

EARLY YEARS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Early Years and Extended Services Manager

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the progress and provide an overview of Early Years with a focus on children's centres, number of childcare settings and funding linked to both of these. Also to outline current objectives.

Financial Implications

2. Herefordshire Council receives a SureStart Early Years and Childcare Grant Revenue 08/09 The Council receives capital and revenue grant for Early Years activity. It also receives other funding for revenue activity as follows that totals to **£7,353,180**.

Annual budget : Children's Centres	£2,235,025
------------------------------------	------------

Sufficiency and Access, Outcomes, quality and inclusion

Extended services&short breaks (AHDC)	£1,461,765
---------------------------------------	------------

(Aiming High for Disabled Children)

Additional revenue money from (Dedicated Schools Grant)DSG supports

Childcare training, Quality Assurance,

Discretionary Grant U4's and other areas	£ 459,390
--	-----------

<u>Nursery Education Funding (NEF) 08/09</u>	£2,898,000
--	------------

Projects

ISPP (Information Support for Parents and Providers)	£ 11,000
--	----------

Big Lottery Play Projects from 2007 to 2010	£ 288,000
---	-----------

Total	<u>£7,353,180</u>
--------------	--------------------------

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Ros Hatherill 01432 261681

Capital funding of £3,318,213 is from the following sources:

Herefordshire Council receives the following **Capital Grant**

in support of Early Years

Extended Schools 08/09 10/11	£ 303,368
Access, Quality and Inclusion 08/11 (3 years funding)	£ 1,998,291
Childrens Centres 08/11	£ 943,055
Big Lottery Capital	£ 50,000
ISPP	£ 23,499
TOTAL	<u>£ 3,318,213</u>

Background

- 3 All Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Grant (SSEYCG) funding should support the delivery of the Government's Ten Year Strategy for Childcare, Choice for parents: the best start for children and in the case of extended schools, development by all schools of a core set of services as set out in the Extended Schools Prospectus. The strategy sets out the Government's vision to ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life.
- 4 The ten year childcare strategy action plan (Choice for parents, the best start for children: making it happen) was published April 2006. The plan recaps the principles of the strategy and sets it in the context of the Every Child Matters agenda. It highlights achievements, challenges and who needs to do what by when. The action plan is accessible on the Sure Start website. <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/?Document=1684>
- 5 The funding will also contribute to the delivery of some of the goals in the Children's Plan: Building brighter futures.
- 6 Funding also supports the duties set out in the Childcare Act 2006. The new duties in the Act confirm local authorities' key role as strategic leaders for childcare and children's services. Local authorities and their partners in health services and Job Centre Plus are required to:
 - Improve Outcomes and narrow gaps at age five through the provision of integrated early years services.
 - Ensure there is sufficient childcare available for parents who want to work and train including an expanded and, where possible, more flexible free offer for three and four year olds.
 - Provide comprehensive information to parents.

Key priorities and challenges which Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Grant (SSEYCG) will support in 2008-09 include:

- Following the completion of a childcare sufficiency assessment for Herefordshire. Filling the gaps between demand and supply identified in a childcare sufficiency assessment to secure sufficient childcare for working parents of children up to the age of 14 (18 for disabled children) The new duty which came into force April 2008 applies to all working parents, and parents preparing for work. Particular attention will need to be paid to the needs of lower income parents and those who have disabled children.
- Delivering at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, a real terms reduction in the achievement gap between the lowest achieving children and the rest. This needs to be addressed within the context of securing better results for all 5 year olds.
- Focusing more sharply on raising standards and embedding a culture of continuous quality improvement across early years. The accomplishment of this together with the narrowing of the achievement gap will be supported by:
 - better use of data to monitor progress and identify where to target resources
 - strengthening alignment between the early years and school improvement functions within the authority
 - more effective use of self-evaluation tools by settings
 - securing greater graduate leadership of practise within Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings.
- Reviewing plans for delivering a children's centre in every community by 2010 to ensure that these achieve value for money and a fair distribution of resources to support services for all children while concentrating the greatest level of resource to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged families.
- Making adequate preparation for the transformation of disabled children's short break services.

What does this mean for Herefordshire to date:

Key Features: The Government requires Herefordshire to deliver the following:

Phase 1 (2004-2006) 3 Children's Centres :

Greencroft - South Wye	All completed, capital builds and refurbishments and designated as delivering services.
Conningsby- Leominster	
Springfield - South Wye	

Phase 2 (2006-2008) a further 6 children's centres (9 in total),

HOPE_ Bromyard Kington, Ledbury, Ryefield-Ross On Wye Widemarsh Golden Valley.	All first 4 completed, capital builds and refurbishments and designated as delivering services. Widemarsh designated and delivering services, capital build still to complete Golden Valley designated and delivering services, capital build still to complete.
---	--

Phase 3 (2008 – 2010) a further 3 childrens centres (12 in total)

Holly Bush,(South Wye)	Refurishment and re-alignment of services
NorthHerefordshire,Leintwardine / Wigmore	To be identified – some services being delivered
second centre North Hereford City TBC.	To be identified

Capital grant in support of Extended Schools – creating additional purpose activity space.

Support development of Childcare settings:

Current provision in Herefordshire

Setting	Numbers
PVI Early Years Settings	104
Childminders	143
LA Nurseries	13.
TOTAL	260

Early years Funding Reform – Nursery Education Funding, statutory requirement that by 2010 the LA has a fair and equitable funding strategy that encompasses, the Private, Voluntary, Independent sectors, together with the LA nursery provision.

Strategic support for the development of AHDC – Aiming High for Disabled Children and Short Breaks.

Strategic delivery of Capital programme in support of Early Years, access, inclusion and Flexibility.

Action planning and review of Sufficiency of Childcare.

Play Pathfinders and Playbuilder status

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Scrutiny Committee note the general overview information made available with reference to Early Years.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/?Document=1684>
- <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pulications/childrensplan>