

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 18 SEPTEMBER 2001

CHILD POVERTY PACKAGE – ADDITIONAL RESOURCES OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

Report by the 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 Childcare Poverty Package, which includes additional resources for Out of School Care services from 2001- 2004.

2. CHILD POVERTY PACKAGE

- 2.1** A three-year package totaling £24 million is available from Autumn 2001 to help reduce child poverty and support parental employment in disadvantaged areas.
- 2.2** Of this, £8.5 million is available for childcare grants for lone parents in full-time Higher Education to pay for childcare. This new grant will be administered through the Students Award Agency for Scotland.
- 2.3** Further Education Colleges throughout Scotland will receive £7.5 million to widen childcare provision, based on locally identified needs.
- 2.4** Ministers have also announced that the package includes an additional £8m, for the Childcare Strategy over the three years 2001- 2004 to help sustain Out of School Care services, especially in disadvantaged areas.

3. OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

- 3.1** Considerable resources are being invested in the expansion of Out of School Care services, mainly through the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). In East Ayrshire a total of £336,449 has been awarded to groups to provide 740 places in Bellsbank Adventure Playground; Crosshouse After School Care; Dunlop Out of School Care; Ideal Start Nursery; PALS After School Service and PEACE Consortium.
- 3.2** The resources awarded from NOF are supporting the creation of places in new and existing clubs. Three-year funding is now available through NOF in disadvantaged areas covering 25% of Scotland. This represents a major step forward in helping clubs to become viable.

- 3.3** While there continues to be sustained parental demand for out of school care services, some clubs have experienced difficulties in providing high quality care at affordable prices and remain viable.
- 3.4** The survival of some clubs has been dependent on continued local authority subsidy or investment from Social Inclusion Partnerships.
- 3.5** Ministers have therefore decided to increase authorities' ability to support good quality but sub-viable clubs, especially in areas of disadvantage. This measure will help ensure the continued existence of services, which are crucial to many low-income families and lone parents.

4. RESOURCES AND PURPOSE OF ALLOCATIONS

- 4.1** The additional financial resource for financial year 2001-2002 is £32,000. This additional allocation to the Childcare Strategy Fund complements the existing £38,272 Childcare Strategy monies which are currently supporting clubs in East Ayrshire.
- 4.2** This allocation is to be used at the expiry of Lottery start-up funding (NOF), to ensure the continued operation of out of school care clubs.
- 4.3** The resources should be focused on good quality clubs in disadvantaged areas where sustainability presents the greatest challenge.
- 4.4** The criteria for allocation is as follows:
- Clubs which have spent their lottery award and require additional financial assistance
 - Clubs which may be in financial difficulty and which have not received Lottery funding (NOF)
- 4.5** Out of School Care clubs in receipt of grant support through SIP funding will not be eligible for ongoing project subsidy through this focused element of the Childcare Strategy funding whilst SIP funding remains available.
- 4.6** The Scottish Executive have strongly recommended that the areas of disadvantage defined for the purposes of these new resources, are those which have been defined using the Arbutnott Index in respect of the 3-year funding available to out of school care through the Lottery Fund.

4.7 The post code areas in East Ayrshire which fall into this category are:

- KA1 4 Shortlees, Riccarton & Caprington
- KA18 2 Auchinleck
- KA18 3 Muirkirk/Logan
- KA18 4 New Cumnock
- KA3 1 Altonhill & Longpark in North West Kilmarnock
- KA6 7 Bellsbank, Dalmellington, Patna etc.

4.8 It has been recognised that applicants to NOF may have been deterred from applying for start up grants, as they may find it difficult to achieve financial viability once lottery money expires. Therefore, these new resources have an important role to play, as NOF will be able to award more start up grants, if local authorities can offer guarantees as to further project subsidy.

5. SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 These new resources are not intended to replace efforts by local authorities and others to assist out of school care services become sustainable on the basis of improved income generation. Viability should remain the goal wherever possible. Proposals to assist local providers' viability are subject of a separate committee report.

5.2 Ministers view this programme of support as an opportunity to enlist other partners in the drive to support out of school care in disadvantaged areas.

5.3 Decisions on the application of the additional resources to individual clubs must be made through local authorities with the full support of the local Childcare Partnership, and where relevant, the Social Inclusion Partnership.

6. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Ministers wish to know results achieved from these new resources in order to assess progress on a Scotland wide basis towards sustaining clubs and helping parents remain in work or get into work.

6.2 While national work continues on a strategic planning framework and performance indicators for children's services, monitoring information relating to the use of these new resources in 2001-2002 will need to be submitted as part of the next round of Children's Service Plans.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 East Ayrshire has been allocated additional Childcare Strategy resources for the purposes of out of school care project support as follows:

- 2001 – 2002 £32,200
- 2002 – 2003 £48,600
- 2003 – 2004 £48,600

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Nil.

9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The development of Out of School Care clubs is an essential element of the Childcare Strategy, and is one of the key aims of the Children's Service Plan, "Inspiring Children and Young People".

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Members of the Education Committee are asked to:

- (i) note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

KG/JA/SB
3 August 2001

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Child Poverty Package – Additional Resources – Out of School Care, Scottish Executive, Education Department, Children and Young People's Group, 3 July 2001
2. Childcare Strategy for Scotland, 1998

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

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER – KAY GILMOUR

AGENDA