

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE - 13 JUNE 2017

SHARED CARE MODEL WITH CHILDMINDERS PILOT - FORFAR 2017/2018

REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - PEOPLE

ABSTRACT

This report seeks approval of the proposed piloting of a shared care model for childminders in the Forfar area and for the contracts for the service to be entered into without the public advertisement of the contract opportunity.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- i approves the proposed piloting of a shared care model for childminders in the Forfar area and authorises the Head of Corporate Quality and Performance to enter into contracts for this service;
- ii approves an exemption in accordance with section 16.24.10(g) of the Financial Regulations to allow the entering into of these contracts without the contract opportunity being advertised on the basis that there has already been sufficient market testing of the proposal; and
- iii authorises the Head of Corporate Quality and Performance to enter into contracts with individual childminders for the provision of this service following competitive process and on the basis set out in this report.

2 ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement.

We have a sustainable economy with good employment opportunities

We have improved the health and wellbeing of our people and inequalities are reduced.

Individuals are supported in their own communities with good quality services.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has made a commitment to deliver 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare to all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds by 2020. In response to this commitment Angus Council are looking to offer parents flexible, affordable provision for children that best meets the needs of our families and as part of this provision are working to develop a shared care model with childminders commencing with a pilot in the Forfar area.
- 3.2 The shared care model will add childminding to the range of ways in which childcare can be delivered and allow parents to access care flexibly from a number of settings (nurseries, playgroups and childminders).
- 3.3 The service is being piloted in Forfar due to a combination of two factors namely a need to address pressure on places with nurseries and playgroups in the town and the high scoring of some areas of Forfar on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Both of these factors are identified in the Angus Early Years Strategy as criteria for the targeting of services.
- 3.4 To ascertain interest from childminders in providing this service, questionnaires were issued to all childminders in the Forfar area. Meetings jointly led by Angus Council, the Care Inspectorate and

the Scottish Childminding Association were also held to give childminders further details of requirements and expectations regarding training, provision of care etc. The introduction of Childminders was also discussed at a meeting with Private and Voluntary sector managers in January. Further consultation with parents and Council staff is planned for May/June.

4 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Currently there is no shared care model of service with childminders in Angus.

5 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed that Forfar will be the location for a pilot for a shared care model with childminders. It is intended to recruit by means of a competitive process 10 - 15 childminders who can demonstrate Care Inspectorate grades of 4 or above. All Childminders will be subject to quality assurance scrutiny from an Angus Council early years officer. Parents seeking a childminding place to deliver some of the hours to which their child is entitled will be required to follow the same application process as is in place for nursery and playgroup places.
- 5.2 The childminders will be funded to accommodate children for the additional hours where they are not in a nursery or playgroup place i.e. 540 hours per annum. In addition to this, childminders will be able to be registered to have eligible 2 year olds either as shared care or for the full 1140 hours. The pilot will operate from October 2017 until 31 July 2018 and will be reviewed in April 2018.
- 5.3 As all childminders in the Forfar area have been consulted regarding the proposals it is proposed not to further advertise the contract opportunity on the basis that adequate market testing has taken place. To enable this to happen, an Exemption is required from the provisions of Financial Regulation 16. The Council's Exemptions Controller has been consulted regarding this and is supportive of the proposal.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The total value of the contracts will depend on the uptake of the service but based on the maximum uptake the value would be £66,800. This cost can be met from the carry forward from the budget for the Childminding Pilot for 2016/2017.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with childminders in the Forfar area, the Care Inspectorate, the Scottish Childminding Association and managers of private and voluntary nurseries and playgroups. Consultation has been very positively received and managers are happy with a blended model of childcare working in partnership with childminders. Further consultation with parents and Council staff is planned for May/June.

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

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