

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2000

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE CHILDCARE STRATEGY 2000 –2002

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the Education Committee of the additional allocation of funds to the Childcare Strategy for 2000 – 2002 and to seek approval to refer additional staffing requirements to Personnel & Property Sub Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** In June 2000, Ministers announced the allocation of an additional £14 million over financial years 2000/01 and 2001/2002 to support a package of measures aimed at improving the volume, quality and accessibility of childcare services 0 –14 years.

- 2.2** Ministers have identified infrastructure development and workforce training and qualifications as priority areas for additional short-term investment. Further investment in these areas will contribute to the overall strategic aims of the Childcare Strategy.

- 2.3** The package of funding consists of three separate strands:

- £6m over two years allocated to the Scottish Further Education Funding Council for childcare allowance to support further education students with study-related childcare costs
- £4m over two years allocated to local authorities for infrastructure support
- £3.6m over two years allocated to local authorities for workforce expansion and development

- 2.4** These additional resources will complement those already available through the Pre-School Development Fund and the “infrastructure” element of the Childcare GAE resources.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

- 3.1** East Ayrshire has been allocated £51,250 for 2000/2001 and £51,250 for 2001/2002. These additional resources are to be directed specifically at new build and refurbishment/re-equipping across the childcare sector 0-14 years and can be used to support projects in public, private and voluntary centres.
- 3.2** Ministers expect authorities to take full account for the need for investment in childcare centres other than those they manage themselves. There is an expectation that at least half of the allocated infrastructure resources will be directed to upgrading or extending provision in centres which cater for student parents.
- 3.3** In addition, Ministers are also concerned that there is a shortage of childcare centres, which provide adequate facilities for children who have special educational needs. Local authority proposals will be expected to show to what extent the resources will contribute to the adaptation of facilities to cater for this group.

4. WORKFORCE EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1** East Ayrshire has been allocated £51,250 for 2000/2001 and £41,430 for 2001/2002 to meet the following objectives:
- to provide incentives which will lead to improved access to childcare qualifications across the childcare sector i.e. the purchase of training courses, staff cover, develop different models of delivery of training
 - to increase the number of SVQ work-based assessors for childcare qualifications
 - to offer continuing professional development for childcare workers.

In order to achieve the expectations placed upon the local authority the department would wish to establish an SVQ Co-ordinator post for a two year period subject to review.

5. RELEASE OF FUNDS AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1** The Scottish executive has stressed the importance of the involvement of the Childcare Partnership in the decisions on the use of the additional resources. In submitting the proposals for the allocation of the resources, local authorities will be expected to demonstrate discussion with and endorsement by the local Childcare Partnership and to take full account of the need for investment in the private and voluntary childcare centres.

- 5.2** Local authorities will be expected to report progress against these proposals in the next Early Education and Childcare Plan to be submitted in April 2001. In reporting progress, the Council will need to demonstrate how the additional resources have helped to improve the overall quality and quantity of provision on the ground.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Funding has been allocated for 2000 – 2002 as detailed in the report, which will meet the costs of proposed developments. The development of an SO2 post of SVQ Co-ordinator (Early Education and Childcare) will cost:

	£
1 FTE SO2	22,662
S+NI	4,351
Travel	<u>3,000</u>
Total	<u>30,013</u>

- 6.2** The balance of monies for 2000/2001 will be spent as follows:

	£
• SVQ materials and training	5,000
• Training and development for Out of School Childcare Committees	6,237
• Training and development for registered childminders	4,000
• Continuing professional development for childcare workers	<u>6,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>£21,237</u>

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** Nil.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** The implementation of the priorities identified for the expansion and development of the Childcare workforce are detailed in the Scottish Executive document "Childcare: The Training Challenge. An Action Plan for the Training and Development of Workers in Early Education, Childcare and Playwork.
- 8.2** This "Action Plan" underlines the Executive's commitment to those working in the childcare sector.
- 8.3** The additional monies allocated will assist the Council in meeting its aim set out in the Early Education and Childcare Plan, and the Social Inclusion Partnership.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members of the Education Committee are asked to:

- (i) remit the establishment of a SVQ Co-ordinator post to Personnel & Property Sub-Committee; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

15 August 2000
JA/SB

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Meeting the Childcare Challenge: A Childcare Strategy for Scotland
2. Childcare: The Training Challenge. Scottish Executive. July 2000.

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104 or Janie Allen, Principal Officer, Pre-5 Services, Tel: (01563) 576185.

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AGENDA