

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

18 JANUARY 2000
25 JANUARY 2000

JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTORS OF
SOCIAL WORK AND EDUCATION

Report No: 47/00

PLANNING EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE Revised Guidance to Partnerships

ABSTRACT

This report advises elected members of the revised guidance to Childcare Partnerships on the planning of Early Education and Childcare issued by the Scottish Executive in December 1999

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Social Work and Education Committees, for their respective interests: -

- (i) note the contents of this report;
- (ii) Instruct the Directors of Social Work and Education to bring a final copy of the Childcare Plan 2000 -2003 to the Education and Social Work Committees in April 2000

2 INTRODUCTION

In October 1998 the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department issued guidance on the "Planning of Pre-School Education and Childcare and the Establishment of Childcare Partnerships". Proposals for the establishment of the Angus Childcare Partnership were the subject of a joint committee report prepared by the Directors of Education and Social Work and considered by the Education and Social Work Committees in November 1998, (report number 1100/98 refers).

The guidance issued to local authorities in October 1998 advised that they should, in conjunction with Childcare Partnerships, develop a local plan which focuses on the growth and improvement of pre-school education and childcare services between 1999 - 2002. New provision should meet the needs of children, be aligned to the needs of parents

and not necessarily be created as a result of existing local authority plans.

The First Angus Childcare Plan was the subject of a joint committee report prepared by the Directors of Education and Social Work and considered by the Education and Social Work committees in June 1999 (Report number 532/99 refers).

Revised guidance issued in December 1999 does not ask local authorities and Childcare Partnerships to do more than the original guidance did. Partnerships are asked to:

- evaluate what has been achieved to date
- review objectives and targets
- roll plans forward for a further year

It is clear from the revised guidance that specific areas are to be addressed in more detail than may have been covered in the initial plan. These areas include:

- Training and qualifications
- Information Services
- Rural Issues
- Ethnic Minorities
- Gaelic
- Special Needs

Partnerships are being strongly encouraged to base their views, on the need for childcare and education services, on the outcome of the local childcare audit. The number of places created or sustained locally should be reported along with how resources have been used to deliver the childcare strategy. Lead responsibilities should be clearly identified. The plan should be brief and concentrate on strategic issues and proposals for action.

Completed plans for 2000 – 2003 should be sent to the Scottish Executive by the end of April 2000.

The role of Childcare Partnerships is further clarified, in the revised guidance, as one of overseeing the production of the childcare elements of the childcare plan. Agreement of plans should be made by consensus. The local authority, and other bodies, should give the Partnership options to consider for the provision of childcare services and take careful account of the views it receives. The role of the Partnership as an executive body is not encouraged.

3 PROPOSALS

It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and that the Directors of Education and Social Work bring a final copy of the Childcare Plan 2000 -2003 to the Education and Social Work

committees in April 2000

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The allocation of funding to Angus Council to meet the objectives of the Childcare Strategy in the financial year 2000- 2001 has been announced as £261,000. The breakdown of the funding is £144,000 for project support and £117,000 for infrastructure. Proposals for the allocation of this funding will be the subject of a future report and will be further identified within the review of the Childcare Plan.

The cost of any proposals contained within this report can be met entirely from the specific financial resources provided by the Scottish Executive.

5 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

This report advises members of the revised guidance for Childcare Partnerships, on the Planning of Early Education and Childcare, issued in December 1999.

The focus of the revised guidance is to assist Childcare Partnerships to update and roll forward their Early Education and Childcare Plans to cover the period 2000 –2003.

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Note: No background papers, as defined by section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.

