

**JOINT ADVISORY SUB COMMITTEE FOR
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

17 FEBRUARY 1999

Present: Councillors Barnard (Chairman), Miss Haydon, Mrs Shillcock,
and Worrall

Also Present: Councillor Mrs Hayes

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Mrs Hirst and Ward

21. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 9 December 1998 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22. **Urgent Items of Business under Standing Order No.7**

The Chairman gave notice that he had agreed to the addition of an item of urgent business to the agenda for the meeting. This concerned the need for a review of the terms of reference of the Sub Committee. An urgent decision was required in order that recommendations could be made to the Education Committee and Social Services & Housing Committee as soon as possible.

23. **Review of Terms of Reference**

The Sub Committee discussed the need for a review of its terms of reference in the light of the experience of the first year of operation and the emerging scrutiny role of councillors in respect of targets and action plans set for children's services.

RESOLVED that a special meeting of the Sub Committee be convened on Monday 22 March 1999 at 7.30pm to consider a review of its terms of reference.

24. **Early Years Development and Child Care Plan (Item 1)**

The Sub Committee received a report on the Early Years Development and Child Care Plan which had been submitted to the DFEE on 1 February 1999. The Plan had been circulated separately with the Agenda. The final version of the Plan had been submitted to the DFEE by the prescribed deadline, having been approved by the Chairman of the Education Committee and signed off by the Chairman of the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership, on behalf of the Partnership and by the Director of Education on behalf of the Borough Council. The DFEE would now consider the document and it was expected that there would be dialogue between the DFEE and the Partnership during the period to mid March 1999. Approval of the Plan would release funds totalling £89,000 in the first year with similar allocations in the following two years. The funds would be used for infrastructure support for the child care elements identified within the Plan. These included the Partnership's goal to increase the number of out of school clubs in the Borough from 10 to 22 over a

three year period. Other costs such as equipment, staff training and set-up costs would be funded through bids to the New Opportunities Fund.

The Sub Committee acknowledged the excellent work which had been undertaken by the Officers in preparing the Early Years Development and Child Care Plan.

RESOLVED that the Sub Committee endorses the Early Years Development and Child Care Plan.

25. **The Quality Protects Initiative (Item 2)**

The Sub Committee received the Management Action Plan submitted by the Borough Council in response to the requirements of the Quality Protects Initiative which had been launched in September by the Department of Health. At its meeting on 9 December 1998 the Sub Committee had considered a report setting out the aims and requirements of the Quality Protects Initiative and the framework which local authorities had been required to follow when submitting their Management Action Plans. The final version of the Borough Council's Management Action Plan had been submitted to the Department of Health on 28 January having been approved by the Chairman of the Social Services & Housing Committee and signed off by the Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Education Committee and Chief Executive. The document would be evaluated by the Department of Health and a decision made on the release of the specific funding identified as part of the "modernisation agenda". Bracknell Forest had been allocated £118,000 in 1999-2000 with other tranches to be released in the following two financial years. The release of this further funding would be dependent upon the targets set in the Management Action Plan having been achieved to the satisfaction of the Department of Health. It was noted that as the first year of the initiative progressed it might be necessary for the Authority to realign some of the content of the Management Action Plan although the core elements would not change. The Government would hold the Council accountable for the targets set within the Plan but would accept the need for some minor adjustments.

The Director of Social Services & Housing answered the Sub Committee's questions on the Plan. The Sub Committee wished to record its appreciation of the work which had been undertaken by Officers in the preparation of this strategic document.

RESOLVED that the Sub Committee endorses the Management Action Plan and the approach adopted.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm
and concluded at 8.20pm

CHAIRMAN