

## CONSTITUTION FOR THE HEREFORDSHIRE EARLY YEARS DEVELOPMENT AND CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP

### Introduction

1. The Secretary of State for Education and Employment requires The Herefordshire Council to establish a body called the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, to prepare an Early Years Development and Childcare Plan. This constitution sets out the main functions of the Partnership, its membership and voting arrangements, and its rules for the conduct of business.

### Function

2. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership's main function is to prepare, and revise annually, an Early Years Development and Childcare Plan which meets the needs of children and Parents and to monitor progress against standards... Such a plan must be referred to The Herefordshire Council for its approval, before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. If The Herefordshire Council does not concur with any of the content of the plan, the plan will be referred back to the Partnership for further consultation and discussion.
3. Partnership is central to the process and the Partnership will act in accordance with the aims set out in The Department for Education and Employment's Planning Guidance.
4. The first plan for the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership in Herefordshire will come into effect from 1st April, 1999, for implementation by The Herefordshire Council.

### Membership

5. The members of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership comprise the following representatives -
  - 1 person nominated by the Herefordshire Association of Governors.
  - 1 person representing parents and carers nominated by the Hereford and Worcester Education Co-ordinating Group
  - 1 person nominated by Hereford Anglican Diocesan Education Authority
  - 1 person nominated by Cardiff Archdiocesan Education Authority
  - 1 from maintained schools with nursery classes
  - 1 person nominated by the Chamber of Commerce Training and Enterprise (for the time being representing also the private and voluntary training sector)
  - 1 person representing voluntary sector providers of Care and Education for 0-4 year olds
  - 1 person representing private sector providers of Care and Education for 0-4 year olds nominated by the Local Association of Private Providers
  - 1 person representing special educational needs groups nominated by the Herefordshire Special Needs Consortium
  - 1 nominated by the local branch of the Registered Child-Minders Association
  - 1 from the Social Services Directorate
  - 1 from the Local Education Authority
  - 1 from the Policy and Community Directorate
  - 1 from the Health Authority

- 1 person nominated by Hereford College of Technology
- 1 person nominated by Centre for Research in early Childhood (University College, Worcester.)
- 1 parent representing parents and carers of children with special needs nominated by the Local Parent Partnership
- 1 from Voluntary Aided Schools
- 1 person nominated by the Marches Family Network
- 1 person nominated by the Free Churches
- 1 representing the Employment Service/New Deal
- 1 representing Rural Development/Playcare Partnership
- 1 representing Playwork Education and Information through ADAPT
- 1 representing Home Start
- 1 representing The Community Health Trust
- 1 representing Local Employers
- 1 representing private and voluntary sector providers of Out of School Childcare for 5-14 year olds
- 1 representing Youth Service
- 1 representing the Independent Schools sector
- 1 representing the Herefordshire Playcare Association.
- 1 representing travelling families

### **Additional Members**

6. The Partnership may decide to invite additional Members to join the Partnership or contribute to the meeting, bearing in mind the Secretary of State's advice that total membership should not exceed 30.

### **Tenure of Office**

7. It is for each nominated body to decide who should represent them at the Partnership, and the period of time each such member should serve.

### **Substitutes**

8. Each nominating group may arrange for a substitute to attend when its formal representative cannot do so. That arrangement is designed to ensure that groups can always be represented, though it is important for there to be as much continuity as possible from one meeting to the next.

### **Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

9. At its first meeting in each financial year, the Partnership will elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its numbers, but excluding members nominated by Council Departments or by schools and other groups representing those directly involved in the provision of education or care for 0-14 year olds.
10. If both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent from the meeting, or have resigned, the Partnership will elect from its number a Chairman for the meeting.

### **Calendar of meetings**

11. The Partnership will meet at least once a term and will determine the dates of meetings as far as possible on an annual basis.
12. Extraordinary meetings may be convened at the request of 3 members of the Partnership. In such cases, the timing and date of the meeting will be determined following consultation with the Chairman.

### **Timing of meetings**

13. Meetings will start at times acceptable to the Partnership, and will normally be limited to two hours duration.

### **Quorum**

14. The Quorum for the Partnership will be one third (rounded up) of the approved membership.

### **Convening and notice of the meetings**

15. All meetings will be convened by the County Secretary and Solicitor of Herefordshire Council.
16. Written notice of meetings and the agenda will be sent to members of the Partnership 7 clear days before the meeting (or 3 clear days in the case of an Extraordinary meeting).
17. Non Receipt by any members of notice of a meeting will not invalidate the meeting.

### **Agenda**

18. The Agenda will be prepared by the County Secretary and Solicitor, in consultation with the Chairman.
19. Items may be placed on the agenda by any member of the Partnership by notice in writing to the County Secretary and Solicitor received at least 14 clear days prior to the meeting.
20. Papers relating to the agenda items will be sent to members with the agenda. The Chairman may agree that papers should also be tabled at the meeting.

### **Late items/Any other business**

21. Immediately before the minutes of the previous meeting have been approved, Members should inform the meeting of any item they wish to raise under any other business. The meeting will decide whether any items so identified may be raised under any other business or whether it should be deferred to a subsequent meeting.

### **Minutes of meeting**

22. Minutes of meetings, including a record of persons attending, will be drafted by the County Secretary and Solicitor.
23. The draft minutes of the meeting will be considered for approval or amendment at the start of the following meeting. Any dissenting view will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, if that is the wish of one or more members present.

### **Decision Making**

24. Decisions should normally be made through consensus.
25. In the event of an item receiving two separate motions, the matter would be resolved by simple majority voting with each representative entitled to one vote. The Chairman will have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

### **Working Groups**

26. The Partnership may establish working groups to gather information and/or draft revisions to the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan for recommendation to a full meeting of the Partnership. When establishing working groups, the Partnership will -
  - (a) ensure that at least 3 members of the Partnership are members;
  - (b) establish terms of reference;
  - (c) determine procedures for reporting back to the Partnership.
27. The Partnership may co-opt non-members to working groups, but such non-members may not vote on any matter.

### **Rights of press and public to attend meetings**

28. The press and public will be entitled to attend meetings of the Partnership but may be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of items containing information capable of being treated as exempt information if meetings of the Partnership were meetings of a local authority.
29. At the beginning of each meeting, for up to half an hour, members of the public will have an opportunity to receive answers to any pre-received written questions they have submitted to the County Secretary and Solicitor.
30. The County Secretary and Solicitor will arrange for a public announcement of meetings of the Partnership, and will also arrange for minutes and papers relating to the Partnership meetings to be available for inspection in Council Offices and Public Libraries after the draft minutes have been approved by the Partnership.

February, 2001