

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 8 October 2013

Co-operative Childcare and Education

Item number	7.6
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P5 , P6
Council outcomes	CO1 , CO2 , CO6
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

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Executive summary

Co-operative Childcare and Education

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress that has been made in developing co-operative childcare and co-operative education and learning in Edinburgh. The Capital Coalition has pledged to develop city wide childcare co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents.

Children and Families has established a Service Level Agreement with Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC) to provide a range of support and advice to the Out of School Care sector, including identifying and helping those who wish to make the transition to co-operative status.

LAYC has established a partnership with a representative from Morton Fraser legal services, and the Co-operative Enterprise Hub (CEH) to provide guidance to After School Care (ASC) clubs with regard to any change in governance to that of a co-operative or a Scottish Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). An SCIO is a new legal form that has been purpose built for the charity sector in Scotland. It provides limited liability and separate legal identity to organisations that are or wish to become charities.

As a consequence of this work, one ASC club is moving forward with CEH in order that a decision might be made as to whether it would be appropriate to change their governance to become a co-operative. Another two clubs are taking forward their interest to strengthening the legal protection to their committees by becoming SCIOs.

Work is being undertaken to develop co-operative approaches between clubs to strengthen their mutual support and enhance the sector. LAYC are supporting clubs by exploring the creation of a 'co-operative charter' to develop the co-operative principles that might be adopted by participating clubs, and formalise these arrangements.

A Steering Group is being formed, chaired by the Head of Schools and Community Services, to monitor and support activity around the development of co-operative childcare, taking cognisance of the wider commitment to develop affordable childcare within the city.

Council officers are developing a plan to consult with members of the Playgroup sector in order to establish how best to support them using more co-ordinated and co-operative approaches. It will be possible to take the learning from the initiatives being developed within the Out of School Care sector, although account will need to be taken of the particular environment of the playgroup sector.

The development of a co-operative approach to delivering a Community Crèche in North Edinburgh is underway. The consortium is awaiting a decision regarding their funding application to the Big Lottery in order to take this work forward.

Additionally, Children and Families is successfully developing co-operative education and learning in the Broughton Cluster. So far, this work has resulted in a range of activities for pupils and staff across the cluster, that reflect the development of co-operative values, principles and operational practices. Representatives from the cluster have also participated in the International Association for the Study of Co-operation in Education in July, using the learning in further CPD and planning events in the cluster.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to:

1. Note that one After School Care club has made formal application to the Co-operative Enterprise Hub, to take the next step to become a co-operative.
2. Note that there is significant scope to develop formal co-operative support and practices amongst clubs;
3. Note the formation of the steering group to monitor the development of childcare co-operatives and associated activity to support the out of school and playgroup sectors;
4. Note the conference to be organised by Lothian Association of Youth Clubs, and the Co-operative Learning and Education event.

Measures of success

At least one provider of childcare is working as, or towards being, a co-operative by August 2013.

Childcare providers which wish to develop co-operative status and/or develop more co-operative working practices are supported and enabled to do so.

Parent led Out of School Care is supported and enhanced throughout the city.

Co-operative education and learning is established as a valued way of working within schools.

Financial impact

The cost of the Service Level Agreement to support the Out of School Care sector is £23,000 per annum. This cost is budgeted for.

Equalities impact

All work within this area seeks to address inequalities in terms of impact on outcomes for children and their families. There are no negative impacts arising from this work.

Sustainability impact

There are no adverse impacts arising from this report.

Consultation and engagement

Extensive consultation has taken place and this will be ongoing throughout the development period.

Background reading / external references

Co-operative Childcare and Education

1. Background

- 1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council, as one of its Capital Coalition Pledges, will establish city-wide childcare co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents. The aim is that, by August 2013, one provider of childcare in Edinburgh will be working as, or towards becoming, a co-operative. Thereafter, the intention is to develop a network of childcare provision operating on a co-operative basis across the city, including pre-school and after school/holiday clubs.
- 1.2 In addition, Children and Families is developing co-operative education and learning, with the support and advice of Co-operative Education Trust Scotland. It has chosen to pilot this development across the Broughton Cluster, involving Broughton High School and Ferryhill, Flora Stevenson, Granton and Stockbridge primary schools.

2. Main report

Childcare Co-operatives

- 2.1 Work to develop the Council's priority to establish Childcare Co-operatives in the city is well underway. The strands of activity are:
 - Providing support to out of school care providers to develop co-operative status for their organisation should they wish, and to develop a structure of support to the sector, using co-operative principles.
 - The development of an overarching steering group to monitor the development of childcare co-operatives, and the support available to them.
 - The development of a support structure for preschool playgroups, and, in so doing, ensure that they have available to them the necessary information in order to decide whether becoming co-operatives will be of benefit to them.

Out of School Care

- 2.2 In May it was reported that Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC) had been commissioned to provide support to community based After School Care (ASC) clubs in order to increase their sustainability, quality and mutual co-operation, and provide tailored support to those which desire to operate as co-operatives.

- 2.3 Since then, LAYC has developed its capacity to provide expertise and legal support to clubs who expressed a wish to change governance to that of a Scottish Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and/ or operate as a co-operative. This support is provided directly by LAYC, along with Morton Fraser legal services, and the Co-operative Enterprise Hub. This support is available free of charge. ASC groups are being offered the chance to express interest and move forward on a stage by stage basis.
- 2.4 LAYC has had discussions with 6 clubs to explore the implications of making such changes, highlighting the potential benefits to the organisations and service users, as well as discovering the challenges for which it will be necessary to find solutions in order to move forward.
- 2.5 The possible benefits identified by groups include the explicit expression of ethos and work of each organisation, and its relationship with the community. A further advantage is related to increased staff engagement, and potential to improve staff benefits and retention. As well as direct communication with the 6 clubs that presented themselves as being interested, LAYC has also produced guidance and information that has been made more widely available across the sector.
- 2.6 A challenge identified as changing the legal status of an organisation to a SCIO or co-operative is the impact that this will have on the organisation's registration with Care Inspectorate. The ASC would need to close and deregister, and then register with Care Inspectorate as a new organisation. The consequence of this is that any history of inspections and therefore formal record of quality is lost. Organisations expressed concern about the impact on their reputation. LAYC is currently pursuing this issue with the Care Inspectorate.
- 2.7 Currently, there is one ASC club that is continuing to express interest in becoming a co-operative. The club has formally applied to the Co-operative Enterprise Hub (CEH) to embark on the process. CEH will assess the current situation of the club in order to confirm whether it is 'fit' to move forward to the next stage of the process. If the club still wishes to continue, LAYC and the representative from Morton Fraser will provide the necessary guidance and support. LAYC are also supporting 2 clubs to becoming SCIOS, in order to provide greater legal protection to their committee. As part of this process, a constitution that will enshrine those principles that are consistent with co-operative organisations is being designed and will be presented to the clubs for their consideration.
- 2.8 The remainder of ASC clubs that are already SCIOs, that have been directly involved in discussions, have concluded that moving to co-operative status for their individual organisations would not, at this stage provide any further benefit to them. However, there is great interest in developing strategies for developing mutual co-operation and collaboration between clubs. This includes the development of a co-operative charter, making use of a small grants scheme, and the development of a Managers Mentoring Service.

- 2.9 Work is underway to explore the creation of a 'co-operative charter' that parent led ASC clubs could access and adopt which would enshrine co-operative principles and practices into their operational procedures. The development of a charter is being progressed by LAYC and the Co-operative Enterprise Hub and will be presented back to the group of clubs that have been engaged in the discussions to date.
- 2.10 A small grants scheme to encourage and support co-operation and collaboration between parent led ASC clubs has been established by LAYC and its first grant has been awarded. The scheme is able to provide up to £400 per after school club for joint work with at least one other parent led ASC club.
- 2.11 The Managers Mentoring Service will provide tailored support to those managers of parent led ASC clubs who request additional support from an experienced manager. Information about this initiative and invitations to sign up as a mentor is currently being circulated within the parent led sector. It is anticipated that this will go live once mentors have been selected and provided with induction training.
- 2.12 In order to develop better understanding of community based parent led ASC clubs, LAYC and Council Officers have been working together to undertake a mapping exercise of provision across the City. It is envisaged that this may also assist in highlighting where additional capacity is required. LAYC are also meeting with colleagues from the CPD team in Children and Families to explore how existing training opportunities and resources might better meet the needs of ASC clubs.
- 2.13 It has been agreed that LAYC will organise and deliver an Out of School Care conference in order to celebrate the sector, and also celebrate, promote and enhance the value of co-operative provision. To that end, LAYC has established a conference planning group comprising of a lead member of staff from LAYC and representatives of ASC club managers. It is anticipated that this conference will take place in late February 2014, and that it is viewed as a positive opportunity to engage with Head Teachers of primary schools to demonstrate the educational benefits and contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence that ASC clubs can make.

Co-operative Childcare Steering Group

- 2.14 A steering group is being formed to monitor and support the activity around the development of co-operative childcare. The group will be chaired by Mike Rosendale, Head of Schools and Community Services, with representatives from Children and Families, Economic Development, After School Care club providers, LAYC, Co-operative Enterprise Hub, Asset Planning and Primary School Head Teachers. While the remit of the group will be to monitor and support the activity around the development of co-operatives and co-operative approaches, it will also take cognisance of the wider agenda being addressed by the current review of childcare funding and commitment to develop affordable childcare within the city. The work of this group will also take account of the

contribution that might be made by Public Service Mutuals with whom council officers met in July.

Pre School Activities

- 2.15 It was reported to Committee on 21 May that Nari Kallyan Shango (NKS), an organisation supporting South Asian women, had expressed an interest in considering a co-operative option for its childcare provision. Subsequent to further discussions, NKS concluded that it is not their intention to pursue a formal move to a co-operative structure. NKS advised that they consider their governance arrangements and operating practices largely follow co-operative principles. In addition they requested that they be kept advised of future developments regarding the Capital Coalition Agenda as it progresses.
- 2.16 The development of a co-operative approach to delivering a Community Crèche in North Edinburgh is underway. The crèche will support families who need short term, affordable, unplanned or emergency childcare, and will be provided within the Pilton Community Health Project that has purpose built registered premises that can provide for children aged from 6 weeks up to 12 years. A consortium of existing organisations has been supported to submit an application to the Investing in Ideas Fund at the Big Lottery and a decision has yet to be made. If successful, it will allow the opportunity to assess the demand for and sustainability of providing short term, unplanned or emergency childcare/crèche services locally. The full operating costs will be collated and analysed to ensure that a mechanism for full cost recovery is developed to secure the long term viability and sustainability of the service. It is planned that this project will operate with principles of mutual co-operation and collaboration, supporting the employment of local people. It will encourage and develop co-operative working practices within the community crèche to combine the interests of employees, families and children.
- 2.17 Council officers are developing a plan to consult with members of the Playgroup sector in order to establish how best to support them using more co-ordinated and co-operative approaches. They have consulted and met with senior officers from SPPA in order to identify the location of 40 playgroups in the city and to confirm the issues that the umbrella organisation have identified for the sector as well identify the support currently available to groups affiliated to this organisation. The issues facing playgroups identified by SPPA include those related to governance, finance, sustainability and staff retention. These issues mirror those experienced by the Out of School Care sector, and while it will be possible to learn from the initiatives being developed for that sector it will also be necessary to take account of the issues that are particular to the playgroups e.g. a quicker turnaround of committee members due to the age group of children attending playgroups.

Co-operative Education and Learning

- 2.18 It was reported to committee in May that the Broughton Cluster had been chosen as the pilot area for developing co-operative education and learning. The Co-operative Education Trust Scotland (CETS) had worked closely with

cluster schools to develop an action plan which included transition activities between nursery and P1, and P7 to S1 that demonstrated co-operative principles, values and practices, democracy days, and the introduction of SQA accreditation for co-operative work as appropriate.

- 2.19 Since then, a school link person from Broughton High School has been appointed to oversee developments in co-operative working and lead the plan in close partnership with CETS. The link person, along with the newly appointed DHT from Flora Stevenson PS has attended the International Association for the Study of Co-operation in Education held in Scarborough in July. CETS presented at this conference, and the two representatives from the cluster contributed to this session. The understanding gained at this event helped to inform the whole cluster CPD session on 12 August held at Broughton High School.
- 2.20 This CPD session gave all staff the opportunity to develop and share their thinking around co-operative values and principles and identify where these currently exist within their schools. This will be collated to determine the next steps for the cluster. CETS has also provided the Co-opoly game, a resource to be used to help pupils develop their understanding of co-operative principles, values and practice.
- 2.21 It is intended that a half day event with senior officials and elected members to look at opportunities and option for co-operative approaches in schools will be arranged based on the evaluation of the work developed in the Broughton cluster.

3. Recommendations

Committee is asked to:

- 3.1 Note that one After School Care club has made formal application to the Co-operative Enterprise Hub, to take the next step to become a co-operative;
- 3.2 Note that there is significant scope to develop formal co-operative support and practices amongst clubs;
- 3.3 Note the formation of the steering group to monitor the development of childcare co-operatives and associated activity to support the out of school and playgroup sectors;
- 3.4 Note the conference to be organised by Lothian Association of Youth Clubs; and the Co-operative Learning and Education event.

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Links

Coalition pledges	P5. Seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum, P6. Establish city-wide co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents
Council outcomes	CO1. Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed CO2. Our children and young people are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities CO6. Our children and young people's outcomes are not undermined by poverty and inequality
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
Appendices	None