

City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday 27 May 2021

Motion by Councillor Mary Campbell - Deferred Start Funding – referral from the Education, Children and Families Committee

Executive/routine Executive
Wards
Council Commitments

1. For Decision/Action

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee has referred the motion by Councillor Mary Campbell to the City of Edinburgh Council as the terms of the motion called for expenditure which was not included in the annual revenue budget for financial year 2021/2022.
- 1.2 The City of Edinburgh Council is asked to note that the outstanding terms of the motion was accepted by the Education, Children and Families Committee.

Andrew Kerr

Chief Executive

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Referral Report

Motion by Councillor Mary Campbell - Deferred Start Funding

2. Terms of Referral

2.1 On 18 May 2021, the Education, Children and Families Committee considered the following motion by Councillor Mary Campbell.

Motion

- 1) To note that each year a number of families whose children were due to start school before the age of five contacted the Council to seek to defer the start of primary school for a year and to secure funding for a further year in a pre-school setting. Children who were not five until the following January or February would automatically receive government funding for a deferred year if they so applied, but that those whose fifth birthday fell August to December were funded on a case by case basis by the Council.
- 2) To note the forthcoming change which was planned in deferred places funding for children starting primary school, which meant that from 2023, children born from August to December would also be able to get deferred early learning and childcare places funded by the Scottish Government.
- 3) To note that under previous deferred places rules, Edinburgh had a large number of deferred places applications, and that the forthcoming change that was planned might increase pressure on early years places.
- 4) To agree that in light of the pending changes to deferrals, Committee requested a report, by December 2021, on the preparations that were needed to build capacity for this change, with a specific focus on how to level the application playing field so that the Council could ensure that the children who were most in need of a deferred start were encouraged to apply.
- 5) To agree to refer onto the City of Edinburgh Council to allow for their consideration the request that for the August 2021 intake, the unique circumstances of the year past and the level of applications for deferrals from parents concerned that their children have not been able to develop as well with so much time spent out of nursery; and so agreed to fund any non-granted requests from those families who have already applied for term

2021/2022; committee notes that this number will be known for certain after the appeals committee meets on the 13th of May, but will be fewer than 55 children.

- 6) To agree that Convenor should write to the Minister for Childcare and the Early Years and COSLA to request consideration to be one of the pilot Council areas for 2022/2023, in order to learn as much as possible about the impact that would be likely, and so the Scottish Government could gain data from a large local authority with a likely high uptake rate.
- 7) To agree that the Convenor of Education, Children and Families would write to the Minister for Childcare and the Early Years and COSLA to request additional legislative work to consider the circumstances of premature children, in light of evidence showing that premature birth was linked to additional learning challenges, and that premature children whose birthdays fell outside the considered deferral period, but whose expected due date would have qualified them for deferred enrolment, were put at a double disadvantage.

2.2 The Education, Children and Families Committee agreed:

2.2.1 To approve the motion by Councillor Mary Campbell.

2.2.2 To refer paragraph 5 of the motion to the City of Edinburgh Council as the terms of the motion called for expenditure which was not included in the annual revenue budget for financial year 2021/2022.

3. Background Reading/ External References

Education, Children and Families Committee of 18 May 2021 – Webcast

4. Appendices

None.