

Date: 21 November 2001
Venue: Committee Room 3, National Assembly Building
Title: The National Childcare Strategy Task Force

Purpose

1. To invite the Committee to express views on the report of the National Childcare Strategy Task Force, commissioned by the Assembly Minister for Health & Social Services.

Timing

2. The report is being presented to the Committee now, prior to it being debated in plenary on 4 December 2001.

Background

3. The National Childcare Strategy in Wales is designed to meet the needs of children, parents and childcare providers in Wales. The aims of the strategy are to advance the well-being of children in Wales, offer equal opportunities to parents, especially women, and support parents in balancing family life, work, education and training.

4. The Childcare Task Force was established by the Minister for Health & Social Services in February 2001 to develop a new action plan to take forward the childcare strategy. The members (at Annex A attached to Doc 1) comprised key players in childcare in Wales, who also sought views at the local level.

5. The Task Force has worked alongside the Assembly's Early Years Advisory Panel, which is implementing the Assembly's commitment to make a free early education place available for all three year olds, for half the day in term time. Some recommendations from the two bodies to the Assembly are in common, such as the proposals for integrated children's centres.

6. The Committee will note from the introduction to the report that the Task Force worked through five subgroups, each of which has contributed a chapter to this report. These chapters outline the challenges facing the Childcare Strategy and make recommendations, both for the short and longer term.

Compliance

7. The Employment and Training Act 1973 provides the statutory basis for grant payments to local authorities to enable the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships to take forward the National Childcare Strategy in Wales. The Assembly's powers in the regard have been delegated to the Minister for Health and

Social Services who has responsibility for childcare.

8. There are no issues of regularity or propriety, and no novel or contentious issues. The Assembly Compliance Office has been consulted about this submission and is content with the compliance aspects.

Financial Implications

9. None at this stage – the Committee is simply invited to note the paper and report. Implementation of the report would have a cost, which could be borne primarily from the funding for the national childcare strategy, indicated within the draft budget outlined below:

National Childcare Strategy

£'000

2001/2002 3,550

2002/2003 5,050

2003/2004 5,550

10. Last December, the consultation document *Framework for Partnership* proposed merging funding for the Childcare Strategy, Children and Youth Partnership Fund (including Play Grant and Youth Access Initiative) and Sure Start into a single Children's Support Fund. A further announcement on this will be made early in 2002.

Action

11. The Committee is invited to give its views on the report of the National Childcare Strategy Task Force.

Jane Hutt
Minister for Health & Social Services

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Foreword

Members of National Childcare Strategy Task Force

Introduction

Chapter 1 Developing childcare to meet the needs of children, families and communities in socially disadvantaged areas in Wales.

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FOREWORD – JANE HUTT AM, MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

I am pleased to present the report of the National Childcare Strategy Task Force. I should like to express my gratitude to all of the independent members of the Task Force, who have given their valuable time and expertise in developing the recommendations contained within it.

This is perhaps the first time that a report on the childcare strategy starts by considering the needs of our children. I welcome that emphasis. It represents the adoption of a 'made in Wales' approach and supports the thrust of the Assembly's other policies for children. At the same time, we continue to recognise that an effective strategy for childcare can improve the opportunities of many people to access employment and training. Women in particular – although not exclusively – are likely to benefit in this respect. An adequate supply of good quality childcare therefore helps to meet the Assembly's economic aspirations and promotes equality of opportunity.

To join up our thinking on children the Assembly Cabinet has formed a sub committee, which I chair. We note the strong message from both this Task Force and the Early Years Advisory Panel that we need a programme of integrated children's centres across Wales, and we are considering how best to give effect to this.

There is a wealth of well informed advice within this Task Force report. In some respects we have responded to this advice already. We have announced increases in the indicative funds for childcare in the draft budget. We have released funds for childcare information services and announced that childminder start up grants will be available across Wales from April 2002. We have helped set up a new organisation to support out of school clubs, Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs.

We will now prepare a considered response to this independent report and will publish our action plan early in 2002.

This report is a major step forward for the childcare strategy in Wales. We are determined to build on the commitment of the task force members, and to make an impact on the quality accessibility, and affordability of childcare within Wales.

Jane Hutt AM
Minister for Health and Social Services, Children and Youth Justice

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Assembly is committed to giving our youngest children, including those in our most deprived communities, a flying start.
2. Since the publication of "The National Childcare Strategy in Wales" in June 1998, the Assembly and its partners have worked together to develop a childcare strategy to meet the needs of children, parents and childcare providers in Wales. The UK Government also has a role in supporting childcare, for example through the Working Families Tax Credit. But the Assembly has the prime responsibility within Wales to

promote the provision of accessible, affordable and good quality childcare within each locality. The Strategy has been successfully taken forward to date in each local authority area by Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships.

3. In view of the time that has elapsed since the Strategy was first published, Jane Hutt AM, Minister for Health and Social Services, created the Childcare Task Force in February 2001 to set the direction for the future in the light of experience so far. The members comprised key players in childcare in Wales, who also sought views at the local level.

4. The Task Force has worked alongside the Assembly's Early Years Advisory Panel, which is implementing the Assembly's commitment to make a free early education place available for all three year olds, for half the day in term time.

5. The Task Force worked through five subgroups, each of which has contributed a chapter to this report. These chapters outline the challenges facing the Childcare Strategy and make recommendations, both for the short and longer term.

6. The first two chapters outline the key policy objectives for the childcare strategy. The first chapter discusses how the childcare strategy can place the needs of the child first and foremost, and in particular proposes that this be achieved through a programme of centres integrating early years development with childcare and other support. The Assembly has proposed the unification of its Childcare funding with Sure Start and the Children and Youth Partnership Fund from April 2003, and this matches well with the unifying nature of such centres.

7. But the priority given to the needs of the child does not mean that other aspects of the childcare strategy are excluded from this report. Chapter 2 explores the important economic benefits of childcare provision. Childcare can offer parents greater opportunity to be economically active, and care is an increasingly significant industry in its own right.

8. The remainder of the report examines the resources that underpin childcare and how they can be developed. The most important resource in childcare is its people, and so Chapter 3 examines the recruitment and training of the workforce. It proposes an action plan to tackle the low status, low wage rates and resulting retention difficulties within the sector.

9. Chapter 4 looks at the infrastructure which delivers the childcare strategy, in particular the local Early Years Development and Childcare partnerships. These play a vital role in ensuring that the statutory and voluntary sectors work together to turn the Assembly's aspirations into good quality provision within our communities. The chapter discusses the support the partnerships need, and the information services that they should provide to the public.

10. Finally, Chapter 5 seeks to make recommendations which can maximise the funding available to childcare. There are several main streams – Assembly funding to partnerships, the New Opportunities Fund, and European Structural Funds are the most significant.

11. The Assembly will be proposing a plan of action in response to this report, which will be published in February 2002.

CHAPTER 1

DEVELOPING CHILDCARE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES IN SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED AREAS IN WALES.

Group Facilitator: Pat Davies, Children in Wales

Purpose of group

- To provide a more detailed definition of community based children's centres and their objectives, determine how this will be funded, and Identify a way forward with the proposals.

Introduction

1. The group welcomed the opportunity to focus on the needs and rights of children and families in the context of the broader agenda of economic development, social inclusion and the cycle of low aspirations and esteem which characterises so many families in Wales. The Childcare Strategy, which aims to give children a good start in life and to enable parents to work and train, is building on one of the lowest levels of public funding for childcare in comparison to other European countries. This makes both the need and the challenge for quality services almost overwhelming, particularly when all recent reports conclude that accessibility, costs, sustainability and capacity building continue to frustrate the development of childcare services and these difficulties are compounded in socially disadvantaged areas (Childcare in Wales, Welsh Affairs Committee 1999, Social Exclusion in Wales, Welsh Affairs Committee 2000, Looking to the Future for Children and Families, The Childcare Commission 2001). It is essential, therefore, that a strategic approach is developed with the co-operation and co-ordination of Assembly departments and of sectors and organisations in Wales.

The current situation

2. The UK has been at the bottom of the European league of public funding for childcare and in Wales there has been little development in the private sector and very limited support for childcare from employers. The cultural emphasis on male and female roles and responsibilities has also restricted the growth of full time day care and costs have been prohibitive, other than for professional couples. This has led to a heavy reliance on the voluntary sector and, most significantly in Wales, to a reliance on family members, relatives and or neighbours – informal arrangements. A diversity of services has developed but with little real choice for parents – childminders, playgroups, creches, family centres, day nurseries, and out of school clubs. Frequently, parents without access to family support have used childminders to provide accessible, flexible care or in many cases a combination of childminder/playgroup/nursery/school. Many pre-school children are shunted from pillar to post during their waking hours in a way which would be regarded as totally unacceptable at primary or secondary stage.

What is required?

3. There is growing consensus that, until local communities throughout Wales develop appropriate services for children, including those that can support parents in work or training, then little impact will be made to the status quo. The paradigm shift from the narrowly conceived welfare to work agenda to a commitment to meet the rights and needs of children, families and communities is seen as a first step. A strategy that places the child's right to access enriching experiences as the central tenet will also support the educational, economic regeneration, community development and employment outcomes of the current strategy, whilst removing the current disparity in access based on *parental* (rather than children's) need and "postcode lotteries".
4. Provision of high quality childcare, if integrated with pre-school education and parental support, can benefit all children and families. There are strong messages from research, from international experiences (Starting Strong, OECD 2001) and from practice developing in England for the need for a continuum of integrated provision for children.

Proposal

5. A long-term strategy should be developed which is grounded in the rights of all children to have secure and fulfilling childcare. A mechanism must be found for integration between Assembly Committees, particularly those reviewing childcare, education and life long learning.
6. A programme of integrated children's services networks (a children's centre "core and cluster" model) should be developed. Each local authority should consider establishing multi-functional, multi-agency centres, linking a network of providers (parent and toddler, playgroups, childminders, out of school clubs, adventure play sites and other leisure activities for young people) to provide enrichment and skills for children, families and communities. Children's centres should build on and enhance existing provision and on the strengths of community groups. The centre would act as a resource and offer models of best practice for all childcare provision in that locality. Services such as playgroups, childminders and informal carers could be affiliated and supported in outreach settings and through multi-disciplinary training programmes.
7. Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships must be empowered to develop the children's centre "core and cluster" model. Funding is needed to strengthen the infrastructure for EYDCPs to enable them to tailor services in response to local need and to establish long term goals.
8. The contribution of national voluntary childcare organisations must be acknowledged and supported through agreed funding mechanisms. WPPA, MYM, NCMA and Clwbiau Plant Cymru/Kids Clubs provide support to grassroots services and play a strong role in EYDCPs and Sure Start Partnerships.

Information to support the development of integrated children's centre "core and cluster" models.

9. The concept of children's centres providing integrated day-care, early education, family support and a community resource for training and multi-disciplinary support has developed from successful models in Europe and England (such as the Pen Green Centre, Corby and the Ace Centre in Chipping Norton). Children's centres have been recommended by groups such as the Daycare Trust 2000, the Childcare

Commission 2001 and are also being considered by the Early Years Advisory Panel set up by the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee. In England, the Early Excellence Centres Programme provides the closest model to the idea of a children's centre (and powerful evidence of the considerable benefits and cost effectiveness of this policy strategy). The programme was established in 1997 to develop a network of centres which are innovative and which demonstrate good practice in education, childcare and family support as well as providing a focal point for training and dissemination. A key feature of the centres is that they have developed to meet the needs of their locality; they provide additionality and are catalysts for service development. Whilst the nomenclature "Early Excellence Centres" has been rejected by groups in Wales, the objectives underpinning the pilot programme are regarded as valid and transferable to Wales.

Objectives

- The provision of good quality integrated early education and day-care for children requiring domestic or centre-based extended-day and extended-year provision, in a range of linked settings across a community/geographical area;
- Parental and carer involvement in the education and care of children through schemes for family learning, developing parenting skills, raising parents' expectations and in other ways;
- Support services for parents and carers of children, including home support, drop-in facilities, counselling and information services
- Effective early identification and intervention for children in need and children with special educational needs, with a view to improving the children's prospects and, wherever appropriate, achieving inclusion in mainstream provision;
- Access to adult education and training by parents of young children and other adults, including those seeking skills and qualifications for employment;
- Positive action to promote social inclusion for isolated and disadvantaged families, equal opportunities and non-racist attitudes and practice in all aspects of the work of the centre;
- Helping to raise standards of early years provision by providing high quality training and development opportunities for the staff of the centre, other early years providers in the area, including voluntary and private providers, childminders and other carers; and by contributing to the training and development strategy of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership;
- Achieving effective multi-agency collaboration between education, social services, health, community services, other agencies and employers in the provision of services;
- Co-operation with schools and providers of before and after-school care to promote continuity of educational provision and study support;
- Monitoring and evaluating the effects and effectiveness of the centre's work, and helping to

disseminate good practice.

10. Children's centres provide a series of functions and services and do not conform to the 'brass plate on a door model'. Core activities might include full day nursery care; part time early education; out of school care; an approved childminding network; family support/information; drop in facilities and training and dissemination opportunities for childcare workers. Alternatively, a centre may house a resources/training network and provide a multi-agency base to develop best practice for all childcare providers in that area. (See Appendix 3)

Management

11. Management of integrated children's centres would vary depending on the component services provided. A range of agencies from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors would be responsible for the management, co-ordination, communication and delivery of services.

Location

12. Centres might be based in nursery/primary/secondary schools; FE/HE colleges; family centres/community centres or redundant housing stock. In some communities, locating children's centres on the same site as a linked primary school would be ideal. (Whilst in Wales there is no equivalent programme of Early Excellence Centres and very little movement to integrated provision, there are many examples of headteachers who support on-site, out of school care/playgroup sessions, drop-in facilities and parenting groups.) Some centres may be based on a single site, but many others will be networked or based on multiple sites and operate through coalition arrangements between the service providers. (Diagram 1) The "core and cluster" model will be especially relevant in rural areas and valley communities where families are based in small settlements or on isolated estates with limited access to transport.

13. Sally Holtermann, in her paper 'Children's Centres: exploring the costs and delivery of a national scheme' states "There is no single blue print to apply everywhere. The exact working out of the idea will depend on local circumstances - the social make-up of the community, the local geography of urban/rural situations, existing services, identified priorities and the availability of suitable buildings for conversion or refurbishment. The common element would be a commitment to working in a co-ordinated and coherent fashion for the benefit of children and families and communities served." (Daycare Trust, 2001)

Process

Strategic Level

14. The Cabinet sub-committee should urgently consider how to develop an integrated approach to the provision of childcare and education for children aged 0-5 years. This linkage is endorsed by members of the Early Years Advisory Panel who are also considering the development of integrated early years centres as part of the plan to expand provision for three year olds.

15. Linkages between initiatives (including Sure Start, Childcare, Play, Children and Youth) are currently

being considered in response to the consultation by the Assembly on the Framework for Children and Young People. Further mechanisms must be developed to link in with Early Education and Communities First.

Operational Level

16. EYDC Partnerships are best placed to consult with local communities to identify need and potential sites/premises for developing integrated provision, possibly as part of the Community Planning process for "Communities First". Many EYDCPs have developed sophisticated data about levels of available provision, levels of unmet need and are in a strong position to build on existing services and to strengthen networks. Funding is needed to strengthen the infrastructure of EYDCPs to enable them to develop and support both existing and new provision. The roles and responsibilities of EYDCPs must be clarified along with decisions about their autonomy.

17. More funding is essential to support the national voluntary childcare organisations to enable them to develop grass roots services and to continue to play a strong role in EYDCPs and Sure Start Partnerships.

Time Frame

18. Much will depend on the level of existing services within a community, that will form the core provision, and on the availability of suitable premises, e.g. nursery/infant school/playgroup or space within an FE/HE college. There will also be the need for capital development and/or refurbishment.

19. EYDC Partnerships/Children's Communities First Committees would need to audit existing services and need. A series of decisions would have to be made prior to establishing a programme of centres or linked services. These might be to:

- Agree common aims and objectives
- Identify funding available
- Consult with local communities
- Identify potential premises/coalitions
- Set up management structure
- Identify core services
- Agree partnership arrangements with children's services/organisations
- Establish joint training programmes
- Appoint and train staff

Funding, Financial Viability, Sustainability

Current Position

20. Current funding for childcare settings and voluntary sector services is grossly inadequate, multi-sourced and not uniform across local partnership areas and within local communities in Wales. Sustainability and viability continue to undermine the development of childcare places in Wales. The attached paper indicates the complexity of current and potential funding sources. (Appendix 4).

21. Many parents cannot afford fees charged for out of school clubs, playgroup sessions, let alone day nursery or childminder fees. Even families qualifying for the Working Families Tax Credit still have to find 30% of the cost of day care. Even then, the fees hardly cover the providers' costs in terms of salaries, rent, resources etc. A "root and branch" review of funding is recommended, exploring the possibility of funding provision to remove or reduce fees to levels where services are accessible to all children, irrespective of parental income. It is proposed that such an investment would pay huge dividends over time – in terms of children's enhanced development, improved recruitment, retention and career development opportunities, community capacity building and economic regeneration and the reduction of health and well-being inequalities – placing Wales on the cutting edge of social care provision in Europe.

22. The move to provide places for three year olds in educational settings carries the risk of undermining existing provision and decreasing opportunities and choice in some communities through the loss of playgroup, parent/toddler and childminder provision. These issues need addressing both nationally and locally.

23. The complexity of funding ties up the time of EYDCP staff and members, and securing income from various sources requires substantial financial skills. Currently some EYDCP and Sure Start Partnerships are trying to provide subsidised places for children in playgroups and out of school clubs in areas of disadvantage, but they are merely scratching the surface.

Funding - Developing a Strategic Approach

24. The Assembly must resource the Childcare Strategy in Wales more adequately.

25. The proposals made in the paper on Maximising Resources suggest a series of ways forward for accessing further funding.

26. The Assembly must consider how to integrate and develop existing strategies and pool the associated funding streams, including the tiny amounts available for childcare provision in Wales, with funding for Sure Start, Children and Youth, Play etc. This should be possible under the Children and Young People's Support Fund which would provide in excess of £35 million for the development of those initiatives. The bigger challenge would be to pool a potential £11 million allocated for the development of integrated centres for three year olds under consideration by the Early Years Advisory Panel.

27. The capital funding element from the NOF 3rd round programme will provide up to £10 million for investment in buildings and refurbishment of suitable premises.

28. It is uncertain how much funding will be available to disadvantaged communities under the Communities First Programme and whether the Communities First Partnership members can be persuaded of the strategic importance of childcare/children's centres in family and community regeneration.

Recommendations

- Departments in the Assembly should establish better mechanisms for developing integrated education

and care services for children, alongside family support, and adult training in combating social exclusion, child poverty, educational underachievement, welfare dependency and unemployment.

- "Core and Cluster" children's centres should be developed in local communities building on existing provision including playgroups, nurseries, out of school clubs and childminder networks.
- Funding is needed to strengthen the infrastructure for EYDCPs to enable them to expand their functions and levels of support.
- Funding is needed to support the national voluntary childcare organisations to enable them to support pre-school, out of school clubs and to develop childminder networks.
- Over time, following pilot schemes to identify benefits and savings from other funding sources on intervention and support, funding should be directed to develop universal provision at low or no cost, allowing children to access to play, leisure and enrichment activities, as a basic human right.

CHAPTER 2

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CHILDCARE

Group Facilitator: Penny Mitchell, Welsh Development Agency

Purpose of group

- To examine the ways in which childcare can contribute to economic development and how communities, people and businesses in Wales can benefit from the synergies.

Introduction

1. As is well documented, the economy of Wales, typically measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head, lags behind the UK average. There are of course many reasons for this prosperity gap, but two of the most important are that Wales has proportionally fewer people in employment than the UK average, and that Wales' occupational structure is concentrated in sectors, which at a UK level, are relatively slow growth.

2. Childcare has the potential to be one of a range of tools that will enable these issues to be addressed. It should be recognised that, whilst much of the data available relates to women, social trends indicate that the issue of dependent care can equally affect men. Survey evidence shows that over 40% of the economically inactive female population of Wales would like to work if circumstances allowed. Furthermore, evidence from the Future Skills Wales project indicates that 26% of females surveyed identified the availability of childcare as the main barrier to work. Add to this changes in the labour market, which seem likely to imply a steadily rising demand for female employees, and the conclusion must be that childcare has the potential to impact on the number of people in work and therefore the level of GDP per head.

3. A report commissioned in 1999 by the WDA (*Caring for the Economy*, Miller Research) suggested that if

female activity rates in Wales could be brought up to the UK average, this would contribute more than £430 million in direct earnings across Wales, increasing GDP per head by as much as two percentage points. The report also indicated that if the estimated 116,000 women currently economically inactive but who would like to work could be brought into the labour market, GDP per head could rise to 89.5% of UK levels.

4. Baseline research for the Entrepreneurship Action Plan into underrepresented entrepreneurs identified that childcare issues centre around two aspects - the cost and the availability. It was noted that women normally take the sole responsibility for childcare, but that also this caring role can come back to women later in life, with dependent elderly relatives needing care. High cost, lack of range of provision and inflexibility do not encourage women to set up or to develop their own businesses.

The Current Position

5. Besides the Assembly, there is no single organisation with responsibility for the economic impact of childcare in Wales. However the WDA as the lead body for economic development has taken steps to ensure that its policies and programmes are geared to support childcare where appropriate.

- When considering the provision of advance premises, childcare facilities may be explored, and where appropriate built in to the design. However there is little evidence to suggest that this should become mainstream policy.
- When deciding on the location of new development at strategic sites, one of the key factors to be considered is ease of access, including access by public transport, which may be important for women returners. The reliability of these services is obviously important for women with young children who may be in day care etc.
- In terms of full or part time employment, the attitude of employers is crucial in changing the cultural resistance to introducing flexible work practices to accommodate carers. Whilst physical provision and subsidised or affordable care may be in the gift of larger scale employers, this is largely confined to the public sector and the view of the CBI for example, is that on-site childcare provision is not attractive to the private sector. In particular it is especially important to recognise the potential onerous costs for SMEs and the unlikelihood that even with public sector support that direct provision of facilities even for the wider community would be regarded positively.

However we believe this should not preclude greater engagement by employers in maximising the potential business benefits of positive support measures for employees with caring responsibilities. Much could be done by awareness raising initiatives through projects already in place such as the Work-Life Balance Challenge Fund which assist firms to introduce family friendly policies in the work place. Other good practice initiatives should be assessed to encourage community based shared provision across all age groups around existing clusters of SMEs, for example the 'Under 5s Demonstration project', and 'Childcare Means Business' a project working with employers in Leeds.

- Appropriate and affordable care must be encouraged from both the demand and the supply side. The market potential of the 'caring industry' needs to be assessed in its own right as a growing service sector which will attract entrepreneurs. The role of the public sector is to then bridge that market gap

until such time as the private sector will intervene. *Caring for the Economy* (Miller Research, 1999) noted that some 10,000 people were employed in childcare and that the sector was worth around £120 million per annum. It is suggested that the potential business opportunities presented by childcare should be promoted through the Entrepreneurship Action Plan.

6. The draft WDA Corporate Plan 2002-2005 promotes the view that competitive businesses, competitive people and competitive communities are interdependent, and how one cannot be maximised without the other two. Childcare is clearly important to both competitive people and competitive communities, the WDA is keen to work in partnership with others to further develop its work in this area where it can enhance the economy of Wales.

7. Local authorities, as the lead partners in community development, have a key role to play in exploiting, for example, the potential of existing school premises for related day care and after school use for all ages.

Proposals

8. It is clear that childcare provision has the potential to free up a significant number of women to return to the labour market. However, it is not just the care of children which can prevent people seeking employment. Current demographic trends mean that people are living longer and therefore there is a consequential rise in the need for care of the elderly. It was felt by some members of the group that the strain of looking after elderly parents or relatives could be just as much a barrier to work, as that of looking after children. The conclusion that follows is that caring could be considered in its own right rather than separately as childcare and care of the elderly. It also follows that because of the current lack of co-ordinated action across Wales the National Assembly should take a greater lead in this area.

9. A second area, is that of child care for children of different ages. Currently if a family is looking for childcare for two or more children of differing ages, e.g. 6 months and 6 years, they will most likely have to put together a number of different carers to form a package of care for both children. These different carers could well be geographically separated, and if one carer is unavailable on a particular day this can effectively ruin the whole package. The group felt that these complications effectively put a further barrier in place for families who want to arrange childcare to facilitate work. The group recommends that further work is conducted in this area to explore how more effective "packages" of care can be put together

10. The group agreed that there is a greater role to be played by the National Assembly and its ASPBs in demonstrating best practice in relation to childcare and family friendly practices. Exit interviews from these public sector bodies could be one way of assessing the real demand for childcare. If the public sector's provision in this area is poor, they are not in a position to effectively influence the private sector.

11. There is an issue of supply and demand. It may be that in areas where there is low provision of childcare, there is also low demand for childcare as a consequence of lack of demand for workers. However, it was felt by the group that by providing affordable childcare in these areas, returners to the workforce would be able to more easily commute into neighbouring more prosperous areas and would also be able to more easily access training and hence upskill themselves.

12. Many medium sized employers may quite rightly decide that it is not efficient to run any kind of childcare provision on their premises. Despite reservations by some, the group felt that there is still merit in exploring the potential for company level involvement in childcare provision within the local community, and that there is potential for such provision to become self financing, or create opportunities for care related businesses. In these circumstances there may be a role for the public sector to identify and work with potential employers who could well host such a scheme.

Conclusion

13. The issue of care for children and other dependents needs to be recognised as a growing, and serious barrier to fully engaging the skills, talents and entrepreneurial ability particularly, but not exclusively, of women in the workforce.

14. The economic benefits of freeing up this section of the potential workforce must be made transparent to the business community. In addition the benefits of supporting formal childcare in terms of increased language and social skills of the future workforce need to be stressed.

15. Although the state has a role to play it must focus on raising the credibility and status of the caring professions, ensuring that the appropriate mix of care provision is available and that consumer choice is catered for. This must include wide private sector involvement.

16. Research by the Family Policy Studies Centre concludes that demand for care work of all kinds will increase, and that dependence on existing labour, frequently women with low levels of education, little or no training, and willing to work for low wages is no longer acceptable or sustainable. New occupational structures and training with matching employment conditions must be introduced. For example, whilst childminders account for 25% of children receiving non-parental care, there is no formal career or wage structure.

Recommendations

- There has been a very wide spectrum of interest represented by the Childcare Taskforce. However, there is a danger that the large number of agencies and interests involved might hamper the development of focused action plans. We therefore recommend that a permanent arrangement is set up, which ensures that the Assembly's strategic leadership and direction to childcare strategy is supported by advice from the various sectors involved.
- An extensive market research exercise should be undertaken to identify and promote the existing and potential size, scope and potential of the Care market in Wales. The WDA would be prepared to undertake this as part of its strategy to identify and support growth service sector industries.
- A comprehensive database of available care services should be developed and promoted through employment agencies and business organisations, subject to confidentiality and child protection considerations.

- Alongside physical and activity based provision, consideration should be given to raising the status of childminding in Wales. This could be by creating a national network, registered and trained, and supported in areas of need by gap funding through structural funds. The prospect of guaranteed income would encourage people into the childcare workforce, and gap funding would bridge the affordability gap for parents. Appropriate exit strategies could be built in to encourage the private sector into the market.

CHAPTER 3

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Group Facilitator: Nigel Levi, ELWa

Purpose

- To examine how the expected demand for more childcare workers can be met in line with the Assembly's aim to increase the number of available childcare places in Wales;
- To discuss how the image and perception of the sector can be changed;
- To ensure that a training infrastructure is in place to meet demand but that it is also accessible and affordable.

Introduction

1. A number of research projects and reports have been undertaken by a number of organisations, many reaching similar conclusions in relation to recruitment and training:

i) a great deal of training is taking place but it lacks co-ordination;

ii) the funding available is sometimes difficult to access or is not sufficient to pay for the training;

iii) the sector is fragmented and hard to define because it overlaps significantly with related sectors, such as care, health and playwork making it difficult to identify all those involved;

iv) the sector's image of low pay and awkward hours with the perception it is a mainly female occupation is not helping to encourage people into the

industry.

2. In order to meet future demand for workers, there must be an adequate supply of the right people with the right skills. This requires a clear picture of likely demand and an equally clearly articulated, coherent network of training provision. For this to happen consideration must be given to ensuring there is an infrastructure in place to cope with any expansion.

The Current Position

Training

3. As previously stated a great deal of training is taking place in Wales but there is a lack of co-ordination between the organisations involved. Much of this is related to the lack of available long term and flexible funding.

a. Modern Apprenticeships and National Traineeships

The number of young people entering these programmes in childcare is relatively low compared to other sectors throughout Wales mainly due to three factors:

- i. the image of the sector and the low pay;
- ii. the calibre of young person entering training generally;
- iii. the introduction of tested key skills.
- iv. Many individuals who enter childcare are over 25 and are not eligible for funding within current regimes. The introduction of the new Modern Skills Diploma for Adults may assist to attract some in this group but it will not be relevant to the large majority of carers working below NVQ Level 3.

a. College Provision

College provision attracts large numbers of individuals, on average around 4,000 per year with a large number of these on non-NVQ courses. Students come from a range of age groups, the most predominant being 16 to 18 years and 25 to 39 years. However, little information is available on how many remain within childcare.

b. Childminding

Childminding is a very important part of the sector. There are approximately 2800 childminders registered across Wales, which is a reduction of about 1000 since 1999. However, funding for their training has usually been outside of mainstream funding, making long-term development and sustained growth difficult. A structured approach, with sustainable long-term funding is needed.

c. Training the Trainers

Within the childcare sector as a whole, there is a shortage of qualified people to deliver the training that is needed. There is a "chicken and egg" element in that unless there are sufficient trainees we will not be able to attract and retain the right quality of trainers in sufficient numbers.

Another vital part of childcare provision is the network of family and friends who act as carers. Ideally these groups' training needs should also be considered. However, they would be difficult to identify and informal care is not regulated in any way. We could provide opportunities but could not require people to take them.

A Qualifications Framework.

4. The status and relevance of training would be considerably enhanced if training provision were linked to a recognised qualifications framework. The basis for this already exists in the form of ACCAC's National Qualifications Framework for Early Years Education, Childcare and Playwork. The intention is to include all accredited external qualifications, with the exception of those awarded by higher education institutions.

Funding

5. Funding for childcare training can be broadly split into two categories; the first is long term and supports college courses and NVQs, the second supports other training activities and is usually short term.

a) The National Council for Education and Training - ELWa

6. The funding currently administered by the National Council was until April 1st 2000 administered by the Training Enterprise Councils and the Further Education Funding Council. Although the functions of these bodies have now been brought together under the National Council for Education and Training - ELWa, for 2001/2002 the inherited funding arrangements are largely unchanged:

- i. College provision is funded by the former FEFCW mechanism and in the main are non NVQ qualifications;
- ii. NVQ provision for those between the age of 16 and 25 is funded via the Modern Apprenticeship and National Traineeship route using the former TEC model;
- iii. For those over 25 a pilot is underway of the Modern Skills Diploma for Adults, which is targeted at those operating at NVQ Level 3.

b) Other Sources of Funding

7. The major area of concern with other sources of funding is that they have been short term. They have not allowed for the stability or growth of an infrastructure for the sector and consequently, training and recruitment has tended to be sporadic and not supportive of long-term sustainable growth.

- i. The National Council for Education and Training - ELWa - is reviewing its funding commitments for a

range of local initiatives. It is not clear at present what level of funding may be available in aggregate or what element of that could be deployed for childcare training. Previously the TECs used local discretionary funds for this purpose but they were generally short term or to pump prime particular projects.

- ii. European monies have also been used as a source of funding and obviously this could still be used in the future with bids being made under the appropriate Objective.
- iii. The New Opportunities Fund is a further important potential source for funding.

Image of the Sector

8. The childcare sector is very diverse, with private, public and voluntary dimensions. The individuals involved have a variety of job titles and the training requirements also vary greatly. Generally, low wages have led to the perception by many, including parents that little skill is required to work as a carer. In order to alter these perceptions fundamental changes are required.

9. Some work has already been done to address the image problem, notably the production of a video called "Making Choices" by the Early Years NTO and ACCAC has produced a National Framework of qualifications for the sector. In addition, the National Day Nurseries Association has produced a Recruitment and Selection pack that aims at assisting employers with the selection of staff and areas such as job descriptions, contracts of employment etc.

CONCLUSIONS

10. Although there are many examples of good or even excellent practice in childcare recruitment and training in Wales, they are piecemeal and patchy. This is in part due to:

- The sector is too dependent on being "market led" which does not help in the development of childcare that is accessible and local;
- The low wage rates for many carers affects the perception of the sector;

PROPOSAL

11. In order to address the issues of recruitment and training, the following is proposed:

- To align the supply with long-term demand;
- Funding and support to be less fragmented and long term thus allowing for sustainability and growth of an appropriate infrastructure of training and development aimed at both existing employees and new entrants into the sector;
- To ensure that the training and recruitment strategy takes into account the issue of language;
- To ensure that all training is of a consistently high quality across all areas of childcare and in all

regions of Wales;

- To draw up an action programme to transform the status of childcare and childcare as a career.

12. To ensure that this can be achieved and is sustainable, it is essential that we have a full understanding of demand and what pattern of supply is needed to meet it. This requires further work and analysis which should cover the following elements:

- What levels of skills and qualifications are needed in different parts of Wales?
- How far does the current level of skills and qualifications meet those needs?
- On the basis of the foregoing, what is the gap between future and current supply?
- What would it cost over what time scales to ensure that the gap is bridged?

13. This analysis will provide the basis, taking into account the National Assembly for Wales' policies and priorities, to determine what elements of this programme should have priority.

14. This work would also need to inform the design of programmes to raise the status of childcare as a career.

Process

15. To achieve the long-term goal it suggested that:

- Further research and analysis should be undertaken,
- Funding should be sought to undertake this work, including the funding of appropriate staff and the identification of an appropriate body to undertake the work. (*reference Maximising Resources chapter*)

16. The timescale for completion should be no longer than 12 months, however, this will depend upon a suitable source of funding being found and the appropriate processes being followed.

17. It is further suggested that in the short-term there would be value in continuing work on the following:

- i. The "core" and "cluster" models for childcare support (*reference Childcare to Meet the Needs of Children, Families and Communities*) will have training implications, therefore, it is vital that these are identified and funding found to allow the training to take place;
- ii. To assist with the process of recruitment and retention the development of generic starter courses is essential, good examples of these already exist which include managing behaviour, children's play, basic food hygiene and first aid. However, it is important that these courses are recognised and their funding is long term this could be addressed by the introduction of a training bursary (*reference Maximising Resources chapter*);
- iii. A key area in the recruitment and training strategy for childcare is the further development of a career

structure based on what already exists but ensuring that all qualifications are recognised by the whole of the sector, including the generic courses above. Further, the public sector should be encouraged to lead the way in this by using the qualification as appropriate rewards.

18. As stated earlier and in the *Maximising Resources chapter* consideration must be given to the funding implications and suitable sources will need to be sought.

Recommendations

- To establish which is the most appropriate source of funding for the research and analysis into the Childcare Sector by December 2001.
- Once funding is obtained to carry out the research and analysis to be completed by October 2002.
- An application for key funds to develop the generic starter courses and other appropriate training should be made as a short term measure
- To ensure that the qualifications and courses are considered by ELWa as part of their on-going review of funding.
- To work with partner organisations in the development and support of the integrated children centre models across Wales.
- To engage all key players within the sector to establish a quality framework for training supported by appropriate monitoring and evaluation.

CHAPTER 4

SUPPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INFORMATION

Group Facilitator: Ruth Marks, Chwarae Teg

Purpose of group

- To consider the support, infrastructure and information aspects of the national childcare strategy that should be developed across Wales.

Introduction

1. The current range of support, infrastructure and information relating to childcare provision in Wales lacks an overall strategy and direction. The National Assembly for Wales is working in partnership to develop a

framework, which meets the needs of children, their parents and carers, employers and Wales' society and the economy as a whole.

2. The main sources of support, infrastructure and information about children's services are found in local authorities, housed in the early years development childcare partnerships. The make-up and status (within local authorities) of the EYDCP's varies considerably across Wales and the establishment of all Wales consortium of the co-ordinators (AWARE) is most welcome.

3. National voluntary organisations including Wales PPA, Mudiol Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM), Play Wales and NCMA also provide a range of services as part of the overall childcare provision in Wales.

4. Information services have been developed in some local authority areas (notably Wrexham) and WCIS (Wales Childcare Information Services) is seen as a useful prototype upon which develop a new Web based national system.

5. We recognise that the Children and Families Division has faced severe challenges in providing the level of practical support that its partners require. It seeks to work with them in developing strategy and guidance. This is welcomed by the sectors (public and voluntary). However, this approach also places additional pressures in terms of consultation, participation in working groups and attendance at meetings.

Proposal

Short term requirements incorporating best practice

6. Planning guidance is required for 2002 onwards for EYDCPs. Much of the basis of the guidance already exists in previous documents. What is required is a review, analysis of current situation and updated guidance.

7. It is suggested that a dedicated civil servant from the Children and Families Division be allocated to this project with immediate effect. It should be the responsibility of this person to review guidance last issued 1999, meet with the EYDCPs and other key players in Wales and also compare recent guidance issued in England.

8. Draft guidance should be issued before the end of the year in order that the final document could be produced in February 2002 for 2002-03 financial year. If a dedicated civil servant is unavailable it is proposed that a secondee or other resource be found to undertake this work.

9. The following five points / strategic principles should be enshrined in the guidance: -

- quality
- affordability
- accessibility
- diversity
- partnership

10. The following strategies will need to be included in the guidance: -

- quality of services strategy
- recruitment strategy
- training and development strategy
- strategies for the development of Children's Information Services
- funding strategy.

(See Annex 1)

Infrastructure

11. The roles and responsibilities of EYDCPs, national childcare organisations and local services in terms of the strategic partnership linked in the National Assembly for Wales are focused on short, medium and long-term planning. The most important issue in relation to infrastructure is that of sustained provision.

12. It is therefore recommended that three-year funding be guaranteed and allocated for the period 2002-05. This will allow everyone involved in the planning and delivery of the national childcare strategy in Wales to focus on provision and planning as opposed to annual concerns about insecure funding or notification of monies.

13. The overall funding for the strategy in 2002-03 is £5.05m.

Support given to EYDCPs in the current year is £1.4m.

Support given to national childcare organisations in the current year is £0.9m. The difference is available for strategic development.

14. The overall thrust or direction of the national childcare strategy should be to meet identified needs of children, their parents and carers and Wales as a whole. In relation to provision of children's services to ensure that there are adequate quality places, employees and volunteers, and information provided regarding the services available. That ongoing training, quality assurance and evaluation is built into the rolling strategy. Links should be made here to be maximising resources subgroup, the New Opportunities Fund and European funds.

Human resource issues

15. A recruitment, retention and training strategy is required. Links should be made here with the training subgroup, National Training Organisations (NTOs), employers and training providers.

Information

16. Information services are required on a local and national basis. Some local authorities have developed information services within their areas (notably Wrexham). Additional support and guidance is required for local authorities to develop services appropriate to their area. The local service requires planning, design and IT development as well as a human element to deliver the best service. The importance of appropriate links to

a national system must not be forgotten. A sub-group of AWARE might wish to help plan and develop the national framework for local CIS provision. A set of minimum service standards already exists upon which to base developments across Wales. (See Annex 1)

17. There are two references in relation to developing a national system for Wales. The Wales Childcare Information Service (WCIS) developed by Chwarae Teg in partnership with many others has been a useful prototype. However the system is not Web based and is extremely labour-intensive in terms of updating and maintaining. The National Assembly for Wales has made an arrangement with a UK system -- Childcare Link. At the current time the Childcare Link information acts as a signpost to the 22 local authorities. It is recommended that a steering group develop a strategy for a national system to take advantage of the developments being undertaken by the Care Standards Inspectorate in terms of a database of registered provision.

18. Local authorities will obviously seek a degree of autonomy in relation to development of their local information services. Guidance should therefore be issued by the National Assembly for Wales to ensure that certain aspects are replicated across Wales to make the appropriate links to a national system.

This would ensure that funding available from the National Assembly is not duplicated in terms of service delivery and represents best value in the use of public funding in this important area of service provision.

Long-term aspirational goals

19. Detailed below are a range of goals that the subgroup believes the National Assembly and partners should aspire to over the next two to five years. Additional partnership work and financial investment will be required in order to achieve these goals. The group believes that the items listed represent ongoing partnership approach, a solid framework, best value and form part of a leading-edge children's strategy for Wales.

It is worth repeating that 3-year funding should be put into place in order that the strategy could build some continuity.

Support

20. There is acknowledgement of the additional resource identified by the National Assembly for Wales over the next couple of years. This should be maximised with other available sources of funding to enable the requirements of local and national plans to be met. Additional resources both financial and human are essential to provide a long-term sustainable support programme.

Infrastructure

21. The National Assembly for Wales, local authorities, voluntary organisations, ELWa and the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) should establish a support and advisory group to discuss, consider, evaluate and plan in relation to the national childcare strategy. It suggested that this forum should meet twice a year. This could be a continuation of the current National Childcare Strategy Task Group.

22. The forum detailed above would monitor that there are appropriate financial planning decisions made

across the Assembly to deliver and develop the Childcare Strategy. Cross-departmental links throughout the assembly are vital. The responsibility should rest with the Children and Families Division (CFD) to ensure that colleagues in economic development, education, health and social services, social policy and finance, local authorities and the voluntary sector partnership are fully aware of their plans and work. The recruitment, retention and training issue has important link to ELWa and the NTOs. (See training subgroup chapter)

23. The forum would also review the planning guidance to be issued to EYDCPs and the progress towards the delivery of local plans including the provision of information services. Again, one of the most important features will be the long-term view concerning the sustainability and continuity of the strategy.

Information

24. Local systems will be developed across Wales and will be both Web based and have a human resource element. A national Web system will also be developed and links to the Care Standards Inspectorate and to any appropriate UK provision should be developed. There should be a free Wales based telephone helpline.

25. Local and national services will meet the minimum standards and build appropriate links with UK wide models.

Recommendations

Support and infrastructure

- Allocate civil servant or secondee to prepare guidance
- Review last guidance issued to EYDCPs, compare with current guidance issued in England and talk with colleagues across Wales.
- Draft guidance for EYDCPs
- Discuss with local authorities
- Issue guidance
- Regional seminars / national conference for EYDCPs to meet with CFSD.
- National Childcare Strategy Task Force (NCSTF) to meet late January/early Feb because budget is known that this stage
- National Childcare Strategy Task Force (NCSTF) to meet early September to review progress and plan for following year.

Information

Local service development: -

- Guidance required for spend in this financial year.
- Guidance required for ongoing developments.

- Possible sub-group of AWARE to be established.

National information service: -

- Meet key players in England, Scotland and Wales
- Develop a specification for the development of a national system linking with the Care Standards work.
- Issue tender for IT firm / person to undertake the development work, installation, training and maintenance strategy.
- Monitor and evaluate.
- Question of ownership of national system.

CHAPTER 5

MAXIMISING RESOURCES

Group Facilitator: Jeanie Gray, New Opportunities Fund

Purpose of group

- To consider how to maximise the funding of childcare provision, infrastructure support and development and training for childcare workers.

The Current Situation

The National Assembly

1. The funding from the Childcare Strategy for infrastructure support totals £3m per year and is used to support the childcare partnerships and the development team currently employed by Chwarae Teg. It is generally agreed that this is insufficient to sustain an adequate infrastructure.
2. The Assembly proposes in the Children and Young People: a Framework for Partnership document that existing funding schemes should be combined from April 2002 into a new Children and Young People's Support Fund.
3. In other parts of the UK, regeneration funding has been used to help to develop and sustain childcare provision in disadvantaged communities. Communities First funding could provide a similar role in Wales.

European funding (Objective 1& 3)

4. It is difficult to have a comprehensive and strategic approach to childcare development under the European programmes. There is around £22 million available from the European Social Fund, £18m via Objective 1 and £4m via Objective 3, but this dispersed over a number of priorities supporting economic development and

training initiatives. The development of childcare occurs frequently within the Objective 1 priorities and under Objective 3 as a support measure for training or job creation, but not as an intervention in its own right. The most promising prospects are Objective 3 - Priority 5 and Objective 1 - Priority 4.

5. Some Early Year Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCPs) have been successful obtaining European funding, for example, to provide enhanced childcare information services, including part-time staff to raise awareness of Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) and to recruit more child care workers. Others are exploring potential bids. This is hampered by difficulties in accessing information and advice on European funding and in some local authority areas, by limited contact between those involved with childcare with those responsible for implementing the local action plans and European programmes.

New Opportunities Fund

6. The Fund has £10m remaining in its current programme to 2003 and £13m in its new programme to 2006 for childcare development.

Until recently these funds have been for 1 year start up costs only. The difficulty with sustaining schemes, particularly in disadvantaged areas has been recognised.

A proportion of the existing programme has been made available for 2nd and 3rd year funding in the 30% most deprived electoral divisions, using the Assembly's Index of Multiple Deprivation. The new programme will consider sustainability, capacity building, training, and capital expenditure and supported play.

Working Families Tax Credit

7. The WFTC can cover up to 70% of eligible childcare costs. Take up is low and the credit does not apply to people who are in training.

Capital

8. New Opportunities Fund and the Assembly are looking at the funding of Integrated Childcare Centres, which could make a significant contribution to childcare provision, particularly in disadvantaged areas. There is further information on these centres in the section of the report on, Developing Childcare to meet the Needs of Children, Families and Communities in Socially Disadvantaged Areas. However, there is likely to remain a shortfall in sources of capital investment to expand and improve mainstream childcare provision.

What requires funding?

The following were identified as the key areas requiring funding.

- Childcare provision, in particular set up and sustainability costs.
- Development and support infrastructure to set up childcare organisations, help co-ordinate bids and access funding from different sources.

- Capital investment in childcare facilities
- Training and quality employment opportunities for childcare workers.

The Way Forward

Sustainable Childcare

Issue

9. In most areas it is difficult to use the short-term sources of funding to create sustainable childcare provision. Long term subsidy will be required in the more disadvantaged communities. In addition, although there are some areas of high demand, in other areas demand is depressed by factors such as, traditional use of family and friends, incomes insufficient to pay for childcare, a little incentive to seek training or work opportunities. There is also a lack of awareness of the financial support provided by ELWa for childcare for unemployed individuals in training.

Proposal

10. Applications should be made for European Funding to extend childcare provision and enable it to become self-sustaining.

Process

11. The most appropriate route would be strategic bids through local action plans. These could be co-ordinated by EYDCPs through the local authorities' European funding structures. This would require EYDCPs to be involved in scrutinising bids for European funding. Although this is being achieved in some areas through the establishment of working groups, it needs to be extended to other areas.

12. Information and briefings should be provided by the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO), for childcare projects on accessing European funding. The experience of EYDCPs who have made successful applications for European funding and best practice /methods of informing and raising awareness about WFTC should also be shared between the EYDCPs.

Time frame

13. Bids should start be made during the current financial year, but would be assisted in the future by the appointment of the funding facilitators, outlined below under infrastructure support and development. In the intervening period WEFO, EYDCPs and childcare development teams should exchange information.

Resources

14. Match funding could be provided from the New Opportunities Fund and the Assembly's existing

resources.

Infrastructure Support and Development

Issue

15. The EYDCPs and childcare development teams have limited resources, which are generally fully utilised in supporting their core activities. There is, therefore, limited capacity to organise complex bids to several funding sources. The resources available for childcare provision from New Opportunities Fund and the National Assembly for Wales also needs to be maximised using European funding. There is, however, no lead childcare organisation to co-ordinate and take forward European bids at an all Wales level for both Objective 1 and Objective 3 funds.

Proposal

16. It is proposed that regional bids be made under Objective 1 and 3 for a team of European Funding Facilitators, managed by an appropriate lead organisation. These facilitators would assist EYDCPs and childcare providers in preparing applications for European and other sources of funding.

Process

17. Efforts have been made by a working group of Taskforce members to implement this proposal and identify an appropriate organisation to take a bid forward.

Time frame

18. A bid for funding for the facilitators should be made during the current financial year.

Resources

19. Match funding for the bid could be provided by New Opportunities Fund under its 3rd Round programme, which includes a measure for capacity building.

Training for childcare workers

Issue

20. The lack of qualified childcare workers requires an investment in appropriate training. In addition there is a need to provide cover for childcare workers and volunteers to attend training.

Proposal

21. It is proposed that a key fund be established under Objective 1 to provide training bursaries, for childcare

workers. Options for parts of Wales outside Objective 1 will need to be explored.

Process

22. The model developed in Northern Ireland, by the Training and Employment Agency could form the basis for the scheme. It is suggested that the bursaries could be used towards the cost of achieving a required qualification. This could include the cost of the course, travelling and other expenses and the cover for absence.

23. This proposal needs to be considered against the recommendations in the Recruitment and Training Section of this report.

Timeframe

24. Ideally this needs to be implemented during the current financial year, but the time frame put forward in the Recruitment and Training Section of this report will also need to be taken into account.

Resources

25. The funds in New Opportunities Fund 3rd round programme allocated for training could be used to match fund the Key Fund. New Opportunities Fund funding would also be available for areas outside Objective 1.

Capital

Issue

26 Lack of suitable premises for childcare is a significant hindrance to the development of childcare.

Proposal

27. An audit of buildings available for childcare should be undertaken to identify the scale of the problem. The proposals put forward in section of the report on Developing Childcare to meet the Needs of Children, Families and Communities in Socially Disadvantaged Areas, should also be considered, as these will also influence priorities for capital investment. The New Opportunities Fund and National Assembly should, therefore, in consultation with others, decide the most appropriate contribution the Fund could make towards capital investment for childcare provision, in Wales.

Time frame

28. As soon as possible

Resources

29. The capital funding element from the New Opportunities Fund 3rd round programme will be available to fund capital investment in childcare provision. It is unlikely that match funding will be available from EU sources for this provision

Recommendations

30. It is recommended that;

- All Wales Regional bids are made under Objective 1 and 3, to establish a team of Funding Facilitators to assist EYDCPs and childcare providers in submitting applications for EU and other funding, using match funding from New Opportunities Fund and National Assembly. The National Assembly for Wales should work with other members of the Task force to identify and agree a suitable lead organisation to co-ordinate these bids.
- Local bids for European funding are co-ordinated to provide sustainable childcare using current New Opportunities Fund and National Assembly for Wales funding as match funding.
- An application for a key fund for training should be made to the Human Resources Partnership under Objective 1.
- The Assembly investigate how a survey of buildings used for childcare could be undertaken, to identify current provision and need.
- The New Opportunities Fund and the National Assembly, in consultation with others, should decide on the priorities for the capital funding element of the Fund's 3rd round childcare programme.
- Information and briefings should be provided, by WEFO, for childcare projects on accessing European funding and EYDCPs should share best practice with regard to European funding and WFTC. Local Authority European Funding Units should involve EYDCPs in European funding bids.

Annex 1

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Annex 2

Minimum Information Standards

The following defines the minimum service which all users can expect from any CIS which meets the standards in this Code of Practice. The method of delivery may vary according to the individual service rationale.

Users can expect:

- To Know how to contact the CIS and how it can help them e.g. through a statement of service.
- Their enquiry and any personal circumstances to be treated in confidence.
- A service which is impartial, objective and accessible.
- Support and guidance to help them identify their requirements.
- An explanation of the different types of childcare provision available.
- Guidance on how to choose the provision which is most suited to their needs and those of their children.

- Detailed, accurate and up to date information about all the registered childcare provision in there are which meets their needs.
- Access to further help or guidance about wider childcare issues e.g. sources of financial assistance.
- The opportunity to comment on the service they have received and how it could be improved.

Source: Raising the Standard; The Code of Practice for Children’s Information Services.

Choices in Childcare; The National Network of Children’s Information Services.

Annex 3

Integrated Childcare/Early Education/Enrichment Provision – Possible Model (Appendix1)

Daycare provision for children 0-3 (at cost to parent) available full or half day (8.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.)

Network of childminders offering care and education in surrounding area

Breakfast club	Early Years Education Provision	3.30 – 6.00
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8.00 – 9.00 a.m. (LEA, WPPA, MYM, NCMA, day Nursery)

Age 3+ - 14	9.00 a.m. –12.00 OR 1.00 – 3.30 p.m. 3 to 4 year olds	After school club p.m.
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(age split in provision)	Wrap around care to top up to full day for parents who work or train, or wish their children to attend full time (if appropriate) 9 am – 12.00 OR 1.00 – 3.30 p.m.	Age 3+ - 14
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3 to 4 year olds	Children 4 in full time education	(age split in provision)
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The above "packages" provide full cover for children aged 0-11/14 of working parents

Parenting support courses, training – NVQ, childcare, IT, vocational, personal development, etc. to meet the identified needs of local parents – supported by the early education and childcare above (9.00 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.)

Young Mothers programme – ongoing education, health and childcare support for mothers of school age who wish to access the service

Health "drop in" sessions available, focusing on various issues – ante natal, sexual health, breastfeeding, diet and nutrition, etc – again supported by the early education and childcare above (9.00 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.)
Parent and Toddler – 2 days per week 9.00 a.m. – 12.00
Parent support group – input from Health, Education, Social Services, Voluntary sector -as identified and requested by parents

Integrated Childcare / Early Education / Enrichment Centre- Possible Model Continued

Drop in youth provision, with IT suite, sexual health advice, housing and benefits support

- New Deal, (Extending Entitlement), Children and Youth P’ship – 1.00 p.m. – 9.00 p.m. (Age 11-25+)
Range of appropriate sport, leisure and enrichment activities to meet identified needs of young people – possibly to include staffed adventure play (NOF), climbing wall, etc.

Training and support activities to encourage participation, "social capital", volunteering, capacity building and citizenship

Centre also hosts staff from Sure Start, EYDCP, Children and Youth (Extending Entitlement), NOF European funding officer, college satellite staff, etc., plus range of Voluntary Sector organisations, the local CIS, Health Outreach, Benefits Agency, NDLP, SEN/Disability advice, etc a "ONE STOP SHOP" – (links to Healthy Living Centres.)

Transport attached to the centre allows parents from beyond "pram pushing" distance to be transported in, and for children, young people and parents to be taken to events and activities.

Diagram of "Core and Cluster" Model

Annex 4

Integrated Childcare/Early Education/Enrichment Centre – Possible Model of Funding Sources

Age range of children Possible funding sources -current

Possible funding sources - Future

0 – 3 – daycare	<p>NOF – capital/revenue (wrap around care) 1-3 years dependent on area</p> <p>National Childcare Strategy – capital (low level of funding)</p> <p>Integrated centres (expansion of Early Ed. NAFW)-capital</p> <p>WFTC – revenue</p> <p>Lottery – capital/ revenue –if meeting criteria (status of provider, area of exclusion)</p> <p>Sure Start –if meeting criteria (status of family, target area)</p> <p>Europe - capital/revenue - if supporting training/employment</p> <p>Parental fees</p>	<p>Children and Young People Support Fund</p> <p>WFTC – revenue</p> <p>Lottery – capital/ revenue –if meeting criteria (status of provider, area of exclusion)</p> <p>Europe - capital/revenue - if supporting training/employment</p> <p>Communities First?</p> <p>Local Authority – Ed., Soc. Serv., Ec. Dev.</p>
3 – 14 Out of school care	<p>NOF – capital/revenue 1-3 years dependent on area</p> <p>National Childcare Strategy –revenue (sustainability)</p> <p>WFTC – revenue</p> <p>Lottery – capital/ revenue –if meeting criteria (status of provider, area of exclusion)</p> <p>Parental fees</p>	<p>Children and Young People Support Fund</p> <p>Local Authority – Ed., Soc. Serv., Ec. Dev.</p> <p>NOF – capital/revenue 1-3 years Dependent on area</p> <p>WFTC – revenue</p> <p>Lottery – capital/ revenue –if meeting criteria (status of provider, area of exclusion)</p> <p>Communities First?</p>

Integrated Childcare/Early Education/Enrichment Centre – Possible Model of Funding Sources

8 and above - enrichment, play, sport, information	Children and Youth P' ship National Childcare Strategy –revenue (sustainability)	Children and Young People Support Fund NOF – capital/revenue 1-3 years dependent on area – staffed adventure play
	Lottery – capital/ revenue –if meeting criteria (status of provider, area of exclusion)	Extending Entitlement
	(SportLot?)	
Training and Capacity Building	Children and Youth P' ship National Childcare Strategy –revenue (sustainability)	Children and Young People Support Fund Local Authority – Community Education
	Lottery – capital/ revenue –if meeting criteria (status of provider, area of exclusion)	NOF Europe (ESF)
	(SportLot?)	ELWa
	Europe (ESF)	Colleges -satellite sites
	ELWa	
Health	Colleges -satellite sites NHS Trusts	(Replacement for Trusts?)
	Local Health Groups	Local Health Groups
	NOF – Healthy Living Centres	NOF – Healthy Living Centres

Glossary

EYDCP Early Years and Childcare Development Partnership

WFTC Working Families Tax Credit

WEFO Wales European Funding Office

CIS Children's Information Service

WCIS Wales Children Information Services

WDA Welsh Development Agency

ELWa Education & Learning Wales

NTO National Training Organisation