

Facilitating the Childcare Market and Securing Sufficiency

Report by: Ros Hatherill, Early Years & Childcare Service Manager

For Information Only

Purpose:

To inform the Partnership of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments, draft guidance and regulations for Local Authorities to support them in carrying out their duty to assess the sufficiency of childcare

Background:

A consultation document was launched by the DfES on 14th August 2006 (attached for information)

This consultation seeks the views on the Local Authority duty to set out in section 11 of the Childcare Act to conduct an assessment of the sufficiency of childcare in their area.

It is anticipated that local authorities carrying out an assessment of sufficiency of childcare within their area as a first step to securing sufficient childcare.

The process will give local authorities the evidence and information they will need, working in partnership with childcare providers and others, to facilitate and shape a childcare market that is sufficient, flexible, sustainable and responsive to parents needs.

The duty to assess the sufficiency of childcare will commence from April 2007.

A free 2 day facilitated pilot strategic workshop has been secured with 4 Children for Herefordshire on 14 November 2006 and 1 December 2006.

Additional Information – Milestones:

14th August - 6th November: Consultation on regulations and guidance to assess sufficiency of childcare

Early 2007: Consultation on Regulations, guidance for duties and powers for securing sufficient childcare.

January 2007: Publication of Section 11 Regulations and Guidance

April 2007: Section 11 Duty comes into force.

September 2007: Publication of sections 6-10 and 13 Guidance Regulations

April 2008: Section 6-10 and 13 Regs and Guidance come into force.

Recommendations:

The Partnership is asked to note:

1. That individual partners make response to the consultation document
2. That partners attend the two day strategic facilitated workshops.
3. The joint responsibility for securing a sufficiency in the local authority childcare care provision. This is just not an EYDCP issue.
4. The milestones indicated in the consultation document.