

## Summary Sheet

### Council Report

Cabinet / Commissioners Decision Making Meeting - 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016

### Title

Request for Exemption from Contract Standing Orders to Continue and Extend the Children's Centre Contracted Provision at The Arnold Centre, Aughton Early Years and Rawmarsh Children's Centre

### Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director CYPS

### Report Author(s)

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### Ward(s) Affected

Holderness Ward, Rawmarsh Ward and Rotherham East Ward.

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek an exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 48, to enable the extension of the three Children's Centre contracts for a further two years pending a full review of Early Help in 2017/2018. The Local Authority has had annual contracts in place with the three Nursery schools since 2011. Prior to 2011 there was one contract per centre for the three year period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2011. This was funded from the Sure Start Grant which was confirmed in advance for the three year period. The current contracts were revised in May 2015 following updates to reference the impending move to the Early Help Service and to streamline the content. The current contracts are due to expire on 31st March 2016.

The extension of the current contracts will ensure consistency for vulnerable children and families and ensure that the Local Authority is able to meet its Statutory Duty in having sufficient numbers of centres for those most in need.

A full re structure of Rotherham's Children's Centres took place between January 2014 and April 2015. As a result of this restructure there has been a reduction in the numbers of designated Children's Centres across Rotherham from 22 to 12. The formal transfer to the new structure took place on April 1st 2015.

Of the remaining 12 Centres, the Local Authority has a contract arrangement with the Governing Bodies of three Nursery schools, (Aughton Early Years, Arnold Centre and Rawmarsh Children's Centre) to continue to deliver the Children's Centre provision. The three settings have all been judged by OFSTED to be outstanding provisions as schools and day care, with The Arnold Centre recently receiving the Rotherham Gold Charter Status. All three Centres are currently performing well against the Local Authority targets and are in line to be good or outstanding for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. The remaining nine centres were offered for tender but remain led and managed by the Local Authority.

The Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to ensure it has sufficient numbers of Children's Centres to meet the needs of those children and families with the greatest need across Rotherham.

The children's centre portfolio transferred from the Education and Skills Service into the Early Help Service on the 1st October 2015. The Early Help Service is currently engaged in a consultation with staff, partners and young people as part of the £422,000 savings to be made in 2016/17. The Children's Centre offer will be reviewed as part of the wider Early Help transformation and savings required in 2017/2018.

Annual challenge meetings are in place with the three Centres. In 2016/17 and 2017/2018 annual targets will be agreed with the school Head Teachers that meet the requirements of the Local Authority and the populations the Centres serve.

The Children's Centres provide valuable early intervention support and services to vulnerable young children and their families. All three centres are well established and are well regarded in the communities they serve They also support the work of safeguarding through their co –working, involvement and support in hosting Child Protection Conferences and Child in Need (CiN) meetings. An extension of the current contracts will ensure continuity for those children and families most in need.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council staff (15 Full Time Equivalent) are currently employed within the three centres, line managed by the Head Teachers and the centres receive Quarterly payments. If this was to cease there would be Human Resource implications for staff employed in the centres; including changes to line management, potential relocation and redundancy and potential mileage expenses. There would also be implications for partners who jointly deliver within the Centres, including health colleagues and staff from the Department for Work and Pensions.

## **Recommendations**

That Cabinet agrees to seek an exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 48.

That Cabinet agrees to extend the contracts for a further two years, with an annual review. This will bring the Centres in line with the full Early Help review and transformation and enable a continued service for vulnerable children and families. It will also provide the Local Authority with the ability to respond effectively to Local and National targets; including budget demands and OFSTED.

### **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 – List of 12 Children’s Centres and associated Wards.

### **Background Papers**

Sure Start Children’s Centres Statutory Guidance, Department for Education, April 2013.

The framework for children’s centre inspection from April 2013 (OFSTED)

Cabinet Report - 15th January 2014 – Early Years and Child Care Services including Children’s Centres.

Cabinet Report - 30th April 2014- Interim Report in Respect of Children’s Centres Public Consultation.

Cabinet Report – 18th June 2014 – Early Years and Child Care Services, including Children Centres – Consultation Feedback report.

Cabinet Report – 6th August 2014- Children’s Centre budget options to achieve required savings.

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

No

### **Council Approval Required**

Yes

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**Title:**

**Request for Exemption from Contract Standing Orders to Continue and Extend the Children's Centre Contracted Provision at The Arnold Centre, Aughton Early Years and Rawmarsh Children's Centre**

**1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That Cabinet agrees to seek an exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 48.
- 1.2 That Cabinet agrees to extend the contracts for a further two years with an annual review. This will bring the Centres in line with the full Early Help review and transformation and enable a continued service for vulnerable children and families. It will also provide the Local Authority with the ability to respond effectively to Local and National targets; including budget demands and OFSTED.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 A full re structure of Rotherham's Children's Centres took place between January 2014 and April 2015. This included a full consultation, equalities impact assessment, and full cabinet approval. As a result of this restructure there has been a reduction in the numbers of designated Children's Centres across Rotherham from 22 to 12.
- 2.2 The Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to ensure it has sufficient numbers of Children's Centres to meet the needs of those children and families with the greatest need across Rotherham.
- 2.3 The formal transfer to the new structure took place on April 1st 2015. Of the remaining 12 centres, the Local Authority has a contract arrangement with the Governing Bodies of three Nursery schools (Aughton Early Years, Arnold Centre and Rawmarsh Children's Centre) to continue to deliver the children's centre provision.
- 2.4 The Local Authority has had annual contracts in place with the three Nursery schools since 2011. Prior to 2011 there was one contract per centre for the three year period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2011. This was funded from the Sure Start Grant which was confirmed in advance of the three year period.
- 2.5 The current contracts were revised in May 2015 following updates to reference the impending move to the Early Help Service and to streamline the content.
- 2.6 During the restructure process, consideration was given to tendering out these centres, however the footprint of these buildings was deemed too complex to determine a difference between the school, children's centre

and day care areas, and so these three centres remained as contracted provision.

- 2.7 The remaining nine centres were offered for tender, but remain led and managed by the Local Authority. Eight are grouped into pairs with one single leadership and governance arrangement over each pairing.
- 2.8 The three settings, (Aughton Early Years, Arnold Centre and Rawmarsh Children's Centre) have all been judged by OFSTED to be 'outstanding' provision as schools and day care, with The Arnold Centre recently receiving the Rotherham Gold Charter Status. They are all currently performing well against the Local Authority targets for Children's Centres and are in line to be Good or Outstanding for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
- 2.9 These centres are led by the three Nursery Head Teachers, providing a saving to the Local Authority of the staffing costs of three Heads of Centre at Band K (£39,267 with on costs total £51,820 (top of scale)).
- 2.10 The children's centre portfolio transferred from the Education and Skills Service into the Early Help Service on the 1st October 2015. Early Help is currently engaged in a consultation with partners, staff and young people as part of the £422,000 savings to be made in 2016/17. The Children's Centres will be reviewed as part of the wider Early Help transformation and savings required in 2017/2018.
- 2.11 Rotherham's Children's Centres are all, (with the exception of Maltby Stepping Stones), located on or within school sites, with close links to Early Years provision.
- 2.12 Annual challenge meetings are in place with the three Centres. In 2016/17 and 2017/2018 annual targets will be agreed with the school Head Teachers that meet the requirements of the Local Authority and the populations the Centres serve.

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 If an exemption from standing orders is not granted the Council will not be able to meet its Statutory Duty to ensure it has sufficient numbers of Children's Centres to meet the needs of those children and families with the greatest needs.
- 3.2 Given that the last restructure process was only finalised in April 2015, it is not possible within current timescales to invite tenders from alternative suppliers or to bring the service back 'in house'.
- 3.3 The Children's Centres provide valuable early intervention support and services to vulnerable young children and their families. All three centres are well established and well regarded in the communities they serve. They also support the work of safeguarding through their co-working, involvement and support in hosting Child Protection Conferences and

Child in Need meetings. An extension of the current contracts will ensure continuity for those children and families most in need.

- 3.4 It is essential that the contract continues as Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council staff are currently employed within the centres. If this was to cease there would be Human Resource implications for staff in the centres (fifteen Full Time Equivalent); including changes to line management, potential relocation or redundancy and potential mileage expenses.
- 3.5 There would also be implications for partners who jointly deliver services within the Centres including health (baby clinics, 'stay and weigh' sessions, breastfeeding support services etc.) and the Department for Work and Pensions Employment Advisors and Independent Advisors (benefits, employment and debt advice).

#### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 4.1 That Cabinet agree an exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 48 to extend the three contracts for a further two years with an annual review.
- 4.2 It is recommended from April 2016 that the contracts are revised as required annually to bring the Centres in line with the full Early Help review and transformation. It will also provide the Local Authority with the ability to respond effectively to Local and National needs and targets. OFSTED will imminently (Spring/Summer 2016) be announcing its new framework for Children's Centres Inspections and this will also guide future decisions by the Local Authority.
- 4.3 Retender the provision or bring the Centres back under Local Authority control. There is not adequate time to complete the re tendering process, alongside consultation with staff and stakeholders.
- 4.4 The three settings (Aughton Early Years, Arnold Centre and Rawmarsh Children's Centre) have run the Children's Centres since 2008. They have a good relationship with the Local Authority and are now linked directly to the Early Help Service, with the three Head Teachers attending all relevant Early Help meetings and Development events.
- 4.5 The three settings (Aughton Early Years, Arnold Centre and Rawmarsh Children's Centre) have all been judged by OFSTED to be 'outstanding' provision as schools and day care, with The Arnold Centre recently receiving the Rotherham Gold Charter Status. They are all currently performing well against the Local Authority targets for Children's Centres and are in line to be Good or Outstanding for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
- 4.6 All three centres are well established and well regarded in the communities they serve. They also support the work of safeguarding through their co-working, involvement and support in hosting child

protection conferences and child in need meetings. An extension of the current contracts will ensure consistency for those children and families most in need.

- 4.7 Therefore, Option 4.1 with the added implementation of 4.2 as required is the recommended proposal.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1 Not applicable.

## 6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The current contracts were due for renewal on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

## 7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The costs of the individual contracts are listed below:-

|                               | <b>15/16<br/>budget</b> | <b>16/17<br/>budget</b> | <b>17/18<br/>estimate<br/>*</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| The Arnold Centre             | £136,865                | £145,569                | £154,303                        |
| Aughton Early Years           | £194,818                | £194,495                | £206,165                        |
| Rawmarsh Children's<br>Centre | £213,308                | £228,385                | £242,088                        |
|                               |                         |                         |                                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>£544,991</b>         | <b>£568,449</b>         | <b>£602,556</b>                 |

\*Figures provided by Early Help Finance Officer and based on a 6% increase to the budget (in line with associated overheads and cost of living, wage increases combined). This figure would be reviewed in line with the Early Help budget and with advice from colleagues in finance.

## 8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to ensure it provides sufficient numbers of Children's Centres to meet the needs of those children and families with the greatest need across Rotherham.

## 9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council staff are based in the three contracted centres and are overseen by the nursery school Head Teachers. If this was to cease there would be Human Resource implications for the 15 full time equivalents (FTE) staff in the centres, including changes to line management, potential for relocation or redundancy and possible increased mileage expenses.

## 10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The Children's Centres provide valuable early intervention support and services to young children and their families. All three centres are well established and well regarded in the communities they serve. They also support the work of safeguarding through their co-working, involvement and support in hosting child protection conferences and child in need meetings. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure it provides sufficient numbers of children's centres to meet the needs of those children most in need.

## 11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 The three Centres have a 'reach' that cover areas with high deprivation (30% Super Output Area). The total population of children under 5 years old and those living in the 30% Super Output Area (SOA) is outlined below.

| Centre                     | Number of Children under 5 living in the area | Number of children under 5 living in the 30% SOA* |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| The Arnold Centre          | 1995  | 427   |
| Aughton Early Years        | 2148  | 823   |
| Rawmarsh Children's Centre | 1162  | 986   |

\* 30% Super Output Area (SOA) is a national measure for deprivation.

## 12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 Health partners and Department for Work and Pensions jointly deliver from the Children's Centres. Baby clinics, 'stay and weigh sessions' and breast feeding support sessions all form part of the Health offer. Debt and benefit advice alongside employment advice are offered by the Department for Work and Pensions officers and independent advisors. The ability to jointly deliver services is important to ensure best outcomes for children and families and to support partners in meeting their National and local targets of engaging with vulnerable children and families.

## 13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 If an exemption from standing orders is not granted the Council will not be able to meet its Statutory Duty to ensure it has sufficient numbers of Children's Centres to meet the needs of those children and families with the greatest needs.



- 13.2 Given that the last restructure process was finalised in April 2015, it is not possible within current timescales to invite tenders from alternative suppliers or to bring the service back 'in house.'
- 13.3 It is essential that the contract continues as Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council staff (15 Full Time Equivalents) are currently employed within the centres. If this was to cease there would be Human Resource implications for staff in the centres; including changes to line management, potential relocation and redundancy and potential mileage expenses
- 13.4 There would also be implications for partners who jointly deliver services within the Centres including health (baby clinics, 'stay and weigh sessions', breastfeeding support services etc.) and the Department for Work and Pensions Employment Advisors and Independent Advisors (benefits, employment and debt advice).
- 13.5 That Cabinet agrees to seek an exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 48.
- 13.6 That Cabinet agrees to extend the contracts for a further two years, with an annual review. This will bring the Centres in line with the full Early Help review and transformation and enable a continued service for vulnerable children and families. It will also provide the Local Authority with the ability to respond effectively to Local and National needs and targets; including, children and family's needs, budget demands and OFSTED.

#### **14. Accountable Officer(s)**

David McWilliams – Assistant Director Early Help and Family Engagement  
Karla Capstick – Head of Service, Early Help (South)

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Joanne Robertson

Director of Legal Services:- Ian Gledhill

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):- Emma Fairclough

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