

## **ELC Strategic Forum – 12 June 2018**

### **Attendees**

Maree Todd, Minister for Childcare and Early Years  
Cheryl Burnett, National Parent Forum of Scotland  
Jim Carle, Disabled Children and Young Person Advisory Group  
Jean Carwood-Edwards, Early Years Scotland  
Sally Cavers, Children in Scotland  
Vicky Crichton, Save the Children  
Eddie Follan, COSLA  
Lesley Gibb, ADES Early Years Network  
Phillip Gillespie, SSSC  
Ann Holmes for Fiona McQueen, Chief Nursing Officer  
Jane Malcolm, NDNA  
Helen Martin, Scottish Trades Union Congress  
Laura Mason, ADES  
Councillor Stephen McCabe, COSLA Spokesperson on Children and Young People  
Gerald McLaughlin, NHS Health Scotland  
Jane O'Donnell, COSLA  
Satwat Rehman, One Parent Families Scotland  
Janine Ryan, Scottish Childminding Association (for Maggie Simpson)  
Andrew Shoolbread, Scottish Out of School Care Network (for Irene Audain)  
Purnima Tanuku, Chief Executive, NDNA  
Dr Deborah Wason, NHS Health Scotland (for Gerald McLaughlin)  
Doreen Watson, Care Inspectorate (for Kevin Mitchell)

### **SG Attendees**

Alison Cumming, Scottish Government  
Euan Carmichael, Scottish Government  
Kathryn Chisholm, Scottish Government  
Janet Dunsmuir, Scottish Government (Secretariat)

### **Apologies**

Jackie Brock, Children in Scotland  
Angela Leitch, SOLACE (no delegate)  
Christine Stephen, Stirling University (no delegate)  
Fiona McQueen, Chief Nursing Officer (delegate - Ann Holmes)  
Gayle Gorman, Education Scotland (delegate – Elizabeth Morrison)  
Jaci Douglas, CALA  
Kevin Mitchell, Care Inspectorate (delegate – Doreen Watson)  
Maggie Simpson, Scottish Childminding Association (delegate – Janine Ryan)  
Irene Audain, Scottish Out of School Care Network (delegate – Andrew Shoolbread)  
Isobel Lightbody, West College Scotland  
Clare Simpson, Parenting Across Scotland  
Gemma Boggs, Scottish Government  
Liz Levy, Scottish Government

## **1. Welcome and minute of last meeting**

The Minister welcomed everyone to the meeting. No items were put forward under AOB. The minute of the meeting of 29 March 2018 was approved. Forum members were advised that approved minutes of meetings are published on SG website. The action log was reviewed, action 08/01 is ongoing.

## **2. Programme Update**

Members were referred to paper 09/02. Joe Griffin has been appointed as Director and Alison Cumming as Deputy Director of the newly formed Early Learning and Childcare Programme. These appointments help to build capacity at a senior level. Further appointments will be made within the Programme.

Members' attention was drawn to the following key points in the report:

Agreement on the funding package was reached between the Scottish Government and COSLA at the end of April. Letters to Local Authorities confirming funding was issued on 1 May.

The Deposit Guarantee Scheme opened in May.

The first round of bids for the Inclusion Fund opened on 31 May.

The update papers contains a link to joint consultation on the new service model and Forum members were asked to encourage responses.

200 providers attended the recent engagement events on the new service model and the Scottish Government is grateful to them for sharing their views.

The Scottish Government extended thanks to those who participated in the National Learning Event and the Family Learning Event which took place in May.

Funding allocations for the Additional Graduate Scheme were issued in April and an update will be provided at the next meeting.

**Action 09/01: Scottish Government to share funding allocation letters from 1 May 2018 with forum members.**

During discussion key points were:

The Scottish Government will not set a national sustainable rate, this a matter for each Local Authority. The funding package agreed by the Scottish Government and COSLA reflects the living wage and the decision on funding for each Local Authority area and was based on the financial templates prepared by Local Authorities. The Service Models Working Group is developing guidance on sustainable rates which will be prepared over the summer.

NDNA representatives advised that the 2018 Nursery Survey Scotland was published on 11 June. They advised that business confidence in sustainability in Scotland is low. Members are concerned about local variation and would welcome transparency. There is currently no consistent mechanism for negotiation on rates for partner providers at a local level. Some members report challenges in ensuring positive partnership with local authorities. Councillor McCabe acknowledged there will be challenges as the expansion programme is a significant undertaking and he advised that COSLA would be happy to engage with NDNA to discuss any issues. COSLA invited Forum members to contact them regarding issues or concerns.

The Chair observed that some significant milestones have been reached: the landmark funding agreement where quantum was agreed jointly; a shared vision for quality early learning and childcare; COSLA and the Scottish Government are working very closely together to ensure the success of the expansion; there are some good working relationships with partner providers.

Early Years Scotland established a sub-group who had developed a funded provider members' statement about ELC expansion plans which was read out to the meeting: *"We all agree that Scotland's youngest children must receive the highest quality Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) which is delivered by a high quality professional workforce. In order to achieve this, and succeed in truly realising **Provider Neutral** status across the sector, an **equal rate per child per hour** requires to be allocated to **every setting**, irrespective of whether the provider is a local authority, independent or voluntary setting. This would set a future aspiration for the full workforce to work towards achieving an **ELC National Pay Scale**, which would ultimately lead to equity, and the best start for all of Scotland's children."*

### **3. Flexibility Legislative Changes**

The Chair invited CS to provide an update to Forum members. The Scottish Government is grateful for stakeholder feedback received on the length of sessions. The priority is quality of provision and outcomes for the child are key. Options are being developed and will go before Ministers for a decision on whether or not the legislation should be changed. However, it is the clear intention that it will be for local authorities to determine what constitutes flexible provision based on local needs.

There is currently a statutory duty on Local Authorities to consult parents at least every two years and feedback suggests that two years is too short a period of time. The Scottish Government will arrange events with parents to obtain feedback on this issue.

A working group is developing guidance on delivering flexibility which will be available by end November.

### **4. Workforce Delivery Plan**

The Chair invited KC to provide an update.

The first phase of the national recruitment campaign earlier this year was aimed at young people. The current phase is targeted at returners and career changers. Adverts point to the Early Learning and Childcare Careers website which gives information on different routes into working in an early years setting. The campaign was informed by market research and aims to bring greater diversity into the workforce. The Workforce team will link with employability services such as DWP to ensure that career advisors are informed. KC advised that the success of the campaign will be measured in a number of ways such as analysis of website traffic, numbers enrolling on courses and information from SSSC on registrations.

The STUC advised that there is some anxiety with union members in relation to changes in contracts and Local Authorities are handling this in different ways which could impact on staff retention. They asked if further analysis will be carried out particularly in relation to how many FTEs and training places will be required and how the existing workforce is responding to change. Local Authorities have included projections in their expansion plans and data will be refined as the programme progresses. It is important to note that the headcount assumption of 11,000 accords with expansion plans prepared by Local Authorities.

Early Years Scotland welcomed the campaign and the promotion of the sector. She suggested including a focus on different parts of the sector and KC will discuss this with marketing colleagues.

SOSCN highlighted that we shouldn't lose sight of out of school care. The qualification levels are the same and in terms of diversity this sector attracts more male staff.

The Scottish Government have increased the contribution rates for apprenticeships and AC asked could the Scottish Government be doing more to let employers know what support is there. Members agreed that it would be helpful to highlight such initiatives to the sector.

**Action 09/02: KC to discuss focus on different part of the sector in the national recruitment campaign with marketing colleagues.**

**Action 09/03: Scottish Government to highlight initiatives to the sector.**

## **5. AOB & Close**

The next meeting will be in September and invitations will be issued as soon as possible.

The Chair expressed her thanks to everyone for attending and contributing to the meeting.