



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Re-Procurement of Crèche service

24th February 2022

Reference: SPCB (2022) Paper 09

Executive summary

1. The SPCB has recently discussed options for supporting Members in balancing their responsibilities and their home lives and re-starting public engagement. The SPCB reflected on a survey of likely future usage of the crèche by Members and other passholders and the usage of the crèche pre-pandemic.
2. The SPCB expressed a strong desire to promote a family friendly parliament. The SPCB supported the re-opening of the crèche as part of this ambition. The SPCB was interested to explore further opportunities to promote a family friendly culture.
3. The SPCB is asked to approve:
 - The procurement of a new crèche contract
 - Agreement on hours of operation
 - Agreement on age range

Issues and options

4. The crèche contract has been closed since October 2020 because of the Covid pandemic. Now that we are close to welcoming the public back to Holyrood, the SPCB wish to start the process of procuring a crèche contract.
5. The procurement team has produced the specification for a contract and is ready to go to market, subject to some clarification from the SPCB and finalisation of the tender documentation.

Specification

6. The previous crèche operated 2 x 4 hour sessions per day, Monday to Friday. The care inspectorate has advised that changes in regulations and guidance for early years childcare, means that there will be restrictions on the hours of operations, due to our lack of suitable outdoor space.
7. In order to secure a licence which meets our needs, we suggest, that our objective for the crèche should be to support Members (and other passholders) with childcare and to welcome parents and carers of young children to participate in the democratic process by:
 - a. A drop off facility for members of the public to engage in parliamentary business. This would normally be limited to 1 session per week- lasting up to 4 hours.
 - b. Emergency care for passholders to access (usually limited to 1, 4 hour session per week)
8. We have previously offered care from 6 weeks to 5 years. The team has investigated the option of increasing the age to 8 years. However, this would require additional space to ensure age appropriate separation and this would add additional costs / space requirements.
9. Whilst the final decision on any restrictions will only come when our appointed contractor applies for a license, based on recent discussions, we understand the above proposal is likely to be accepted as the crèche is not being used for a permanent care solution of more than a few hours per week.

Demand

10. We will promote the crèche to Members and passholders and continue our work to promote to the public (see Annex 1 for details on previous promotions).
11. To match supply to demand and to best meet the objectives of the crèche. we are recommending that the crèche is procured to open Tuesdays to Thursdays to start with. The contract would include the ability to increase days if demand is high and/or to meet specific needs such as the session opening ceremony.
12. We have a budget of circa £150,000. It is likely that the operating costs will have increased since the last contract was in place. There may also be one-off set up costs. Reducing the days the contract operates should reduce overall costs and keep to the original budget.

Is the SPCB content to procure based on the proposals above?

Procurement

13. Pending the request for decisions made in this paper, the tender documentation can be finalised and the procurement process can start imminently. It will take approximately 5 months to complete the procurement process, however, timescales may reduce if there are a small number of bidders and the contract award is straight forward. Given the niche nature of this and our previous experience, we suspect this timescale might be reduced. Following the procurement process, the care inspectorate recommends 6 months for the contractor to set up and recruit. This means we are looking to re-open the crèche in spring 2023.
14. The procurement team are currently at full resource capacity but understand the importance of the crèche to the SPCB and have prioritised this over other procurements. To free up resource, a risk assessment has been carried out and an existing contract will be extended for a further twelve months through a Non-Competitive Action.
15. The SPCB expressed an interest in exploring emergency care provision to extend the family friendly support to Members, Members' staff and SPCB staff. Work has begun to specify the exact requirements and we will update the SPCB in the coming weeks of progress.
16. The likely cost of emergency care provision is up to £65,000 per annum plus administrative time which is not yet defined. This is not budgeted. Reducing spend on the crèche contract would help off-set this cost. We are also reviewing ways to offer this type of a provision on a smaller scale which would also help manage costs.

Governance

17. The Procurement and Facilities management teams are working together to progress this at speed for the SPCB. Once the SPCB is content with the procurement approach, the process will begin to procure a contract.
18. Lynsey Hamill, Group Head for Resilience and Sustainability will keep the SPCB updated at regular intervals.

Resource implications

19. There is budget allocated of £150,000 for this procurement. If the SPCB is content to reduce opening hours, it is likely the procurement will be within this budget. Emergency care is a new requirement and will be

costed separately and brought back to the SPCB.

Publication Scheme

20. This paper can be published in lines with SPCB policy.

Next steps

21. If SPCB are content, the procurement process will begin. An update to Members and other passholders will be prepared.

Decision

- The procurement of a new crèche contract
- Agreement on hours of operation
- Agreement on age range

Resilience and Sustainability

February 2022

Annex 1

Marketing and Communications

Since opening at Holyrood, the creche has been heavily promoted through internal and external communications and through marketing campaigns aimed at the general public in Scotland.

The most substantial, sustained marketing campaign in recent years was our *Visit* campaign, which ran from 2016-2020.

The campaign sought to increase public footfall at Holyrood and actively promoted parliamentary events and facilities that were open to the visiting public, including free tours, the café and the creche.

The free creche was prominently positioned throughout the campaign as follows:

- On the Parliament's homepage and Visit and Learn section of our website, and on the specially created Visit campaign website;
- In leaflets placed in popular visitor locations across Scotland;
- Outdoor advertising in the central belt;
- Adverts in a range of publications targeted towards visitors, including family visitors;
- Radio adverts that pushed people to find out more about visiting on our website;
- Social media promotion;
- Exterior signage.

In addition to the Visit marketing campaign, creche promotion has also featured within the following:

- Events geared towards family visits such as the Science Festival when hosted at Holyrood;
- During major events including the Opening of Parliament and the Festival of Politics to highlight the 'visitor offering', including the creche, to a wider audience.
- Mainstream news promotion of the service at landmark points of its operation and during other public events at Holyrood.
- Information within the building for visitors, including leaflets and table-talkers highlighting the creche and its availability
- Internal comms promotion to all passholders at various times in the parliamentary calendar eg after an election, during recesses for visitor ideas or childcare juggling etc.
- The creche is promoted to witnesses by Clerks as part of the standard invitation

