

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SUB-GROUP

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham**

Date: Tuesday, 12 October 2004

Time: 11.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Appointment of Chairman.
2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman.
3. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
4. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th April, 2004 (copy attached) (Pages 1 - 5)
6. Childrens Centre Outreach Development Project (report attached). (Pages 6 - 8)
7. Men Who Dare Childcare Project (report attached). (Pages 9 - 11)
8. Working with Employers - "Creating More Work - Life Balance" Project (report attached). (Pages 12 - 13)
9. Date and time of the next meeting - Tuesday, 18th January, 2005.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUB-GROUP
20TH APRIL, 2004**

Present:- Councillor Boyes (in the Chair) and Councillor Austen, Gosling, Jack and Robinson.

Ruth Johnson	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Roger Higginbottom	Strategic Leader Inclusion
Mary Smith	Education Services Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager
Aileen Chambers	Childcare Resources and Information Co-ordinator

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Littleboy	
Julie Bates	Rotherham Play & Learn Bus
Jackie Jenkinson	Head of Children and Families
Sue Walker	Senior School Improvement Adviser, Manager Early Years and Childcare Service

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20th JANUARY, 2004

Resolved:- That the minutes of the above meeting be received and agreed.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No. 7 – Children's Information Service

Reference was made to the need to nominate a non-voting representative on this Sub-Group as a vacancy had occurred due to the new operational arrangements of the Rotherham Children's Information Service.

Resolved:- That nominations for a Non-Voting Representative be submitted to the next meeting of this Sub-Group for consideration.

3. BEACON COUNCIL SCHEME APPLICATION 2003/2004

The Senior School Improvement Adviser, Manager Early Years and Childcare Service, submitted a report informing Members that a Beacon Council Scheme Application 2003/2004 had been submitted in September, 2003 to be assessed in the autumn.

The report summarised the assessment feedback under the application section headings as follows :-

- Theme Assessment
- Vision Strategy
- Consultation
- Partnerships
- Actions
- Outcomes
- User & Community Satisfaction

- Best Value Performance Indicators

The conclusion was that whilst the Service would accept the validity of a number of the questions raised regarding the inclusion of information in the application, particularly the issues around the involvement of Health, officers felt that much of the information was clearly included and they were disappointed with the outcome. Equally the application was limited to nine pages in length.

It was reported, however, that officers were addressing the issues and building these into the Service Plan.

Members of this Sub-Group also expressed their disappointment at not receiving Beacon Council status for the Early Years and Childcare Service and expressed the view that Rotherham's Service was very involved in supporting other local authorities in disseminating information and advising on good working practices and Rotherham had not received any recognition for this.

Resolved:- That the Senior School Improvement Adviser, Manager Early Years and Childcare Service, write to the local Members of Parliament conveying this Sub-Group's disappointment at not receiving Beacon Council status and drawing attention to the fact that Rotherham's Service was very involved in supporting other local authorities in disseminating information and advising on good working practices.

4. ROTHERHAM CHILDREN'S INFORMATION SERVICES

The Childcare Resources and Information Co-ordinator submitted a report informing Members that the Children's Information Service had moved to a new location on 15th March, 2004. The decision to discontinue funding the previous Children's Information Service and to operate a service from within the Early Years and Childcare Service was taken to enable the provision of a more integrated service to the public, with longer opening hours within the available budget and to fulfill the Sure Start Children's Information Strategy.

Flyers had been produced and distributed to promote the new service with Information Points in RMBC Reception Area, Norfolk House, Walker Place, Arts Centre/Central Library Reception Area. The same freephone telephone number has been retained - 0800 0730230.

The CIS Team would have back up from the current Administration Officer and Clerical team who had been trained on the ChIS database and a service would be provided to the public from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm.

The report outlined future developments and the benefits of the new Children's Information Service.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That arrangements be made for a suitable press release to be made about the Rotherham Children's Information Service

5. CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager submitted a report updating Members on current progress on the Children's Centres Strategy. The Children Centre's Strategic Plan was submitted to the Sure Start Unit on the 14th October, 2003 and formal feedback from the Unit was received in February, 2004. Many strengths were acknowledged in the proposals, including having a clear strategy which utilises and builds on existing provision and is making good use of other initiatives to support the reshaping of services. The Social Inclusion aspects of the strategy were seen as strong with specific actions identified and the qualified teacher input to the Centres being addressed.

Additional information had been requested on how childminders will be recruited and integrated into the Centres and how the Children's Centres proposals will link into the extended schools agenda. Implementation plans will also need to be submitted for each of the Centres.

Concern had been expressed by local authorities about whether or not there will be continued funding after March 2006. Whilst the Sure Start Unit cannot anticipate the outcome of the next spending review, they can confirm that on-going revenue funding will be available in 2006-07 and 2007-08 to support Children's Centres currently being developed.

Resolved:- That the report be received and future updates be welcomed.

6. EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

The Childcare Resources and Information Co-ordinator submitted a report detailing the successful recruitment activity over the last year.

It was reported that there had been 538 recruitment enquiries and 542 prospective child minders had been invited to training sessions.

A Recruitment and Marketing Officer had been appointed on 1st April, 2004 who would take forward recruitment activity in partnership with the Training and QA Co-ordinator and Childcare Development Teams. Plans were in place to develop a Job Matching Service to put prospective childcare/early education workers in touch with Rotherham providers who have vacancies.

Continued professional development and accessibility to Early Years and Childcare training has been successful over the year. At the end of the financial year the data collated on numbers of delegates attending the training and numbers accessing Early Years funding will be analysed and an end of year report will follow. As it is nearing the end of the three year project an overall project report will be submitted; this will specify how the finance has

been used and the number of beneficiaries supported either through support with training fees, cover costs or help towards childcare.

The Sub-Group asked for further information on (a) what proportion of 16 to 18 years age group were interested in child minding and (b) the payment of training fees.

It was noted that the issue about the payment of training fees had been raised with local Members of Parliament via the Social Services Programme Area.

Resolved:- That the report be received and future updates welcomed.

**7. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE EARLY YEARS DEVELOPMENT
CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP**

Resolved:- That the minutes of meetings of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership held on 17th December, 2003 and 11th February, 2004 be received and noted.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**(a) Rotherham Show:**

It was reported that last year's show was a great success and that many enquiries had been received from people who were interested in working in childcare. The Early Years and Childcare Services would have a presence at this year's Rotherham Show.

(b) Children's Literature Festival:

Officers were asked to pursue the linking of Sure Start Month activities with the Children's Literature Festival in June 2004.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of this Sub-Group be held on Tuesday, 20th July, 2004 at 11.00 am.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children & Young People’s Sub Group
2.	Date:	12th October 2004
3.	Title:	Children’s Centre Outreach Development Project Wards affected: Dinnington Ward Boston Castle Ward Rotherham West Ward Rotherham West Ward Maltby Ward Rawmarsh Ward Wath Ward Valley Ward Hoober Ward Silverwood Ward
4.	Programme Area:	Education, Culture and Leisure Services

5. Summary

£95,983 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund has been awarded for an Outreach Project for 2005 – 2006. The funding will support the participation of hard to reach, families in areas where Children’s Centres are not yet meeting the full range of core services.

6. Recommendations

That members receive and approve the report.

7. Proposals and Details

Children’s centres will serve children and families in disadvantaged communities and will provide integrated care and education for young children, health services, family support and a base for childminders. This integrated approach by children’s centres will provide holistic support for children’s development, support to families with young children and will facilitate the return to work of those parents who are currently unemployed.

Whilst funding is available from the Sure Start Unit for the Children’s Centre Initiative to create new childcare and deliver support services to children and their families, it is limited. Take up of childcare facilities within the Centres as soon as they are open will be essential to provide fee income to support the running costs. By supporting families to develop self esteem and raise personal aspirations, before the Centres are open, families will receive the support they require earlier and demand will be stimulated for the childcare to be offered. This Project will play a vital role in achieving the government targets of creating 404 new childcare places for 0-5 year olds and developing services to reach 6044 children by March 2006.

The Project will involve the Rotherham Play and Learn Bus who have a proven record of removing barriers to access hard to reach groups. Services are taken to the community in a non threatening environment. The project will pilot and evaluate innovative methods of delivering integrated services within targeted areas, ensuring they are inclusive, accessible and flexible to meet the needs of all local children and their families:

- Rotherham Play and Learn Bus will be used as a mobile base to deliver services to parents, targeting hard to reach families, prior to Children's Centres delivering core services
- Play and Learn Bus will be scheduled for 2 sessions per week, to work in selected areas for blocks of 6 or 8 sessions over 6 or 8 continuous weeks, 2 areas per week on a rolling programme
- Services that could be offered from Play and Learn Bus include:
 - Children's Information Service
 - Family learning
 - Family support including drop in group sessions and 'stay and play' sessions
 - Job Centre Plus
 - Health services
 - Consultation on the way services are to be offered from the Children's Centres and information about developments
- Successful services will be integrated into each Children's Centre as it opens and shared as an example of 'best practice' with other areas and initiatives.
- Services will be available continuously in all areas. At periods where the Play and Learn Bus is not scheduled to work in a particular area these services will be offered using existing community resources. However, the Play and Learn Bus will remove barriers to accessing services and encourage participation from hard to reach families.

Early support for families and building self confidence, will give parents the opportunity to make informed choices about the way initial services are delivered, ensuring that their own and their children's needs are being met to give their children the best possible start in life.

This project will lay the foundations for the Children's Centres and ensure the early involvement of families.

8. Finance

The total cost of the Outreach Project will be **£224,083**

This will be funded through:

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	£95,983
Children's Centre Initiative	£128,100

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- This is a time limited project that will be an important contributor to the successful development of Children's Centres. To minimise the risk, forward planning will be undertaken to ensure that the delivery of the project can come onstream from the 1st April 2004.

- Should the Play and Learn Bus be unable to deliver the service delivery will take place at community venues.
- Robust monitoring arrangements will be in place to ensure successful outcomes.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The work of this project will impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

Corporate Plan:

- Corporate Priority: Investing in the Economy – improving employment rate.
- Corporate Priority: Investing in People – improving Early Years (Foundation Stage) attainment.
- Corporate Priority: A Place which Cares – Targeting the most vulnerable.

Community Strategy:

- Priority: Wealth – Reduce the gap between Rotherham's working age population in employment (68%) and Great Britain.
- Priority: Learning – rationalising and extending early years provision to meet the needs of children or adults wishing to increase parenting skills, or return to learning or work throughout the borough.
- Priority: Health
 - Reduce Infant Mortality
 - improving the life chances of vulnerable young people
 - improving family support

Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy:

- Strategic Priority: Improving the life chances of children and young people
- Strategic Priority: Enabling everyone to achieve functional skills for life.
- Strategic Priority: Improving the economic position of the unemployed, economically inactive and low earners.

The Project will:

- Provide quality play activities for children
- Work with vulnerable families and help reduce health inequalities by both interaction with families and by helping to reduce child poverty
- Help build self esteem and raise the personal aspirations of families.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham Children's Centres Strategy

Contact Name :

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children & Young People’s Sub Group
2.	Date:	12.10.04
3.	Title:	Men Who Dare Childcare Project – all wards covered
4.	Programme Area:	Education Culture and Leisure Services

5. Summary

This report provides information about a new project aimed towards addressing gender imbalance within the Early Years and Childcare workforce. The duration of the project is three years within which time it aims to support men into employment or access into further education. Funding has been secured through a successful application to the Learning and Skills Council to access European Social Fund money.

6. Recommendations

That members receive and approve the report.

7. Proposals and Details

The project aims to support men to access training and employment opportunities within the childcare sector by challenging the traditional stereotypical belief that childcare is a career for women only. The project will also promote the benefits to children gained through the employment male childcare workers. Currently there are very few male childcare workers; this is partly due to the stereotypical image of childcare as a female profession and the barriers which may be faced by men, such as, no peer support and negative attitudes from early years and childcare providers and parents.

A full-time Project Co-ordinator / Manager will be recruited to:

- Develop a programme of activity with existing and new childcare providers, which will enforce the positive benefits of men working within the childcare sector. These benefits will also be shared with parents.
- Work closely with agencies offering career advice and guidance to men to ensure childcare is promoted as a realistic career option.
- Develop close links with networks and agencies already engaging with men through their pastimes and hobbies plus develop a joint approach to promoting the career options within the childcare sector.
- Ensure that appropriate training opportunities are available to men who have expressed an interest in childcare with support offered to students throughout their course from other male childcare workers.

- Develop publicity, to include a poster campaign and a recruitment pack for men interested in becoming childcare workers, featuring existing male childcare workers as positive role models and career opportunities available in childcare.
- Targeted recruitment events for male childcare workers
- Establish a support network for existing and new male childcare workers in Rotherham.
- Link in with existing targeting of 14-18 year olds, raising the profile of males working within the childcare sector.
- Set up Male parent / carer activity sessions with the aim of raising the profile of the male role in working with children.
- Work with childcare training providers and support agencies to ensure all training and best practice guidance promotes the benefits of men within the childcare sector.
- Expand an existing locally developed male mentoring scheme.
- Establish 'drop in' sessions within the three local Sure Start Programmes and newly developing Children's Centres.
- Improve the continuous professional development of existing male childcare workers

8. Finance

The total amount of funding available for this project in Rotherham is **£150,000**

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Funding is payable on successful outputs being reached. Over the three year project 120 men are required to enter the Early Years and Childcare workforce in paid employment or access relevant Early Years and Childcare training. The project is required to support 45 employers in addressing recruitment and selection in relation to gender imbalance. Project planning has been undertaken to minimise the risks.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The work of this project will impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy

Corporate Priority: Investing in the Economy - Improving employment rate

Corporate Priority: To be a progressive, responsive, accessible and quality service provider - Developing capacity through partnership

Community Strategy - Childcare is a major growth area and the development of good quality early years and childcare provision plays a crucial role in contributing to the social and economic regeneration of the area, allowing parents the opportunity of accessing education, training and employment to underpin the economic regeneration of the region. The project will provide men, who have been disengaged from the labour market and younger men who may otherwise have few or no qualifications and limited prospects of entering employment, with the opportunity to participate in new training which is responsive to their needs.

This application links into the Sure Start Guidance for 2004-06, which states the drive to recruit and train men must be maintained.

The project takes a proactive approach to tackling the issue of gender imbalance within childcare. It looks to break down some of the barriers to men following this as a career path as demonstrated below: -

Barrier – The low pay associated with this type of work and the fact that is not viewed as a potential ‘career’ opportunity by many men. This will be targeted through a number of the activities outlined in section 1B, including the targeting of 14-18 year olds, improvement of the continuous profession development (aiding the career prospects) and the close liaison with agencies offering career advice.

Barrier – Cultural Attitudes / Gender expectations. The work with existing providers, distribution of publicity and expanding of the male mentoring scheme will all aid to break down this barrier. This is an area that is very much going to be a case of success breeds success, as more men gain employment in the industry the stigma attached to this will reduce.

Barrier – Knowledge of opportunities. The targeting of school leavers (14-18 year olds), specific recruitment events, drop in sessions and publicity materials will all assist in disseminating the information on childcare careers so it does become a possibility for men looking for employment.

Barrier – Cost of training. By funding the training and setting up the mentoring scheme this barrier is removed.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Learning Skills Workforce Development Strategy
Early Years and Childcare Strategy

Contact Name : Paula Williams, Training and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator,
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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children & Young People’s Sub Group
2.	Date:	12th October 2004
3.	Title:	“Creating More Work – Life Balance” Project – Working with Employers – to cover all wards
4.	Programme Area:	Education, Culture and Leisure Services

5. Summary

This report provides information about a new project to raise awareness of Work Life Balance and Family Friendly Policies with particular reference to childcare initiatives. Funding has been secured through a successful joint South Yorkshire Objective 1 funding bid.

6. Recommendations

That members receive and approve the report

7. Proposals and Details

A successful Objective 1 Funding Bid has been submitted by “Children Mean Business” (CMB) to extend their existing CMB project across South Yorkshire from January 2004 to December 2006. The joint project “Creating More Balance” will work with employers to enable them to explore ways of supporting their employees childcare needs and work – life balance.

The key aim of the project is to :

- promote work-life balance and family-friendly policies and practices to employers across different sectors and throughout the sub region, including promoting Children’s Information Service and developing links between employers and existing / new childcare providers.

Each local authority area will have a Project Officer responsible for developments within their locality. The Project Officer for Rotherham, Ms M. Hunt is based with the Early Years and Childcare Service.

The benefits of the project will include raising awareness with employers of work life balance and family friendly policies. There will be a particular focus on promoting Tax Credits, childcare vouchers and the Children’s Information Service as well as encouraging links between employers and new and existing childcare providers. This activity should have a positive impact on supporting the sustainability of childcare provision in the Borough.

8. Finance

The total amount of funding available for the project in Rotherham is **£98,895**

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Funding may be withheld if the project's outcomes or milestones are not met. This risk will be minimised through robust monitoring systems and reports to the CMB Project Manager to enable appropriate remedial action to be undertaken. The contract between Rotherham Local Authority and Sheffield Children's Information Service, on behalf of the CMB Project will state the requirements in relation to payment of the ESF Objective 1 funding, submitting claims, equipment and other assets, insurance, indemnity, clawback, observance of legal requirements, retention and maintenance of records.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The work of this project will impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

Corporate Priority: Investing in the Economy - Improving employment rate
Corporate Priority: To be a progressive, responsive, accessible and quality service provider - Developing capacity through partnership

Community Strategy - Wealth - Reduce the gap between Rotherham's working age population in employment (68%) and Great Britain's figure.

The work of this project will help to remove the barriers people often faced entering work through offering employers a range of practical interventions to support them in the development of work-life balance options. This will assist in the breaking down of barriers to employment for local communities and will also assist companies in the retention and recruitment of staff.

The project will:

- increase the volume of contact with employers
- **increase the number of employers linked to the South Yorkshire childcare infrastructure**
- build expertise among staff on work-life balance
- increase the take up of tax benefits, assisting low paid workers

11. Background Papers and Consultation

National Childcare Strategy
DfES Five Year for Children and Learners

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