

<i>item:</i>	6
<i>report:</i>	CYP19/08

GOVERNANCE OF CHILDCARE GRANTS

By Bill Alexander

Summary

This report updates members on childcare grants awarded in 2007/08, and makes proposals for future arrangements for these grants.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The UK Government published Meeting the Childcare Challenge: A Childcare Strategy for Scotland in May 1998. This was one of a number of measures aimed at supporting families and raising children out of poverty. The Strategy recognised that good quality childcare has benefits for children by promoting their development and learning, and benefits for parents, by enabling them to work. Although there was already a diverse range of childcare provision in Scotland, action was needed to fill gaps in the formal childcare sector to enable parents to take up employment or training. The overall aim of the Childcare Strategy was therefore to make high quality, accessible and affordable childcare available in every neighbourhood.
- 1.2 Childcare Partnerships were set up in each local authority, because Ministers wanted a new approach to childcare. They believed the Childcare Strategy couldn't be achieved by central or local government alone. It needed the contribution of the private and voluntary sectors, parents, the community – indeed all those with an interest in childcare locally.
- 1.3 Funding was also provided to local authorities, to use in association with childcare partnerships, to support the Childcare Strategy. In particular, this was intended to provide start up grants to enable the creation of new childcare provision or places, and also to sustain otherwise critical but unviable provision - for example in rural areas or for children with additional support needs. It was recognised that some other funding streams have restrictive criteria that applicants have to meet, and the Childcare Strategy funding was intended to be more flexible.
- 1.4 A significant number of grants are made each year to local groups in line with these criteria. Some grants are small; others are considerable. Most are planned over the year, but some are short-term responses to particular financial difficulties. Grants can be made at any time during the year.

- 1.5 In 2008/09, this funding is almost £1.9m. More details are provided in Appendix 1.

2 Background

- 2.1 At the outset of the Childcare Strategy, each of the 8 administrative areas in Highland had a childcare partnership, and there was also a central pan-Highland partnership meeting. The local partnerships made bids to a separate central officer group for financial support. The decisions of this group were reported to the pan-Highland partnership.
- 2.2 The Highland Council decided to devolve these budgets to the eight areas from April 2003. The allocation took account of population (75%), deprivation (15%) and rurality (10%).
- 2.2 The budget was the responsibility of the Area Children's Services manager, supported by the Area Childcare & Family Resource Officer. No separate processes were established for the governance of these budgets, and neither were reports presented to any Council Committee or the Joint Committee.
- 2.3 In recent years, it became practice for grant awards to be discussed with the Area Children's Champion.

3 Grants awarded in 2007/08

- 3.1 At Council re-organisation in April 2007, the eight devolved budgets were combined into three devolved budgets for the new areas, in line with the established formula.
- 3.2 Discussion took place during 2007/08 about the award of grants at local partnerships, to ensure that decisions were in accord with the Early Years Review and complementary to the local strategic approach.
- 3.3 Funding decisions continued to be made by Area Children's Services Managers. For most of the year, Children's Champions were not in place to be involved in these discussions.
- 3.4 The detail of all grants awarded during 2007/08 is attached as Appendix 2.

4 Arrangements for future grants

- 4.1 Given the nature of these grant awards, it is neither practical or feasible, or desirable for the purposes of the Childcare Strategy, to have a disproportionately onerous governance process. However, it is necessary to ensure due scrutiny.
- 4.2 It is proposed that budget management passes to the Resources Manager (Early Years) who has a responsibility for oversight and co-ordination of these services across the authority. This postholder has

the necessary specialist knowledge of childcare issues, not always available to local Social Work Managers.

- 4.3 However, funding decisions should still be dependent on application to the local childcare partnership and endorsement by Area Service Managers, to ensure alignment with local strategy.
- 4.4 It is further proposed that applications should be routinely discussed with the newly appointed Area Children's Champions. This could take place at the partnership meeting, or in other briefings.
- 4.5 On rare occasions, providers are unhappy with the level of grant provided, or on the nature of grants to certain organisations. In such cases, it would be helpful to have a disputes resolution process. It is proposed that this should involve a meeting between the Area Children's Services Manager and/or Resource Manager and Children's Champion and any aggrieved parties, and a recommendation to the Head of Service to determine the matter.

Recommendation

The Joint Committee is asked to consider this report, note the childcare grants awarded in 2007/08, and agree the proposals for future arrangements for these grants as follows:-

- i to ensure due scrutiny, the budget management passes to the Resources Manager (Early Years);
- ii to ensure alignment with local strategy, funding decisions continue to be dependent on application to the local childcare partnership and endorsement by Area Service Managers;
- iii applications be routinely discussed with the Area Children's Champions; and
- iv that, where providers are unhappy with the level of grant provided or on the nature of grants to certain organisations, a disputes resolution process be established involving a meeting between the Area Children's Services Manager and/or Resource Manager and the Children's Champion and any aggrieved parties, with a recommendation to the Head of Service to determine the matter.

Bill Alexander

Head of Children's Services

Appendix 1 Childcare & Family Resources Budget: 2008/09

Income

SW Budget	1,859,180
NHS contribution	35,000
Budget total	1,894,180

Central Infrastructure	128,000	
Pan Highland Developments	553,180	
Devolved to Areas (see below)	1,213,000	
TOTAL BUDGET		1,894,180

Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey	Projects FRO Admin	401,100.00 42,000.00 21,000.00	
Total			464,100
Ross, Skye & Lochaber	Projects FRO Admin	297,200.00 42,000.00 21,000.00	
Total			360,200
Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross	Projects FRO Admin	283,700.00 42,000.00 21,000.00	
			346,700
Pan Highland FRO		42,000.00	
			42,000
TOTAL			1,213,000

Central Infrastructure

SC&FRO		55,000
% of BSO	33%	12,000
% of Gaelic post	25%	12,250
Admin	20%AA +1.60% CA	33,750
Clachnaharry running costs		15,000
TOTAL		128,000

Pan-Highland commitments

CALA	146,050	
CNSA	38,000	
SCMA	113,000	
Keeping Children Safe	15,300	
SS&F	22,632	
Deaf Services	9,830	
Direct Childcare	38,365	
Breakfast Clubs	100,000	
Toy Library	5,000	
Pan-Highland Developments	65,003	
TOTAL		553,180

**APPENDIX 2
CHILDCARE GRANTS IN 2007/08**

INBS

SNAP	70,590
Time Out - 12/1	2,760
Arts Play	5,000
Direct Childcare	11,416
Highland Toy Library	7,777
SCMA - start up packs	3,108
SCMA - Development Officer	7,312
SCMA - Scheme of ex	2,000
Nairn Play & Leisure	3,159
CLL Summer Activities	791
FACES	33,601
Strathy Bairns	7,500
Junior World	70,000
SCMA	555
HAPI	10,000
Groove Deficit	35,395
Groove Summer	825
Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig	5,000
Inshes	10,000
Limetree Summer	1,620
Merkinch Enterprise	25,275
Cuthduthel OOSC - 24/7	10,000
Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre	3,000
Dalneigh P.S/Limetree	10,887
Kirkhill OOSC	5,500
Newtonmore OOSC	10,000
Cawdor OOSC set up	25,000
St Stephen	323
Inverness College - Longman N	2,240
Limetree Nursery	45
Groove Raigmore	810
Kidszone	6,644
Groove Grantown	362
Junior World	3,631
1st Steps	1,328
Junior World	14,500
Highland Games B&D Graphics	39
Childminding Strathy Advert	106
HiMats Playing Up Training	1,500

RSL

CALA Dunglass Groove	787
Garve Hotel	30
Lohcarron Village Hall	3
Lohcarron Village Hall	3
CALA Dunglass Groove	110
British Red Cross	411
CALA Toybox	4,000
Hall rent First Aid	35
3 O'Clock Club	2,468
Legowan Lodge Hotel	39
St Andrews First Aid Course	280
Toybox Rent	810
Averon Leisure	133
Chilminders	3,399
Drumming Workshop	1,750
SOAR	12,000
Toybox	531
Applecross Childrens Club	600
Ledgowan Lodge Hotel	84

RSL cont

Ullapool Toddler Group	500
Seaboard Playgroup	472
Toybox	2,839
CALA	10,000
CALA	5,000
West Alness Resident Assoc	30
SCMA	253
Ledgowan Lodge Hotel	92
DAVIES SPORT (SCMA Top	229
Toybox Rent	480
St Andrews First Aid Course	327
Toybox	3,404
Ullapool OOSC	13,450
Averon Centre (Risk Assess)	25
Averon Centre	1,500
CALA Seabord	750
CALA Groove	57,746
SOAR	25,630
Toybox Rent	450
KALE	1,500
North Highland College(Food	240
Skinner (Seabord Villages)	780
Paula White (Sing & Sign)	50
Direct Childcare(Ullapool Par	1,340
North Highland College (Food	180
CALA Marybank Staff	286
Toybox	18,638
J&I Carpets (Hilton of Cadbol	2,537
Seabord Playgroup	215
Culbokie Baby & Toddler Grc	400
West Alness Resident Grant	636
North Highland First Aid	340
Muir of Ord Community Hall	1,688
Ordkidz	500
North Highland First Aid	240
Ullapool	3,436
KALE Feasibility Study	2,000
KALE (Milton baby & toddler)	660
Conon Bridge parent & toddle	500
CALA Seabord Resources	670
CALA Risk Assessment	143
After school Club Coulhill	500
Newmore OOSC	5,000
CLL Summer Activities	5,500
SCMA	5,663
Caol Youth Centre	3,100
SCMA	2,500
FW RC Primary School	300
Special Needs Playscheme	290
Parenting Stormy Hill Stores	60
CALA Raasay Playscheme	100
Parenting Classes Hall Hire E	53
Helen Scott Danter	270
Sarah Stevens	15
Broadford Hall	19
Glenelg & Arnisdale Develop	200
First Aid Course Portree	752
CALA Webster Stratton Portr	1,160
CALA Birth to Three	383
Raasay House SN Play	380

CSER

CASPER	16,694
Ankerville Alness	35,000
Ormlie Community Assoc	9,457
Treats	10,141
Wick Family Centre	9,568
PPP	600
Pultneytown Parish Church	850
Pultneytown Parish Church	2,025
CALA - Staff bank training	3,600
Ormlie Community Assoc	1,750
Crioleagan Inbhir Theorsa	330
Halkirk Playgroup	500
MAASK	15,000
Wick Family Centre	4,784
SCMA	1,100
North Highland College	260
CALA - Gaarfields	9,111
Golspie Community Assoc -	5,000
Allsorts - OOSC	5,000
Invergordon OOSC	20,000
North Highland College	410
North Highland College	208
Kinlochbervie Summer Play	1,284
Kinlochbervie Playgroup	1,035
SCMA Start Up Packs	444
Highland Mobile Toy Library	1,014
SCMA	3,500
Parenting Programme	2,030
Brora Families Friday Group	3,000
Womens Aid	39,819

Cross area boundary

SCMA	14,518
CALA Polish Border Crossin	29,950

Total for all areas 871,452