

REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE- 22nd APRIL 2002
DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE- 22nd APRIL 2002

REPORT ON: CONTINUATION OF SURE START STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

JOINT REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 269-2002

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This Report seeks approval for proposals for taking forward Sure Start Dundee for the period April 2002- March 2004 to enhance and extend support and provision for children aged 0-3 and their families.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education and Social Work Committees:

- 2.1 approve the continuation strategy outlined
- 2.2 approve the proposals for expenditure of Sure Start Funding in the financial years 2002/3 and 2003/4
- 2.3 remit the Director of Education to liaise with the Director of Personnel and Management Services to continue the deployment of staff involved in Sure Start initiatives until the end of March 2004.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The financial implications of this Report will be met entirely from Scottish Executive Sure Start Funding of £653,000 available within the GAE for the years 2002/3 and 2003/4.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Delivery of the Sure Start Strategy will support access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A key aspect of the Sure Start Strategy is to improve access by a wider range of children and their families to services and provision in local areas.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Sure Start is a national initiative, established in 2000, to improve services for children in the first years of life and to support their families. A Report to the Education and Social Work Committees (refer to Report No 645-2000) set out the initial proposals for delivery of Sure Start in Dundee. The Sure Start Initiative has been co-ordinated by the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership as an integral aspect of Dundee's early years and childcare strategy. The Sure Start targets are outlined in the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2001- 2004.
- 6.2 Initial funding for The Sure Start initiative was for two years only until the end of March 2002. Additional funding has been made to continue the Sure Start programme for a further two years until the end of March 2004. This Report seeks approval to roll forward the Sure Start projects for the continued period.
- 6.3 The Dundee Sure Start strategy encompasses a range of projects and initiatives designed to support children in the first years of life and their families. These have been delivered by a range of service providers and have had significant impact in shaping the direction of service development.
- 6.4 The trend towards integration of early years services delivery is now recognised to have very important implications for ongoing service development. A first principle is that more children should be able to access a range of services which are integrated at the point of delivery. In particular where families have wide ranging needs, providing services within multi purpose facilities can better address the all round needs of children and families and promote social inclusion by 'normalising' family support and intervention.
- 6.5 Sure Start increased the momentum for early years service development. Planning for Sure Start has afforded an important opportunity to think again about how best to support very young children and how to enhance their lives and experiences through appropriate and sensitive interventions, which also reflect the critical role that parents play.
- 6.6 A multi- agency Sure Start Strategy and Implementation Group was established in 2000 with membership from education, social work, health and the voluntary and private sectors.
- 6.7 The Strategy is comprehensive and wide-ranging and has been designed to meet a challenging agenda. The key strategies can be summarised under the following broad categories:
- Centre based provision which includes childcare and broader family support services
 - Parent support groups or programmes
 - Home visiting programmes
 - Community outreach services
 - Early Intervention
 - Training and staff development and production of staff development materials
 - Partnership and collaboration across agencies and departments, including health
- 6.8 A key development within the Sure Start programme is the development of new service models at Woodlea Children's Centre, Charleston Primary School and Happyhillock Child and Family Centre.

7.0 CONTINUATION PROPOSALS

7.1 It is proposed to continue the development of Sure Start and to deploy available Sure Start resources in order to support this. The key projects and associated resource implications are outlined below.

7.2 Sure Start Early Intervention Projects

All age eligible children are now entitled to a part-time pre-school education place. Dundee has 100% provision available to meet this entitlement. However there is a clear recognition that some children will have a need for a more intensive level of support from an earlier stage in life. These may be children with special educational needs and also those whose first years of life have been hampered by environmental or social challenges. There is clear acknowledgement that intervening early to provide an appropriate response can often reduce the need for later and more resource intensive intervention.

Three early intervention projects were established in Woodlea Children's Centre, Kirkton Nursery and Child and Family Centre and Ardlar Primary School and Child and Family Centre. These projects have identified groups of children aged 2-4 who need more support. They have been very successful in bridging the work of nursery schools and child and family centres, in strengthening the support available to children who may have otherwise required a more specialist placement, in building a tiered approach to supporting children with assessed needs, in linking home and early years settings and in promoting effective inter-agency collaboration and improved coordination of services.

A total of 60 children aged 2-4 are directly involved in Sure Start early intervention but the projects have a wider impact on a larger number of children attending the three facilities where the projects are operational. Dundee Educational Psychology Department is currently evaluating the impact of the projects. An interim report will be available in autumn 2002 but initial feedback from staff, parents and the children themselves is highly encouraging. A programme of staff development has been delivered to support the delivery of these projects. The resource implication for the continuation of these projects is the ongoing deployment of 3 teachers and 3 nursery nurses.

7.3 Sure Start Outreach Projects

3 outreach posts are established to support the development and enhancement of services for young children and families in areas of the city where there are gaps in service provision. The role of each worker is to liaise closely with other local service providers and to promote a partnership approach to the identification and response to presenting need in each local area.

The Hilltown, St Mary's and Charleston areas have initially been targeted as three areas where services are needed. The outreach workers are linked into the three child and family centres in or near the local neighbourhoods in which the outreach projects are operating. A range of new services has now been developed and supported in these neighbourhoods including parent and child groups, parent groups and family support services.

These projects have maximised the use of existing community resources including child and family centres, nurseries, churches, libraries and neighbourhood centres. In addition the projects have been able to improve the co-ordination of local services and to support better multi-agency collaboration. It is proposed to retain 3 outreach worker posts and to extend and re-focus their work to include a wider range of areas, including Menzieshill and Stobswell.

7.4 Development of Integrated Early Years Services

Sure Start has supported the development of three new integrated early years settings. These include the funding of posts at Woodlea Children's Centre, the

establishment of a new 0-3s provision at Charleston Primary School and a daycare facility at Happyhillock Child and Family Centre.

The development of these facilities has improved the capacity of services to provide for the full range of children's education and care needs within a single facility. This aims to improve the outcomes for children and families and promote inclusion by using the universally available services as a gateway to appropriate additional services and facilities. This is in line with local and national agendas to improve the co-ordination of services and also takes forward the action outlined in "For Scotland's Children".

The total resource required to continue these initiatives is:

- 7 social work posts at Woodlea
- 3 posts at Charleston 0-3s
- 3 posts at Happyhillock Daycare service

7.5 Voluntary Sector Projects

The original Sure Start guidance emphasised the role of the voluntary sector in providing services for young children and their families. Dundee is well supported by innovative voluntary sector projects which have supported the delivery of Sure Start. These include the Dundee Sitter Service, Homestart Dundee and the MidCraigie and Linlathen Under 12s Project. It is proposed to provide funding to these organisations for a further 2 years to enable them to continue to play an important part in delivering Sure Start.

The Dundee Sitter Service

This offers a sitter service to parents from 7.30am until 10.30pm in their own homes. This supports families with childcare at times when no other services are available. A range of needs are met, including those of lone parents who are working shifts or studying or families with significant health needs. The Sitter Service has gained national recognition as a unique, flexible, responsive and affordable childcare service. This service requires total funding of £55,000, £15,000 of which is funded from Sure Start to maintain its current level of service.

Home Start Dundee

This is a long established and respected project in Dundee, part of a national voluntary sector organisation. This provides volunteers, parents themselves, to support other parents in their own homes who are experiencing a range of difficulties, such as post-natal depression or who have particular circumstances such as a child with disability. It is non-stigmatised and informal and makes an enormous difference to the families who benefit from it.

It is proposed to provide Sure Start funding of £29,000 to Home Start which will support an increase in the current level of service of 11 families and 8 additional volunteers.

7.6 The Pre-School Home Visiting Service

This service is part of the education department provision for children under 5. It visits children and their parents at home, often in the first year of life. In particular children with special educational needs are referred to the service.

In addition the service works with children and parents experiencing a range of other needs. The service also offers support to early years centres about individual children and this has meant that children with significant additional needs have been able to take up a mainstream nursery or child and family centre placement.

The Pre School Home Visiting Service also works with a range of other professionals including educational psychologists, paediatricians, health visitors and therapists and has had an increasingly strong service co-ordinating role. Very importantly this service has supported children at transition points as they move into and between early years settings and on into primary schools.

Sure Start has allowed a further 2 teachers to be deployed to the service, making a total staff compliment of 3.6. The Early Years and Childcare Officer manages the Pre School Home Visiting Team who work closely with the Early Years and Childcare Team. It is proposed to maintain the staff team within the Pre- School Home Visiting Service by funding two teachers from Sure Start.

7.7 The Sports Development Initiative

Again this has been highly successful and well received initiative. Leisure and Arts had previously provided this initiative to children in SIP 1 areas. Sure Start funding has meant that the initiative can be offered across the City. This promotes physical development and movement in young children, encouraging children and their parents to be active and to enjoy physical activity. In particular this initiative has had significant impact on children with disabilities and it is intended to strengthen this aspect of the work over the next two years.

The initiative works in nurseries, child and family centres and community groups. In the past 6 months a total of 135 children and parents have taken part and it is anticipated that this level of service will be continued over the next two years. A full evaluation of the first six months of this project has been conducted and a report is due to be published by the end of April 2002.

7.8 The Sure Start Health Workers

This project has been the subject of Committee approval in December 2001 (refer to Report number 816-2001). This is the result of effective collaboration between the Early Years and Childcare Partnership and Health and means that two health visitors will be attached to early years services. This will aim to meet the needs of children globally and comprehensively by adding a focus on health to the education and social work services already available. The full cost of this initiative is £50,000 in each of the two financial years 2002/3 and 2003/4.

7.9 Early Years and Childcare Team

The Sure Start budget also supports a portion of the salary costs for the Early Years and Childcare Team.

8.0 CONSULTATION

This Report has been the subject of consultation with the Directors of Finance, Support Services, Personnel and Management Services.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

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Continuation of Sure Start Strategy and Implementation

APPENDIX 1: Financial Outline

Project	2002/3	2003/4
Early Intervention Projects	131,000	135,000
Outreach Workers	74,000	76,000
Woodlea	105,000	110,000
Happyhillock Daycare	47,000	48,000
Charleston 0-3s	52,000	53,000
Sitter Service	15,000	15,000
Home Start	29,000	29,000
Pre-School Home Visiting Service	59,000	62,000
Sports Development	25,000	24,000
Health Workers	50,000	50,000
Early Years Team Salaries	38,000	40,000
Total Proposed Committed Expenditure	625,000	642,000
Available Expenditure	653,000	653,000
Non- committed expenditure*	28,000	11,000

** Not all available expenditure is committed within these proposals. This will allow for additional small scale resourcing of the initiatives.*

