

Part 2

Visions and Objectives

Vision 1. That no person in North Tipperary would be prevented from participating in the workforce solely by being required to care for one or more children

That appropriate childcare would be available within an accessible distance of home or workplace to every worker or every person that wishes to participate in the workforce

- *Identify an appropriate population unit for the provision of facilities*
- *Identify an appropriate maximum distance from home to childcare facilities*
- *Identify the level of provision of different childcare facilities throughout the county*
- *Identify the nature and scale of provision required in each population unit in the county*
- *Identify the shortfall*
- *Establish a programme of provision to address the shortfall*

That childcare would be available at a range of prices that would reflect the range of abilities to pay

- *Establish the percentage of disposable household income that should be devoted to childcare*
- *Establish the minimum payment needed to develop a viable childcare business*
- *Compare the minimum payment with the percentage of household income*
- *Assess the capacity of households within the North Tipperary area to pay the minimum required fee*
- *Develop a model charging structure for childcare facilities that includes a range of prices and supported places*
- *Develop a negotiation mechanism with childcare providers on pricing levels*
- *Prepare reports for potential funders regarding pricing levels and strategies*

That pre-school sessional and full day care will be available in each settlement of 200 people or more

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*
- *Establish the shortfall of provision*

- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*

That after-school sessional care will be available in each settlement of 200 people or more

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*
- *Establish the shortfall of provision*
- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*

That all employers of an appropriate size would provide child-care facilities within the workplace

- *Carry out a survey of employers within North Tipperary to establish the number that are in a position to provide a childcare facility*
- *Investigate the possibility of employers providing childcare facilities in an integrated, combined way*
- *Provide an advisory resource to employers to encourage them to make childcare facilities available*

That employers would subsidise the cost of their employees' childcare

- *Establish a protocol in consultation with employer organisations for the circumstances in which subsidies would be provided and the nature and extent of such subsidies*

That employee-friendly work practices would be introduced by employers

- *Organise a forum for employer and employee organisations to establish and promote best practice in employee-friendly work practices*

That information on the range and location of available childcare would be readily accessible and actively promoted to workers and employers

- *Create a register of notified childcare providers within North Tipperary, and publish and disseminate the register*
- *Create a Website with information on Childcare issues made available*

That the cost of childcare would be supported through the taxation and social welfare systems

- *Develop a case for such support and submit the case for consideration by Government*
- *Create a network of other agencies in the Region and seek support for the course of action identified*

Vision 2: That no person in North Tipperary would be prevented from engaging in training and education, from participating in social and recreational activities or from attending to their occasional personal needs solely by being obliged to care for one or more children

That appropriate childcare would be available within an accessible distance of home or of the county's major adult education and training centres.

- *Identify an appropriate population unit for the provision of facilities*
- *Identify an appropriate maximum distance from home to childcare facilities*
- *Identify the level of provision of different childcare facilities throughout the county*
- *Identify the nature and scale of provision required in each population unit in the county*
- *Identify the number and location of adult training and education facilities in the county*
- *Establish an appropriate maximum distance from training and education facilities to childcare facilities*
- *Identify the shortfall*
- *Establish a programme of provision to address the shortfall*

That at least one multi-service childcare facility will be available in each parish village with a population of 200 people or greater

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*
- *Establish the shortfall of provision*
- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*

That an in-home childcare structure would be established for the provision of childcare after normal working hours

- *Carry out a sample survey to identify the scale of provision of in-home childcare that is required*
- *Identify the range of childcare structures that might be developed to provide the relevant service*
- *Establish a register of those willing to provide an in house after hours childcare service*
- *Create a standard of performance for those providing such a service*
- *Identify and secure a source of funding for this service*
- *Establish a fund for innovative service provision*

That childcare facilities would be available after normal working hours to facilitate social and recreational activities

- *Identify the level of demand for childcare facilities after normal working hours*
- *Identify the supply of childcare facilities that are available after normal working hours*

That childcare would be available at a range of prices that would reflect the range of abilities to pay

- *Establish the percentage of disposable household income that should be devoted to childcare*
- *Establish the minimum payment needed to develop and sustain a viable childcare business*
- *Compare the minimum payment with the percentage of household income*
- *Assess the capacity of households within the North Tipperary area to pay the minimum required fee*
- *Assess the range of state agencies willing to participate in subsidising childcare*
- *Develop a scale of childcare fees based on the above information*
- *Develop a negotiation mechanism with childcare providers on pricing levels*
- *Prepare reports for potential funders regarding pricing levels and strategies*

That information on the range and location of available childcare would be readily accessible and actively promoted.

- *Create a register of childcare providers within North Tipperary, and publish and disseminate the register*

That the cost of childcare would be supported through the taxation and social welfare systems

- *Develop a case for such support and submit the case for consideration by Government*
- *Create a network of other agencies in the Region and seek support for the course of action identified*

That major education and training centres would provide childcare facilities on site

- *Identify the major educational and training facilities in the county*
- *Ascertain the intentions of the directors of these facilities with regard to the provision of childcare facilities*
- *Provide support to the directors of education and training facilities regarding the development of childcare facilities on site*
- *Create mechanisms through which providers of education and training facilities can co-operate in the provision of childcare facilities*

That major centres of public resort would make childcare facilities available on site

- *Identify the major centres of public resort in the county*
- *Ascertain the intentions of the directors of these facilities with regard to the provision of childcare facilities*
- *Establish linkages with the Planning departments of the local authorities around this issue*
- *Provide support to the directors of centres of public resort regarding the development of childcare facilities on site*
- *Create mechanisms through which owners and managers of centres of public resort can co-operate in the provision of childcare facilities*

Vision 3. That all parents and guardians of children in North Tipperary will practice responsible parenthood including the time they spend caring for their children at home

That all parents would have the opportunity to develop a positive parenting approach

- *Develop positive parenting courses and make them available to all parents*

That all parents would have realistic expectations of their own roles as parents

- *Publicise and make available information on the reality of parenting*
- *Provide support mechanisms for parents*

That all parents would have the opportunity to avail of training in parenting skills and would regard such participation in a positive light

- *Develop parenting skills courses, seminars and events*
- *Establish linkages with women's' groups and mother and toddler schemes*
- *Liase with the VEC and other public agencies on the issue*
- *Publicise these events through a media campaign*
- *Publicise these events through existing community and voluntary organisations*

Vision 4: That all children will be cared for in a manner that is appropriate to and has explicit regard for their particular age and developmental needs

That all people working with children would be suitably trained in the theory and practice of education and child development

- *Establish the nature of the training needs of those working with children*
- *Establish the number of those that require training in childcare*
- *Work with second-level and third-level education providers and other training organisations to develop and make available a range of training courses in childcare*
- *Investigate routes for accredited prior learning*

That the environment in which children are cared for would be safe and secure

- *Adopt and disseminate standards for the provision of childcare and childcare facilities*
- *Establish a screening mechanism for all those involved in childcare provision*

That the environment in which children are cared for would provide an appropriate developmental stimulus

- *Develop and promote standards of best practice regarding the creation of a stimulating environment for childcare facilities*
- *Make available an advisory service to childcare providers that will allow high quality environments to be created within childcare facilities*

That information on basic child development needs would be readily accessible and actively promoted.

- *Establish a comprehensive knowledge resource base regarding best practice in childcare and parenting*
- *Publicise the availability of this resource*
- *Disseminate widely to social and service policy makers*

That the individual needs of each child will be catered for within every childcare facility having regard to the age of the child

- *Develop a manual of best practice regarding the induction of a new child into any childcare facility*
- *Establish a system through which any child noted to have characteristics requiring attention can be referred to appropriate assessment facilities*

That all children would be cared for in an integrated way through a partnership involving all those caring for the child.

- *Develop a manual of best practice regarding the induction of a new child into any childcare facility*
- *Promote the concept of childcare being provided in an integrated and coherent way including identified best practice*
- *Create opportunities for carers and parents to share concerns and experiences regarding children cared for by professional carers*

Vision 5: That provision for children with special needs will be made within all substantial mainstream childcare facilities

That the buildings within which childcare takes place would be designed and constructed in a manner that would facilitate physical access, circulation and care for those with physical or sensory disability

- *Develop a model of best design practice for buildings of this nature*
- *Circulate and disseminate the best design manual to designers such as architects and interior designers*
- *Organise a design seminar for those involved in the provision of childcare facilities*

That specialised equipment and resource material would be available to childcare facilities catering for a child with physical, sensory or other disability

- *Create a catalogue of available specialised equipment from different suppliers and offer an ordering service to childcare providers*
- *Create a library of specialised equipment to be loaned out to childcare providers when required*

That information on the availability of specialised equipment from specialised organisations would be widely distributed and promoted

- *Create a catalogue of available specialised equipment from different suppliers*
- *Circulate the catalogue to all childcare providers*
- *Circulate the catalogue of the available items in the library of resources to all childcare providers*

That childcare staff would be adequately trained and supported in an ongoing manner in the care of children with special needs

- *Develop a training course for those involved in childcare with regard to the care of those with special needs*
- *Provide an ongoing advisory service to make specific information available to those caring for children with special needs*
- *Create a referral resource for those caring for children with special needs*

That a childcare provider would not be disadvantaged by the provision of care for those with special needs

- *Carry out an assessment of the commercial impact on childcare providers of providing care for children with special needs*
- *Promote the importance of providing mainstream care for those with special needs*
- *Provide specific support mechanisms for those providing childcare to children with special needs*

That special facilities will be available for children with needs that cannot be catered for within the mainstream facilities

- *Carry out a detailed assessment of the care needs of children that cannot be catered for within mainstream facilities*
- *Identify the shortfall*
- *Establish a programme of provision to address the shortfall*

- *Evaluate the different ways in which facilities can be provided to satisfy such needs*
- *Enter into discussions with the neighbouring counties to evaluate the level of provision within their areas*

Vision 6: That provision will be made for children with special needs who cannot access either mainstream or special needs facilities

That transport would be made available for those with special needs that cannot access mainstream or special facilities

- *Identify the location of those requiring access to special dedicated facilities*
- *Establish transportation services between the location of those requiring these services and the location of the facilities*

That trained in-home care would be provided for those that cannot access out-of home care

- *Identify the current level of provision of such services*
- *Establish a register of those willing to provide special in-home care for those with special needs*
- *Establish training programmes for those willing to provide such care*
- *Provide resources to make special payment to those willing to provide such care*

That trained in-home care would be provided for those with special care needs out of working hours

- *Identify the current level of provision of such services*
- *Establish a register of those willing to provide special in-home care for those with special needs*
- *Establish training programmes for those willing to provide such care*
- *Provide resources to make special payment to those willing to provide such care*

Vision 7: That all childcare facilities would seek to achieve a standard of excellence in accordance with a recognised scheme

That childcare providers would recognise and accept the importance of providing a quality service

- *Establish a network of childcare providers to offer support and to share experience*
- *Investigate and develop models of best practice for childcare providers*
- *Disseminate the developed models of best practice*
- *Organise an annual conference on the issue of good practice in childcare*

That a schedule of appropriate quality schemes would be identified, developed as necessary and promoted

- *Research the availability of appropriate quality approval schemes*
- *Evaluate the work involved in the organisation and implementation of such schemes*
- *If no appropriate schemes are identified, work with accreditation organisations to develop such schemes*
- *Promote the schemes amongst childcare providers and provide an advisory and assistance service to those wishing to participate in a scheme*

That mentoring, support and training would be made available to those wishing to attain a certification of quality

- *Establish a support service for those wishing to participate in quality certification schemes*
- *Identify the training needed by those wishing to participate in such schemes*
- *Establish the availability of appropriate training schemes and where such schemes are not available work with training and education providers to create and deliver them*

That those providers who have achieved a quality standard would receive appropriate recognition and promotion

- *Establish a county-based quality mark for those who have achieved a recognised quality standard*
- *Promote the importance of the quality mark through media campaigns and direct contact with parent and other voluntary groups*

Vision 8: That a range of childcare facilities and services will be available in North Tipperary so that the individual needs of parents and children can be catered for to the greatest extent possible

That pre-school, sessional and full day care will be available in each settlement of 200 people or more

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*
- *Establish the shortfall of provision*
- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*

That after-school sessional care will be available in each settlement of 200 people or more

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*
- *Establish the shortfall of provision*
- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*
- *Provide support for the development of pilot initiatives in this field*

That each area or multi-service facility will include a drop-in service

- *Include the provision of drop-in facilities in the design guidelines and models of best practice for all significant service facilities*
- *Propose to the Local Planning Authorities that such provision would be included as a policy statement in the statutory development plans for North Tipperary*

That an in-home childcare structure would be established for the provision of childcare after normal working hours

- *Identify the current level of provision of such services*
- *Establish a register of those willing to provide in-home childcare after normal working hours*
- *Establish training programmes for those willing to provide such care*
- *Provide resources to make special payment to those willing to provide such care*

That childcare facilities would be available after normal working hours to facilitate social and recreational activities

- *Include a requirement for the provision of such facilities in the design guide and models of best practice for the provision of childcare facilities*
- *Establish a register of those willing to provide in-home childcare after normal working hours*
- *Carry out a survey to identify the level of demand for such services provided other than by friends and family*
- *Identify the current level of provision of such services*
- *Establish training programmes for those willing to provide such care*
- *Provide resources to make special payment to those willing to provide such care*

That the special needs of parents and children would be acknowledged and supported

- *Identify the range of special needs of parents and children regarding childcare provision*
- *Develop a programme for the phased provision of facilities to cater for the special needs*
- *Develop training programmes that address the special cultural needs of particular groups within society*

That information on the availability of childcare facilities would be widely disseminated

- *Create a register of childcare providers within North Tipperary, and publish and disseminate the register*
- *Create a network of information dissemination amongst community and voluntary organisations in North Tipperary*
- *Develop a Website with appropriate information provided*

Vision 9: That all non-family childcare providers will be included in the formal childcare structures

That paid childcare work will be acknowledged by parents and childcare workers as a responsible and skilled activity

- *Design a Public relations campaign on the theme of professional childcare*
- *Establish a forum to allow parents and childcare workers to share experiences and develop appropriate practice*
- *Disseminate information regarding quality assurance in childcare*

That school guidance counsellors will be aware of paid childcare work as a valid career choice

- *Design a schools campaign on the theme of professional childcare*
- *Develop a set of appropriate salary scales for the sector and lobby for their implementation*

That the community at large will be aware of and value the complexity and skills involved in professional childcare

- *Design a Public relations campaign on the theme of professional childcare*
- *Disseminate information regarding quality assurance in childcare*

That parents will choose to have their children cared for within the formal childcare sector

- *Establish a forum to allow parents and childcare workers to share experiences and develop appropriate practice*
- *Disseminate information regarding quality assurance in childcare*

That pending the extension of the formal sector, the informal childcare sector would be supported as appropriate in providing as high-quality a service as possible within its limitations

- *Identify the current level of provision of informal services*
- *Establish training programmes for those providing such care*
- *Provide resources to make special payment to those willing to participate in such training*
- *Create and fund financial incentives for providers making the transition to the formal sector*

That all non-family childcare providers will become aware of the value of participating in the formal sector

- *Establish a forum to allow parents and childcare workers to share experiences and develop appropriate practice*
- *Disseminate information regarding grants available for registered childcare*
- *Create and fund financial incentives for providers making the transition to the formal sector*

That all those engaged in non-family childcare work will be rewarded to a level that will attract capable individuals into the sector

- *Develop a model charging structure for childcare facilities*
- *Develop a set of appropriate salary scales for the sector and lobby for their implementation*

- *Develop a negotiation mechanism with childcare providers on pricing levels*
- *Prepare reports for potential funders regarding pricing levels and strategies*

That the cost of childcare would be supported through the taxation and social welfare systems

- *Develop a case for such support and submit the case for consideration by Government*
- *Create a network of other agencies in the Region and seek support for the course of action identified*

Vision 10: That all those working in or managing childcare facilities will be suitably qualified

That all those working in childcare will have an accredited nationally recognised qualification relevant to their area of work

- *Establish the nature of the training needs of those working with children*
- *Establish the number of those that require training in childcare*
- *Investigate the possible range and nature of accredited schemes available*
- *Work with second-level and third-level education providers to develop and make available a range of training courses in childcare*

That a range of accredited childcare training courses will be available in an accessible way to all those working in childcare

- *Work with second-level and third-level education and other training providers to develop and make available a range of training courses in childcare*

That the benefits of qualification will be recognised by all those working in childcare

- *Establish a network of childcare staff to offer support and exchange experience*
- *Promote training and best practice ideals amongst childcare providers and provide an advisory and assistance service to those wishing to participate*

That a range of accredited childcare training courses will be available in an accessible way to all those managing childcare facilities

- *Work with second-level and third-level education and other training providers to develop and make available a range of training courses in childcare*

That the benefits of qualification will be recognised by all those managing childcare facilities

- *Establish a network of childcare staff to offer support and exchange experience*
- *Promote training and best practice ideals amongst childcare providers and provide an advisory and assistance service to those wishing to participate*

That all childcare facilities will be managed by a person with an accredited national childcare qualification

- *Promote training and best practice ideals amongst childcare providers and provide an advisory and assistance service to those wishing to participate*

That those working in childcare will engage in further formal education and training to increase their capacity and understanding and in particular to acquire specialised skills

- *Work with second-level and third-level education and other training providers to develop and make available a range of courses available*

That all those working in childcare will engage in continuing in-service training and education

- *Establish a network of childcare staff to offer support and exchange experience*
- *Promote training and best practice ideals amongst childcare providers and provide an advisory and assistance service to those wishing to participate*

Vision 11: That childcare provision in less densely populated areas will be accessible to people living in those areas

That appropriate childcare would be available within an accessible distance of home or workplace to every worker or every person that wishes to participate in the workforce

- *Identify an appropriate population unit for the provision of facilities*
- *Identify an appropriate maximum distance from home to childcare facilities*
- *Identify the level of provision of different childcare facilities throughout the county*
- *Identify the nature and scale of provision required in each population unit in the county*
- *Identify the shortfall*
- *Establish a programme of provision to address the shortfall*

That appropriate childcare would be available within an accessible distance of home or the county's major adult education and training centres.

- *Identify an appropriate population unit for the provision of facilities*
- *Identify an appropriate maximum distance from home to childcare facilities*
- *Identify the level of provision of different childcare facilities throughout the county*

- *Identify the nature and scale of provision required in each population unit in the county*
- *Identify the number and location of adult training and education facilities in the county*
- *Establish an appropriate maximum distance from training and education facilities to childcare facilities*
- *Identify the shortfall*
- *Establish a programme of provision to address the shortfall*

That an in-home childcare structure would be established for the provision of childcare after normal working hours

- *Carry out a sample survey to identify the scale of provision of in-home childcare that is required*
- *Identify the range of childcare structures that might be developed to provide the relevant service*
- *Establish a register of those willing to provide an in house after hours childcare service*
- *Create a standard of performance for those providing such a service*
- *Identify and secure a source of funding for this service*

That transport would be made available for those with special needs that cannot access mainstream or special facilities

- *Identify the location of those requiring access to special dedicated facilities*
- *Establish transportation services between the location of those requiring these services and the location of the facilities*

That pre-school sessional and full day care will be available in each settlement of 200 people or more

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*
- *Establish the shortfall of provision*
- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*

That after-school sessional care will be available in each settlement of 200 people or more

- *Identify the number of settlements with populations of 200 and over*
- *Carry out a survey of all settlements of 200 and over to identify the childcare facilities that are available within them*

- *Establish the shortfall of provision*
- *Develop a phased programme of service provision and of support for such provision*

That the needs of parents and children in less densely populated areas will be taken into account when Rural Transport Strategies are being developed

- *Create linkages between the Childcare committee and the North Tipperary County Development Board in relation to rural transport*
- *Prepare a submission on the issue of transport and childcare linkages in collaboration with parents*

Vision 12: That no person would be discouraged or prevented from placing their child in any assisted childcare facility due to cost, class, ethnic background or any other reason

That all supported childcare facilities will have charging schemes structured to reflect the capacity to pay of different sectors

- *Develop a model charging structure for childcare facilities that includes a range of prices and supported places*
- *Include a requirement to operate the model scheme in all agreements with those receiving support for the provision of facilities*

That private childcare providers would co-operate in the development of subsidised childcare places within their facilities

- *Develop a model charging structure for childcare facilities that includes a range of prices and subsidised and supported places*
- *Develop a scheme for the provision of support to private providers that adopt the model scheme*
- *Promote the model scheme amongst childcare providers*

That a sufficient supply of supported childcare places will be available to meet the needs of those with an inability to pay commercial rates

- *Establish the percentage of disposable household income that should be devoted to childcare*
- *Establish the minimum payment needed to develop and sustain a viable childcare business*
- *Compare the minimum payment with the percentage of household income*
- *Assess the capacity of households within the North Tipperary area to pay the minimum required fee*

That a sufficient supply of childcare places will be available to ensure that the subsidy of places will not lead to an increase in childcare rates

- *Establish the demand for childcare places in the various areas of the county*
- *Establish the extent of the provision of notified and un-notified places in the various areas of the county*
- *Develop a programme of provision of childcare places that reflect the shortfall*
- *Prioritise the provision of facilities in areas with the greatest shortfall*

Vision 13: That the support needs of all those providing care to a child would be recognised and made available to the greatest extent possible

That support would be available for families under stress

- *Establish a network of service providers to make available an integrated system of support for families under stress*
- *Develop a referral system from the childcare system to family support services*

That parenting skills would be supported through the provision of training and information services

- *Identify the availability of parenting skill training in the county*
- *Identify the availability of information regarding parenting skills in the county*
- *Develop training programmes for parenting skills*
- *Implement parenting training programmes through community and voluntary organisations*

That there would be an opportunity for parents to share their support needs in a safe and encouraging environment

- *Develop an induction programme for new children and parents entering a child-caring facility*
- *Provide an opportunity for parents to meet with child care workers when children are being left and collected*

That training would be available to childcare providers on responding to the presented support needs of parents

- *Identify the training facilities for these purposes that are available in North Tipperary*
- *Develop training programmes if required*
- *Organise the provision of training for child-care workers to enable them to deal with parents that share family stresses with them*