

CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP
WOODHILL HOUSE – COMMITTEE ROOM 1
Wednesday 9th December 2008

10:00 a.m.

MINUTE OF MEETING

Present:

Maureen Rennie	Childcare @ Home (chair)
Chris Smillie	Working for Families
Calvin Little	N H S G
Shaunna Allan	Development Officer (Early Years)
Kirsty McLean	Children & Young People's Advisor, N H S
Margaret Wylie	Scottish Childminding Association
Cllr Richard Stroud	Elected Member
Maureen Strachan	Manager, Peterhead Family Centre (Social Work)
Jo Hughes	Education Officer (Early Years)
Moira Beverley	Education Accountant
Suzanne MacDonald	Education Accountant (shadowing Moira Beverley)
Caroline Hay-Crawford	Development Officer (Childcare Strategy)
Debbie Bruce	Training Officer (Childcare Strategy)
Jim Wilson	Scottish Enterprise Grampian
Frances Littlejohn	Early Years Coordinator (for Elizabeth Ann Engels)
Jean Peat	Minute

Welcome

Ben Hobbs, Childcare 4All, Emma Watson's replacement was introduced to everyone.

1. Apologies:

Anne Law	JobCentre Plus (for Gillian Robertson)
Elizabeth-Ann Engels	Project Manager, Early Intervention
Amy Pirie	Information Service Co-ordinator
Linda Pirie	National Day Nurseries Association
Jenny Willox	Parent Representative
Susan Bain	Association of Quality Nurseries in Scotland
Mandy Mayo	SPPA
Sarah Campbell	Grampian Racial Equality Council
Martina Hickey-Laing	Aberlour Childcare Trust

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Agreed as an accurate account of the meeting.

3. Draft Minutes of Partnership Sub-groups for Noting:

Funding Task Group Meeting 9 October 2008

There were no questions or comments

Training Task Group Meetings 29 October 2008

There were no questions or comments

ACTION

4. Matters Arising from Last Minute:

a) Care Commission Meeting

On 25 November Maureen and Susan met with Chris Stadames and Kim Connolly of the Care Commission to discuss Partnership concerns regarding lack of appeal rights for providers complained against and other inconsistencies. Maureen handed out a paper and gave a brief summary of the meeting, the main points being:

- I. As the complaints Policy was approved by Scottish Ministers the Care Commission cannot make changes to policy. Procedures remain the same. Those complained against have no right of review or appeal.
- II. The number of scrutiny bodies is to be reduced.
- III. Medical declarations signed by the prospective staff member or volunteer is acceptable. Appropriate questions should be asked at the interview.
- IV. Providers should question inconsistencies with the Care Commission Officer. The Care Commission will, in future, inform all childcare umbrella organisations of new practices, requirements and/or recommendations. This could be passed on to their members.
- V. The new grading system has resulted in fewer inspections being carried out. Officers will spend less time on 'Low Risk' services and devote more time to the inspection of 'Higher Risk Services'.
- VI. For the Partnership's information the inspection focus areas for Day Care of Children Services next year will be Child Protection and Safer Recruitment.

b) Early Years and Childcare Review

No progress to report so far. The report will not go to committee until January or February. This makes planning next year's budget difficult. Caroline will keep everyone informed and suggested that an extra meeting might be arranged once the Review is released.

5. **Childcare @ Home & Childcare 4 All Reports:**

Maureen highlighted the problem with disclosure taking longer. It now takes eight to nine weeks as there is a back-log of work since the summer. One hundred and ten new staff have been recruited and interviewing in Banff is still taking place. There has been an increase in weekend respite cover. The service has been extended to cover crèches. Recent Early Years Fairs provided an opportunity for successful networking.

Childcare 4 All also attended the Alford Fair. Some of the sensory equipment was displayed to give providers a sense of size. Mobile Resources continues to be popular and it has become clear that there are individuals and providers, outside the remit of the service, who would wish to access resources. Caroline indicated that funding from the Childcare Partnership was for childcare providers. If other organisations wished to use the service, they would need to provide funding in order to utilise its.

6. **Report on Kaizen Regarding Holiday Programmes:**

Caroline would be attending a Kaizen to look at holiday programmes. This would be lead by Rachel Boal, Sports Development Officer. The aim was to improve on planning and coordinate the discrepancies between networks. By gathering together agencies involved with the holiday programmes and speaking to stakeholders it was hoped to produce a framework to work by where each area will have a toolkit to set up individual arrangements for a local programme but share a corporate presentation in the marketing. This leaflet will hold information common to Aberdeenshire but also hold local programme information. Next year the holiday programme will be set for the full year.

7. **Feasibility Study – Childcare in Rural Areas:**

Chris Smillie, Working for Families, submitted a joint paper to the Partnership proposing that a *research project be undertaken to look at the childcare situation in rural areas of Aberdeenshire*. The cost of the research, based on an existing project, would be around £30,000. After a lengthy discussion of the pros and cons of the feasibility study, it was agreed that the Partnership would be willing, in principle, to commit £5,000 if agreement of the remaining funding is gained from other Partners

8. Childcare Partnership Targets:

Banchory Outdoor Area:

The playground area, which will be used by the out of school clubs and playgroups as well as the school, has been completed. The funding for this will come from the Partnership budget.

Banchory Indoor Refurbishment:

The indoor area shared by the out of school club and playgroup has been refreshed with new paint, blinds and flooring. The funding for this was committed last year.

12+ Holiday Programme:

Members were in possession of a written report on the October programme and the figures and feedback were good. In some instances the take up of places was 100%.

Intergenerational Programme:

Equipment has been acquired and the children have started to interview people. Children are very confident after their training. This long-term project will result in a booklet to be used in the future.

Training Strategy:

All necessary paperwork has been submitted to procurement but they will not go to tender until all is in order and checked by Procurement. Moira will arrange to accrue money left over from this year's budget. There is a huge amount of training still to be done.

Childcare Strategy will continue to coordinate the delivery of Accredited training and some workshops but the Early Years Coordinators will take on curriculum training which they will deliver on in-service days and at other times. The training outline will be redesigned to reflect this.

Reading Bus:

No progress on this initiative until the result of the Early Years Review is known.

Play Strategy:

No progress on this initiative. The £5,000 funding already committed will be redirected.

Doric Book Two:

£5,000 was committed to this project and the creation of the book is well underway. This edition is aimed at the three to eight year olds. After the initial launch in Aberdeen, a series of smaller launches, tied in with some of the *Heritage Fairs*, will take place around Aberdeenshire. Discussion with Laura Mason, Head of Education, raised the possibility of developing CPD training for the Shire. Curriculum for Excellence money may be made available for this. There will be opportunities to engage with schools or nurseries through involvement with GLOW.

Reading Festival:

The Reading Festival held in Portlethen was very successful and another is in the planning. Matthew Fitt has been booked, he will also deliver twilight training sessions. The Early Year's Remit will be included in the 2009 festival.

World Café Event Day:

These events, led by the Public Health Coordinator, will aim to bring professionals and interested parties together to look at what provision exists and identify gaps in the services. Each network will host a local event and from the findings a feasibility study will be conducted.

Migrant Workers Event:

This event will be run by Community Planning in Inverurie on Friday 6th February and will give migrant workers and services an opportunity to come together.

Sustainability for OOSC:

The letters and applications have been sent out to all eligible clubs. The deadline for return is 5 January 2009.

Under 8s Handbook:

The second print of the handbook was launched at Portlethen and has a new look.

CHIS – Scottish Government Day:

There will be a Scottish Government event on 4th February for CHIS Staff and Partnership Officers to discuss the new National Early Years Framework.

Cooking Bus:

Caroline advised the group that she had not heard whether the bus would be available to use.

Harmonisation of Charges:

Caroline wished to make members aware of the new 'Harmonisation of Charges' for hire of educational buildings and the impact it will have on the Partnership. This would mean that out of school care settings, most of which do not cover their costs, would have to pay rent. For those settings run by Childcare Strategy, the extra cost would fall to the Partnership. This has still to go Committee.

9. Review and Partnership Planning for 2009 - 2010:

It was agreed to hold the planning days as usual although the budget was not known. This has implications for the SLA holders as they need to know whether funding is to be continued and to what extent. Caroline asked the holders of SLAs to think about next year's proposals and submit them to the Funding Away Day group for consideration. 4 March 2009 was agreed as the date of the full Partnership Away Day.

10. 2008 – 2009 Expenditure Update:

The Financial Statement included officers' salaries up until the end of October. The sustainability funding for the out of school care and the Workforce Development funding still has to be taken out of the total remaining. It is hoped that the under spend on Workforce Development can be carried forward. The remaining shortfall on managed out of school clubs will also be taken from that balance.

Savings will be made on one vacant post in the Information Service as the post will not be filled until after the review.

11. A O C B:

Caroline presented copies of the recent newsletter and invited members to take a copy.

Caroline told members that Christmas Greetings had been sent out by email this year and she hoped that most people had received their copy by now.

Maureen advised everyone that this would be Moira Beverley's, the accountant for Childcare Strategy, last attendance as she was moving posts within the Council. Maureen thanked her for her valued advice and experience over the past years and added that she would be sorely missed.

14. Dates & Times of Next Year's Meetings:

Wednesday 25th March 2009

Wednesay 17th June 2009

Wednesday 9th September 2009

Wednesday 9th December 2009