

Minutes from Sutherland CCFRP Meeting

Friday 24th March 2006, at 10:30am in the Committee Room, Brora

Present:

Sam Brogan – Senior Childcare & Family Resource Officer
Fiona Carter – SCMA Development Officer
Cllr Rita Finlayson – Children's Champion
Valerie Gale – Highland Pre-School Services
Dawn Grant – Area Children's Services Manager
Jacquie Hutchinson – Senior Family Liaison Officer
Rosie James – Health Visitor
Ann Keatinge – Voluntary Groups East Sutherland
Irene MacKintosh – Forward with Families
Christine MacLean – Gaarfields Day Care Centre
Innis Mitchell – Integration Manager
Catherine Sutherland – Family First Co-ordinator
Glynne Williamson – Early Years Development Officer
Gillian Unger, Ann Nicol & Marie Rhodes – Farr Edge 2000Ltd
Carla Gallon – Administrative Assistant (minute taker)

Apologies from:

Lynne Bannister – Family First
Gwash Campbell – Community Education Officer
Myra Clark – The Young Karers East Sutherland
Bill Couston – ECS Manager for Sutherland
Miles Greenford – Public Health Practitioner
Lindsay Gunn – Childcare & Family Resource Officer
Joyce McTaggart – Out of School Care Federation
Julia Nelson – Health Development Officer
Campbell Stewart – JobCentre Plus

2) Minutes of the last meeting 27th January 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 27th January 2006 were approved as a true record by Dawn Grant and seconded by Ann Keatinge. The minutes will be submitted for inclusion at the next Sutherland County Committee Meeting.

3) Matters Arising:

Childcare and Family Resource Officer post for Sutherland

Dawn Grant advised that she had briefly discussed this item with Bill Alexander and agreement was held between them that if the Early Years Review was to continue in Sutherland, then it would seriously need to be considered to re-instate this post again. A definite decision will be made shortly, but the post may not be re-advertised until later in the new financial year.

Dawn Grant to feedback further information at the next meeting

Food Hygiene Training:

It was noted that there was no funding left within the 05-06 financial year budget for this training. As per discussions from the last meeting regarding new food hygiene legislation and the effects on present standards held by certificate holders, Val Gale sought agreement from the other members as to whether the Childcare Partnership would facilitate this training within the new financial year?

All members agreed. For action by Val Gale/Lindsay Gunn

Keeping Children Safe Training

Val informed members that the next training had been planned for Monday 24th April in the Rhiconich Hotel. It was initially planned to hold the training in Scourie but it was not possible, due to the lack of a suitable venue. A flyer promoting the training will be distributed nearer the time.

Child Protection Training

Dawn advised that this training was being held in the Caithness Naver Centre on the 26th and 27th April. She also mentioned that it would be running in the Marine Hotel in Brora on the 13th and 14th September. If anyone is interested in booking places on the training please contact Sheila Newton or Linda MacLennan (both Highland Council employees).

Feedback from Positive Behaviour Training

Although no formal feedback had been received as yet from Audrey Tomlinson, Rosie James advised that she had heard the training was a success. Irene MacKintosh attended the training and she confirmed Rosie's views. Approximately 14 people attended the training. Val Gale stated that there would be further training in Positive Behaviour planned within this new financial year, and that locations on the West Coast would be looked at to possible host this training.

Speech and Language Therapists

Rosie distributed contact information for all the Speech & Language Therapists based in Sutherland. (Attached with the minutes - for additional copies please ask Rosie James or Carla Gallon). Brief discussion was held regarding the Therapists, and all members agreed that the information provided by Rosie was extremely useful.

Early Years Review update

Innis Mitchell informed all members that the review was still ongoing, but had now been extended over a two year period, due to the fact that further detailed consultation is required in some areas and long-term future concerns over provision need to be considered.

Rita Finlayson suggested that Innis ask Bill Couston (Area Education, Culture & Sport Manager for Sutherland) to attend the next CCFRP meeting and allow members his plans regarding timescales, etc... for the future of the Early Years Review.

For action by Innis Mitchell

4) Sustainability of Childcare Providers: Information provided by Fiona Carter

Fiona Carter advised members that The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) has submitted a bid to Working for Families for sustained childcare support for a Childminder within Sutherland. She gave detailed information about what exactly was being asked for; the proposal being that a childminder could be given a fixed salary for one year, the contribution from the bid from Working for Families being dependant on the number of children that he or she is providing childcare for at any one time. It was noted that the bid had not been processed as yet.

Fiona was asked at the previous meeting to provide details regarding the possibility of the Childcare Partnership sustaining a childcare provider for a fixed term, to give an idea as to what it would cost and whether it might be possible to allow this to happen in the future. This information was distributed at the meeting (and attached with the minutes) and the details were discussed by all members.

Dawn asked what the current situation was with regard to the RSPA funding bid which Phil Tomalin has been overseeing. Part of this funding bid contained an element relating to childcare. It was noted that there had been no update on this yet. Once an update has been established this item can be discussed again.

5) FINAL Budget Review 2005 - 2006

Input from Gillian Unger, Farr Edge 2000Ltd: Gillian gave details to all members regarding the expansion of Farr Edge 2000Ltd from Out of School Care to full day care (wrap-around) provision. An average of 9 children currently use the facilities on a regular basis. Cover is provided in the Tongue and Farr area, based in Bettyhill.

Gillian explained that grant funding for the provision had dried up last year and so Farr Edge had applied to the Childcare Partnership at the beginning of last year for financial assistance. The service was granted £1,000 of their initial bid for £19,000 and advised by the Childcare Partnership to seek assistance from a CASE Business Advisor with regard to their application before it would be fully considered. Gillian explained that liaisons had taken place between Farr Edge 2000Ltd and CASE Business advisor Andrew Murray, but noted that the organisation were not agreeable to the suggestions and proposals put forward by Mr Murray. The application was never re-submitted as funding from Children in Need was provided for Farr Edge 2000Ltd until September 2006. As a result of this, it has been possible to sustain posts for the short-term future at least.

Ann Nicol had prepared a financial summary for Farr Edge 2000Ltd and a copy of this was provided at the meeting. (Funding Sub-Group Members wishing to view a copy of the financial summary please ask Carla Gallon).

The two main concerns that were raised for the future regarding the organisation were as follows:

- 1) The sustainability of 1 post will be uncertain after September 2006-03-28
- 2) The majority of funding available to Farr Edge 2000Ltd for the future would be ring-fenced for things like training and sustaining posts etc, etc... Gillian Unger noted that there would not be funding to cover essential maintenance, refurbishments, or updating equipment and facilities.

Sam Brogan explained that SVQ Training should be done through the Highland Council – at no cost to the organisation.

For Follow-up and Action by Gillian Unger and Sam Brogan

The Childcare Partnership advised Gillian that if Farr Edge 2000Ltd would be looking to submit an application for funding assistance within 06-07, to do so as soon as possible, giving detailed and accurate information regarding projection figures and costs.

Other Budget Matters:

Gaarfields application for sustainability: Val informed members of the current situation at Gaarfields Day Care Centre, on behalf of Christine MacLean. A decision now has to be made regarding the future of Gaarfields and whether it is to continue running as part of the Out Of School Care Federation (OOSC Fed) or whether to revert back to running as a private day-care provider. It was agreed that the application submitted by Gaarfields for sustainability funding from the Childcare Partnership would be considered after this decision had been made. Some concerns regarding the future of Gaarfields were discussed by Rita Finlayson, Ann Keating, Sam Brogan and Christine MacLean.

Ann Keatinge to provide assistance to Christine in tackling some of the issues

Final Budget Allocations: Dawn explained the last minute funding allocations that were granted to Gaarfields. The Budget Summary was distributed to all members. The Budget Summary detailed how the 05-06 funding was spent. No decision on the allocation for the 06-07 Budget for Sutherland has yet been made.

6) Members Updates

Written copies of members' updates were distributed at the meeting from:

Fiona Carter, SCMA

Jacque Hutchinson, Sure Start

Irene MacKintosh, Forward with Families

Catherine Sutherland, Family First

Catherine also wanted to mention that she and two volunteers had attended the Highland Wellbeing Alliance Violence against Women Training held recently in Inverness. Over 100 people in total attended this training. Demand in Sutherland is very high for this, so it was suggested that the Childcare Partnership could possibly consider flagging this up with Gillian Gunn, Domestic Abuse Campaign Co-ordinator for the future.

(These updates are also attached with this minute)

7) AOCB & DONM

AOCB: Representation on the Childcare and Family Resource Partnership from the West Coast of Sutherland: It was suggested that a representative from Farr Edge 2000Ltd should attend future meeting if possible.

Gillian Unger to be added to the CCFRP distribution list

Agenda Items suggested for the next meeting:

Farr Edge 2000 Ltd – an update?

Early Years Review – an update

Training Plans for Budget for 06-07

DONM: Wednesday 24th May at 10:30am – VENUE TBC

DATES FOR FUTURE CHILDCARE & FAMILY RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS:

Wednesday 24th May 2006

Friday 30th June 2006

Friday 1st September 2006

Friday 27th October 2006

Friday 15th December 2006