



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 13 MARCH 2019

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF POST OF EARLY YEARS SERVICE MANAGER

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the Council to consider suspending Standing Order 81 and approve the establishment of the post of Early Years Service Manager at salary grade 13 on a permanent basis, as outlined in the Delivery Plan for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare provision across Moray.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Council in terms of Section II (8) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to alterations to the establishment, whether by way of increase or decrease, of posts graded on or above SCP (92) 39 of the SJC spinal column of hourly rates.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Council suspend Standing Order 81 and approve the establishment of the post of Early Years Service Manager on a permanent basis as detailed within this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to make available 600 hours of Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) provision to three and four year olds whose parents request this provision. Funded places must also be provided for eligible two year olds. In Moray this provision is delivered via a combination of school/local authority nurseries (23 nurseries), independent (private and third sector) providers (36 nurseries), and childminders.
- 3.2 The Government has committed to increasing funded ELC hours from 600 to 1140 hours by 2020. 'The Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare in Scotland' sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the expansion of ELC provision across Scotland, underpinned by the principles of quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability. The blueprint prioritises the delivery of high quality experiences for every child, recognising the significant

contribution that universally accessible ELC can make to a child's development.

- 3.3 Local authorities have been given responsibility for delivering the expansion in their local communities and are being asked to consider the development of enhanced service models that reflect, and are responsive to, local needs. The ELC Delivery Plan sets out how we will achieve this within Moray, including staffing requirements, and was agreed at the Full Council on 27th September 2017 (para 20 of the Minute refers).
- 3.4 As part of our delivery, we are redesigning our central Early Years team which includes the creation of an Early Years Service Manager (Permanent, Full time, Grade 13). The job description and person specification for the role are attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.5 The Early Years Service Manager will provide strategic leadership, vision and the effective management necessary to shape an expanding 'Early Years' Service into one that focuses on quality improvement and works with others to prioritise the learning, development and wellbeing needs of children and families. This will include understanding the needs of children and families to develop and implement strategy, establishing and monitoring systems to drive improvement, and ensuring that resource is effectively utilised to improve outcomes.
- 3.6 The Service Manager will initially work closely with the Early Learning & Childcare Expansion project team to 2021/22 to develop an expanded, high quality service. The Manager will manage the operational team during the transition period and will manage a fully operational service from 2021/22 onwards, taking full responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient high quality early learning and childcare places for eligible children across Moray.
- 3.7 A report recommending the establishment of the Service Manager post was previously brought to Full Council on 18 December 2018 and during discussions concerns were raised regarding the continued funding of the post. Council were advised that funding was in place until August 2020. Council therefore agreed to approve the establishment of the post and to note that Scottish Government funding was in place until August 2020 (para 5 of the Minute refers). The report has come back to Council in order to clarify the situation regarding funding for the post and to confirm that Council approves the establishment of the post on a permanent basis. Ring-fenced funding is in place until March 2022 and ongoing funding will be provided through the Local authority block grant post March 2022.

4. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 4.1 In terms of Standing Order 81 no resolution of the Council shall be amended or revoked within six months of its adoption except by the Suspension of Standing Orders.
- 4.2 Given that it is less than six months since it was agreed to approve the

establishment of the post until August 2020 then should the Council determine, following further consideration of the matter that there has been a relevant and material change in circumstances and agree to the establishment of the post on a permanent basis it will be necessary to suspend Standing Orders and in doing so the relevant and material change in circumstances shall be specified in the motion proposing the suspension.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2023

This project links to the priority of 'Ambitious and Confident Young People' as referred to in the Moray 2026 Plan. It also links in with our requirements to 'Provide a Sustainable Education Service Aiming for Excellence' as referred to in the Moray Corporate Plan 2023.

(b) Policy and Legal

The creation of this post has been considered and is supported under the terms of recognised and agreed Council policies.

(c) Financial implications

The cost of this post will be met from the funding from Scottish Government notified to the council for the expansion of early learning and childcare.

The post has been formally graded through the Job Evaluation Process at salary grade 13 (currently £53,647 - £58, 717)

(c) Risk Implications

If the creation of an Early Years Service Manager post is not approved, there is a risk that we are unable to fulfil our commitment to develop and deliver a quality Early Years service to Moray.

(d) Staffing Implications

There are no implications for the workforce arising directly from this report. The expansion of Early Learning & Childcare is an area of growth, and the creation of a new post will support and manage all staff within nursery settings.

(f) Property

There are no property issues arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities

There are no equalities issues arising directly from this report.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Director (Corporate Services) the Human Resources Manager, the Head of Financial Services and the Democratic Services Manager have been consulted and agree with the sections of this report relating to their areas of responsibility.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Council suspend Standing Order 81 and approve the establishment of the post of Early Years Service Manager as detailed within this report.**

Author of Report: Joanna Shirriffs (Senior Project Manager: Early Learning & Childcare Expansion)