Submission on proposed alterations to Hive – June 2021

1. **Background**

Childhood Services Ireland (CSI) are actively engaged in the Pobal Super User Forum and DCEDIY Stakeholder Group (Hive/NSC) and have established an internal working group to discuss areas pertinent to Pobal and the Hive.

The below proposals aim to introduce technical fixes to the Hive operating system which will reduce administrative burden for Service Providers.

2. **Proposals**

2.1 Early Opening for Registration of the ECCE Scheme and NCS.

2.1.1 CSI propose that registration for schemes (NCS and ECCE) opens on 1st May of each year. It is intended that this process runs similarly to that in the primary/secondary school sectors whereby schools ascertain which children will be in attendance early in January or February of each year.

2.1.2 Problems frequently occur regarding delayed CHICKS which lead to missed funding for families. If a child registers in May for a later commencement date, then it would be expected that the CHICK is in situ in time for that date. Service Providers can welcome incoming children into their services for a welcome day in June, knowing that those children will be in attendance in September.

2.1.3 Early registration should reduce ECCE no-shows whereby a parent registers a child for more than one service leading to services with unexpected unfillable empty places in September.

2.1.4 Any changes made to the Hive will be user-tested in May, rather than finding issues that delay registrations in August when all providers are trying to register at the same time.

2.1.5 Opening registration early will create less risk of the Hive system crashing due to over-capacity in August as Service Providers can register from May.

2.1.6 Those Service Providers who close during July and August will be enabled to undertake administrative work during their working year instead of during periods of closure. This would also prove beneficial for all-year services who generally operate with less staff during summer months and therefore have less administrative cover.

2.2 Input of Parental Fees

2.2.1 CSI propose that the registration process is altered so that Service Providers have the option to input parental fees during the registration process. This will include screen space for the service to include a breakdown of more complicated fee patterns.

Childhood Services Ireland
Ibec

84/86 Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2
Ireland
D02 H720

tel: + 353 1 605 1500
email: info@ibec.ie
web: www.ibec.ie

2.2.2   This step will need to be added to the "Change Registration" section of the Hive as any changes to a child's hours/days will necessitate a change to the funding arrangement with the parent.

2.2.3   The Registration becomes an electronic agreement between the Service Provider and the parent where the Service Provider offers the place to the child at a specified rate, and by confirming, the parent agrees to take that place at the offered fee.

2.2.4   Pobal can conduct compliance checks on the agreement online. There is a significant environmental impact as no paper agreements are necessary for those selecting the electronic registration.

2.3   **"Amend" function**

2.3.1   CSI propose to introduce an "amend" function for all registrations (both NS CS and ECCE). ECCE day changes have always necessitated the award to be ended and the child to be re-registered with the new days. The "amend" function will permit amendments to eb made to a child's registration without the need for re-registration.

2.4   "R**ollover" function**

2.4.1   CSI propose to introduce a function to permit a registration "rollover". If a child is already registered for an award, whether NCS or ECCE, and is subsequently registered for an additional year, a "rollover" function can be actioned that would allow the previous year's award to be renewed rather than re-registered.

2.4.2   This "rollover" function should also apply to Higher Capitation awards. Where staff have not changed from the previous year, a "rollover" should apply to the Fees Policies if fees have not changed.

END