

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 4 MAY 2004

WORKING FOR FAMILIES FUND

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the current position regarding the Working For Families project and to seek approval for the following:

a) the areas within which the project will operate; and

b) the proposed target client group

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At a meeting of the Emergency Powers Committee on 14 January 2004 it was agreed to accept an award of £1.2 million for the introduction of the 'Working For Families Fund' (WFFF)

2.2 The WFFF will be targeted at those families with dependant children where the assistance provided by other agencies does not match the clients' needs but who nevertheless are motivated to move towards employment or improve their employment position. The fund will support the provision of childcare where this is not available locally and is a barrier to employment.

2.3 In response to the timetable set by the Scottish Executive, a small steering group was established to complete an outline proposal to be submitted to the Scottish executive by 27 February 2004. The outline proposal, which was accepted by the Scottish Executive, identified where the WFFF may be targeted and which groups may benefit, the steering group comprises;

East Ayrshire Council
Early Years Services
Childcare Partnership
Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire
East Ayrshire Employment Initiative
East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership
JobcentrePlus

Kilmarnock and Ayr Colleges, NHS Ayrshire & Arran and the East Ayrshire Council of Voluntary Organisations will be invited to join the steering group at a future date.

- 2.4 The Scottish Executive has now requested that the Council submit a fully costed proposal by 8 April 2004.

3. TARGET NEIGHBOURHOODS

- 3.1 Following guidance from the Scottish Executive advising that the WFFF should be targeted at the most deprived neighbourhoods within authorities, Economic Development officers have analysed the most recent and appropriate statistical information and the results are detailed below. The statistics show that it may be appropriate to target the WFFF within the Wards of Altonhill, Hillhead, Longpark and Onthank, Shortlees, Bellfield and Riccarton, Muirkirk, Lugar and Logan and Bellsbank and Patna.

% of economically active people aged 16-74:			
Area	% Unemployed	% of Unemployed Classified Long Term Unemployed	
Scotland	3.97	32.55	
East Ayrshire	5.47	37.90	
Altonhill, Hillhead, Longpark & Onthank	10.32	41.99	
Shortlees, Bellfield & Riccarton	6.9	42.03	
Muirkirk, Lugar, Logan	7.02	36.05	
Bellsbank & Patna	7.05	39.9	
% household composition:			
Area	Married couple households with dependent children	Cohabiting couple households with dependent children	Lone parent households with dependent children
Scotland	16.76	2.71	6.91
East Ayrshire	18.26	3.55	6.75
Altonhill, Hillhead, Longpark & Onthank	14.21	4.23	12.77
Shortlees, Bellfield & Riccarton	15.5	3.9	10.2
Muirkirk, Lugar, Logan	17.43	4.43	8.08
Bellsbank & Patna	15.7	4.7	11.5
Number of lone parent households with dependent children:			
Area	No of lone parent households with dependent children	No of male lone parents	No of female lone parents
Scotland	151,452	12,756	138,696
East Ayrshire	3,400	223	3,177
Altonhill, Hillhead, Longpark & Onthank	207	11	196
Shortlees, Bellfield & Riccarton	168	7	161
Muirkirk, Lugar, Logan	115	4	111
Bellsbank & Patna	86	4.5	81.5

4. TARGET CLIENT GROUPS

- 4.1** Again, following Scottish Executive guidance the proposed target client group has been identified utilising current appropriate statistical information. It is recommended that the preferred target group will be families with dependant children including single parent families, unemployed families and families on low incomes. These families will also include parents with alcohol and substance abuse issues, mental health issues and those suffering from low self esteem. The total number of families with dependant children within the areas identified is 1,620.

5. COMMUNITY LINK PROJECT

- 5.1** In discussion with pilot project providers and others an immediate problem faced by projects is the identification and engagement of the client group. The following project description seeks to overcome this problem whilst providing individual clients with achievable and supported action plans with clear planning horizons.
- 5.2** The objective of the community link project is to engage with 400 families in a variety of settings, and assist them to overcome the barriers faced in returning to the labour market. Initially the project will recruit 4 experienced community link workers and 4 part time trainee link workers recruited from the local community. The link workers will identify and engage with the client group. Clients will be supported by the link worker in the preparation and implementation of a timebound personal development plan. The project link workers will support clients through their important transition periods with money/budgetary advice and benefits advice. Health advice and other relevant information will be provided as required. Costs associated in overcoming childcare barriers to employment will be referred for approval to the project co-ordinator who may make funding decisions up to £2,000 with the appropriated financial checks and balances in place. Interventions above this amount will be referred directly to the steering group for consideration. Where the co-ordinator identifies a potential solution to an individual's problems that is not immediately associated with the provision of childcare support, guidance will be sought from the Scottish Executive on the appropriateness of utilising the WFFF. Appropriate audit controls will be in place for all financial transactions. Steering Group meetings will be held monthly where standard reports will be submitted concerning client activity, financial commitments, budgetary statements and fund operating outputs. A separate report will be submitted to East Ayrshire Council's Corporate Governance Committee.
- 5.3** The target group will be families with dependant children, including single parents, unemployed parents and parents with a low income who are not receiving Job Seekers Allowance and who wish to move into employment and require childcare to do so. Within this client group the project will seek to work

with individuals who have mental health problems, drug and alcohol problems and who suffer from low self esteem.

- 5.4** The project link workers will encourage and support the development of local client family forums where collective local childcare needs can be identified, discussed and resolved. This group will also provide the grounding for future project development within their local areas and will be supported to encourage further families to make use of the WFFF.
- 5.5** East Ayrshire Council supports a number of ILM projects which include Jobrotation, CONDUIT, East Ayrshire Woodlands and Ayrshire Electronic Community etc. It is essential that the WFF project links closely with and maximises the opportunities provided by these projects. JobcentrePlus Action Team for Jobs also operates within the four areas targeted and this project will work closely with them to maximise the available employment opportunities.
- 5.6** This project forms an integral part of East Ayrshire Community Plan “Improving Opportunities” and “Eliminating Poverty” themes and underpins all other projects described in this pro forma and any future project development.

5.7 Proposed Project Outputs and Outcomes

OUTPUTS:

- 400 families identified
 - 300 individuals completing their action plans
 - 50 people completing their action plan and being signposted to appropriate government programmes
 - 100 families signposted to existing childcare services
 - 200 new sitter service hours per week provided
 - 2000 new hours of out of school care for 12-15 year olds
 - 640 additional hours of crèche provision for Women Into Work
 - 40 additional crèche places created
 - 30 additional training places created
 - 30 childminders registered
- } Childcare Workers' Summer School

OUTCOMES:

- 350 action plans agreed and developed
- 80 individuals accessing further support services
- 40 individuals continuing to develop interpersonal skills and overcoming literacy/numeracy problems
- 40 individuals into employment
- 40 accessing further training programmes
- 60 increasing the family income

5.8 The implementation of this community link project seeks to avoid the introduction of randomly selected interventions but will ensure the co-ordinated development of projects which link together and can be replicated throughout East Ayrshire.

6. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

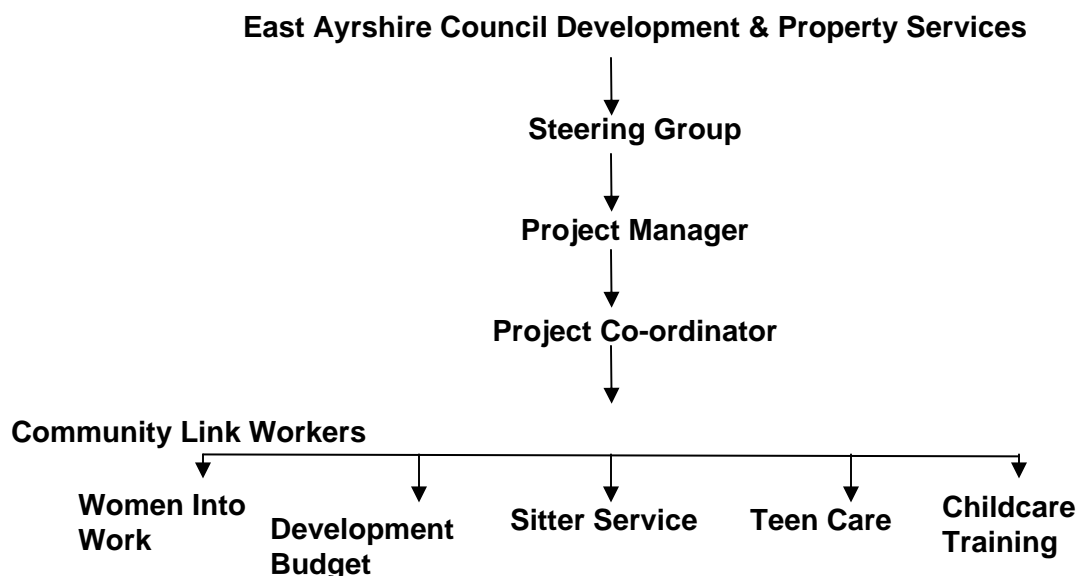
6.1 At a strategic level the Steering Group will oversee the planning and development of the project. Operationally the management of the project will be undertaken by East Ayrshire Council Economic Development section.

6.2 The WFF team will recruit in the first instance four full time link workers and four part time trainee link workers to engage with the identified client group. Additional project staff will be required as individual projects develop and to address possible roll out into other areas of East Ayrshire.

6.3 At its meeting of 10 February 2004 the Corporate Governance Committee agreed to the establishment of two new posts within Economic Development graded AP5-SO2 and AP1 to develop and manage the WFFF. However, with due regard to the current Development and Property Services budget, Economic Development and Property Services Division have now reviewed the original staffing arrangements.

6.4 Administration and management arrangements will be dealt with, in the main, within existing Economic Development and Property Services Division staff, the final proposals will be reported to a future meeting of the Corporate Governance Committee.

Management Structure:



6.5 This structure will allow flexible delivery at a local level and allow budgetary control to remain within the Council's financial structures. As stated, devolved budgets to the value of £2,000 per client will be administered by the project co-ordinator. Clients requiring additional childcare finance will be referred back to the steering group for approval.

6.6 The financial profile of the project is as follows:

Costs	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	Totals £
Community Link Project	186,708	183,805	370,513
Under 16 Teen Care Project	36,000	74,160	110,160
Women Into Work Project	22,880	24,344	47,224
Business Start-up for Childcarer Project	10,850	10,850	21,700
Sitter Services Project.	152,000	189,520	341,520
Childcare Workers' Orientation Training	17,300	20,291	37,591
Totals	425,738	502,970	928,708
Development Budget	123,000	148,292	271,292
Totals	548,738	651,262	1,200,000

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct financial implications concerned with the implementation of this project.

8. TRADE UNION IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The above proposals are subject to Trade Union consultation.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal implications regarding the operation of the Working For Families Fund.

10. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Working For Families Fund is in accord with the aims of the East Ayrshire Community Plan with specific reference to the 'Eliminating Poverty' and 'Improving Opportunities' sections.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The Committee is asked to approve;

- i) the target areas identified within para 3.1 of the report; and
- ii) the target client group identified within para 4.1

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services

TM/KM
25 March 2004

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Emergency Powers Committee – 14 January 2004 – Working For Families**
- 2. Scottish Executive, Working For Families – Guidelines For Implementation**
- 3. Corporate Governance Committee – 10 February 2004 – Working For Families Fund**
- 4. Working For Families – Outline Proposal Document 27 February 2004**
- 5. Working For Families - Lessons from the Pilots Project (Stage 1)**

For further information on the content of this report contact Robert Paton, Head of Economic Development and Property Services. Telephone 01563 576142.

Implementation Officer: Tom Merry (4611).