



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills & Early Years City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education Services

Contact: Heather Douglas

Ext

Item 4

28th January 2021

Early Learning and Childcare Expansion: Scotland Street

Purpose of Report:

To ask the Committee to consider the future plans for the Scotland Street Museum.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the plans for the future of the museum which were developed in partnership with Glasgow Life;
- Consider the plans for the development of a nursery on the ground floor; and
- Ask the Executive Director to bring back further reports on the progress of the development.

Ward No(s): 5 Govan

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No

consulted: Yes No

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 In 2017, the Scottish Government published the *'Blueprint for 2020'*, outlining proposals to deliver on the previously announced policy commitment to increase the statutory entitlement for early learning and childcare (ELC) from 600 to 1140 hours by August 2020. The *Blueprint* sets out requirements for local authorities to seek to deliver a service which prioritised quality, affordability, accessibility and flexibility.
- 1.2. In September 2017, Glasgow City Council submitted detailed plans to the Scottish Government, setting out proposals to deliver 1140 hours of statutory hours by August 2020. Our vision focusses on delivering the requirements set out in the *Blueprint*, with ELC settings moving to becoming all day, all year services, maximising choice and flexibility for parents and making better use of our resources and estate.
- 1.3. The Scottish Government confirmed on the 1st May 2018 that a capital award totalling £44.130m would be provided to undertake estate related projects in line with the expansion plans. The offer of £44.130m was predicated on being used for specific works associated with the expansion plans. It does not make financial provision for investment outwith the scope of funded eligibility i.e. 3 and 4 year olds and eligible two's.
- 1.4 Since the Scottish Government first announced the expansion programme, significant work has been undertaken to prepare information and develop Glasgow's response to the expansion plans across a wide range of workstreams, encompassing workforce, quality, communications, and partnership delivery. Property has been one of those key workstreams. Detailed analysis of ELC provision has been undertaken across the city, comparing demand (number of children and families) to supply (statutory places across all providers), to ensure that capital is allocated where most required. This exercise has identified specific communities across the city, requiring additional physical capacity to deliver the increase in statutory hours.
- 1.5 The above analysis identified the need for more early learning and childcare places in the Pollokshields area. Officers explored the area for potential sites which included buildings currently owned by Glasgow City Council.

2 Scotland Street Museum

- 2.1 Scotland Street School was built in 1906 and is considered one of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's masterpieces. It closed as a school in 1979 and then re-opened in 1990 as the Scotland Street Museum of Education run by Strathclyde Regional Council, primarily intended for school groups. Following local government re-organisation in 1996 it was transferred to Glasgow Museums. A new display gallery on Charles Rennie Mackintosh was installed and opened to the general public, with the focus of the museum being the history of education and the architecture of Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

- 2.2 The site comprises the main school building, janitor's house, two external toilet blocks (one front and one rear), play shelters and boundary walls, and all are Category A listed.
- 2.3 The school visits remain a popular attraction, with members of Glasgow Life museums staff leading tours whilst characterising school teachers and creating an immersive experience for the children who themselves are given the opportunity to dress as Edwardian school children, take part in a lesson and other authentic activities. In the past, a cafe was located on the ground floor for visitors, however this has been reduced to a vending offer. Also on the ground floor is located a permanent exhibition called *GlaswegAsians* which occupies the equivalent of two classroom sized spaces The display was developed in partnership with Colourful Heritage, an organisation devoted to gathering and sharing experiences of South Asian immigration in Scotland. There is a commitment to find another location for this exhibition.
- 2.4 Most recently, spaces within Scotland Street School Museum (SSSM) have been a temporary home to Citizens Theatre staff who occupied a variety of rooms while the Citizens Theatre building is being substantially upgraded.
- 2.5 As part of the maintenance commitments which Glasgow Life holds with regard to the buildings they manage, a Fire safety report was commissioned at SSSM which recommends works to the building to create greater protection to the fabric of this precious listed building. There are also a number of surveys underway which cover both the external and external fabric, and given the building's age, are identifying a body of work which is required to safeguard the future of this important historic asset to both the city of Glasgow and in the national and international C.R.Mackintosh context.
- 2.6 It is proposed that the works that have been identified in connection with fire safety and fabric repair are brought together with the proposed re-purposing and adaptation work (see below) into one substantial body of work to commence as soon as possible.
- 2.7 The Council's approach to managing its property assets has changed significantly since the Glasgow City Development Plan was adopted in March 2017. As the owner of the city's largest property and land portfolio, the Council has begun to take a more active management role adopting a place-based approach to effective decision making that not only supports effective service delivery but can also act as a catalyst for wider social, economic and regeneration objectives.
- 2.8 In line with the Council's Strategic vision 2017 - 2022, Glasgow City Council adopted its first Property and Land Strategy in 2019. The Strategy set out the Council's ambitions to reimagine its property and land estate, working with the city to best meet the needs of those who live, work and visit Glasgow. Flowing from this strategy is the recently adopted Heritage Assets Plan, developed to provide a consistent and considered approach to the stewardship of our Heritage Assets. Glasgow's built heritage is significant in volume and diversity and is highly valued by all who live, work and visit the city. By their nature,

heritage assets require more intensive stewardship to keep them in good condition and more creativity in the way that these assets are modified and re-purposed to support alternative uses and changing day to day operations.

- 2.9 In line with the Property and Land strategy and its detailed asset plans, a multi-use, place-based approach is proposed for Scotland Street School, including the introduction of a new early years facility (funded through Scottish Government's 1140 additional childcare hours) - potentially the inclusion of a *digital learning Hub* for Education Services, retention of the museum offer whilst retaining an appropriate level of access for visitors to enjoy the exterior built form and setting.
- 2.10 In summary, re-introducing an education provision in the form of early years' accommodation will signal a return of the building to a new form of its original use. Re-thinking the use of the building offers new ways of interpreting the architecture and history of the building, while retaining its important role in the city in terms of cultural tourism and its unique Charles Rennie Mackintosh focus. It will also allow the important function of delivering schools workshops by Glasgow Museums' staff to the children of the city to be maintained.

3 Future museum offer: programme and interpretation

3.1 Scotland Street School Museum (SSSM) currently offers well-attended themed classroom re-enactments for schools, as well as a public programme of activities for a range of audiences. The future programme at SSSM will be condensed to focus on delivery of the two most popular parts of the current offer:

- Themed classroom re-enactments for schools and for the public – varying in delivery style and content.
- Guided tours focusing on Mackintosh's design, the history of the building including playground, and history of education.

3.2 This is also an opportunity to explore the development an outdoor self-led visitor experience (see section 6), with interpretation to make the architecture, design features and stories of Scotland Street accessible to all.

4 Relocation of existing displays

4.1 Glaswegasians: The Glaswegasians exhibition will be refreshed and relocated in another Glasgow Museums venue. This will enable the Service and partners to reach new audiences with the exhibition content and accompanying programme, potentially including initiatives such as the Aunty Ji living history character.

4.2 Mid-floor and stairwell-room displays: Objects and exhibits from these spaces will be relocated – potentially to other locations in the building and to alternative Glasgow Museums venues. The specific story of Scotland Street School in terms of its architecture and use as a school could be interpreted

digitally and made available online as well as being incorporated into the proposed external interpretation (see section 6). Some objects will remain in the building to enhance the learning environment of the proposed early learning and childcare setting and the museum space for school visits.

5 Programme and interpretation activities

5.1 The table below summarises a potential programme:

Activity	Times
<p>Classroom re-enactments for schools (pre-booked)</p> <p>Themed classroom experiences for school groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing WW2 and Victorian sessions • New session(s) for younger pupils e.g. cookery classroom or playground/games based 	Weekdays, term- time
<p>Classroom re-enactments for public (drop in)</p> <p>Themed experiences for public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing WW2, Victorian and cookery sessions 	Weekend days and school holidays, selected dates
<p>Guided tours for public (drop in)</p> <p>Guided tour featuring internal and external spaces, covering themes of architecture, Mackintosh and history of education</p>	<p>Weekend days, selected dates</p> <p>Public guided tours on selected dates including Doors Open Day, Mackintosh Festival etc.</p>
<p>Outdoor visitor experience - general public access</p> <p>Self-led visits around the front and rear girls' playgrounds</p>	<p>Drop in access for general public during opening hours (TBC)</p> <p><i>See section 6 re enabling access to this self-led space</i></p>

In support of delivering this programme a space for staff and freelancers to use as a base will be provided.

6 Outdoor visitor experience

6.1 Continued access to this popular attraction by members of the public will be maintained to the front playground throughout the week and rear girls' playground at weekends for a self-led visitor experience focusing on the Mackintosh architecture and stories of SSSM. The early learning and childcare setting would have access to the rear boys' playground which would not form part of the museum experience. It would become a secure, real-life, present-day outdoor learning and play area, and would provide a talking point about the contrast in educational approaches over the years.

6.2 *Interpretation opportunities - in-situ and digital:* The girls' rear playground and shed could be used to house some fixed interpretation as a brief introduction to the building, the school and key features for visitors to look out for. An additional layer of content could be provided through mobile digital interpretation (that visitors access using their own devices), delivering first-person historical accounts of the Mackintosh building project and what life was like when attending Scotland Street School, to create a sense of immersion and personal connection as visitors explore the outdoor space. Further digital content could be available on the Glasgow Museums website, to enable audiences to see and explore the building and playgrounds through images and filmed content to create a 'virtual tour'.

7 Proposed nursery and use of other areas

- 7.1 It is proposed to develop the ground floor to become a nursery providing early learning and childcare to 3 to 5 year olds. The nursery would have access to the rear boys' playground which would be developed as part of the planned improvements. The nursery would be registered to provide 60 3-5 years full-time equivalent places. The Appendices show the proposed layout of the nursery. Secure access will be maintained to the nursery and planned school visits to the museum areas will be managed between Glasgow Life and the head of the nursery to ensure no disruption to children's learning.
- 7.2 On the first floor as existing there is a mixture of exhibition space, staff accommodation and meeting rooms. The rooms will remain largely untouched but will be refurbished and re-purposed to a series of flexible office spaces and meeting rooms. In order to support the new purpose, a small office space adjacent to the existing toilet block will be remodeled to provide the additional toilet area required. Existing passenger lift will be refurbished and commissioned to create barrier free access to this and the top floor.
- 7.3 On the second floor at present are the main original teaching spaces complete with tiered seating. Some of the intact pupil cloak areas reside on the second floor and will be retained to support the authentic heritage experience unique to Scotland Street School. The proposal is to retain these with repairs and refurbishment as necessary as they will be the main focus of visits especially for schools. The remaining rooms will be repurposed as meeting rooms and staff spaces.
- 7.4 Upper ground and upper first floor existing mezzanine spaces will again remain largely untouched with refurbishment as needed.
- 7.5 As part of the development, officers will engage with Road Safety and Traffic Management officers in Neighbourhoods & Sustainability to develop a comprehensive travel plan for the nursery. For example, there is currently an arrangement with the car park opposite with Glasgow Life. This could be explored for parents and carers who were bringing their child by car. The proximity of the subway station would enable parents to access the city centre for employment using park'n'ride. Consideration will also require to be given to safe crossing arrangements.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The proposed development of SSSM allows the building to be reinstated for its original purpose of delivering education, whilst retaining the much valued museum experience. In addition, the development of the outdoor experience allows the public to continue to enjoy the beautiful exterior while the proposed weekend access would allow planned visits for the public to enjoy the splendor of the interior.
- 8.2 Once complete the new provision at SSSM would demonstrate that important buildings can be used for multiple purposes and provide great experiences for a range of users and visitors. It would provide a unique atmosphere for young people to thrive in while continuing to allow visitors access to this architectural masterpiece through enhanced interpretation.
- 8.3 Glasgow Life Board approved this proposal at their November Board meeting. Early discussions with interested parties linked with C.M.Mackintosh show support for the proposal which returns a much loved asset to its original use while retaining access to the museum and developing an external experience which enables appreciation of the architecture.

9 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Finance to undertake the fabric related improvement works and fire prevention works has been secured from the Community Assets Fund (£800,000), and a further £2 million has been set aside from the Early Years 1140hr Expansion programme to undertake the re-purposing works required for the creation of a fully registered and compliant early learning and childcare facility.

Additional revenue implications will be met from the ring fenced ELC expansion funding

Legal: Legal Service's advice will be sought in relation to the assignation of lease and the formalities of the ongoing relationship with Glasgow Life.

Personnel: It is proposed that the ELC facility will be operated by Education Services and additional staff recruitment will be aligned to the completion of works.

Procurement: None

Council Strategic Plan: Excellent and Inclusive Education 22, 33
Equality Impacts:

Outcome:

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental: The new ELC accommodation will be integrated into the existing building in a sensitive and appropriate way given the significance of the Mackintosh designed structure. This project will improve the physical environment, by giving a new and relevant purpose to a Listed building helps to safeguard it for this and future generations.

Social: The expansion programme will have a positive impact on all communities.

Economic: The expansion programme will have a positive impact on the local economy providing direct employment with the creation of jobs in the ELC sector and will also support parents and carers seeking to return to work, embark on training or extending working hours.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts: Not Applicable

10 Recommendations

10.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the plans for the future of the museum which were developed in partnership with Glasgow Life;
- Consider the plans for the development of a nursery on the ground floor; and
- Ask the Executive Director to bring back further reports on the progress of the development.