

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	18 April 2000
EDUCATION COMMITTEE	25 April 2000
PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE..	2 May 2000
FINANCE & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE	2 May 2000

SURESTART (SCOTLAND)

JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL WORK, EDUCATION
AND PERSONNEL

ABSTRACT

This report outlines the progress of the Surestart (Scotland) initiative in Angus and recommends support for further developments in 2000/2001 with the additional funding provided by the Scottish Executive.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee

- 1 Approves the further development of Surestart Scotland as described in this report.
- 2 Approves the virement proposals contained in Appendix 3.

It is recommended that the Education Committee

- 1 Approves the further development of Surestart (Scotland) as described in this report.

It is recommended that the Personnel & Property Services Committee approves the establishment of the following posts

- 1 1 Resource Worker, SCP 27-35.
- 2 1.5 Family Support Officers, SCP 12-18.

It is recommended that the Finance & Information Technology Committee

- 1 Approves the virement proposals contained in Appendix 3 which allocates the additional funding to appropriate budget headings.

2 INTRODUCTION

Committee is referred to the Angus Childcare Plan agreed by the Social Work and Education Committees on 1 June and 8 June 1999 respectively and committee report 757/99 outlining previous Surestart developments. The Childcare Plan outlines developments in childcare and pre-school education in Angus. It is recognised that good quality childcare and pre-school education are central to the plans for tackling social exclusion in Scotland. They contribute in a number of ways by assisting a child's social and educational development with particular benefit to those children and families in need. More immediately they can help parents to enter or re-enter the labour market.

Central Government is committed to supporting the development of early years services and has recently set out its objectives within a National Childcare Strategy. The strategy includes the provision of a part-time pre-school place for every 4 year old whose parents wish a place, the expansion of pre-school provision to 3 year olds and the increased availability of childcare for very young children and children outwith school hours. The strategy recognises that children are cared for in a mix of informal care, from parents and relatives in the home, and in more formal settings. Good parenting is seen as key to ensuring that children grow up happy and well prepared for adult life. Parents are recognised as the first and often greatest influence on their children's development and education. The strategy recognises that good quality childcare provides long-term benefits for the development of all children.

A cross departmental review by the Scottish Office in 1998 concluded that effective support for young children is undermined by the current system of service provision, which is driven by vertically separated agencies each of which deals with a fragment of children's lives rather than by the needs of children as whole individuals. Fragmentation and lack of co-ordination appears particularly severe for those aged 0 - 3, when children are particularly vulnerable but can benefit most from support. The review recognised that changes in existing arrangements must establish a pattern of services for young children which are free of stigma but enable effort to be targeted at those children most at risk of becoming socially excluded later in life.

The first year of a child's life is seen by the review as crucial in terms of cognitive development and emotional adjustment; the quality of bonding and attachment in the first year weigh heavily on subsequent achievement. The Scottish Executive is therefore encouraging the development of services, which direct support to families with very young children to help children fulfil their potential and be in a position to get the most from subsequent opportunities including pre school education.

Objectives for the development of initiatives are given in the Scottish Executive *"Guidance on the Expansion of Support for Families with*

Very Young Children". The focus of these initiatives is the personal growth and development of the very youngest children (0 - 3 years) before they have the opportunity of pre school education. Alongside the guidance additional resources have been made available to implement this part of the National Childcare Strategy, £195,000 was made available in 1999/2000 through which a family support team was created for Forfar/Kirriemuir (reference Committee Report 757/99) allowing Rural Outreach to concentrate its efforts in Brechin and Montrose and the Arbroath Family Centre to continue its deliver family support services for Arbroath.

A development plan for family support services submitted to the Scottish Executive has achieved an additional allocation of Surestart resources in 2000/2001 of £110,000. Further additional resources are expected in 2001/2002 to allow the extension of outreach services from the Child and Family Centre to Carnoustie and Monifieth.

3 PROPOSAL

It is proposed that Rural Outreach is expanded and refocused to concentrate on family support (as detailed in Appendix 2). The concept of "family centre" will be used in line with Scottish Executive guidance to deliver parent support, parenting education, and flexible daycare for children in need through community childminding.

Family support will be enhanced by the work of Homestart volunteers supporting individual families in their own home. Supportive networks for families with very young children will be developed through supporting and further developing parent and toddler activity throughout Angus through the Scottish Pre-school Playgroup Association (SPPA). Families with young children with special needs will be further supported by the extension of community childminding to include children with special needs.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Allowance has been made in the social work department's revenue budget for this development, using money allocated by the Scottish Executive as part of the comprehensive spending review.

These developments will be phased in during financial year 2000-2001, taking account of other strategic and structural changes that are planned within the social work department. The full year costs are contained in Appendix 1. The initial commitments are set out in the virement proposals contained in Appendix 3. The financial implications will be monitored and any vacancies will be reported to the Social Work Committee as part of the regular financial monitoring arrangements.

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

Developments in childcare in Angus are outlined with the Angus Childcare Plan. The establishment of early intervention and family support services underpins the development of the National Childcare and Social Inclusion strategies.

The development in 2000/2001 of “family centre” type family support services Brechin/Montrose will enhance the equity of childcare for children in need and family support services across Angus.

J Torbet
Director of Personnel

J Anderson
Director of Education

W B Robertson
Director of Social Work

21 March 2000

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.

Financial Implications

Staff Costs	Grade	Full Year Cost £'s
Resource Worker	SCP27-35	23,296
Family Support Officer (1.5 WTE)	SCP 12-18	23,451
Property Costs		7,000
Supplies and Services		10,000
Travel		6,000
Sub-Total		69,747
Third Party Payments		
Community Childminding		26,253
Special Needs Childminding		10,000
Homestart		4,000
Sub-Total		40,253
TOTAL		110,000

Staffing implications

Current establishment

1 Senior Resource Worker	AP6
1 Family Support Officer	SCP 12-18
0.5 Clerical Assistant	GS1/2

Proposed establishment

1 Senior Resource Worker	AP6
1 Resource Worker	AP4/5+1
2.5 Family Support Officer	SCP 12-18
0.5 Clerical Assistant	GS1/2

APPENDIX 3

Virement proposals

Vire from		£
Child Community - Family support & early intervention	Third party payments	60,000
TOTAL		60,000

Vire to		£
Child Community - Rural outreach	Staff costs	49,133
Child Community - Rural outreach	Transport	6,000
Child Community - Rural outreach	Supplies & services	4,867
TOTAL		60,000

Social Work Department Only

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE.....(DATE)

REPORT TITLE

After approval, copy report to :

ACTIONS REQUIRED

WHAT	WHO	WHEN