

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting: Children, Families and Schools Sub-Committee

Date: Monday 8 September 2003

Report of: Director, Children, Families and Schools

Subject: Sure Start Guidance 2004-2006

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 Following government reviews of Sure Start schemes for 0-3 year olds, the national childcare strategy, and of Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships, revised guidance has been issued under the single brand of "Sure Start".
- 1.2 This report provides members with information on the key elements of the national Sure Start guidance for 2004-2006, particularly the local authority role and responsibilities.
- 1.3 The report seeks agreement for a process of consultation and local involvement to prepare for the local implementation of the guidance from the next financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the contents of the Sure Start guidance 2004-2006, particularly the local authority role and responsibilities.
- 2.2 That members agree to the process to implement the guidance for the next financial year, as set out in the report below.
- 2.3 That this report is circulated to all councillors for information, and so that they are aware of the Council's responsibilities in relation to Sure Start.

3. Background Information on Early Years and Childcare.

- 3.1 Sure Start is now the government's framework for bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support. It encompasses targeted

- services in disadvantaged areas and universal services for all children 0-16, in relation to early education and childcare.
- 3.2 The overall aim of Sure Start is to provide the best possible start in life for all children. It contributes to government ambitions to tackle child poverty, education and health inequalities. It also contributes to economic and community regeneration, by enabling parents to work and stimulating the local childcare workforce.
- 3.3 The strategy has been reinforced by significant additional investment to provide:
- Early years education for 3 and 4 year olds
 - Set up grants for childminders and pump-priming for out of school childcare
 - Capital funding for neighbourhood nurseries, Children's Centres and out of school childcare in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
 - Area based Sure Start schemes for 0-3 year olds in areas of particular disadvantage
 - Recruitment and training funds for childcare workers
 - Children's Information Services
 - Quality and inspection schemes
 - Administration and infrastructure costs for Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships.
- 3.4 This national investment has been complemented by local support through the local authorities, health and other public sector partners, employers and private and voluntary sector providers. Each local authority area has been required to bring these agencies together, and to support an Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Local Authorities have also been required to produce an annual, statutory, EYDCP plan setting out how it proposed to provide early years education and childcare.
- 3.5 Brighton & Hove has a good track record in its support for the EYDCP, and we are fortunate in having a good partnership and very skilled local team. We also have two successful local Sure Start schemes in the city centre and Hollingdean. We are submitting an application for the team and the partnership to be recognised nationally as a Beacon of Good Practice.

4. Sure Start Guidance 2004-2006

- 4.1 The new guidance for 2004-2006 comes as a result of a national review of the various strands of early years, childcare and family support. It is linked to the emerging policy context for more integrated working to support

children and families, such as Children's Trusts, Family Support and the forthcoming Green Paper on Children at Risk.

- 4.2 The new guidance brings together local Sure Start schemes, Early Years education and childcare, with family and health support services for all 0-16 year olds under the general banner of Sure Start.
- 4.3 Local Authorities have the clear responsibility to make sure that the full range of services are provided, and that all partners are engaged. Also that various initiatives are linked up eg. children's centres, extended schools, childcare for students, JobCentre Plus, support for childcare providers, workforce recruitment and development, raising the quality and effectiveness of Foundation Stage education.
- 4.4 The funding will come, largely, through the local authority grant, and can be delivered according to local priorities, but within certain ring-fenced parameters. For example, the duty to provide sufficient early education places for 3 and 4 year olds.
- 4.5 A summary of the key features of the Sure Start Guidance, and the local authority responsibilities, is provided as annex 1. The full guidance and delivery arrangements will be available in the members' room or can be provided to individual members on request.
- 4.6 The guidance recommends that local authorities review their current delivery and partnership working arrangements in the light of the Sure Start guidance, and so that we are in a position to deliver the new agenda by April 2004, when new performance management arrangements will come into place.
- 4.7 The guidance also asks local authorities to ensure accountability at senior officer and member level. We have already been asked to nominate a Strategic Officer for Sure Start, which for Brighton & Hove is the Assistant Director, Community and Families. The Chair of Children, Families and Schools Sub-committee has taken on the lead member role and is a member of the EYDCP and local Sure Start schemes.
- 4.8 It is proposed that the review of current delivery and partnership working arrangements is carried out over the next three months, in conjunction with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, the two Sure Start Partnerships and other relevant partners and community groups. Local intelligence about the needs of children and families, and direct views will be taken into account as far as possible.

- 4.9 This review will complement the work to develop Children's Centres – see report also on this agenda, and the on-going work to develop childcare – see report on out of school funding also on this agenda. Most importantly, it will also complement the work to develop the Children's Trust and Family Support Services.
- 4.10 It is proposed to bring a further report outlining the results of the review and with proposals for future Sure Start delivery to the January meeting of the CFS sub-committee.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The EYDCP has already received the new guidance at the meeting in July. It will be considered in more depth at a review day in October.
- 5.2 The Sure Start Partnerships will be consulted, along with other area based or community groups.
- 5.3 Soundings will be taken from parents and children as far as possible, and demand will be assessed through the Children's Information Service and other service access points.

Contact Officer

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COMMITTEE REPORT APPENDIX



Meeting/Date	Children, Families and Schools Sub-Committee 8 September 2003	
Report of	Director of Children, Families and Schools	
Subject	Sure Start Guidance 2004-2006	
Wards affected	All	
Financial implications		
<p>The EYDCP currently has a budget of £4,262,370 which comprises ring-fenced funds for early education for 3 and 4 year olds and £1,320,000 specific grant from the DfES. In addition, there are funds to develop neighbourhood nurseries and children's centres, out of school childcare. Central Sure Start has a revenue budget of £775,100 with an additional capital fund of £1.2m. Hollingdean Sure Start has a revenue budget of £327,400 and a capital budget of £1m. Both these Sure Start schemes are grant limited to a 10 year period with a tapering fund. The indicative budget for 2004/05 is £5,913,806. This includes all the strands of funding in the Sure Start guidance.</p> <p><i>Finance Officer consulted: Kevin Ullah/Date 15/8/03</i></p>		
Legal implications		
<p>Local Authorities currently have a statutory duty to provide early years education and to produce an Early Years Development Plan under the Education Act 1998. They also have a duty to comply with the Race Relations Amendments Act, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act 2001. The guidance refers to further changes in legislation to complement the revised guidance.</p>		
Corporate/Citywide implications		Risk assessment
<p>Sure Start is a key government priority that impacts not only on the lives of children and families, but on workforce development and employment. The guidance refers to the need to link with the Local Strategic Partnership.</p>		<p>It is important that the new delivery arrangements build on existing good examples of partnership working with schools, private and voluntary providers. An on-going risk is the affordability and sustainability of childcare, particularly in disadvantaged areas.</p>
Sustainability implications		Equalities implications
<p>Parents need childcare near to their home or place of work to reduce travelling time and environmental impact. Quality of buildings, design and impact on children is also a factor in new capital developments.</p>		<p>Equality is at the heart of the Sure Start agenda, and key targets are to reduce inequality in relation to education, health and economic prosperity.</p>
Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder		
<p>Various research reports have shown that a positive early start in life reduces the potential negative effects in later life, including reduced risk of offending.</p>		

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**Background papers** *[Part 1 reports only]*

1. Sure Start guidance 2004-2006 . Available in the members room.
2. EYDCP plan 2003/04 and the Sure Start delivery plans 2003/04.

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