

Item No. 10.	Classification: Open	Date: 7 June 2015	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Update on Children's Centres Programme	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
From:		Councillor Victoria Mills, Children and Schools	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR VICTORIA MILLS, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS

Southwark Council has a strong commitment to giving children the best start in life and our Children's Centres programme is a central part of delivering this. Changes are being made to the way the programme is being managed to ensure that there is a consistent service that focuses resources where they are most needed – on direct work with children and families, accessible through a range of Children's Centres and other community facilities across the borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Cabinet notes the progress in implementing a new model of managing the delivery of children's centres in Southwark following changes in national policy.
2. That the Cabinet approves grants to lead agencies for the delivery of the children's centres programme in line with this model as set out in paragraph 32 of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Children's centres are places where families with children under five can access a range of services and information and get help and advice from health, education and social care professionals. Their core purpose is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in child development, school readiness, health and life chances.
4. Southwark has had 16 separate children's centres, all of them managed by schools with the exception of one voluntary sector led centre (1st Place). Southwark has also commissioned services for part of the borough from a Lambeth-based voluntary sector centre (Coin Street).
5. A process of reviewing and reshaping Children's Centre delivery in Southwark has been underway since the publication of a revised Ofsted Framework for Inspection of children's centres (last updated in 2014) and a shift in national policy for children's centres from providing predominantly universal services to delivering more targeted interventions alongside services for all. There were also local concerns about inconsistency, variable quality and duplication of services across children's centres delivered in different ways by 17 different providers.
6. Detailed consultation with children's centres and stakeholders during 2014-15 (summarised in paragraph 31) resulted in broad agreement to reorganise the management of Southwark's Centres into four groups aligned with the localities used by the Early Help service. During 2015-16 this model was developed further, with a process to identify lead agencies for each locality and planning of a new staffing structure. The new Children's Centre management model is being implemented during Quarter One (1 April 2016 – 30 June 2016).

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Benefits of new model

7. The new model is based on a hub and spoke arrangement with one lead body per locality co-ordinating staff and services across the reach area. This approach focuses on delivering universal and targeted services where they are needed in the community, using spaces that are accessible to children and families. In each locality there will be one overall management board, one lead manager and a single staff team, in place of the range of different arrangements in place previously.
8. These changes to current practice, along with improved integration with Early Help, will mean Southwark can offer children and families services that will improve outcomes at the earliest point, underpinned by clear local arrangements for collaboration between professionals and agencies in line with the requirements of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2013). Benefits of the new model are expected to include:
 - Children and families accessing the children's centre services they need in their local area;
 - A programme of universal and targeted services developed using local needs assessment data;
 - Staff teams having consistent job descriptions, induction, training and supervision resulting in high quality practice;
 - Early Help and children's centre teams working in a totally integrated way sharing good practice as well as developing common understandings and approaches to working with families;
 - Stronger collaborative partnerships;
 - Economies of scale and wider strategic planning resulting in better value for money and an increase in frontline provision.

Selecting lead agencies

9. All current children's centres in Southwark were invited to express an interest in becoming the lead agency for their locality. Those that did so were invited to develop a proposal and to present this to a panel chaired by the Director of Education.
10. Following this process, lead agencies for each locality have been identified as follows:
 - Borough, Bankside and Walworth: 1st Place Children & Parents Centre in partnership with Coin Street Community Builders.
 - Bermondsey and Rotherhithe: Kintore Way Children's Centre in partnership with Pilgrims Way Primary School & Children's Centre.
 - Camberwell and Dulwich: Dulwich Wood Children's Centre.
 - Peckham and Nunhead & Peckham Rye: Ivydale Primary School & Children's Centre.
11. Lead agencies will be accountable for meeting the terms of a service level agreement specifying Children's Centre requirements. As part of this they each have a responsibility to establish a locality Strategic Development Board with multi-agency and stakeholder membership to help guide and drive cross sector planning, service development and collaborative partnerships.

Maintaining existing service delivery across Southwark

12. At the start of the remodelling process there were 16 separate designated children's centres in Southwark. In the new model there are four groups of Centres each led by one agency. However, the locality Children's Centre programme and related early years services will continue to be delivered from the following buildings in Southwark that include all of the

original 16 children's centres and other facilities as follows:

Bermondsey and Rotherhithe locality

- Children's Centre at Pilgrims Way Primary School
- Kintore Way Children's Centre
- South Bermondsey Children's Centre
- Southwark Park Playroom (previously designated as part of Rotherhithe Children's Centre)
- Rotherhithe Primary School (continuing to deliver under-3s early education and childcare places)

Borough & Bankside and Walworth locality

- 1st Place Children and Parents Centre
- Bishops House Children's Centre
- Coin Street Children's Centre
- Children's Centre at Victory Primary School

Camberwell and Dulwich locality

- Children's Centre at Crawford Primary School
- Dulwich Wood Children's Centre
- Grove Children and Families Centre
- East Dulwich Estate/Albrighton Centre (previously designated as part of South Camberwell Children's Centre)
- Bessemer Grange (Children's Centre facility now prioritised for provision of two year old places)

Peckham and Nunhead & Peckham Rye

- Children's Centre at Ivydale Primary School
- Children's Centre at Rye Oak Primary School
- Children's Centre at Ann Bernadt Nursery School
- Peckham Rye playroom (managed by Ivydale)
- Leyton Square playroom (previously designated as part of East Peckham Children's Centre)
- Nell Gwynn Nursery School (which will continue to deliver early education places for two to four year olds)

13. In addition services will be delivered through libraries, health centres and other community venues.
14. All buildings funded by the Government's Sure Start Children's Centre capital programme remain in use for children's centres and related early years purposes, thus avoiding risk of Department for Education seeking to claw back funding - which it can choose to do if funded buildings cease to be used for intended function.

Services

15. All services are being planned and developed with a view to improving accessibility, meeting local needs, employing evidence based practice and ensuring multi-agency collaboration.
16. Services will be planned and targeted within each locality according to local need but will all feature:

- High quality play sessions and interventions;
 - Outcomes focused casework using the Family Star Plus assessment and support planning tool;
 - Joint delivery with EH teams of evidence based parenting programmes;
 - A full range of health services to meet families needs, including specialist interventions;
 - Access to employment support including education and training courses;
 - Opportunities for people to gain accredited qualifications through volunteering, apprenticeships and student placements;
 - Targeted groups that meet specific local needs within each community;
 - Support for childminders and PVI early years settings.
17. All services will be reviewed quarterly to ensure targets are met, outputs and outcomes are improved and there is a focus on continuous development.

Policy implications

18. The Childcare Act 2006 (“the Act”) places a range of duties on local authorities in relation to the provision of early childhood services (which includes early years provision and health and social services for young children, parents and prospective parents, together with and employment and other advice for parents and prospective parents).
19. The council is under a general duty to improve the well-being of young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them, in relation to matters such as physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation; the contribution made by them to society; and social and economic well-being.
20. Specifically, the council is required
- to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner in order to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their parents; and
 - to take steps to identify prospective users of services and encourage their take up;
 - to facilitate as far as possible the participation of parents and providers of services in the planning of early childhood services.
21. The arrangements for the provision of early childhood services must, so far as is reasonably practicable, include arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need. Where children’s centres are provided, the council and partner organisations must consider whether to provide early childhood services through children’s centres.
22. A children’s centre is defined in the Act as a place or a group of places through which integrated early childhood services are made available for young children, parents and prospective parents, including:
- early years provision (early education and childcare);
 - children’s social care;
 - health services;
 - training and employment services
 - information and advice services
23. Other requirement son the council, in relation to the organisation and management of children’s centres, includes ensuring:
- - that there are sufficient children’s centres, so far as reasonably practicable, to meet local need;
 - each children’s centre is within the remit of an advisory board;

- that there is consultation before any significant changes are made to children's centre provision in their area.
24. 'Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance' (DfE, 2013) defines 'the core purpose of children's centres' as being 'to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:
- child development and school readiness;
 - parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and
 - child and family health and life chances'.
25. The Government announced in July 2015 its intention to consult on the future of children's centres. The Minister responsible, Sam Gyimah MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Education), has indicated that children's centres will remain but with a further shift in emphasis away from 'bricks and mortar' and separate centres towards local networks of services. The Southwark approach is consistent with that taken by many other Local Authorities and with this emerging national direction of travel.

Community impact statement

26. Equality analysis carried out at the time of the consultation indicated that the potential impact of changes to children's centres would affect the following groups in particular:
- Children under the age of five;
 - Parents of young children, in particular women who make up the highest proportion of parents using Children's Centre services.
 - The communities amongst whom young children are concentrated. Amongst children under five in Southwark the three largest ethnic groups are White British (22% of children), Nigerian (12%) and Black Caribbean (8%).
27. However it was further determined that the proposed changes were focused on re-organisation of the management of children's centres and not expected to impact negatively on front line services for the community. Indeed the reduction in management costs should enable an increase in capacity to work with disadvantaged families.
28. The main impact of the changes has been on staff employed across the children's centres. An equality analysis was undertaken to identify and mitigate against any potential adverse impact of the reorganisation on groups of staff .

Resource implications: Budget and financial issues

29. The existing budget for 16 children's centres has been reallocated to four localities, incorporating a saving of £92,000 to reflect the ending of a number of ex-Sure Start projects.
30. A funding formula has been agreed based on the IDACI scale which measures deprivation for children based on a range of economic, housing and social issues and then ranks them in order of need. The funding for children is then weighted using this scale so that areas with the greatest need attract proportionally appropriate budgets. This formula is in line with that used for school funding allocations and was agreed at a meeting with all existing Children's Centre providers as a fair method of apportioning resources.

31. The budget has been allocated across four localities as follows:

Locality	Number of children under 5	Amount (based on numbers of children weighted by IDACI)
Borough and Bankside & Walworth	4500	£560,260
Peckham and Nunhead & Peckham Rye	5735	£705,745
Camberwell and Dulwich	5815	£624,386
Bermondsey and Rotherhithe	4230	£559,606
<i>Southwark total</i>	<i>20280</i>	<i>£2,449,997</i>

32. It is proposed to allocate these budgets to the lead agencies as an annual grant for 2016-17 as follows:

- 1st Place Children and Parents Centre: £441,258 (representing 79% of budget for Borough, Bankside and Walworth area in line with proportion of area managed by 1st Place);
- Coin Street Trust: £119,002 (representing 21% of budget for Borough, Bankside and Walworth area in line with proportion of area managed by Coin Street);
- Pilgrims Way Primary School: £559,606 (for Bermondsey and Rotherhithe locality);
- Dulwich Wood Children's Centre: £624,386 (for Camberwell and Dulwich locality);
- Ivydale Primary School: £705,745 (for Peckham and Nunhead & Peckham Rye locality).

Consultation

33. There has been extensive consultation on the development of the new Children's Centre model, and with staff affected by it. Key milestones have included the following:

- September 2014: consultation on proposed changes to children's centres launched with full day event involving children's centres and partner services.
- December 2014: meeting with Headteachers of schools involved in children's centres programme.
- September 2014 – December 2014: consultation period with circulation of proposals paper to Children's Centre governors, managers, and staff and key partners in health, education, social care and the voluntary sector.
- February 2015: Following consideration of consultation responses, which were generally positive, the Director of Education agreed to proceed with plan to move children's centres programme towards model of a group of Centres for each locality, managed and co-ordinated by one lead agency per locality.
- March – August 2015: current children's centres invited to express an interest in undertaking lead role for their locality, and then to present their proposal to panel chaired by Director of Education, which agrees leads for localities in a non-competitive process.
- September 2015: Director of Education meets with headteachers and senior managers of proposed lead agencies.
- October 2015: children's centres direction of travel agreed by Children and Adults Board.
- November 2015: HR processes for re-organisation of staff agreed with affected schools.
- January – April 2016: formal consultation with staff and their trade unions on new locality staffing structure, followed by matching process for new posts.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (CS0364/DB)

34. The allocated Children Centres budget of £2.450m for 2016/17 is sufficient to fund this program within the current year, and a similar level of funding is anticipated to be available in 17/18 and 18/19, subject to annual confirmation of the Council's budget position.

HR Concurrent

35. The changes to the children's centre structure impacted on council staff employed to work in schools with children's centres attached to them and on staff engaged through agencies and through external providers of services.
36. Constituent trade unions and affected council employees were consulted on the changes to the provision and the impact on their employment in accordance with the agreed reorganisation and redundancy procedure. TUPE was deemed not to apply to transfer any council staff in relation to the Borough, Bankside and Walworth area. In the other areas, there was a change of line management and accountability by virtue of the new structure but no change of employer. 37 council employees were affected.
37. Consultation with staff and unions commenced in January 2016 and included the rationale for the proposals, the proposed structure and job descriptions and selection criteria. All job descriptions were rewritten and evaluated for use across all localities to ensure consistency of standards across the borough. Overall there are reduced levels of management and increased frontline capacity to deliver services. Staff in the new model will have access to a high quality suite of mandatory training as well as having wider teams to be able to learn and develop with; teams are enthusiastic about the development opportunities on offer. Some changes were made to proposals in response to the consultation process.
38. Staff members had the option to express an interest in voluntary redundancy or for consideration for any of the new roles. Of the 37 staff affected:
- 9 requested voluntary redundancy, which was agreed.
 - 25 were offered and accepted suitable alternative employment in the new structure, with the majority being offered their first choice of post and in many cases promotion.
 - 1 is still to be interviewed.
 - 2 have been served notice of compulsory redundancy.
39. The overall cost of redundancy payments made, including pay in lieu of notice where applicable, is £53,110. It was agreed during 2015 by the previous Director of Education that these costs would be met from the school staffing budget EX021 rather than individual school budgets. Reimbursement to schools will therefore be met from the 2016/17 staffing budget.

Director of Law and Democracy

40. The Director of Law and Democracy (acting through the corporate section) notes the content of the report.
41. The report asks cabinet to note the progress in implementing a new model of managing the delivery of children's centres in the borough as set out in the report and to approve specified grants to the lead agencies for that model of delivery.
42. The duties on the council in relation to the provision of early childhood services and the provision of those services through children's centres are outlined in the policy implication's section of the report. The council has a specific duty to secure that early childhood services

in their area are provided in an integrated manner, and these arrangements must, so far as is reasonably practicable, include arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.

43. In relation to the payment of grants to the specified lead agencies, the council has a subsidiary power to do any thing (which might involve expenditure or not) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions. The payment of grants, being incidental to the performance of the council's statutory functions in relation to the provision of early childhood services as described above, is therefore considered to be within the council's power.
44. Cabinet is asked to note the implementation of the new model of managing the delivery of children's centres, implementation of which is currently underway. The decision to implement the new model is not specified as reserved to a Cabinet or a particular decision maker, and under the constitution is therefore deemed to be delegated to officers. However it is consistent with the Cabinet's role and functions to consider initiatives to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the council's services, and to oversee service provision generally. Similarly, the decision Cabinet is asked to make in respect of the award of grants is not expressly reserved to Cabinet by the Constitution, but it is an executive decision that Cabinet is able to take, and is consistent with the Cabinet's role and functions in relation to the strategic management of the council's resources.
45. The report sets out consultation undertaken, in paragraphs 6 and 34 with service providers, service users and staff in relation to the new delivery model.
46. The council is required to consult before making any significant changes to children's centre provision in its area, and paragraph 34 of the report refers to the consultation events that have taken place.
47. It is also noted that the report refers further in paragraph 38 to consultation undertaken with the trade unions and employees in relation to the reorganisation of the staffing structure.
48. The cabinet is reminded of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED General Duty) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and when making decisions to have regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, (b) to advance equality of opportunity and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The relevant characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, The PSED General Duty also applies to marriage and civil partnership but only in relation to (a). The cabinet is specifically referred to the community impact statement at paragraphs 27 to 29 of the report which sets out the consideration that has been given to equalities issues which should be considered when considering these recommendations.
49. The reorganisation of the organisational staffing for the new model has employment law implications and these have been identified in the Human Resources Concurrent at paragraphs 36 to 40 of the report. That confirms that the delivery of the new model did not involve the transfer of council employees under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) and that the reorganisation was managed under the council's reorganisation, redeployment and redundancy policy and procedure and other relevant human resources procedures. This would ensure that the council acted in accordance with employment legislation. As noted above the report summarises, in paragraph 29, the consideration given to the equalities implications of the proposed staffing changes as required under the PSED.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Documents	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

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Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
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Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
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