlight support available from Health visitors/Early Years Centres to offer Early Learning and Childcare information and guidance.</p>
Poverty	<p>Highlighting the entitlement of expanded hours as universal phasing as opposed to targeted to disadvantaged or poverty.</p>
Employees	<p>Effective people planning process along with effective communications plan with stakeholders and staff will inform planning and decision making process.</p>
All	<p>As this is part of a five staged process with a universal statutory entitlement being in place by August 2020 an Expansion Delivery Group with members representing stakeholder interest will review progress and outcomes and provide progress reports to a Strategic Delivery Board. Stages one and two are already implemented; Stage 3 will be implemented in August 2018. Followed by Stage 4 which will be planned in August 2018 for implementation in August 2019. Stage 5 will encompass all remaining provision to achieve full implementation for August 2020.</p>

7.	How certain are you of the answers you have given?	
	Answer	Tick One
	Certain - I have populated the evidence base to support my answers.	
	Fairly Certain – but don't have concrete evidence to support my answers so would recommend further assessment is conducted if the proposal is progressed.	x
	Not Certain – further assessment is recommended if proposal is progressed.	

Completed By			
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Post	Project Manager	Date	3/11/17