

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 23 July 2021	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education
<b>Report title:</b>		Grant Award Extension: Children and Family Centres	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All Wards	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Children's and Adults' Services	

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education formalises the approval of the grant funding for the period 1 December 2020 – 30 November 2021 (twelve months) to the lead agencies (named as shown in Table 1) to continue the delivery of the Children and Family Centre's programme. The twelve-month grant award has a total value of £2,335,114.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Children and Families Centres (CFC) in Southwark are delivered by five providers (three maintained schools, two voluntary sector organisations) across four Southwark localities and they are funded via a Grant Award. The total 2020/21 annual spend for CFC's is £2,335,114 (see Table 1).
3. CFCs are places where families with children under the age of 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 and reduce inequalities. CFCs support outcomes across child development, school-readiness, health outcomes and life chances.
4. In 2015, lead agencies were identified for their locality and the arrangements were put in place in April 2016 as shown in Table 1. The total funding has been the same from April 2016/2017 to March 2020/21 at £2,335,114 per annum across five lead agencies.
5. The grant agreement in place with each CFC lead agency sets out what they are expected to deliver in return for their grant funding. These inform performance monitoring which is currently carried out by the Council's Family Early Help Service.

**Table 1 CFC - Locality, lead agency and grant award value**

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Grant Award Value 19/20</b>	<b>Grant Award Value 20/221</b>
Borough, Bankside and Walworth	1st place Children and Parents Centre	£420,463	£420,463
	Coin Street Centre Trust	£133,966	£133,966
Peckham, Peckham Rye and Nunhead	Ivydale Primary School	£652,487	£652,487
Bermondsey and Rotherhithe	Pilgrim's Way Primary School	£533,235	£533,235
Camberwell and Dulwich	Dulwich Wood Primary School	£594,963	£594,963
<b>Total</b>		<b>£2,335,114</b>	<b>£2,335,114</b>

6. CFCs offer direct support with a core structure of family support and early years practitioners, management, and administration support.
7. In addition, a range of health and care services are co-located within the CFC's. The centres host partner organisations where service delivery and associated resources lay outside the scope of the grant award. However, it remains an expectation of the grant award that CFCs support the wider delivery of health and social care services to improve outcomes of residents.
8. Services which are delivered directly by CFCs or partner agencies include, but are not limited to:
  - Family Support - 1:1 casework for families with complex needs who are referred by partners or stepped down from Children's Social Care.
  - Parenting programmes to support attachment and improve family relationships.
  - Targeted groups to meet identified needs e.g., domestic abuse, low-income families or fathers' group.
  - Play, learning and development – including baby and toddler groups, stay and play (universal and targeted).
  - Bookstart sessions and promotion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.
  - Education, Skills and Training, in partnership with Southwark Works, DWP and other employment support services, to support parents into employment, including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL),

Basic/functional skills, volunteering opportunities, vocational accredited skills, GCSEs/NVQs, and First Aid.

- Advice and guidance on issues affecting children and families.
- Health services (hosted by Children's Centres but delivered and resourced by NHS partner agencies) including antenatal and postnatal groups and activities, support for mental health and post-natal depression; nutrition/dietetics; breastfeeding support, speech and language support.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

9. The CFCs play a central role in improving the outcomes of young children and their families. Providers work closely with partners via the under 5's Strategic Partnership and Early years (0-5 years) subgroup of the Partnership Southwark Start Well Cell which supports the Partnership Southwark Recovery Plan.
10. To date CFCs have demonstrated effective working with the council's Family Early Help service and are integral to the delivery of the Keeping Families Strong approach. The 2017 Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) highlighted that "*Younger children who have emerging and additional needs are helped through an extensive range of services clustered around children's centres*". The 2020 focused visit again recognised CFCs as part of an alliance which provide a safety net for vulnerable children as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response. These reports demonstrate effective cross system working and the role of CFC in supporting children and families.
11. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic the support for communities has shifted to flexible models of delivery which includes online support.
12. The early help strategic review carried out by the family early help transformation team highlighted that CFCs use the central reporting system MOASIC and Synergy. Using a centrally held data system provides a strong foundation to partner wide joint commissioning for neighbourhoods and locations.
13. As part of the early help strategic review and associated plan, a review of the CFC provision was carried out in October 2020. The review concluded:
  - The lead agencies are meeting the service requirements as currently stipulated in the grant.
  - The service is valued by the families and they support the professionals they work with.
  - There is a need to develop a borough-wide core standard service delivery with local delivery plan.

- There is a need to develop an early years' support pathway and improve the use of an integrated data system to support robust recording and reporting of service performance and outcomes.
14. Since the review, CFC providers have been actively engaged in service development plans focusing on five primary areas:
    - Financial management.
    - Demonstrating targeted support for the most vulnerable groups in each locality, based on demographic and cohort data.
    - Better use of buildings to support wider system integration.
    - Engagement with local communities in the planning of services.
    - Improved outcomes-based reporting and recording.
  15. These areas support the council in demonstrating value for money and reducing inequalities, in line with the Borough Plan 2020-22.
  16. The Borough Plan sets out an ambitious plan to build a better future for the people of Southwark and includes a commitment to “continue to invest in early intervention and keep children and families' centres open”. It was agreed that this would be achieved via formalised contracting arrangements.
  17. The current grant award expired on 30 November 2020, however, the pandemic limited the ability of the Council to carry out procurement exercises and CFCs ability to engage in such an exercise.
  18. Throughout the pandemic CFCs have been focused on the identification of vulnerable families and ensuring delivery via alternative methods (i.e., virtual or face to face following COVID safe practice).
  19. This grant award extension provides the time required to carry out this process in full. Continuing with the current service is deemed to be the best possible solution at this time for families with children under the age of five.
  20. CFC lead agencies have a long history of working on service development with the council and strong local community connections putting them in a unique position to provide services responsive to Southwark residents' needs. The proposed procurement route to move providers to a more formalised contract arrangement is via a Single Supplier Negotiation, as advised by Procurement and Legal. Approval for this process will be sought via a Gateway 1.
  21. A twelve-month extension to the grant award would allow for a Gateway 1 report to come forward and negotiation on the scope of service delivery with the CFCs to continue. These discussions will support the council and current lead agencies to:

- Deliver services in line with a development framework and agreed budget.
- Gain oversight and transparency regarding CFC building utilisation by wider council and NHS funded services.
- Improved outcomes for families, demonstrated by standardised use of information systems and key performance reporting.
- Build strategic management, leadership, and accountability to support providers successfully engaging with an open competitive procurement process should the council choose to explore this route in the future.
- Stabilise provision of the support offered by CFC to support the council's response to mitigating against the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to some of the most vulnerable children and families.

22. The procurement timeline is set out below:

<b>Table 3: Procurement Timeline</b>	
Service and provider development with the current lead agencies.	December 2020 to July 2021
Submission of Gateway 1	July 2021
Submission of Gateway 2	September 2021
New Contract Starts	November 2021

### **Policy implications**

23. 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 employment and other advice for parents and prospective parents).
24. Southwark’s Borough Plan (2020– 2022) set out an ambitious plan to build a better future for the people of Southwark and includes commitments across eight themes guided by Southwark’s values which help Southwark achieve the vision of a ‘fairer and more just society. Of the eight commitments within the Borough Plan the CFCs services contribute considerably to the new priority themes, which are:
- Tackling health inequalities
  - A great start in life.

25. The Council is committed to improving 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.

### **Community impact statement**

26. The Public Sector Equality Duty, at section 149 of the Equality Act, requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard when carrying out their activities to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those with none. The Council's Approach to Equality commits the Council to ensuring that equality is an integral part of our day-to-day business.
27. "Protected characteristics" are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful - the characteristics are age, gender, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.
28. The Borough Plan contains a range of commitments which the council will deliver up to 2021/22. CFCs support the delivery of themes such as 'Tackling health inequalities', to deliver value for money and quality services for children under-fives and their families accessing CFCs service.
29. As the CFCs programme is focused on young children and their families, the decision to continue to resource it would be expected to have a particularly positive impact on:
- 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.
  - Children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. More than half of the population of Southwark children aged 0-4 years is of BAME background.
  - Children from low-income families. 24.7% of children aged 0-4 are from low-income families.
30. CFCs provide an opportunity to provide a platform for delivery of seamless services which are responsive to the needs of communities and neighbourhoods that they engage with daily. This can include a specific focus on the renewed commitment to reduce inequalities as part of Southwark

Stands Together. The early help strategic review makes a specific recognition of the need to take a contemporary approach to coproduction by ensuring there is an alignment via the service development plan, through the requirement to demonstrate targeting resources, tailoring services, and ongoing engagement with families and children and young people.

31. The subsequent commissioning exercise will further allow for the issues raised by the SST events held in 2020 to inform service development and planning.

### Resource implications

32. The grant will be managed through current staffing resources contained within the Partnership Commissioning Team structure, working alongside the Early Family Help transformation lead.
33. Monitoring of the grant is based on the conditions of grant funding which amongst other things includes evidence of work being done and outcomes being met.

### Legal Implications

34. Please see the supplementary advice of the Director of Law and Governance below.

### Financial Implications

35. This extension is the continuation of a current arrangement for which a budget is in place on cost centre EE832 within Children and Families. Thus, there is sufficient budget in place to fund this extension for its full duration.
36. The budget for Children’s Centres for 2020/21 is as follows:

		Grant Award	
Locality	Lead Agency	Annual Budget	Extension Dec 2020 - Nov 2021
Borough, Bankside and Walworth	1st place Children and parents Centre	£420,463	£420,463
	Coin Street Centre Trust	£133,966	£133,966
Camberwell and Dulwich	Dulwich Wood Primary School	£594,963	£594,963

		<b>Grant Award</b>	
<b>Locality</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Extension Dec 2020 - Nov 2021</b>
Peckham, Peckham Rye and Nunhead	Ivydale Primary School	£652,487	£652,487
Bermondsey and Rotherhithe	Pilgrim's Way Primary School	£533,235	£533,235
<b>Total</b>		<b>£2,335,114</b>	<b>£2,335,114</b>

37. The required budget for the twelve-month grant award funding (1 Dec 2020 - 30 November 2021) is £2,335,114.

### **Consultation**

38. This report is informed by the Early Help Strategic Review and the 0-5 Strategic Oversight Group, further it links to the Partnership Southwark Start Well section of the Recovery Plan. These reviews and plans were all developed with multiagency and multidisciplinary professionals from across health, social care and the voluntary sector.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

#### **Head of Procurement**

39. Not applicable.

#### **Director of Law and Governance**

40. This report seeks approval of the award of grant funding to the five lead agencies identified in Table 1 under paragraph 5 to enable the continued delivery of the Children and Family Centres programme for the period from 1 December 2020 to 30 November 2021. Paragraphs 18 and 19 note the effect and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the original timeline for commissioning and procuring a new redesigned service.
41. The decision to approve the report recommendation is one which is expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member under Part 3D of the council Constitution. The proposed grant award is consistent with the council's statutory duties and powers as noted in this report and with corporate policy.
42. These services will continue to be regulated by way of conditions of grant funding rather than by more formal commercial contractual conditions. However, the existing service level agreements with the lead agencies have been reviewed and revised in order to include more rigorous and defined performance indicators and outcomes.

## Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (01DK2021-22)

43. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes the contents of this report, with specific reference to the paragraph concerning financial implications.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Documents	Held At	Contact
Grant Award to Children's Centre Providers 2019-20	Children's and Adults' Services Commissioning, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Sau-Fun Wong 020 8167 6937
Link: <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=6795">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=6795</a>		
Update on Children's Centres Programme 2015	Children's and Adults' Services Commissioning, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Sau-Fun Wong 020 8167 6937
Link: <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s62052/Report%20Childrens%20Centres%20Programme.pdf">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s62052/Report%20Childrens%20Centres%20Programme.pdf</a>		
Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance 2013	Children's and Adults' Services Commissioning, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Sau-Fun Wong 020 8167 6937
Link: <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/678913/childrens_centre_stat_guidance_april-2013.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/678913/childrens_centre_stat_guidance_april-2013.pdf</a>		
Southwark Council Fairer Future Commitments 2018-22	Children's and Adults' Services Commissioning, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Sau-Fun Wong 020 8167 6937
Link: <a href="https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/fairer-future-commitments?chapter=7">https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/fairer-future-commitments?chapter=7</a>		
Southwark Council Budget Book 2019-20	Children's and Adults' Services Commissioning, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Sau-Fun Wong 020 8167 6937
Link: <a href="https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/9153/Children-and-Adults.pdf">https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/9153/Children-and-Adults.pdf</a>		

### APPENDICES

None
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## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's and Adults' Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Sau-Fun Wong, Children and Young People – Programme Manager	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	22 July 2021	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Director of Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	22 July 2021	