

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO :	Partnership & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	12 March 2015
SUBJECT :	Early Years Budget
PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S):	Ieuan Williams
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1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

R1- The Council to reduce the Early Years Budget by 10% compared to the 14/15 allocation of £483,690.

R2 – The allocation to be as follows -

<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Total	435,321
Contributions to 48 individual settings	364,266
Contributions to national organisations; MM and WPPA	24,515
Contributions to additional building costs for specific settings	16,620
Training needs of setting staff	6,920
Cynllun Cyfeirio (support for children with special educational needs)	20,000
Reserve	3,000

2.0 REASONS.

2.1 Following discussions last year on the Early Years Budget the Council formed a Task and Finish Group to discuss the budget in detail aiming for an agreement on the way forward. Group membership was elected members, representatives of Mudiad Meithrin and the Wales Pre-School Providers Association, primary school head teachers and Authority officers. The group met on four occasions under the chairmanship of the Portfolio Holder and an agreement was reached on the level of support for the Early Years. The group will continue as the Early Years Group to discuss funding arrangements to the future.

2.2 The budget is composed of

i) Contributions to 48 individual settings.

The Authority provides a contribution towards the costs of running the individual settings so as to ensure the provision of the statutory 10 hours a week education for children from the beginning of the term following their third birthday until they start school. All the other children attending the setting pay a fee.

This was the main focus of the discussions. It was recognised that the Authority needs to change the way it contributes to the individual settings as there is a wide difference in numbers. It was agreed that the Authority would gradually change its method of support so that settings receive time to develop very detailed business plans with the help of their national organisations. Each setting is an independent body with its own committee, registered person and affiliated to one of the two national bodies.

Historically the smaller settings, those with up to 16 children within the statutory age, received finance based on the provision of two staff members and a contribution towards the purchase of resources. Those with higher numbers received finance for an extra staff member for every 8 pupils above the 16. These settings also received a higher contribution for resources. The ratio of one staff member for every 8 pupils is based on the ratio expected for children aged 3 to 5 educated within the Foundation Phase.

For the 14/15 financial year the contribution towards resources was cut in its entirety as well as cuts towards staffing. The cut for 15/16 is a continuation of this process with slight adjustments made towards reflecting the true numbers of statutory aged children attending the setting. The Early Years Group will continue to explore different ways of contributing towards the settings while taking children numbers into account.

- ii) Contributions to national organisations; Mudiad Meithrin and Wales Pre-School Providers Association. This is towards their costs of providing local support for the individual settings.
- iii) Contributions to additional building costs for specific settings. Many settings meet within the local school and so have no associated building costs but others meet within other buildings and need to pay rent or other costs. The Authority contributes towards these costs.
- iv) Training needs of setting staff. This is towards the cost of running statutory courses such as Child Protection and First Aid.
- v) Cynllun Cyfeirio. This is to provide support for children with special educational needs by employing additional staff. This aspect of the budget has not been cut from its 14/15 level.

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