

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Acting Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development (Housing and Regeneration Services)

**Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
7 November 2007**

Subject: Childcare Intermediate Labour Market Programme

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to bring the Committee up to date with the progress of the Childcare Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) programme taken over by West Dunbartonshire Council's Skillseekers Section when the original Provider One Plus went into liquidation.

2. Background

- 2.1** One Plus was recognised as a valued service provider across several Local Authorities in the West of Scotland. The organisation provided a range of services including childcare provision, homecare services, children and families services and training programmes.
- 2.2** At the end of 2006 it emerged that the organisation was experiencing financial difficulties. One Plus went into liquidation on 22 January 2007. At that time there were twenty one participants on the ILM programme, all were working towards the achievement of a SVQ Level 2 qualification in Childcare. All participants were in placement with local childcare providers.
- 2.3** All participants recruited were Working for Families clients and Training for Work eligible. Working for Families provided the childcare costs for the clients for up to 52 weeks, the term of the project, and offered any other support needed to ensure the participants could successfully complete the programme.
- 2.4** The Skillseekers Section of West Dunbartonshire Council took over the management of the ILM programme from 29 January 2007. One full-time member of the One Plus staff was retained to assist in the delivery and ensure continuity for the participants. The ILM Key Worker has a temporary contract until the end of the programme in December 2007.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** The programme provides structured work experience with training leading to a nationally recognised childcare qualification to Working for Families clients over a period of 52 weeks. This opportunity is a waged option and participants are employed for 30 hours per week. Practical support is given to the participants to become “Job Ready” through training, workshops and by actively encouraging job search.
- 3.2** One participant dropped out shortly after the takeover due to ill health. Of the 20 who continued, 18 have now achieved an SVQ Level II qualification in Playwork. By the end of October all 20 participants will have completed the SVQ. Nine trainees completed an additional National Certificate in “Children & Young People with Special Needs”. Qualifications have also been gained in Food Hygiene, First Aid and Moving and Handling. All participants have also undergone training in Child Protection.
- 3.3** Of the 18 participants who have completed the programme, 12 have secured jobs. The ILM Key Worker continues to provide on going aftercare as well as support, encouragement and assistance to the remaining 6 who have yet to secure employment. The remaining 2 students will complete their training in November, already one has secured employment commencing on completion of the programme.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are currently no Personnel Issues. The project is resourced and facilitated by the ILM Key Worker and MainstreamTeam Leader, Skillseekers.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** There are no financial implications as a package of external funding was available from Working for Families; Training for Work; European Social Fund; Childcare Partnership and CRF.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** Had the programme not continued, the participants would have been unable to complete their qualification, had to revert to benefits and may not have re-engaged with programmes offering access to employment, education or training.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1** Excellent results have been achieved by the participants of the programme in attaining their qualification and in the majority of cases gaining employment.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1** The Committee is invited to note the success of the Childcare Intermediate Labour Market Programme supported by the Skillseekers section in providing training and employment support to lone parents within West Dunbartonshire.

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Date: 23 October 2007

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Appendix:	None
Background Papers:	None
Wards Affected:	All