

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 AUGUST 2007

NEW EARLY YEARS, CHILDCARE AND PLAY CAPITAL FUND FOR 2007-08

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise members of Cabinet about a decision by Ministers to establish a new capital fund in 2007-08 and to seek approval to allocate 20% of the capital grant to voluntary, community and private sector groups/organisations which provide a key role in service delivery in East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The new Early Years, Childcare and Play Capital Fund has been established in this current financial year to improve the quality and accessibility of early years, childcare and play facilities and provide scope for extended and integrated service delivery.
- 2.2 A total of £8million has been distributed to local authorities using the childcare strategy formula. East Ayrshire has been allocated £201,000 as a specific capital grant under section 37 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003,, section 10 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 and section 68 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

3. USE OF GRANT

- 3.1 The letter from the Scottish Executive of 26th July 2007 sets out the conditions attached to the capital grant. The fund may support capital projects, including the purchase of equipment, in the private and voluntary sector where these providers play a key role.
- 3.2 Due to the difficulties that voluntary sector providers and community organisations face in accessing capital funding, local authorities are expected to provide opportunities for this sector in particular, to submit proposals for capital spend.
- 3.3 Ministers have set a target of 20% of each local authority's allocation to be used in the voluntary and community sectors. As the private sector can often access other sources of capital monies, the fund should only be open to private sector providers where capital spend has a clear and demonstrable wider community benefit.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 outlines the 5 priority areas for use of the capital grant which include:

- Refurbishing or upgrading Early Years facilities to create a better environment for staff and children, and to develop closer links with parents
- Creating, extending or refurbishing early years facilities to deliver extended or more integrated services
- Improving facilities for out of school care
- Creating, refurbishing or upgrading play spaces, equipment and facilities for children, both within early years centres and in the wider community
- Adaptations and equipment to improve access to play, early years services and out of school care for children with additional support needs.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A capital grant of £201,000 has been allocated to East Ayrshire for financial year 2007-08.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Scottish Executive has set out the terms and conditions of the capital grant in the letter of 26 July 2007.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These developments promote the themes of Community Learning and Improving Opportunities

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Nil

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that members of the Cabinet:
- (i) note the establishment of the new Early Years, Childcare and Play Capital Fund,
 - (ii) approve the allocation of 20% of the capital grant to voluntary, community and private sector groups/organisations and invite proposals from those organisations which provide a key role in service delivery in East Ayrshire,
 - (iii) delegate to the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, the responsibility to develop the proposals for the spend of the capital grant in consultation with the Spokespersons for Life Long Learning,

- (iv) request that a further report is made to Cabinet to report the spend of the capital grant; and
- (v) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

Graham R. Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JA/KG/JW
1 August 2007

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Letter from Scottish Executive Children, Young People and Social Care Directorate – Positive Futures Division
26 July 2007

Members requiring further information should contact Kay Gilmour Head of Service: Community Support, Tel. No 01563 576104 or Janie Allen, Principal Officer (Early Education and Childcare) Tel. No. 01563 578125

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2007-2008: EARLY YEARS, CHILDCARE AND PLAY FUND

Purpose: Improve quality and accessibility of early years, childcare and play facilities and provide scope for extended and integrated service delivery.

Priorities

1. Refurbishing or upgrading Early Years facilities to create a better environment for staff and children, and to develop closer links with parents
 - Improving the care and learning environment
 - Creating permanent accommodation for children where they are currently using temporary facilities
 - Creating parents' rooms and ensuring facilities are available for confidential discussions between parents and staff
2. Creating, extending or refurbishing early years facilities to deliver extended or more integrated services
 - New, extended or upgraded children & family centres
 - Improving facilities at nursery schools or in schools with a nursery class to allow them to provide extended services, parenting support, health services etc.
 - On-site facilities for wraparound services provided by the voluntary or private sector
 - Adapting or extending facilities to accommodate 0-3 year olds
3. Improving facilities for out of school care
 - play and recreational equipment
 - creating dedicated spaces or effective partitioning solutions for out of school care
 - equipment storage solutions
4. Creating, refurbishing or upgrading play spaces, equipment and facilities for children, both within early years centres and in the wider community
 - vacant and derelict land in housing areas cleared and transformed into open greenspace
 - community play spaces and equipment that cater for mixed ages
 - playgrounds/equipment that are challenging and designed to include natural surroundings
5. Adaptations and equipment to improve access to play, early years services and out of school care for children with additional support needs
 - inclusive play, learning and recreational equipment