

Protect and enhance Glasgow's childcare offer – Motion as adjusted, approved.

15 Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Anderson, moved that

"Council notes that the cost-of-living crisis is having a deep impact on families' ability to afford childcare, which on average in Scotland costs £1,079.59 per month. Council believes that current funding provision provided by the Scottish Government falls short of what is required and that shortages in non-statutory out of school care services pose further financial challenge for families, especially lone women parents.

Council agrees that bolstering childcare can help reduce child poverty figures, combat gender inequality and tackle fiscal pressures. Council acknowledges a recent report by Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Oxfam Foundation - Poverty Proofing the Future of Early Years Childcare - which states that 89% of families with children under 3 believe more funded childcare would improve family wellbeing and 2 out of 3 parents would work more if more funded childcare were available.

Council notes the ongoing delivery challenges with recruitment of ELC-trained professionals. Council notes there have been childminder recruitment challenges, resulting in a fall in numbers of childminders and the impact this has on availability of provision. Council notes the lower levels of pay in the sector and calls to increase wages above the Real Living Wage, when funding is available.

Council commits to continuing to support, at a minimum, the 1,140 funded childcare hours for all three, four, and pre-school five year olds. Council notes that, unlike other councils in Scotland, Glasgow's childcare offering goes above and beyond the statutory minimum.

Council further commits to supporting the universal expansion of fully-funded childcare hours to children aged between 9 months and 2 years, whilst noting that childcare for children of this age should remain optional rather than compulsory, and that the state should support those parents and carers who choose to care for their children at home as strongly as it supports those who choose to use childcare outside of the home.

Council notes that within Flexible Childcare Options Scotland's Impact Report 23-24 it states that 67% of parents said they could "work more" thanks to the flexibility offered by the service. Council notes the benefit of early years education to children's overall health, wellbeing and development, particularly those children from more deprived areas. Council agrees to explore ways to make the current childcare offer more flexible to support parents in shift work or irregular employment.

Council notes that the demand for places in Council nurseries for children under 3 is extremely high, with 1,900 children currently taking up places and a further 1,700 children aged 0-2 years on waiting lists. Council acknowledges that there is a need for more childcare facilities in the city. Council commits to exploring all

funding options available and that future planning and property strategies need to address this.

Council notes that various pilot schemes aimed at families with young children who are living in poverty are taking place in the city and that early results are very promising. Council recalls its extensive and innovative measures to tackle child poverty through measures such as the targeted provision of childcare, but it is unlikely they will move beyond pilot stage without guaranteed funding from the Scottish Government to support the expansion of such schemes.

Council wholeheartedly supports the principle of parental choice which is central to the Scottish Government's 'funding follows the child' provider-neutral approach, and recognises the importance of ensuring parents and carers can choose from a variety of different childcare settings including public, private, and third-sector nurseries, as well as childminders.

Council applauds the steps taken in recent years within Council services and policies to recognise the importance of fathers and other parents, moving away from the perception of childcare as an issue only for mothers or women. This includes the recent Miscarriage Bereavement Leave policy which acknowledges the importance of non-pregnant parents right from the earliest forming of a family. Council believes there is always more that can be done to support all parents employed by the Council family, including, where legislatively possible, extending rights to Elected Members who are parents and carers.

Finally, Council notes that while conversations on childcare often focus on preschool children, the vast majority of children continue to need childcare once they are primary school aged, and often beyond if they have additional support needs. Council notes that there is the equivalent of 1 space for every 10 primary aged children in current provision, and that in many areas of the city there is immense competition for out of school care with waiting lists often years long, and that provision on offer may not be suitable for or offered to children with additional support needs. This information is often difficult to find and many parents are not aware of the shortage with enough time to plan for their child starting school, which can impact on their ability to maintain their employment once their child is school aged.

Council welcomes the recent "Co-designing Glasgow's All Age Childcare" report, produced with the input of families in three wards across the city. Council endorses the report's recommendations which advocate for a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable all-age childcare system that addresses affordability, availability, and accessibility challenges for families in Glasgow. Council resolves to use the findings from this report when considering changes to or expansion of childcare provision, recognising, as the report makes clear, that the needs of communities and families are likely to be different depending on circumstances including cultural and historical factors.

Council resolves to:

- Acknowledge the importance of the 1140 funded childcare hours provided for all three, four and pre-school five year olds, in tackling child poverty and inequality in Glasgow.
- Outline its support for the continued expansion of the Early Adopter Community Pilot and to advocate for further universal expansion of fully-funded childcare hours to all children aged between 9 months and 2 years.
- Requests that the Leader of the Council writes to the UK Government ahead of the publication of the findings of Parental leave and pay review co-led by the Department for Business and Trade and the Department of Work and Pensions, emphasising the importance of a meaningful increase to statutory parental leave and pay.
- Requests that the City Treasurer writes to the UK Government asking for a change in the criteria for the Tax Free Childcare scheme, which is currently prejudiced against children educated within the Scottish school system by excluding children who are aged over eleven in September, when many Scottish children are still in primary school and requiring wraparound care.
- Write to all Registered Social Landlords and Housing Associations to ask them to fasttrack childminder applications in order to remove barriers to employment.
- Investigate in City Development Plan 2 whether developer contributions could be acquired for childcare facilities including early years nurseries.
- Task the Education Estate Board with exploring conditions attached to the disposal of the educational estate, ensuring a needs assessment has been carried out to ensure adequate childcare facilities are available in every ward before any recommendation is made.
- Establish a review within three committee cycles in collaboration with childcare experts on the current implementation of ELC to ensure childcare hours are accessible and flexible to families with children under 5, with a particular focus on children with additional support needs.
- Bring a paper to the Education, Skills and Early Years Committee within three committee cycles, exploring how the current pre-school childcare offering could be adapted to meet the needs of parents in shift work or irregular employment.
- Bring a paper to the Business Bureau within three committee cycles to explore what more could be done to support Elected Members who have parental or other caring responsibilities, including giving consideration when scheduling committee meetings to ensuring that Full Council meetings align with Glasgow City Council school holidays as far as is practical."

Councillor Cannon, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved as an amendment that:-

- (1) at the start of the first sentence insert the following:

"Council will advocate for sufficient funding to be provided to local government by the UK and Scottish Governments in order to...";

- (2) in the last paragraph beginning "Council resolves to:" combine bullet points 3 and 4 to read as follows:

- "Write to the UK Government ahead of the publication of the findings of Parental leave and pay review co-led by the Department for Business and

Trade and the Department of Work and Pensions, emphasising the importance of a meaningful increase to statutory parental leave and pay and ask for a change in the criteria for the Tax Free Childcare scheme, which is currently prejudiced against children educated within the Scottish school system by excluding children who are aged over eleven in September, when many Scottish children are still in primary school and requiring wraparound care.”; and

- (3) in the last paragraph beginning “Council resolves to:” delete bullet points 8 to 10 and replace with the following new bullet:

- “Conduct a review to be reported to a future Education, Skills and Early Years Committee on current implementation of ELC to determine if it is as accessible and flexible as it could be, particularly with its ability to support children with additional support needs and the needs of parents of shift work or irregular employment.”

Councillor Johnstone, seconded by Councillor Turner, moved as an amendment that:-

- (1) in the fourth paragraph , after “Council notes that, unlike other councils in Scotland, Glasgow’s childcare offering goes above and beyond the statutory minimum” insert the following new sentence:

“Council further recognises the positive role Glasgow Labour has played in expanding early provision, notably through the introduction of the Free at 3 initiative, which provided funded childcare for eligible two-year-olds and three-year-olds ahead of national statutory requirements. This initiative demonstrated Glasgow’s commitment to tackling child poverty and supporting working families and remains a key example of how local leadership can deliver progressive change.”;

- (2) in the seventh paragraph delete the sentence “Council commits to exploring all funding options available and that future planning and property strategies need to address this.” be deleted;

- (3) in the ninth paragraph, after “but it is unlikely they will move beyond pilot stage without guaranteed funding from the Scottish Government to support the expansion of such schemes” insert the following new sentence:

“Council therefore urges the Scottish Government to provide adequate and sustained funding to support the expansion of childcare provision beyond pilot schemes, including ring-fenced resources for local authorities to deliver high-quality, accessible, and flexible childcare services. Council believes that without guaranteed long-term funding, the ambition to reduce child poverty and support working families will not be fully realised.”; and

- (4) the following asks be deleted:

“Write to the UK Government ahead of the publication of the findings of Parental leave and pay review co-led by the Department for Business and Trade and the Department of Work and Pensions, emphasising the importance of a meaningful increase to statutory parental leave and pay.

Write to the UK Government asking for a change in the criteria for the Tax Free Childcare scheme, which is currently prejudiced against children educated within the Scottish school system by excluding children who are aged over eleven in September, when many Scottish children are still in primary school and requiring wraparound care.”

Councillor Bruce, with the approval of her seconder, accepted the amendment by Councillor Cannon resulting in the following adjusted motion:

"Council notes that the cost-of-living crisis is having a deep impact on families' ability to afford childcare, which on average in Scotland costs £1,079.59 per month. Council believes that current funding provision provided by the Scottish Government falls short of what is required and that shortages in non-statutory out of school care services pose further financial challenge for families, especially lone women parents.

Council agrees that bolstering childcare can help reduce child poverty figures, combat gender inequality and tackle fiscal pressures. Council acknowledges a recent report by Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Oxfam Foundation - Poverty Proofing the Future of Early Years Childcare - which states that 89% of families with children under 3 believe more funded childcare would improve family wellbeing and 2 out of 3 parents would work more if more funded childcare were available.

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Council will advocate for sufficient funding to be provided to local government by the UK and Scottish Governments in order to continuing to support, at a minimum, the 1140 funded childcare hours for all three, four, and pre-school five year olds. Council notes that, unlike other councils in Scotland, Glasgow's childcare offering goes above and beyond the statutory minimum.

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flexibility offered by the service. Council notes the benefit of early years education to children's overall health, wellbeing and development, particularly those children from more deprived areas. Council agrees to explore ways to make the current childcare offer more flexible to support parents in shift work or irregular employment.

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inclusive, and sustainable all-age childcare system that addresses affordability, availability, and accessibility challenges for families in Glasgow. Council resolves to use the findings from this report when considering changes to or expansion of childcare provision, recognising, as the report makes clear, that the needs of communities and families are likely to be different depending on circumstances including cultural and historical factors.

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- Conduct a review to be reported to a future Education, Skills and Early Years Committee on current implementation of ELC to determine if it is as accessible and flexible as it could be, particularly with its ability to support children with additional support needs and the needs of parents of shift work or irregular employment."

On a vote being taken electronically and by calling the roll, 23 voted for the amendment and 45 for the motion as adjusted, with 1 abstention.

The motion as adjusted was accordingly declared to be carried.