

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Early Years Capital Programme Update

Executive/routine
Wards

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Education, Communities and Families Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

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Early Years Capital Programme Update

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the delivery of the Council’s Early Years 1140 Capital Programme by setting out the status of projects within the programme, the financial pressures that remain in the delivery of the last phases of the programme and the ways in which these pressures are being addressed.

3. Background

- 3.1 In October 2016, the Scottish Government published ‘A Blueprint for 2020 – The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in Scotland’ that outlined their plans to increase funded hours of early learning and childcare from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020. The Government’s vision was to deliver high quality, flexible ELC which is affordable and accessible for all.
- 3.2 The City of Edinburgh Council was allocated £39.484m of capital funding from the Scottish Government to support the expansion of nurseries to provide the increased funded hours.
- 3.3 In [March 2022](#), Committee considered the “Early Years 1140 Capital Programme Update” report which set out the delays being experienced in the delivery of projects and the potential impact of rising costs.
- 3.4 This report provides a further update on the delivery of the Early Years 1140 hours capital programme.

4. Main Report

Early Years 1140 Capital Programme Projects

- 4.1 Appendix 1 provides detail on all projects that currently form the Early Years 1140 capital expansion programme. Over the past five years, 25 individual projects have been delivered including eight new or replacement nurseries and the establishment of a Forest School network.

- 4.2 There are currently nine 'live' projects in the Early Years 1140 capital programme. Three of these are new nurseries focused on partnership working and improving transition. These are:
- A community hub at Ratho, incorporating Early Years, Library and community space;
 - The Macmillan Hub in Pennywell which will create the Council's largest Early Years facility in a building shared with library services and North Edinburgh Arts; and
 - A large nursery as part of a new early level campus at Kirkliston.
- 4.3 Market conditions, the impact of COVID-19 and rising inflation experienced since 2018 has made delivery of this Early Years Programme particularly challenging and placed pressure on the available budget. The original Scottish Government allocation of £39.484m has been supplemented by realignment of unspent revenue funding resulting in an increased capital budget of £65.3m.
- 4.4 Despite this increase in the overall capital budget and the removal of some projects, estimates suggest a total programme cost of £66.10m. While this total includes £3.1m of contingency, it is anticipated that costs associated with several of the uncommitted 'live' projects (projects not yet under construction) will continue to rise. For this reason all 'live' projects that are uncommitted remain under review.
- 4.5 Projects that have been removed from the programme since the update in March 2022, and the rationale for their removal, are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Early Years 1140 Projects Removed from programme

Project Name	Project Description	Rationale for Removal
Currie Primary School	Refurbishment Works (minor)	Further investigation showed insufficient space for works proposed.
Echline Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Alternative provision planned (new primary school at Builyeon Road).
Greengables Nursery School	Refurbishment Works	Potential site for new Greendykes Primary School.
Sighthill Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Relocation of modular building has provided capacity. Potential redevelopment of Calderglen nursery.
Stanwell Nursery School	Refurbishment Works	Scope of works not possible due to decant requirements.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Projects at Ratho, Pennywell and Kirkliston will be completed over the next six months. Further evaluation of the costs likely to be incurred on uncommitted projects will be assessed in light of pressures on the overall programme budget.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The original Capital Grant from the Scottish Government to allow expansion to 1140 hours of ELC was £39.484m. The delay in the delivery of the programme has resulted in underspend in the Scottish Government's revenue grant that has been transferred to capital to cover increasing costs. Up to the end of financial year 2020/21, this resulted in a further £16.245m being added to the capital budget. A further £9.6m was added in financial year 2021/22. This cumulatively increases the available capital budget for Early Years expansion to £65.329m
- 6.2 The previous section set out that the estimated cost of the full programme exceeds the available budget by £0.8m. However, the estimated cost of the full programme includes £3.1m of contingency suggesting that, if further cost increases could be avoided on remaining 'live' projects, the programme should be deliverable in its current form. Unfortunately, recent experience suggests that further cost increases should be anticipated. Consequently, tight monitoring on project costs is required and it may be necessary to prioritise within uncommitted projects to release budget from one project to support delivery of others. This requirement will continue to be assessed.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The purpose of the Early Years 1140 Capital Programme is to facilitate the delivery of high quality, flexible ELC which is affordable and accessible for all. The planning of new infrastructure considers not only the capacity to provide places but also the flexibility it will provide in offering parents a choice in how they access their entitlement.
- 7.2 Accordingly, reducing the scope of the Early Years 1140 programme to meet budgetary pressures will not prevent the Council from meeting its statutory requirement to provide places for eligible children; however, it may limit the flexibility for parents. For example, a child may not be able to attend their closest Early Years setting because the hours available do not fit with the parents' working patterns.
- 7.3 The Early Years 1140 programme was developed with a focus on ensuring sufficiency of places and flexibility in areas of greatest deprivation. This is to ensure that access to appropriate provision is available within all neighbourhood's and that that access is equitable with more affluent areas of the city where private nurseries and choice may be more abundant.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 All new Early Years settings are built according to the environmental standards required at the time of their design and with cognisance of the Council's Net-Zero targets.

- 8.2 Outdoor play, learning and exploration are at the heart of Edinburgh's Early Years settings. A significant part of the programme has been the development of a network of Forest Kindergarten's and the careful creation of high-quality outdoor settings.
- 8.3 Internal spaces are designed to biophilic principles with free flow between indoor and outdoor spaces promoting independent exploration of external environments.
- 8.4 This heavy focus on the design of outdoor spaces and natural environments is to embed within children's learning and experiences an appreciation and understanding of nature and the outdoors. It is recognised that one of the single most effective ways of addressing climate and nature emergencies is through education.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 Engagement with communities has been undertaken on a project by project basis according to the needs of the community and the type of project being delivered.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 None.

11.1 Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1- Early Years 1140 Hours Capital Programme.

APPENDIX 1: Early Years 1140 Hours Capital Programme

Project Name	Project Description	Project Status	Estimated Completion Date	Cost Estimate October 2023 (£)
Abbeyhill PS Nursery Class	Refurbishment Works	Complete	15-Aug-19	25,000
Bonaly Forest School	Forest School (Relocate Clifton Yurt to Bonaly)	Complete	1-Aug-21	20,000
Brunstane Primary School Nursery Class	Refurbishment Works	Complete	1-Oct-19	476,555
Cammo Forest School	Forest School	Complete	15-Feb-21	98,399
Castleview Avenue	Forest School	Complete	22-Jan-21	100,719
Clifton Hall Forest School	Forest School	Complete	1-Aug-18	38,000
Clovenstone Primary School Nursery Class	Refurbishment Works	Complete	17-Apr-23	86,000
Corstorphine Hill Forest School	Forest School	Complete	22-Jan-21	114,157
Craigentenny Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Complete	15-Dec-22	5,753,397
Craigmillar Forest School (Castlebrae High School)	Forest School	Complete	22-Jan-21	108,310
Dean Park PS Nursery Class	Refurbishment Works	Complete	30-Nov-21	344,114
Granton Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Complete	14-Sep-22	5,977,104
Moffat Early Years Centre	Refurbishment Works	Complete	6-Aug-20	76,800
Nether Currie PS Nursery Class	New Build	Complete	1-Aug-22	3,543,848
New Broomhills PS Nursery Class	New Build - part of new PS	Complete	1-Aug-21	1,279,246
New South Edinburgh PS Nursery Class	New Build - part of new PS	Complete	1-Aug-22	1,352,620
New Victoria Primary School	New Build - part of new PS	Complete	17-Jan-22	1,333,479
Newbattle Forest School	Forest School	Complete	15-Aug-20	15,000
Prestonfield Primary School Nursery Class	Refurbishment Works	Complete	1-Jul-20	280,257
Queensferry Forest School	Forest School	Complete	22-Jan-21	117,536
Queensferry Primary School Nursery Class	Refurbishment Works	Complete	9-Jan-20	219,674
Sighthill Primary School Nursery Class (TU)	Temporary Unit	Complete	15-Feb-19	413,032
St Cuthbert's RC Primary Nursery Class (TU)	Temporary Unit	Complete	12-Aug-19	249,537
St John Vianny Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Complete	16-Dec-22	5,272,115
St Marks Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Complete	9-Dec-22	5,116,836
Broughton Primary School Nursery Class (Powderhall)	New Build - Replace Existing	Tender Evaluation	22-Apr-25	6,076,294
Carrick Knowe Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Extension	Pre-tender	22-Apr-25	3,985,027
Craigroyston HS Cluster (Pennywell)	New Build – Macmillan Hub	Under Construction	15-Mar-24	6,542,000
Gilmerton PS Nursery Class (Spinney Lane)	New Build - Extend Existing	Pre-tender	31-Oct-24	4,198,127
Kirkliston NS	New Build – Early Level Campus	Under Construction	1-Feb-24	4,819,850
Lauriston Castle Forest School	Forest School Accommodation	In Development	1-Aug-24	50,000
Liberton Nursery	Refurbishment Works (staff toilet)	In Development	1-Aug-24	33,600
Ratho Primary School Nursery Class	New Build – Community Hub	Under Construction	29-Feb-24	3,905,978
Refurbishment / reinstatement of production kitchens	Granton Production kitchen	Under Construction	22-Dec-23	770,085
Currie PS	Refurbishment Works (minor)	Removed from the programme	-	4,000
Echline Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Removed from the programme	-	144,000
Greengables Nursery School	Refurbishment Works	Removed from the programme	-	-
Sighthill Primary School Nursery Class	New Build - Replace Existing	Removed from the programme	-	-
Stanwell Nursery School	Refurbishment Works	Removed from the programme	-	40,000

Subtotal	62,980,696
Contingency	3,088,107
TOTAL	66,068,803

