



## **EDUCATION EXECUTIVE**

### **COMMUNITY PLAYGROUPS UPDATE**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (DEVELOPMENT)**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report provides an update to the report dated 16 April 2013 in the progress of implementation of a new model of management for playgroups through Community Playgroups (SCIO).

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

1. To note the progress made in relation to the implementation of the new model of management for playgroups through Community Playgroups (SCIO).
2. To note the progress made in relation to the provision of places for eligible two year olds within a playgroup setting.
3. To agree to provide funding to support the management model - £25K per annum.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; Providing equality of opportunities; Making best use of our resources; Working in partnership
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	An equality impact assessment has been completed.

<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	n/a
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	n/a
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<p>Parents/carers are responsive to their children's developmental needs. Children are ready to start school.</p> <p>Everyone's life chances are maximised (by improved educational attainment) to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.</p> <p>We support strong, resilient communities.</p>
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	<p>Budget provision for playgroups in 2015/16 is £54,000 and is currently allocated proportionately to all registered playgroups in West Lothian that meet set criteria regarding their governance.</p> <p>Playgroups mainly operate in Council premises without charge.</p>
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	<p>Approved for submission to Executive by PDSP on 9 February 2016.</p> <p>Education PDSP report – 16 November 2010</p> <p>Education PDSP report – 25 November 2011.</p> <p>Education PDSP report – 16 April 2013</p> <p>Education PDSP report – 9 December 2014</p>
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	<p>Extensive consultation took place through a representative group of playgroup committee members from September 2011 to June 2012.</p>

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1 Background**

Community Playgroups (SCIO) was formed in April 2013 and they are a registered charity which is regulated by the Office of the Charity Regular (OSCR). Community Playgroups is managed by an Executive Board and they have strengthened the relationship between the local authority, parents/carers and the third sector to deliver playgroup services within local communities.

### **D2 Progress to date**

Over the last three years, Community Playgroups have successfully transferred six playgroups into the organisation – Armadale, Bathgate, Crofthead Hickory House, Livingston Village, Kirknewton, and West Calder. Thus achieving the number of transfers agreed within the Business Plan for support by the Council by 31 December 2014. Community Playgroups are also currently in discussion with two other playgroups with the aim for the groups to join the organisation within the next twelve to eighteen months.

The Council officers have supported Community Playgroups with the work to transfer playgroups in to the organisation, utilising the funding previously allocated from the Early Years Change Fund. Challenges have included the recruitment/retention of staff, promotion and upgrading premises to meet new Care Inspectorate standard introduced in 2014 in relation to nappy changing.

### **D3 Eligible 2 Year Olds**

In August 2015, the eligibility criteria for two year olds was extended to those children from low income families. Local playgroups have been essential in the provision of places for eligible two year olds along with childminders and family centres in areas where no council provision is currently available. In turn, the provision of places for eligible two year olds have become an essential source of regular income for playgroups to enable them to meet staffing costs.

Up to December 2015 of the 206 applications for an eligible two year old place which have been granted, 112 places have been provided by playgroups.

### **D4 Funding**

Playgroups across West Lothian currently receive grant support on a proportionate basis of £54,000 per annum.

Although the Executive Board of Community Playgroups are all volunteers, the Board have now employed a part time Group Manager (30 hours /39 weeks) and a part time Business Support Officer (18 hours/39 weeks) to manage the daily operations across the six settings.

Without these two posts the Community Playgroup, who now employ twenty staff across six setting would be unable to fulfil the duties of a reputable employer and ensure compliance with Care Inspectorate regulations. The organisation has been able to fund these posts until 31 March 2016 using a portion of the monies provided through the Early Years Change Fund but they will require an additional £25K per annum to sustain these positions.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The model of management provided through Community Playgroups strengthens governance for playgroups to sustain choice for parents/carers in relation to early learning and childcare. However, sustainability remains a challenge for all playgroups and to ensure the continuation of Community Playgroups further grant support - £25K per annum is required.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Education PDSP Report – Playgroup Provision 16 November 2010

Education PDSP Report – Playgroup Update 25 February 2011

Education PDSP Report – Support for Playgroups Across West Lothian 16 April 2013

Education PDSP Report – Support for Playgroups Across West Lothian 9 December 2014

Appendices/Attachments: None

Contact Person: Donna Adam, Strategic Resource Manager, Education Services, Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, West Lothian EH54 6FF

e-mail: [donna.adam@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:donna.adam@westlothian.gov.uk) Tel; 01506 281646

**Donna McMaster**

**Head of Education (Development)**

Date: 1 March 2016