

12. DISCRETIONARY CHARGING - EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELC)

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Primary) seeking approval for the introduction of discretionary charging in council provisions as part of the council's ELC framework.

Education Executive noted that consultation had commenced with partner providers in November 2021 and would be ongoing as part of the overall delivery of early learning and childcare. Officers advised that future reports to Education Executive would include the outcomes of this ongoing engagement.

It was recommended that the Education Executive:

1. approve the introduction of discretionary charging in council provisions as part of the council's ELC framework;
2. agree that the fee charged for discretionary early learning and childcare would be set annually at the average of all fees charged by partner providers based in West Lothian, and that this annual fee would be reported to elected members for scrutiny; and
3. delegate authority to the Depute Chief Executive to progress the arrangements set out in the recommendations and body of the report, in order to ensure that the proposed new service could be implemented by the target date of August 2022.

Decision

1. To approve the terms of the report; and
2. To note the outcome of ongoing partner provider consultation and engagement would be included in future reports to Education Executive.