

EARLY YEARS DEVELOPMENT AND CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP

COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership held at , Education and Conference Centre, Blackfriars, Hereford. on Thursday, 8th March, 2007 at 7.00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Bella Barron	Independent Schools Sector
Norris Boyland	Church of England Diocese
Rose Dyke	Jobcentre Plus
Di Gibson	Home Start
Andy Gosling	North Herefordshire Children's Centre
Stephen Grist	Herefordshire Governors' Association
Carol Holloway	Individual Attendee – Wigmore After School
Sue Marshall	Individual Attendee – Redhouse Nursery
Jan McColl	Parents' Representative
Liv Moss	Voluntary Sector Providers (0-4 years)
Kathy Pearce	Individual Attendee – Dollymixtures Pre-School
Ailsa Robbie	Marches Family Network
Rose Spitzmaul	Individual Attendee – Trinity Treetops
Klaus Wedell	Chairman

In Attendance:

Heather Donaldson	Corporate and Customer Services Directorate
Sue Fiennes	Children and Young People's Directorate
Ros Hatherill	Children and Young People's Directorate
Anne Heath	Children and Young People's Directorate
Alison Murphy	Children and Young People's Directorate
Sue Peasgood	Children and Young People's Directorate
Bryan Twitty	Children and Young People's Directorate

614. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Lea Abbotts, Janice Greenow, Cllr Jenny Hyde, Lynn Marsden, Tracey Neale, Cllr Sally Robertson, Ben Straker.

615. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Rose Dyke for Ben Straker.

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616. LATE ITEMS / ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following additional item of business was submitted:

- The proprietor of Townend Nursery, Stretton Grandison, had forwarded a query about Nursery Education Funding, on behalf of her clients. The Partnership agreed to consider it later on the agenda, under Item 9 (ANY OTHER BUSINESS)

617. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

618. SUE FIENNES - DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Partnership thanked Sue Fiennes, who was leaving the Authority at the end of March 2007, for her significant contribution to Early Years and Extended Schools matters during her time as Director of Children and Young People's Services.

Sue said that she had been impressed with the mixed sectors represented on the Partnership, and how well people had worked together to make a difference to the issues that they regarded as important.

Members presented her with a bouquet of flowers and wished her every success and happiness in the future.

619. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AWARD

Bryan Twitty reported that the National Association of Children's Information Services (NACIS) had given the Herefordshire Children's Information Service an award for quality. Ros Hatherill said that the Association's report had highlighted several areas of excellence within the service, and was a reflection of the team's professionalism and dedication.

620. MINUTES

During consideration of the minutes, the following updates were given:

Minute 604 (MINUTES): Sue Peasgood said that the Early Years Foundation Stage framework would be in place in Herefordshire at the end of March 2007. At the next Partnership meeting, she would report in detail and supply the related documents.

Minute 606 (THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE EYDCP): Ann Heath reported that a steering group had been set up to do some research, and assess the feasibility of setting up a Public Service Trust for Herefordshire. The group comprised two Primary Care Trust Board members, the Leader of Herefordshire Council, the Chief Executives of the PCT and Herefordshire

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Council, and one Cabinet member. Research would be finished in April 2007, followed by public consultation and a decision about whether the proposal was right for Herefordshire.

AGREED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2006 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

- **Minute 605 (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN) - Third paragraph, second line: delete "NHS's".**

621. HEREFORDSHIRE EARLY YEARS CONFERENCE

Sue Peasgood reported on the recent Herefordshire Early Years Conference, held at the Courtyard Arts Centre. Over 300 professionals working with 0-5 year olds attended, and heard addresses from Oxford University Professor, Kathy Sylva and Early Years Consultant, Ros Bayley. Several members commented that they had attended the day, and had been inspired by, and impressed with, its content and the calibre of the speakers. Topics covered included research on the effectiveness of pre-school and primary education, ways to captivate children and stimulate learning and development, and education through pictures, storytelling, toys and humour.

Alison Murphy added that the staff at the Courtyard had been extremely supportive and helpful, and she would be writing to express her thanks on behalf of the Early Years team. Sue Fiennes suggested that the letter should also be copied to Councillor Mrs J. French, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources, whose cabinet portfolio included the Courtyard.

AGREED: that the report be noted.

622. CHILDREN'S CENTRES AND EXTENDED SCHOOLS

Bryan Twitty provided information on progress made with extended schools and children's centres in Herefordshire. He made the following key points:

- Lea Abbots had been appointed as Children's Services and Extended Schools Coordinator;
- Central Government's target was that by 2010, all children, young people, parents and carers would have access to extra services in schools and children's centres, after the end of normal school hours. The target was part of "Every Child Matters: Change for Children". Schools that provide these extra services are called "extended schools". Examples of services on offer include: parenting advice, access to the school's facilities, affordable childcare in and around school;
- In Herefordshire, the EYDCP had a development team to deal with extended schools matters, and the team was working with the 14 extended schools clusters to provide the necessary information to the DfES and the training and development agency. Each cluster had its own development co-ordinator;
- Children's Centres were continuing to develop alongside extended

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schools. Phase 2 of the development was going well, with Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye both making excellent progress, and discussions underway to enhance facilities in Peterchurch. North of Hereford city, Widemarsh Workshop had been identified as a possible development site.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

623. THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE EYDCP

Members considered the next stage in the consultation about proposed changes to the EYDCP's role, function and constitution. Klaus Wedell said that the EYDCP represented the interface between childcare providers and the Council, and that Ann Heath was the link between the EYDCP and the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. Ros Hatherill said that it was crucial to get the right blend of membership to ensure that all sectors were represented effectively. She added that originally, the EYDCP had been set up under statute to ensure effective delivery of Early Years Services. The statutory requirement was no longer in place (due to changes brought about by "Every Child Matters", which required a different way of working), but the need for a partnership with childcare providers was still essential.

Members worked in groups to ascertain what decisions the Partnership should now be taking, and what the representation should be. The following points were made:

Membership/Representation:

- Need to ensure adequate parent representation on the Partnership, and also to find a way for representatives to communicate with other parents (for example, newsletter, through the various settings). It was suggested that parent reps could be drawn from the clusters or from children's centres.
- Need to involve the staff from all the settings;
- Special Education Needs – is this still the appropriate umbrella for representation?
- The Chair should always be independent and have no vested interest;
- How will children's centres be represented? Not all 10 managers can attend because this would not be practical, maybe a rolling attendance – they can take it in turns?
- It was necessary to consider whether and how, the following groups can be represented:
 - Extended schools
 - Colleges – should the representation be wider?
 - Libraries
 - Police
 - Drugs help organisations
 - National Trust Forest Schools
 - Youth Services
 - Connexions
 - HCVYS
- Advisors: It was suggested that the Partnership should have a core of set ones, plus additional ones to be brought in depending on the issues to be discussed.

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- How do we choose representation of larger groups? How do we disseminate information to the larger groups?
- SEN – The Partnership will approach the SEN consortium to obtain representation.

Communication:

- Information could be sent and received through the following channels:
 - Letters on notice boards
 - Parent's suggestion boxes
 - Email and Websites
 - A newsletter for the general public
- Also send agenda out to interested bodies, which might read, but not attend the meeting.

Meetings:

- Frequency of Meetings –if they fit in with C&YPPB Meetings we can have a reporting line. The C&YPPB meets 6 times per year, and it was suggested that EYDCP should meet a minimum of 3 times per year.
- Title – What conveys the flavour of the meeting best? Should we retain the existing name, or choose something new – for example, “Early Years and Extended Schools Partnership (EYES)”? Anne Heath and Ros Hatherill will think specifically about this and bring any further ideas to the next meeting.
- Should we rotate the venues? How will it affect attendance?

Role and Function

- Informing the Board – summary of progress/proceedings be put in a newsletter which can go to the Board, but also to the general public.
- Operational – DfES has put consultations to the EYDCP and to officers in the past – the role of the EYDCP must be to take those consultations back to constituents and get a wider response.
- Size of Partnership. Should be no more than 30. Need to establish what is a quorum. Also, consider whether the partnership should have the powers to set up sub-groups to deal with specific issues.

AGREED: That a the initial draft of the constitution be devised, taking account all of the points made in the above minute, and be considered at the EYDCP's next meeting.

624. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bryan Twitty read out a question which had been forwarded by the proprietor of Townend Nursery, Stretton Grandison, as follows:

" From next year, I understand that Nursery Education Funding is to extend to 15 hours and cover 38 weeks. However, my setting offers 12 hours and 36-37 weeks at the most. At present, Nursery Education Funding is paid on a proportional rate. Accepting that every nursery is different and there should be parental choice, my parents do not want this, but do want the Nursery Education Funding. How is this going to work?"

Bryan explained that there was no date yet, for commencement of the

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funding for 15 hours and 38 weeks, and the most recent consultation merely said "by 2010 at the latest". The Code of Practice issued to all proprietors explained all of the issues surrounding the matter, and made it clear that settings were not obliged to open for 38 weeks.

Some members asked if the issue could be looked at in greater detail at the next meeting, because they felt that the current policy might be weighted slightly in favor of LEA nurseries and not private providers.

RESOLVED: that the issue of nursery education funding be examined in greater detail at the next meeting.

625. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that some of the EYDCP meeting dates might need to be changed to fit in with the meeting cycle of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. For this reason, the date of the next meeting was changed from 10 May 2007 to 06 June 2007.

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the EYDCP be held on 06 June 2007, and further dates be decided to fit in with the meeting cycle of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm

CHAIRMAN