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**REPORT TO: ELC EXPANSION PROGRAMME BOARD/TRANSFORMING  
LEARNING BOARD**

**SUBJECT: ELC JOINT DELIVERY BOARD LETTER**

**DATE: 04 FEBRUARY 2020/13 FEBRUARY 2020**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 On 10 December 2019, the Minister for Children and Young People and COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People wrote to Leaders, Chief Executives and Directors of Education across Scotland to provide an update on the ELC expansion at a national level and to propose that all local authorities complete an assurance check on their individual programmes. This paper sets out the Project Team's response to the reflective questions contained within the letter and invites Programme Board/Transforming Learning Board to comment.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The letter was sent out to all Scottish local authorities following the Joint Delivery Board meeting in October 2019. The letter refers to national indicators which show that with 7 months to go there is still a great deal of work to be done across Scotland, and this presents a risk if there are delays in any aspect of the ELC expansion implementation (a copy of the letter is attached to the report)

2.2 The letter suggests that oversight and scrutiny from senior officers and elected members is linked to effective delivery. The Programme Board and Transforming Learning Board are invited to review and discuss the reflective questions set out in the letter, and the project team's responses (appendix 1).

**3. CONCLUSION**

3.1 Programme Board/Transforming Learning Board is asked to:

- Review and discuss the ELC expansion programme reflective questions as set out in the letter from the Minister and COSLA Spokesperson.



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## Appendix 1 - ELC Joint Delivery Board – Reflective Questions

ELC Delivery Board Questions		Project Team response
Cross Cutting Questions (councillor involvement)		
1	In what ways are councillors able to scrutinise expansion plans?	Expansion plans are scrutinised at the Transforming Learning Board, which has councillor representation
2	In what ways and how regularly are elected members updated on progress?	Progress updates are provided at the Transforming Learning Board.
3	How do councillors feel able to balance competing priorities to focus on delivering the statutory entitlement?	Elected members approved the establishment of a project manager post to deliver the statutory entitlement. This has helped to maintain focus and progress.
4	In what ways are key decision points between now and August 2020 planned into your committee cycle	The project team have been delivering the programme as set out in the ELC Delivery Plan agreed by Council in 2017. Committee reporting has been limited to approval and updates on grant funding.
Cross Cutting Questions (senior leader involvement)		
5	Have you seen a clear programme plan and is it agreed at a CMT level?	The programme plan was agreed by the SRO and is held by the PMO. Progress against milestones is reported to the Officer ELC Programme Board and the Transforming Learning Board. The full programme plan was not agreed by CMT.



6	In what ways do you have visibility of programme progress?	ELC Programme Board (Head of Service level membership) and Transforming Learning Board.
7	What are the routes for escalating issues?	Issues should be escalated via the SRO to CMT.
8	Is there a senior officer responsible for overall delivery	Yes, there is an identified SRO.
9	How are the project team empowered to make decisions and raise issues across the portfolios	The SRO is responsible for establishing when decisions can be made by the project manager and team, and when decisions need to be escalated to the SRO.
10	What gives you confidence that there are resources in place in the team to ensure delivery?	There is a temporary project team working on the expansion, and an expanded Early Years operational team progressing the delivery of the entitlement.
11	Are your team benefiting from sharing experience with peers? How could this be developed further?	The team have been working closely with colleagues across the Northern Alliance. There have been regular Northern Alliance meetings since 2017. The ELC Project Manager has also been attending ADES early years network meetings since 2017 where approaches to the expansion have been shared, and problems discussed.
<b>Workforce and Recruitment</b>		
12	How could staffing models be made more efficient? Can recruitment be reduced?	We have developed an efficient staffing model based on a flexible service delivery model. Recruitment is linked to uptake so that as far as possible we are staffing to ratio only.
13	How has staff engagement and consultation let to the most efficient use of existing staff?	The project team have engaged with staff in line with the phased rollout. There have been whole staff team meetings, and 1:1 meetings with staff to discuss their needs and any interest in increased hours. A number of part-time staff have increased their



		hours reducing the need for new staff.
14	What recruitment pipelines are available, and are there other routes available?	Modern Apprenticeship and Men into Childcare pipeline, plus standard recruitment processes.
15	What gives you confidence that you will successfully recruit at scale in spring/summer?	We have phased our expansion and have therefore completed approximately one third of our recruitment. Interest in our posts to date has very been high. We have a full-time HR Adviser working within the project team supporting recruitment.
16	What happens if you are unable to recruit to meet the staffing target?	We would have to reduce capacity in our settings and/or reduce the number of hours available to parents.
Capital and Capacity		
17	What capacity is required for August 2020?	We need approximately 2,000 1140 hour bundles
18	What options are there to deliver that capacity, and what is needed to put them in place?	We have partner capacity, including childminders. We are supporting partners through the ELC grant process to increase their capacity. Additional local authority and partner capacity is also being developed through the capital programme (new build and refurbishment)
19	What are timelines for implementation?	New partner contracts will be in place for prior to June 2020. New build and refurbishment programme due to complete by August 2020 (with the exception of new Keith nursery).
20	What will trigger contingency decisions, and when?	We are aware we need temporary accommodation for the new Keith nursery from August to December and are working on getting that in place (accommodation identified, awaiting Care Inspectorate sign off). Contingency arrangements are required for Mosstodloch, Aberlour and Mortlach. These would be triggered over the summer



		period if there is any delay in the completion of the refurbishment works.
Quality		
21	How are areas for quality improvement identified across both sectors?	The Continuous Improvement Officers are responsible for quality improvement in local authority and partner settings and are developing a performance management framework to identify areas for improvement and agree support measures.
22	What is the impact on capacity?	There are currently 3 partner settings in Elgin that are causing the most concern in terms of quality and meeting the National Standard. Local authority support is being directed towards them as they offer significant capacity in Elgin. The Continuous Improvement Officers have received support from the Scottish Government and the Care Inspectorate has recently appointed Improvement Advisors to support settings that aren't meeting the National Standard. These 3 settings will all receive targeted Improvement Advisor support.
23	How are resources targeted to support improvement?	Resources are targeted using the performance management framework. Settings are RAG rated, with settings rated 'red' receiving intensive support.