

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2015

Report by Director of Education

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS TO CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT THE ENTITLEMENT  
OF 600 HOURS OF PRE-FIVE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek elected member approval to consult with parents of children under 5 years to review and determine a model for the delivery of 600 hours of early learning and childcare in East Renfrewshire from autumn of 2017.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. Members are asked to:
- a. approve that the Director of Education proceeds with a consultation exercise; and,
  - b. instruct the Director to report on the findings of the consultation and depending on the outcome, bring forward a revised model for East Renfrewshire to a future Education Committee in October 2016.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Members will recall the duty placed upon the Council as a result of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, viz. to increase entitlement to early learning and childcare to 600 hours for every 3 and 4 year old, 2 year olds whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits and every looked after 2 year old. The duty also outlined the national expectation to introduce flexibility on how this entitlement is accessed.

4. Elected members will be aware that East Renfrewshire was one of only two councils in Scotland to deliver 570 hours per year to all prescribed preschool children.

5. At the October 2013 Education Committee the Director of Education reported the results of the consultation exercise which surveyed parental views on how the Council should deliver the entitlement to 600 hours of early learning and childcare. It detailed the views of parents on how children could access the additional 30 hours of high quality learning and childcare.

6. Parental demands for childcare in East Renfrewshire fell into 3 categories:
- a) Those who require additional nursery sessions so that their child attends full time for some or all of the week;
  - b) Lengthening the duration of a nursery session, before or after by 1 or 2 hours;
  - c) Provision of nursery sessions during school holiday periods.

7. Members will be aware of the requirement outlined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, for local authorities to consult on early learning and childcare every 2 years and to build year on year, more flexible models of early learning and childcare provision through reconfiguration of services.

8. Draft statutory guidance has been published to accompany the Act. Within this draft guidance the Scottish Government set out an expectation that provision will be built up through year on year improvements to flexibility and choice. The draft guidance, which indicates that there will be annual incremental increases in funding from the Scottish Government to enable education authorities to increase flexibility and choice on an annual basis, includes estimated increased levels of funding from 2014 – 2019.

9. From August 2015, the department introduced a model for East Renfrewshire which provided parents with both choice and flexibility in accessing this additional provision. This is based on degrees of flexibility being available, so that parents can choose:

- no flexibility - 5 sessions of 3 hours 10 minutes per week.
- limited flexibility - 5 sessions of 3 hours per week, with the option of using the additional 30 hours during school holiday periods.  
- 5 sessions of 3 hours per week, with the option of using the additional 30 hours before (1 hour) or after (up to 2 hours) the nursery session.
- greater flexibility - Extended day, where sessions would be a minimum of 4 hours and a maximum of 8 hours in any day, subject to a maximum of 600 hours funding in any year. Additional hourly charges would be applied thereafter where there is capacity available.

10. Members will recall that from August 2015, all East Renfrewshire Council Early Learning and Childcare Establishments are open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

11. The Scottish Government is committed to improving and increasing high quality, flexible and integrated early learning and childcare which is accessible and affordable for all, supports employability for parents and economic security for families as well as a better work-life balance.

## **REPORT**

12. It is proposed that the attached consultation document be made available to parents of children under five by:

- a) Putting an online version of the questionnaire on the Council's Citizen's Space.

13. It is proposed that the consultation should last from January - April 2016 with articles in the local press and school and nursery newsletters, posters in nurseries, playgroups, libraries, doctor's surgeries and the Council's social media sites to encourage parental participation.

14. Thereafter responses will be collated and reported to a future Education Committee in October 2016 in readiness for allocation of places early in 2017 with any new arrangements to take effect from autumn 2017.

## **FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS**

15. There are no financial and efficiency implications for this consultation. There will, however, be financial implications for any reconfiguration of existing models of delivery.

16. It is anticipated that Scottish Government funding will be available to support any future models.

## **CONSULTATION**

17. This paper relates to a proposed consultation with parents of children aged under 5 years.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

18. Members are asked to:

- a. approve that the Director of Education proceeds with a consultation exercise; and,
- b. instruct the Director to report on the findings of the consultation and depending on the outcome, bring forward a revised model for East Renfrewshire to a future Education Committee in October 2016.

Mhairi Shaw  
Director of Education  
19 November 2015

### Convener Contact Details

Councillor E Green, Convener for Education and Equalities  
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Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

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### Background Papers

1. Report to Education Committee: Results of the Consultation on the Implementation of the Entitlement to 600 Hours of Early Learning and Childcare, October 2013.
2. Report to Education Committee: Towards Flexibility in Early Learning and Childcare Provision, 20 November 2014.

### Key Words

This paper relates to the duty outlined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, to consult with parents every 2 years on accessing 600 hours of early learning and childcare for preschool children.

## East Renfrewshire Council: Education Department

### Consultation on Early Learning and Childcare in East Renfrewshire

#### Information Paper for Parents

##### Introduction

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to provide all eligible pre-school (4 year olds), ante pre-school (3 year olds) and some 2 year olds (whose parents are on certain benefits and/or are looked after) children with 600 hours of early learning and childcare (formally called pre-school education).

The Act also asks local authorities to provide an appropriate level of flexibility to allow parents some choice when deciding to access services.

East Renfrewshire was one of only two councils in Scotland to deliver 570 hours per year to all prescribed preschool children. The Council carried out a consultation with parents in June 2013 on their preferences on how children could access an additional 30 hours of high quality learning and childcare. The vast majority of parents stated 600 hours should be provided in the same way with a majority indicating that all hours should be delivered as core. However, a large percentage indicated a wish/need for flexibility to meet childcare and family requirements.

##### Current Arrangements in East Renfrewshire Council

In August 2015, East Renfrewshire Council introduced a model of flexibility based on the consultation of June 2013. The model provided parents with 4 choices:

###### 1. Core Hours

Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon) at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours and 10 minutes. This is based on term time (38 weeks per year).

###### 2. Additional Hours

Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon), at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours. Parents and carers can access the additional 30 hours before (1 hour) or after (up to 2 hours) the nursery session. This is based on term time (38 weeks per year).

###### 3. Holiday Provision

Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon), at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours. This allocation is based on 40 weeks per year, with parents and carers having the opportunity to access the additional 30 hours (2 weeks) in terms of additional sessions during school holidays.

###### 4. Extended Hours

Parents and carers can apply to access extended day sessions, either 38 or 52 weeks per year. Parents would be able to access a minimum of 4 hours funding and a maximum of 8 hours funding in any day. A maximum of 600 hours funding could be used in any year. Additional hourly charges would be applied thereafter.

## 5. Partner Provider

Parents can negotiate with a partner provider term time or extended day/year sessions. The provider will charge at their own hourly rate, which may be higher than the rate funded by East Renfrewshire Council.

All East Renfrewshire Council early learning and childcare establishments are open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The time at which children become entitled to early learning and childcare is set down in legislation and broadly begins from the term after the child's third birthday as described in the table below:

<b>Child's third birthday falls on or between the following dates</b>	<b>The child will become eligible from the following preschool term</b>
1 March – 31 August	August (autumn term)
1 September and 31 December	January (spring term)
1 January and last day in February	April (summer term)

The Scottish Government allows education authorities flexibility to make the most appropriate arrangements for their own residents. However, most education authorities in Scotland still follow this approach to admitting children for preschool education.

In East Renfrewshire, children who reach 3 years of age between August and February begin nursery on or immediately after their third birthday in an attempt to maximise the amount of preschool provided for children. Children who become three years of age between March and August start nursery in August in keeping with government guidance.

## Proposal and consultation

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, requires local authorities to consult on their models of early learning and education every 2 years. The aim of the process is to gather information that will allow the reconfiguration of services, year on year, to provide more flexible models of early learning and childcare for parents and carers. This process will be continued until either a wide range of flexible provision is achieved and/or successive consultations are producing similar findings.

From January to June 2016, East Renfrewshire will be seeking the views of all parents with children aged 0 – 5 years. The information you provide will be treated confidentially and anonymously, and will be used to inform future service planning and provision (from August 2017 onwards).

## **East Renfrewshire Council: Education Department**

### **Consultation on the future of early learning and childcare in East Renfrewshire**

#### **Consultation with Parents**

#### **On-Line Questionnaire**

**Dear Parent / Carer**

**The Council is seeking your views so that a model of provision can be devised to best meet the needs of our residents.**

**East Renfrewshire Council currently provides 600 hours per year of early learning and childcare to all 3 & 4 year olds whose parents wish it.**

**At present the 600 hours is provided as follows:**

**1. Core Hours**

Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon) at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours and 10 minutes. This is based on term time (38 weeks per year).

**2. Additional Hours**

Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon), at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours. Parents and carers can access the additional 30 hours before (1 hour) or after (up to 2 hours) the nursery session. This is based on term time (38 weeks per year).

**3. Holiday Provision**

Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon), at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours. This allocation is based on 40 weeks per year, with parents and carers having the opportunity to access the additional 30 hours (2 weeks) in terms of additional sessions during school holidays.

**4. Extended Hours**

Parents and carers can apply to access extended day sessions, either 38 or 52 weeks per year. Parents would be able to access a minimum of 4 hours funding and a maximum of 8 hours funding in any day. A maximum of 600 hours funding could be used in any year. Additional hourly charges would be applied thereafter.

**5. Partner Provider**

Parents can negotiate with a partner provider term time or extended day/year sessions. The provider will charge at their own hourly rate, which may be higher than the rate funded by East Renfrewshire Council.

**In East Renfrewshire 570 hours is provided to all parents as either morning or afternoon sessions during term time. We want to consult with you as to how the additional 30 hours should be provided.**

**You are invited to respond by giving your views, suggestions or concerns. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this consultation.**

**1. Where do you currently live?**

Newton Mearns	<input type="checkbox"/>	Busby/Clarkston/Eaglesham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giffnock/Thornliebank	<input type="checkbox"/>	Barrhead/Neilston	<input type="checkbox"/>

**2. Please indicate the number of children in your family who fall into the following age categories:**

1 year old and under	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 year old and under	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 year old and under	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**3. Which of these early learning and childcare education provisions do you currently use?**

Type of Establishment	Please tick (✓)
Local Authority Nursery Class or Family Centre	
Private Provider (in partnership with ERC)	
Private Provider (not in partnership with ERC)	
Child Minder	
None of the above	

**4. What do you consider to be important when choosing a childcare provider (select all that apply)**

	Please tick (✓)
Affordability	
Convenience	
Good quality inspection report	
Qualifications of staff	
Reputation	
Social and educational opportunities for my child	
Flexibility	

**5. If you use early learning and childcare services, please indicate the reason(s) (select all that apply):**

	Please tick (✓)
My child is entitled to early learning and childcare	
To allow me to work	
To allow me to look for work	
To allow me to study/train	
To give me time for other things (e.g. appointments, etc)	
It is good for my child's development	
My child likes spending time with/at the provider	

6. **Eligible 2, 3 and 4 year old children are entitled to 600 hours of funded early learning and childcare. How are you using / would like to use your 600 hours of funded childcare and education?**

Model of Early Learning and Childcare	Please tick (✓)
<p><b>Core Hours</b> 5 sessions of 3 hours and 10 minutes, (a session being either a morning or afternoon) at a local authority nursery. This is based on term time (38 weeks per year).</p>	
<p><b>Additional Hours</b> Parents and carers can apply for 5 sessions, (a session being either a morning or afternoon), at a local authority nursery. Each session will last 3 hours. Parents and carers can access the additional 30 hours before (1 hour) or after (up to 2 hours) the nursery session. This is based on term time (38 weeks per year).</p>	
<p><b>Holiday Provision</b> 5 sessions of 3 hours, (a session being either a morning or afternoon), at a local authority nursery. This allocation is based on 40 weeks per year, with parents and carers having the opportunity to access the additional 30 hours (2 weeks) in terms of additional sessions during school holidays.</p>	
<p><b>Extended Hours</b> extended day sessions, either 38 or 52 weeks per year. Parents access a minimum of 4 hours funding and a maximum of 8 hours funding in any day. A maximum of 600 hours funding could be used in any year. Additional hourly charges would be applied thereafter.</p>	
<p><b>Partner Provider</b> Parents negotiate with a partner provider term time or extended day/year sessions. The provider charges at their own hourly rate, which may be higher than the rate funded by East Renfrewshire Council.</p>	

**7. None of the above**

If so, please use the space below for comments or suggestions on how these hours could be used.

Other (please specify)
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Wraparound Care is a service offered over and above the 600 hours entitlement for early learning and childcare. East Renfrewshire Council offers a wraparound service in all its establishments. Parents and carers can purchase wraparound before the morning session, during lunchtime and after the afternoon session. In some establishments parents can purchase additional sessions.

**8. Do you currently use the wraparound service?**

Yes  No

**9. If you don't use the wraparound service please indicate the reason(s) why (select all that apply):**

	Please tick (✓)
I do not require childcare beyond the 600 hours provided	
I prefer to use another childcare provider (i.e. childminder)	
The cost of wraparound	
The limited short term flexibility	
Availability	
Other	

**10. None of the above**

If so, please use the space below for comments or suggestions on how wraparound could be provided.

Other (please specify)

**11. Here are some common views / perceptions of current early learning and childcare provision. To what extent do you agree or disagree with them? (please tick)**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I find it difficult to afford the childcare I need.					
Providers are not flexible enough about hours of use.					
I feel I rely too much on family friends for childcare.					
If I could access more childcare I would have more opportunity to work, study or train.					
I would like more choice in the childcare available to me.					

**12. Please use the space below if you have any comments or suggestions that will inform our decision making.**

Comments / Suggestions

**13. Would you be interested in joining a focus group to further discuss the future of early learning and childcare in East Renfrewshire Council? If yes, please provide your contact details below:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you.**