

ANGUS COUNCIL

ITEM No. 13

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE 15 AUGUST 2000
 EDUCATION 22 AUGUST 2000

DISTRIBUTION OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE CHILDCARE STRATEGY

JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL WORK AND EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report advises Committee of additional funding made available to the Council to support the development of childcare for student parents, provide equipment to enable access to childcare by children with disability and develop the quality of childcare available in Angus through workforce development and training initiatives.

1 RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committees

- I. Agree to the proposals for the distribution of the resources.
- II. Note that the attached proposals have been submitted to the Scottish Executive in order that the funding can be released to the Council

2 INTRODUCTION

Background

In July 1998 Ministers announced an additional £91 million to be allocated to childcare over three years to 2001-2002. Although announced within this package, £16 million was not clearly targeted at that time and was retained for later announcement.

At a Parliamentary debate on Early Education and Childcare on 15 June Ministers announced the allocation of £7.6 million to be distributed to local authorities over the financial years 2000/1 and 2001/2. The additional funding is to support a package of measures aimed at improving the volume, quality and accessibility of childcare services.

Details of the funding package have now been received.

Infrastructure

£46,220 in 2000/1 and a further £46,220 2001/2002 has been allocated to Angus for the development of childcare infrastructure. This years resources will be released on the submission of an application to the Scottish Executive with plans for year 2 to be included in the Review of the Childcare Plan.

The resources must be used to meet the following aims:

- contribution towards new build that will increase availability of childcare
- refurbishment/re-equipping of facilities to improve accessibility for children with disabilities requiring childcare
- meeting the childcare requirements of student parents (at least half the resources should be directed to this aim)

The funds are to be used to support development across the private, voluntary and local authority sectors.

Workforce expansion and development

£46,220 in 2000/1 and a further £37,590 in 2001/2 has been allocated to Angus to expand the childcare workforce and widen opportunities for training. The first year resources will be released on the submission of the plans to the Scottish Executive. With plans for the second year to be included in the Review of the Childcare Plan.

This is an area of development that is already significantly addressed in the Childcare Plan, with plans in Angus to develop a core training package to be used for the pre registration training of childminders, the training of playgroup, crèche and after school club workers. This will create a foundation level training in Angus, which will allow workers to more easily move between sectors. The partnership has funded the continuation of the ESF funded project that has seen childminders in Angus access SVQ II. Community Childminding training has been seen as the access route to SVQ for childminders. A tender has been advertised to establish an assessment centre that will offer SVQ III to pre-school education partner providers. A childminding development worker and an Out of school care development worker have been appointed to take forward post registration training initiatives within each sector.

3 PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the resources being made available by the Scottish Executive are used in Angus to:

- I. Establish, through the Childcare Partnership, a start up safety equipment grant scheme for prospective childminders.
- II. Explore the development of a special needs equipment loan scheme for use by childcare providers.
- III. In conjunction with Angus College develop a subsidised childcare scheme for student parents.
- IV. Make available a ½ module (National Certificate Level) on disability to all childcare providers with some staff replacement costs.
- V. Make available an SVQ in playwork to playleaders working in out of school care.
- VI. Establish, through the Childcare Partnership, a grant scheme to subsidise the Professional Development Award in childcare and education for staff in the pre-school sector.

These proposals further develop the commitment to training and development identified by Angus Childcare Partnership and detailed in the Childcare Plan.

The proposed submission to the Scottish Executive is attached to this report.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A specific grant of £92,440 in 2000/2001 and £83,810 in 2001/2002 is being made available by the Scottish Executive. This will fully fund the proposals outlined in this report.

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

The additional resources being made available by the Scottish Executive for the development of infrastructure and workforce expansion and development in the Childcare Sector support the development of the Childcare Strategy in Angus and meet with the aims and objectives of the Angus Childcare Plan.

W B Robertson
Director of Social Work

J Anderson
Director of Education

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 the above report.

OR

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