

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	CLH 34/19

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 29 May 2019

Report Title: **Early Learning and Childcare Update**

Report By: Interim Director of Care and Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper provides members with information on the key updates and progress in relation to the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Note the current national and local position

3. Introduction

- 3.1 The expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) will raise the current funded entitlement of 600 hours for 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds to 1140 hours by August 2020.
- 3.2 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 commits us to this current requirement and the Act will be reviewed to ensure the 1140 hours is enacted before August 2020.
- 3.3 The programme aim is to reduce the poverty related attainment gap and ensure all children get the best start in life through the provision of high quality early learning and childcare. By providing an extension to the funded hours of ELC, parents will be able to access further education, training or employment.
- 3.4 Parents and carers should understand their entitlement to ELC for their children and be supported to consider their options around available provision. They should also know this is a choice and that they do not have to take up the full 1140 hours. They should consider what is in the best interests of their children and their family when they make their decisions.

4. National ELC Programme

- 4.1 Simon Mair is a new appointment to the national team and he has taken up post as the Head of Delivery Assurance. Having previously worked for East Dunbartonshire Council as the school improvement and planning manager. Simon will work with local authorities to provide assurance to the ELC Joint Delivery Board that each authority is making progress in delivering the expanded entitlement.
- 4.2 The Joint Delivery Board are due to meet again in June to consider authorities progress data from the quarterly reporting on the information supplied to the Improvement Service from authorities around staffing, capacity, uptake, quality and infrastructure. We are presently compiling this.
- 4.3 Quarterly data is also provided by authorities to the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) around progress on the capital expansion programme and this together with discussions around the Scottish Study of ELC focus on outcomes for children, will feature at the Joint Delivery Board.
- 4.4 SFT recently attended a local ELC Programme Board and shared the National and Highland picture around capital progress (Appendices 1 & 2). This shows that overall capital progress is slower than had been anticipated but that Highland is largely in line with the National picture. However, it was highlighted that in respect to Highland this relies on all of the required works being completed on time with a huge reliance on anticipated work taking place over the summer before August 2020. A concern was that any delay in this schedule will significantly impact on the expansion plans.

Contingency plans must be in place that will include interim measures such as longer opening hours in some settings.

- 4.5 Members were given the link to the published [Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for early learning and childcare providers: Principles and practice](#) a joint Scottish Government and COSLA publication, at the last meeting of this committee in January. Supporting [Operating Guidance](#) and a [Question and Answer](#) document to further support the sector has now been published alongside this.

- 4.6 Scotland Excel has been developing a suite of operating guidance to support local authorities in the implementation of Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard.

The guidance documents were published on 30th April:

- Transition options
- Setting a sustainable rate from 2020
- Business sustainability criteria

The guidance will have important implications for authorities and partner providers as we develop our shared commitment plans to deliver 1140 hours whilst complying with the new model for next year.

- 4.7 In relation to responsibilities within the operating guidance, local authorities will remain the guarantor of quality with some of the main focus being on business sustainability and the payment of the Living Wage to all employees delivering ELC.

We will consult with our colleagues in legal and procurement to ensure that moving towards 2020 our contract and procurement processes meet the requirements set out in the guidance and comply with the new ELC National Standard.

5. Local ELC Programme

- 5.1 Members have been kept updated on local plans and have acknowledged the scale of the task to deliver 1140 funded hours across Highland. Through previous committee papers members have also been made aware of the local structure of the ELC programme through the central Programme Board that meets fortnightly and has strategic decision making for the expansion. 4 Local Area Boards meet every 4/6 weeks to develop the proposals at an operational level and the collaborative ELC partnership group focus on the joint opportunities required to implement the programme.
- 5.2 Important local developments around opportunities available in ELC includes the deployment of PSAs for August 2019 where the need for additional practitioners to deliver the proposed 1140 hours will be required. The re-structure of Care and Learning means we can ensure ELC is seen as a priority in the service. It can offer an important career structure for staff who have the caring and nurturing skills required to ensure a high quality ELC experience for all children.
- 5.3 There are many subgroups that support the expansion programme that focus on workforce and policy development and our partners either lead or co-chair with Highland Council on aspects of development.
- 5.4 Let's talk about 1140 (#letstalkabout1140) will be hosted by UHI on 24th May. This collaboration of many partners aims to raise the profile of the early years expansion in terms of opportunities for career development and offer examples of current good practice across Highland and Scotland. A subgroup of the partnership group, are leading the planning for the event.
- 5.5 Highland Council Family Resource Co-ordinators have been working closely with CALA (Care and Learning Alliance) to increase the number of places available for eligible 2 year olds. Two new settings at Raigmore and Invergordon are now

operating well and staff are working closely with parents to ensure they are enabled to take up the hours that they want.

- 5.6 Highland Council offered their support to CALA to apply for Social Innovation Funding from the European Social Fund and the Scottish Government to pilot the delivery of new and innovative models of ELC in rural areas to support a sustainable rural community. This is something members have been interested in.

CALA in partnership with the Sheiling Project who are funded by Highland Council to deliver outdoor ELC provision (Summerlings) have successfully been awarded £122,000 from this fund. Inverness College UHI and the University of Edinburgh, will undertake the research which will explore how best to provide high quality child centred ELC that is beneficial to everyone. Examples may include taking the nursery to children - learning from the Scandinavian mobile pre-school model, or providing quality ELC at different times and places to best suit parental rural and seasonal work patterns.

- 5.7 The project will also look at how to create intergenerational and inclusive ELC including shared staffing, training and new types of shared spaces. It will run until the end of March 2020 and CALA will be working in close partnership with a wide range of organisations and groups including Highland Council, NHS Highland, Skills Development Scotland, Cantraybridge College and Dementia Friendly communities and local members.

- 5.8 Highland Council early years team have a training and support agreement with 'Peep', an independent charity that supports parents with children aged 0 – 3 to learn together. Providing training for early years staff in 'Learning Together' and the 'Peep Progression Pathway' has enabled local practitioners to deliver the programme to more than 400 parents last year and this continues.

'Peep' principles assist parents to understand child development and thereby enhances confidence to explore their role as a parent, it uses play as a basis for learning and enables the development of positive relationships between parents and children.

- 5.9 Last year we highlighted the important joint working through the Peep progression pathway to support dads in Inverness prison undertake units related to early years and gain credit towards qualifications at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5. Highland Council and CALA staff support this programme. It is the only one in the UK and features on the Peep website as an example of great collaborative working.
<https://www.peep.org.uk/sites/www.peep.org.uk/files/Peep%20case%20study%20-%20HM%20Prison%20Inverness%20-%20Peep%20Progression%20Pathway%203.19%20%5Buploaded%5D.pdf>

- 5.10 The Peep Progression Pathway is also being run at UHI in an attempt to attract more men into childcare roles. The first evening at the end of March saw 11 men aged between 17 and 35 years attend. Discussion focused on play - including outdoor play, communication, safety and protection and there are opportunities for many other topics to be covered. Some of the men who attended are very interested in a career in ELC and UHI have agreed to cover the costs of PVG checks for them to gain experience in settings as part of their learning.

All students are guaranteed an interview for the HNC Childhood practice or alternative

paths into education.

- 5.11 We continue to work closely with colleagues in learning and development to expand on the proposals to meet the requirement for qualified ELC practitioners. An anticipated additional 250 staff are required, they must register with the SSSC within 6 months of appointment which commits them to either possess or be working to a recognised qualification within 5 years.

Opportunities are being developed through the EYP Modern Apprenticeship Programme and the council SQA centre can deliver the required qualification (SVQ 3 Social Services – children and young people, SCQF level 7). However, more assessors are required to support this and the MA Programme Manager is developing proposals around further staff requirements for this.

- 5.12 In terms of Highland Council's Change Programme, Early Years is very much a part of that process. We have proposed a review of provision that will deliver savings in line with changes that will not adversely impact on service delivery and in some instances will enhance it. This includes building a career pathway in early years and developing the ELC Modern Apprentice programme.

We must however be able to demonstrate commitment to our Delivery Plan and ensure there are no delays to recruitment that will have an adverse impact on the quality of provision, which needs to rise to meet the Care Inspectorate standards for August 2020. Furthermore, any delays that mean we do not meet our statutory requirement must be mitigated.

- 5.13 Due to the changes in requirements from the Care Inspectorate around evidence required to demonstrate child led learning, we have for some time been considering the level of non-contact time that is currently provided for planning and prep in local authority nurseries. This will ensure a more efficient and effective use of service development time and has been discussed at the Primary Head Reps Group (PHRG). There was agreement that these changes should be considered by a smaller sub group from the PHRG and early years staff.
- 5.14 This work has been undertaken and we are now in a position where we will look to allocate this time to a setting based on numbers of children attending, to be used as required to meet the needs of the nursery rather than allocated to individual practitioners, to rename and redefine its use and develop a Framework that demonstrates that.

This will obviously be a change in current practice and Headteachers and managers must ensure staff are made aware of the requirement for these changes proposed for August 2019, as part of the service review.

6. 1140 hours implementation 2019/20 update

- 6.1 As previously reported to this committee in March, the expansion programme is ever evolving and the current proposals to deliver 1140 hours in August 19 and January 20 are attached as Appendix 3.
- 6.2 The ELC Area Boards continue to offer the operational advice around suitability for expansion and this has largely been in line with minimal requirements from an estates perspective across a whole ASG in order to ensure there will be no impact on any partner provision in a locality. Deprivation criteria have been addressed within this

where possible but with the extent of provision required, complexities around sustainability of communities/schools and the ability to deliver all of the requirements including workforce and capital are also factors that have been considered.

- 6.3 We can not promise to get this right every time but have advised that if it became apparent that there would be any adverse impact on a partner provider in the area then we would seek to address this. We need to be mindful that the entitlement is not until August 2020 and although the Scottish Government have issued multi-year funding to ensure earlier adopter sites, there are many reasons why we need to continue to phase in the hours.
- 6.4 It did subsequently emerge that in the case of one of our partner providers in the South Area that a detrimental impact on the business sustainability of that provider was realised because a neighbour outdoor nursery provision was intended to be part of the expansion from August 2019. All of the available evidence suggests that in most instances families do not choose full outdoor provision, however when the offer of full funding was made available this proved not to be the case.
- 6.5 A case was made where the partner was able to demonstrate parents were choosing to switch provision and the impact on their business sustainability was significant. They were subsequently included as part of the expansion programme for 2019 and are a valued provider for the expansion programme moving into August 2020.
- 6.6 The ELC capital investment programme includes a number of settings that are also subject to primary capacity pressures over the next few years and a separate report to this committee is presented by the Head of Resources. The capital expansion programme remains one of the key risk factors to the delivery of this programme.

7. Implications

- 7.1 Resource - the Scottish Government has awarded full capital and revenue funding for this Programme
- 7.2 Legal - There is a legal requirement to provide 600 hours entitlement to all eligible children and this will increase to 1140 hours by August 2020, detailed in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- 7.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) - 1140 hours will impact positively in communities by enabling parents to work or study through the provision of additional funded hours. It will also provide additional employment in the sector.
- 7.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever – None except a positive impact as the provision of outdoor ELC will negate the need for building works in some instances.
- 7.5 Risk – The risks for the programme are described within the report. ELC workforce requirements are extensive and remain a risk if any delay to recruitment occurs. This is further impacted on in remote and rural areas where quality of provision may also be a risk.
- 7.6 Gaelic – there are challenges around ensuring an adequate workforce of fluent Gaelic speakers at every level to ensure immersion in the language

Designation: Interim Director of Care and Learning

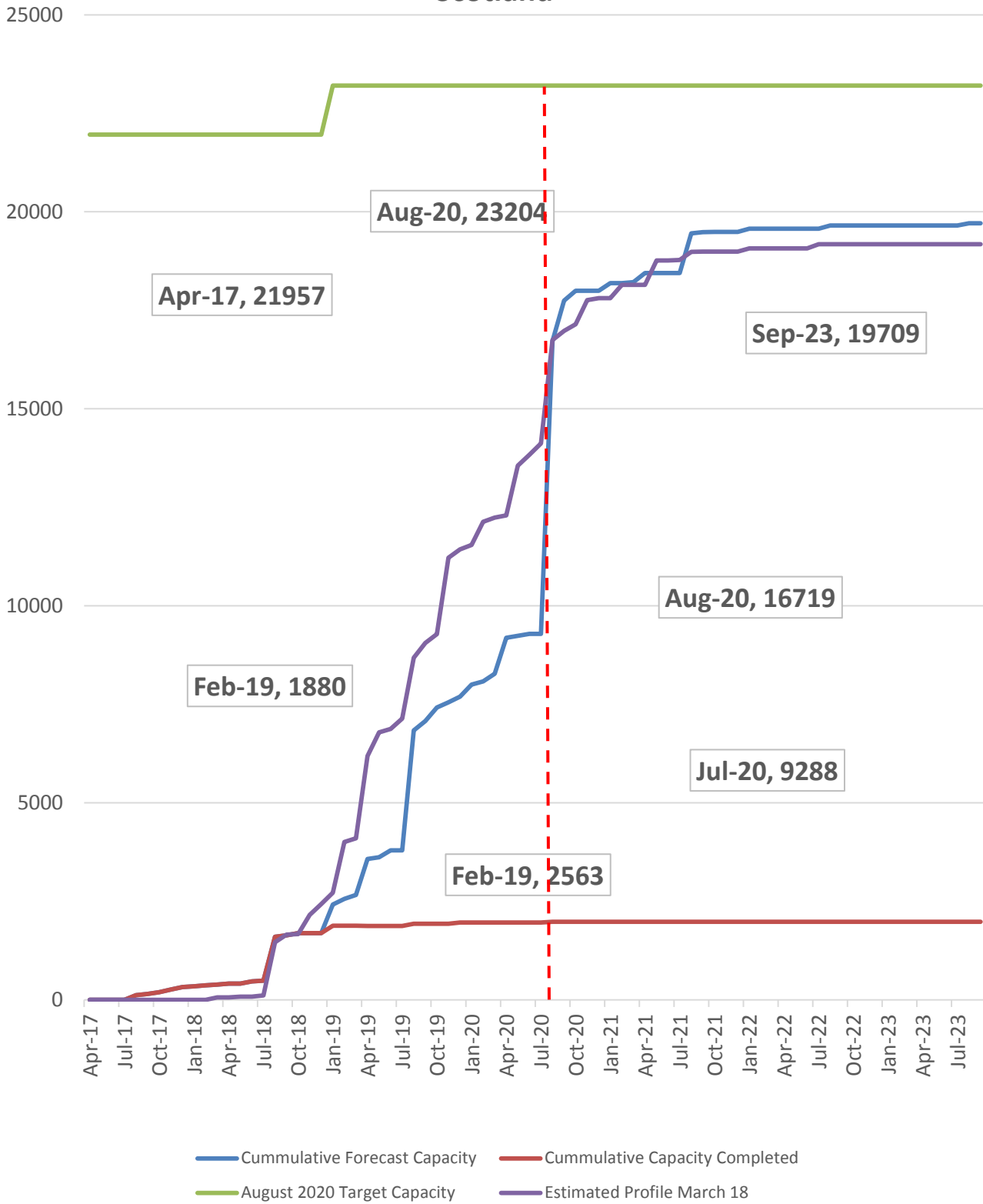
Date: 17 May 2019

Author: Sandra Harrington, Senior Manager Early Years

Background Papers:

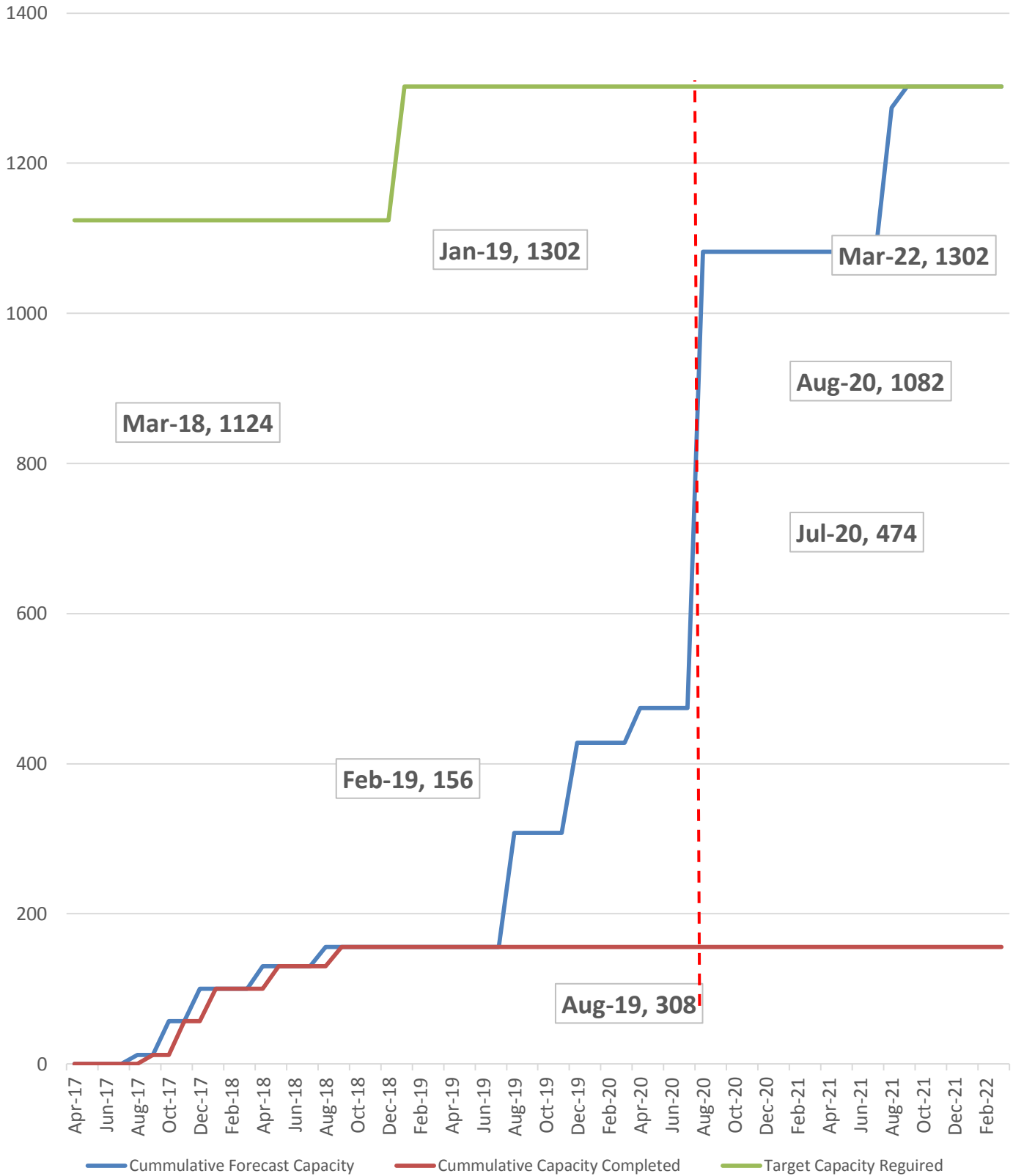
Appendix 1

Local Authority Capacity - Forecast, Open v Target - Scotland



Appendix 2

Local Authority Capacity - Forecast, Open v Target – Highland



Appendix 3

Proposed settings delivering 1140 hours-Phase 2 (August 2019) &Phase 3 (January 2020)

Setting	Area	Phase	Opening times	Notes
Abernethy	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Cannich	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Cauldeen	South	Phase 2	8am-6pm	
Cawdor	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Central	South	Phase 2	8am-6pm	
Dalneigh	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Dochgarroch	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Farr	South	Phase 2	School hours	Half day Friday
Stratherrick	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Mackenzie Centre	South	Phase 2	Still to be confirmed	Whole year
St Joseph's	South	Phase 3	8am-6pm	Moved to Phase 3
Teanassie	South	Phase 2	School hours	
Glenurquhart CCC (Partner Centre -PC)	South	Phase 2	8am-6pm	
Karen Mackenzie (Childminder - CM)	South	Phase 2	Childminder	
Limetree (Dalneigh) (PC)	South	Phase 2	8am-6pm	Whole year
Northern Meeting Park CALA (PC)	South	Phase 2	Still to be confirmed	Whole year
Stramash Tornagrain (PC)	South	Phase 2	Fully outdoors	
Country Bumpkins (PC)	South	Phase 2		Included from April 2019
Meike White (CM)	South	Phase 2	Childminder	
Summerlings (PC)	South	Phase 2	Fully outdoors	

Setting	Area	Phase	Opening Times	Notes
Culbokie	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
Dingwall	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
Gledfield	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
Hill of Fearn	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	Current Early Level
Hilton of Cadboll	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
Marybank	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	Half day Friday
Milton	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	Current Early level
Park	Mid	Phase 2	8am-6pm	
Resolis	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
South Lodge	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
Tarbat Old	Mid	Phase 2	School hours	
Ardross (PC)	Mid	Phase 2	9am – 3pm	
Croileagan (PC)	Mid	Phase 2	8.30am – 4.30pm	
Cromarty (PC)	Mid	Phase 2	9am – 3pm	
Dingwall Children's Nursery (PC)	Mid	Phase 2	8am – 6pm	
Dingwall Ducklings (PC)	Mid	Phase 2	8.30am – 3.30pm	
Little Angels (PC)	Mid	Phase 2	8am – 6om	

Setting	Area	Phase	Opening Times	Notes
Bonar	North	Phase 2	School hours	Current Early Level
Cannisbay	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Castletown	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Dornoch	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Dunbeath	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Farr	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Helmsdale	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Keiss	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Lairg	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Lybster	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Melvich	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Rogart	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Scourie	North	Phase 2	School hours	Current Early Level
Durness	North	Phase2	School hours	
Thrumster	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Alison Munro (CM)	North	Phase 2	childminder	
Halkirk (PC)	North	Phase 2	School hours	
Julie Minchen (CM)	North	Phase 2	childminder	
Kinlochbervie CALA (PC)	North	Phase 2	Sessional	
Seonaid Mhor (CM)	North	Phase 2	childminder	
Watten (PC)	North	Phase 2	Sessional	

Setting	Area	Phase	Opening Times	Notes
Acharacle	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Applecross	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Auchtertyre	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Banavie	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Broadford EM	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Broadford GM	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh	West	Phase 2	8am-6pm	
Bun-sgoil Stafainn	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Caol	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Carbost	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Glenelg	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Invergarry	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Inverlochy	West	Phase 2	8am-6pm	
Kilmuir GM	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Knockbreck	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Kyleakin	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Lundavra	West	Phase 2	School hours	
MacDiarmid	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Plockton GM	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Raasay	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Spean Bridge	West	Phase 2	School hours	
St Columba's	West	Phase 2	School hours	
Struan	West	Phase 3	School hours	
Little Learners (PC)	West	Phase 2	8am-6pm	Whole year
Lochcarron (PC)	West	Phase 3	Sessional	
Portree EM (PC)	West	Phase 3	8am-6pm	Whole year
Stramash FW (PC)	West	Phase 2	Fully outdoors	