

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 24 MARCH 2010

2010/11 BUDGET PROPOSALS: EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

Report by Executive Director of Educational & Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members of Cabinet for the reduction in budgets in relation to early education for financial year 2010/11 onwards.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** As part of the budget setting exercise for 2010/11 two options were put forward for budget consultation which impact on the provision of early education.
- 2.2** The two budget proposals were to review Partner Provider provision where there was sufficient local authority provision to provide a place for all three and four year olds where a parent wishes one, and secondly to review the management arrangements in nursery schools adjacent to primary schools. These were set out as item numbers 58 and 59 respectively in the General Services Revenue Estimates 2010/11 Efficiencies – Consultation Options: Working Paper Supplementary Information.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 Partner Providers

- 3.1.1** The Council is currently in partnership with ten Partner Providers of ante and pre-school education. These are:

- Beechwood Nursery, Kilmarnock (Private)
- Burns Bairs, Mauchline (Voluntary)
- Dean Park Nursery, Kilmarnock (Private)
- Fenwick Pre-5's, Fenwick (Voluntary)
- Hurlford & Crookedholm Play Group, Hurlford (Voluntary)
- Jacaranda Nursery, Coalhall (Private)
- Newmilns Nursery, Newmilns (Voluntary)
- Puddleducks Nursery, Kilmarnock (Voluntary)
- St Columba's Nursery, Stewarton (Private)
- Woodlands Nursery, Kilmarnock (Voluntary)

- 3.1.2** The undernoted sets out information in respect of the Partner Providers and associated nearest local authority provider of ante and pre-school education.

Partner Provider	No. of Places Commissioned 2009/10	Nearest Local Authority Nursery & Capacity	Saving
Beechwood Nursery, Kilmarnock (Private)	40 pre-school 42 ante pre-school Total 82	Gargieston NC - nil	nil
Burns Bairns, Mauchline (Voluntary)	1 pre-school 23 ante pre-school Total 24	Mauchline NC 10 FTE places (20 x 5 session places or 40 split session places)	£12,851
Dean Park Nursery, Kilmarnock (Private)	20 pre-school 20 ante pre-school Total 40	Onthank NS - nil	nil
Fenwick Pre-5's, Fenwick (Voluntary)	23 x pre-school 22 x ante pre-school Total 45	Onthank NS – nil Kilmaurs NS - nil	nil
Hurlford & Crookedholm Play Group, Hurlford (Voluntary)	0 pre-school 27 ante pre-school Total 27	Hurlford NC - nil	nil
Jacaranda Nursery, Coalhall (Private)	12 pre-school 21 ante pre-school Total 33	Drongan NS 10 FTE places (20 x 5 session places or 40 split session places)	£14,214
Newmilns Nursery, Newmilns (Voluntary)	19 pre-school 13 ante pre-school Total 32	Galston NS – nil Darvel NS – 12 sessional places only	nil
Puddleducks Nursery, Kilmarnock (Voluntary)	27 pre-school 21 ante pre-school Total 48	Riccarton NS – nil Shortlees N & FC - nil	nil
St Columba's Nursery, Stewarton (Private)	8 pre-school 16 ante pre-school Total 24	Lainshaw NC - nil	nil
Woodlands Nursery, Kilmarnock (Voluntary)	25 pre-school 15 ante pre-school Total 40	St Andrews NC - nil	nil

3.1.3 Based on the above, it is not proposed to partner Burns Bairns and Jacaranda Nursery in academic session 2010/11. An ante pre-school or pre-school educational place will be available for all children currently attending these partners, or who are likely to require a place at the start of academic session

2010/11. The savings arising from this are £27,065. Based on census data for uptake of places for 2009/10 academic session, this is an increase of £5,196 from the initial proposed saving.

3.2 Management Arrangements in Nursery Schools Adjacent to Primary Schools

- 3.2.1** There was a significant level of comment raised in respect of the proposal to review the management arrangements in nursery schools adjacent to primary schools. The Cabinet paper of 10 February 2010 indicated that given the level of issues raised it was recommended that the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services examine this, and alternative options which would generate a similar level of saving and return to Cabinet no later than the end of March.
- 3.2.2** The attached sets out recommendations in respect of savings in financial year 2010/11 (including the Partner Provider saving) with a recommendation that the Executive Director of Educational & Social Services return with a full review of ante pre-school and pre-school education provision in Nursery Schools no later than the end of June 2010.
- 3.2.3** Proposed recurring revenue savings to be made in the early education and childcare revenue budget from 2010/11 onwards has been identified from a line by line review of the budget.

The undernoted summarises key aspects of the proposals:

- The Council terminated its partnership with Grasshoppers Nursery part way through academic session 2009/10 due to issues of quality. The consequence of this management action is a resultant £27,000 saving with no impact on service delivery to the Council.
- Wraparound care is no longer available at Nether Robertland Nursery due to the increase in pre-school education numbers. As the adult: child staffing ratio is higher for wraparound care a saving is being made on staffing. In relation to Crosshouse Nursery, numbers of children have reduced and therefore staffing costs have reduced. An overall saving of £25,000 can therefore be made.
- EA Positive Play is jointly funded by East Ayrshire Council's Leisure Development Services, Early Education and Childcare Service and the Big Lottery Fund and aims to increase physical activity levels, encourage creativity and use play as a medium to build confidence and self esteem of children and adults. The Early Education and Childcare Service committed to provide £10,000 for two years, 2008/09 and 2009/10 to support the implementation of EA Positive Play. Therefore a saving of £10,000 can be made.

- Travel costs and supplies and service costs have been closely monitored and there is scope to reduce these budgets by £7,100. This equates to 4.4% of the central travel costs and supplies budget.
- Funding has been available in the past to voluntary/community groups to support what was known as the Childcare Strategy. Not all the funding was utilised this current financial year. There will be no direct impact on groups. Saving is £15,000. This relates to 4.5% of available budget.
- The service has focussed on delivering training and providing continuing professional development in-house in 2009/10 due to budget pressures. Based on this it is proposed to reduce this budget by £5,835. This relates to 31.7% of available budget.

Appendix 1 sets out a summary of overall savings.

4. PERSONNEL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Nil.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The overall saving of £117,000 in financial year 2010/11 will be made on a recurring basis.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no risks associated with the savings identified in the Early Education and Childcare budget for financial year 2010/11. In respect of the proposals regarding Partner Providers, many parents use a private sector nursery as they combine day care and ante or pre-school education. There will therefore be potential childcare issues arising for parents affected by this decision.

6.2 Overall however, there are no risks associated with the proposals set out in this paper in respect of the requirement as laid down by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, whereby local authorities require to provide an ante pre-school or pre-school educational place for every parent who wishes one for their child.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The provision of ante pre-school and pre-school education is set within the context of the Promoting Lifelong Learning Theme of the Community Plan. The provision of childcare for parents in employment, education or training is set within the context of the Community Regeneration Theme of the Community Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Members of Cabinet:

- (i) approve the proposals in respect of Burns Bairns and Jacaranda;
- (ii) approve the proposals in respect of the recurring savings in the Early Education and Childcare Budget; and
- (iii) ask the Executive Director of Educational & Social Services to return to Cabinet with the outcome of the review of Nursery Schools in June 2010; and
- (iv) otherwise note the content of the report.

Graham R Short
Executive Director of Educational & Social Services

GRS/KG
22 February 2010

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Cabinet Paper of 13 January 2010 – Budget Consultation 2010/11 – 2012/13.
2. Cabinet Paper of 10 February 2010 – Revenue Budget 2010/11 – 2012/13.

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Service: Community Support, Tel: 01563 576104.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR

EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

BUDGET SAVINGS 2010/11

AREA OF SAVING	£
Reduction in partner providers x 3 Grasshoppers Nursery Burns Bairns Jacaranda	54,065
No wraparound at Nether Robertland NC due to demand for pre-school education places and reduction in staffing for wraparound at Crosshouse Nursery due to reduction in numbers	25,000
Positive Play (Commitment to match fund ends March 2010)	10,000
Review of travel costs	3,500
Supplies and Services	3,600
Reduction in funding available to voluntary sector	15,000
Reduction in CPD for local authority and Partner Providers	5,835
TOTAL	£117,000