



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 2 NOVEMBER 2022**

**SUBJECT: EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE – MAJOR AND MINOR
INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS UPDATE**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the consequences of programme delays on the operation, costs and staffing of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings with planned major and minor infrastructure works.
- 1.2 To inform the Committee of plans for ELC major and minor infrastructure works in 2022 and 2023.
- 1.3 To inform the Committee of capital spend budget plans approved by Council on 29 June 2022 which include completion of infrastructure works for identified local authority nursery settings.
- 1.4 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) **Notes and scrutinises the consequences of potential programme delays for planned major and minor infrastructure works at designated nursery settings;**
- (ii) **Notes the plans for outstanding major and minor ELC infrastructure works in 2022 and 2023; and**
- (iii) **Notes the capital spend budget plans approved by Council on 29 June 2022 for completion of infrastructure works at identified local authority nursery settings.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 24 August 2022, Councillor Warren noted the information report on Early Learning and Childcare – Major and Minor Infrastructure Works Update and asked that it be brought to the next meeting of the Committee to consider the effect of planned improvement works on performance.
- 3.2 Since August 2018, Moray Council's Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) team has been preparing for the expansion of funded ELC hours to increase from 600 to 1140. This expansion was originally scheduled to be completed by August 2020; however, due to the pandemic this was delayed by the Scottish Government until August 2021.
- 3.3 As part of the expansion programme, four new build nurseries have been constructed throughout various Associated School Group (ASG) areas in Moray including:
- Strathisla Children's Centre - Keith ASG
 - Pilmuir Primary School Nursery - Forres ASG
 - Cullen Primary School Nursery – Buckie ASG
 - Linkwood Primary School Nursery - Elgin High ASG
- 3.4 In addition to new build facilities, six major refurbishments and three minor refurbishments of existing spaces were carried out including works at:
- Lady Cathcart Centre – Buckie ASG
 - Burghead Primary School Nursery – Lossiemouth ASG
 - Lhanbryde Primary School Nursery – Milnes ASG
 - Mortlach Primary School Nursery – Speyside ASG
 - Mosstodloch ELC Centre at Mosstodloch Primary School – Milnes ASG
 - New Elgin Primary School Nursery – Elgin High ASG
 - St Thomas Primary School Nursery – Keith ASG
 - Hythehill Primary School Nursery – Lossiemouth ASG
 - Kinloss Primary School Nursery – Forres ASG
- 3.5 One major refurbishment project remains outstanding at Aberlour Primary School which includes setting up one outdoor nursery space and siting one temporary bespoke nursery unit to serve as decant spaces during the refurbishment process. Following completion of works, both Aberlour Primary School Nursery (local authority operated) and Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-School Nursery (partner provider operated) will return to the facilities in line with current operating arrangements.
- 3.6 Additionally, five minor refurbishment projects remain outstanding at Kinloss Primary School Nursery (Forres ASG), Findochty Primary School Nursery (Buckie ASG), Portgordon Primary School Nursery (Buckie ASG), St Peters Primary School Nursery (Buckie ASG) and Rothes Primary School Nursery (Speyside ASG).
- 3.7 The minor works at Kinloss Primary School Nursery were planned in 3 phases to allow works to be carried out during school holiday periods. Phase 1 and 2 are now complete and included upgrades to the toilets, kitchen and playroom

areas. Phase 3 remains outstanding and will include re-location of one primary school classroom door outwith the nursery area and the installation of a fob security system on nursery doors.

- 3.8 Delays were encountered in these remaining projects as a result of COVID-19 and ELC budget pressures.
- 3.9 Identified works were based on meeting National Standards and Care Inspectorate requirements and are essential in order to ensure facilities remain operational and thereby meet the capacity for current and future demand of funded ELC places within respective ASG areas. Local authorities have a statutory legislative requirement to provide 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare to all 3-4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds as mandated by the Scottish Government.
- 3.10 A summary of recent Care Inspectorate inspection results can be found in the corresponding information report: Singleton Inspections of Early Learning and Childcare Centres – Published Reports March 2022 to June 2022. This report includes 2 settings which are part of the planned works, Portgordon Primary School Nursery and Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-School Nursery. These settings both received lowered grades in areas which will be addressed as part of the works programme.
- 3.11 3 minute briefs and project mandates were completed for the above noted outstanding projects and submitted to the ELC Programme Board, Asset Management Working Group and Corporate Management Team (CMT) for consideration. Following these submissions, it was recommended that a request to complete infrastructure works for identified local authority nursery settings be included in the capital spend budget plans for review by Moray Council on 29 June 2022.
- 3.12 It was agreed at Moray Council on 29 June 2022 (para 22 of the minute refers) to include in capital budget plans:
- £900,000 – Aberlour Primary School project for the 2 associated nurseries
 - £20,000 – Kinloss Primary School Nursery project
 - £92,000 – Findochty Primary School Nursery project
 - £110,000 – Portgordon Primary School Nursery project
 - £137,000 – St Peters Primary School Nursery project
 - £131,000 – Rothes Primary School Nursery project.
- 3.13 Above figures were provided by the Quantity Surveying (QS) team and are subject to fluctuation depending on the timeline for works to be completed which may impact on overall budget due to inflationary costs of building materials. The QS team has provided updated figures for the minor works which are noted in the Financial Implications section of this paper. The updated costs for the major project at Aberlour are still pending. Any further changes to original costings will be submitted at the meeting of Moray Council on 7 December 2022 for review of the capital plan.

3.14 A proposed timeline for the completion of the above noted projects is as follows:

Nursery	Planned works	Proposed timeline
Kinloss Primary School Nursery	Fob system to be installed on nursery doors connected to primary school; door leading into primary school classroom to be relocated outwith nursery area	Design team have advised Easter 2023 holidays
Findochty Primary School Nursery	Kitchen refurb/existing nursery toilets to be re-configured to include private nappy changing space (if possible replacement of flooring to be included)	Design team have advised Easter or summer 2023 holidays
Portgordon Primary School Nursery	Fob system to be installed on nursery exit doors; kitchen refurb/existing nursery toilets re-configured to include private nappy changing space	Fob works can be put through help desk as soon as possible once confirmed by Building Standards and carried out after hours if required; Design team have advised kitchen/toilet works Easter 2023
Roths Primary School Nursery	Kitchen refurb/re-configure disabled toilet area to include nappy changing space	Design team have advised summer 2023 holidays
St Peters Primary School Nursery	Kitchen refurb/addition of nursery & staff toilets including private nappy changing space (if possible replacement of flooring to be included)	Design team have advised summer 2023 holidays
Aberlour Primary School Nursery / Aberlour and Craigellachie Pre-School Nursery at	Siting of 1 temporary unit at Aberlour PS/decanting of partner nursery in temporary unit/decanting of local authority nursery to	-Design team have advised drainage works during Easter holidays 2023 with siting of temporary unit and

Nursery	Planned works	Proposed timeline
Aberlour Primary School	outdoor space/major refurbishment of existing premises with both nurseries returning following completion of works	refurbishment works to follow - Outdoor nursery decant to be in place following Easter holidays 2023 - -Works estimated to be completed by October 2023

- 3.15 The proposed timeline is dependent on availability of DLO and external contractors. Head teachers and nursery managers will be kept informed of proposed works and timelines in order to ensure transparency at each stage and allow processes to be finalised through open discussion.
- 3.16 Advice from the Climate Change (CC) team notes that outdoor nursery provision produces considerably less carbon emissions. The CC team recommend adding a checkpoint review of the temporary outdoor provision utilised during the decant period to determine if there would be an opportunity to continue provision in this way for the local authority operated nursery setting.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The report links to the priority of working towards a financially stable Council that provides valued services to our Communities and providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan.

The report links to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Care Inspectorate inspects all registered services regulated under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, which includes nursery classes and playgroups.

Local authorities have a statutory legislative requirement to provide 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare hours to all 3-4 year olds and eligible 2 year old children.

(c) Financial implications

The estimated costs to complete outstanding major and minor infrastructure projects were expected to be approximately as follows:

- £900,000 – Aberlour Primary School for Aberlour Primary School Nursery/Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-School Nursery
- £20,000 – Kinloss Primary School Nursery

- £92,000 – Findochty Primary School Nursery
- £110,000 – Portgordon Primary School Nursery
- £137,000 – St Peters Primary School Nursery
- £131,000 – Rothes Primary School Nursery

However, revised costs were provided by the Quantity Surveyor team for the minor projects on 02.09.22 as follows:

- £14,100 – Kinloss Primary School Nursery
- £66,800 – Findochty Primary School Nursery
- £41,500 – Portgordon Primary School Nursery
- £120,800 – St Peters Primary School Nursery
- £47,700 – Rothes Primary School Nursery

Updated costs are still pending for the major project at Aberlour. These estimated costs are subject to change depending on inflationary costs of building materials and overall timeline of work completion; however, a 10% contingency has been included within the estimates to allow for potential uplifts. Any update to above noted figures will be provided to full Council 7 December 2022 for consideration.

Investment of capital budget is required in order to meet National Standards and Care Inspectorate requirements to ensure continued operation of identified nursery settings in order to meet current and future demand for capacity of funded early learning and childcare spaces in respective ASG areas.

The timeline for works to be completed will be over 2022 and 2023 financial years. If slippage in proposed timeline occurs, works may extend until 2024 financial year. Where possible, works will be carried out as soon as possible in order to prevent further uplift in costs related to inflation and building material cost increases.

(d) Risk Implications

There is a risk that general inflation and the rise in building material costs will have an impact on the overall budget estimated for the outstanding projects to be completed. This would result in the need for additional capital funding to be requested in order to ensure identified works could be completed.

There is also a risk that the proposed timeline for the works will require to be altered further depending on the availability of internal and external contractors. Furthermore, there is a risk for disruption of service for settings in the event scheduled works take longer to complete than expected. This risk can be mitigated by developing a contingency plan to run services in an outdoor location on a short-term basis to allow any slight delays to be addressed.

There is a risk that Care Inspectorate grades will be negatively affected if inspections take place before remaining works can be completed. This has been evidenced at Aberlour Primary School Nursery, Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-School Nursery and Portgordon Nursery where grades from recent inspections have been lowered from previous results. On-

going communication with Care Inspectorate will be maintained throughout each project's timeline in an effort to assure Care Inspectorate plans are in place for National Standards to be met in identified settings.

(e) Staffing Implications

The proposed works require staff input from the Early Years team, Finance, Property (including QS and Design teams) and Estates. However there are no direct staffing implications.

(f) Property

The proposed works would have impact on six primary school nursery locations in Speyside ASG, Buckie ASG and Forres ASG areas.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no implications arising directly from this report, however equalities impacts and considerations have been taken into account in previous ELC reports

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

This proposal has the potential to increase the Council's carbon emissions due to the building refurbishments and siting of temporary accommodation units. However, the option of refurbishment of the existing nurseries means that the carbon emissions are considerably less than that of any new build.

A positive implication is that substantial carbon savings and wider climate behavioural influence are possible via the provision of outdoor nursery facilities. It is therefore very important that a review point is included in plans to enable permanent continuation of this service if successful.

To address the negative implications, advice on further carbon reduction measures will be sought if required from the Council's Climate Change Team.

(i) Consultations

Depute Chief Executive, Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Property Asset Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Asset Manager (Commercial Buildings), Principal Climate Change Strategy Officer, George Gunn, Climate Change Strategy Officer, Early Years' Service Manager, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Committee is asked to note and scrutinise the consequences of potential programme delays for planned major and minor infrastructure works at designated nursery settings.

5.2 Committee is asked to note the plans for Early Learning and Childcare major and minor infrastructure works in 2022 and 2023.

- 5.3 Committee is asked to note the investment of capital budget to complete outstanding ELC major and minor infrastructure works in identified nursery settings.**
- 5.4 Committee is asked to note that any changes to original costing estimates will be submitted at the Moray Council meeting 7 December 2022 for review of the capital plan.**

Author of Report: Jennie Ordonez, Early Years Project Officer
Background Papers: SPMAN-1293228629-707 / SPMAN-1315769894-315 /
SPMAN-1315769894-329
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-336