

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – Report to Cabinet

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| 1 | Meeting:     | Cabinet  |
| 2 | Date:        | 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2014                                    |
| 3 | Title:       | Early Years and Child Care Services including Children's Centres |
| 4 | Directorate: | CYPS   |

### 5. Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the proposal to achieve the required Early Years and Child Care services, including Children Centres revenue reduction to meet the council-wide significant revenue reductions required by the government. It is stated here that changes will take place in services to meet the required reductions in revenue as demanded by central government.

Cabinet are asked to endorse the proposal for consultation for statutory public consultation in relation to changes to children's centre delivery, and on all services to be changed which will be of the maximum required 45 day period so that the reconfigured service and the required revenue reductions be implemented from April 2014.

### 6. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 6.1 Endorse the proposal for statutory public and subsequent staff consultation

## **7. Background**

### **7.1 Current Provision**

The Early Years and Childcare services, covers a range of areas of work including the delivery of children's centre services, family and information services, early education and childcare services. There are over 500 Early Years and Childcare providers and 22 Children's Centres within Rotherham. The work of the Early Years and Childcare Services includes meeting a range of LA statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006. The Children's Centres currently target over 8,500 children in the borough (there are currently nearly 15,500 under 5's in the borough)

### **Children's Centres**

- 22 Children's Centres that provide access to multiagency services (both targeted and universal services) for children from pre-birth to 5 years of age and their families, of these 14 centres provide early education and childcare. All centres provide access to health services; family support and outreach services and training which also supports improved parenting skills to reduce the numbers of children coming into care, advice and support services to increase access to employment through universal and targeted services
- Children Centre services are targeted primarily towards the following vulnerable groups
  - Lone parents of children under 5 years of age
  - Teenage parents
  - Black and Minority Ethnic Groups with children under 5 years of age
  - Disabled children under 5 years of age
  - Disabled parents with children under 5 years of age
  - Workless households with children under 5 years of age
  - Dads with children under 5 years of age
  - Any other specific vulnerable groups that are reflective of specific localities and their local needs identified by centres
- Partnership working with health, adult and family learning particularly targeting most vulnerable and hard to reach groups through outreach of Early Years and Childcare Services
- Business management of children's centres contracts including performance, contracts and finances
- Management of Early Education contracts and finance monitoring
- Provision of leadership development for managers/business owners, HT in PVI settings/Childminder/Children Centres
- Support and Challenge the quality, standards and performance in schools/early years providers, including Childminders and out of school clubs, and children's centres - where provision is either requires improvement or inadequate.- 'Settings of concern'
- Provide information to parents/carers through the Families Information Services

## **7.2 Statutory Duties**

Statutory Services delivered by the Early Years and Child Care Service in order to meet the statutory duties identified in the Childcare Act 2006

### **Children Centres**

- Duty of sufficiency – ensure through partnership working sufficient children's centres in place to improve outcomes for young children, their families and reduce inequalities in:
  - child development and school readiness;
  - parenting aspirations and parenting skills;
  - child and family health and life chances.
- Duty of LA to ensure each Children's Centre is within the remit of an advisory board, its makeup and purpose for each Children's Centre.
- Following Ofsted inspection the LA must produce an action plan for the children's centre.
- Set annual targets as part of each Children's Centre annual challenge meeting to improve outcomes for children and families.

### **Family Information Service**

- Through the Family Information Service (section 12 of the Child Care Act 2006) a duty to provide a range of information, advice and assistance to parents with children aged 0- 19, or up to 25 if child has SEN ( including information regarding registered childcare; activities for children and young people and available support services

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and assessment**

- Ensure that schools and other EYFS providers understand and follow the requirements set out in the National Standards and Testing Agency assessment and reporting EYFS arrangements
- Provide statutory annual training to EYFS teachers on Profile assessment moderation for children by the age of 5 – including completion of moderation visits and report to at least 25% of all schools on an annual basis
- Quality assure annual EYFS Profile assessment data on an annual basis, prior to submission to DfE – and follow up any anomalies with individual schools.
- Accountable for the educational outcomes/attainment for children by the age of 5, including narrowing the gap in attainment

### **Sufficiency Duty**

- Sufficiency duty – the duty to assess and ensure the sufficiency of Early Education and childcare provision to meet the needs of all eligible children ( 2, 3 and 4 year old Early Education places.) and ensure sufficient high quality accessible, affordable, sustainable early education and childcare places for children 0-14 (up to 18 for young people with SEN) available to meet the needs of working parents.

## **Development of the Early Years Workforce and improvements to the quality of provision in settings**

- Development of the Early Years and Child Care Workforce. A duty to provide information /advice and access to training to Child care providers (section 13), for high quality and skilled workforce
- Quality improvement in relation to settings with 2 year olds. Provide challenge and support to settings , including Childminders and schools that are providing provision to children under 5, that is either 'require improvement' or are 'inadequate'

## **Inclusion**

To support providers to deliver accessible, inclusive early years and childcare provision to meet the needs of the local diverse community, children with additional needs/disabilities and all vulnerable groups.

### **7.3 Proposal**

The current revenue budget for Early Years and Child Care services, including children's centres is £5.053m

There is a required revenue reduction of £2.2m for 2014-16. Substantial consideration has been given to the best way forward to achieve this revenue reduction and the proposal is:

- Closure of 13 registered Children's Centre buildings with a reduction to 9 Children's Centres across the borough
- These 9 children's centres buildings then clustered to form 7 registered centres across the borough resulting in an increased size of reach areas
- Creation of a foundation years service across health, social care and education
- Shift to provider funded training for all settings to access any training, including those requiring improvement/inadequate. This could affect sufficiency going forward as only Good settings can offer 2 year old places.

This proposal delivers the required financial efficiency and there will be an impact on the quality and quantity of the service provided by the Early Years and Child Care service.

### **7.4 Consultation**

There is a legal duty to consult in relation to opening or closing Children's Centres and or making significant changes to the range or nature of services provided.

Cabinet are asked to endorse the proposal for consultation for statutory public consultation in relation to changes to children's centre delivery, and on all services to be changed which will be of the maximum required 45 day period so that the reconfigured service and the required revenue reductions be implemented from April 2014.

A consultation strategy will be developed and in line with the previous service transformations a detailed consultation with staff, schools, practitioners, wider stake holders and the public will take place.

The consultation will include an impact assessment in accordance with statutory guidance.

## **8. Finance**

Total current budget 13/14 for Early Years and Children's Centres = £5.053m

Total Children's Centres savings to be achieved 14/16 = £1,.869m

Total Early Years and Childcare Service savings to be achieved 14/16 = £331k

Total revenue budget reduction 2014 -16 = £2.2m

The potential identified savings would be achieved over a two year period 2014/15 and 2015/16 as statutory consultation is required before implementation. This would require a significant time commitment in Year One and therefore the majority of savings would be achieved in Year Two. The target value of savings over the two years is £835k in 2014/15 and £1.365m in 2015/16.

## **9 Risks and Uncertainties**

1. Any decisions made about the progress of the proposal will need to consider that partner organisations may also need to meet governance requirements regarding the Foundation Years' Service
2. That the opportunity to transform services to improve outcomes is not grasped with enough vigor to make the necessary changes happen and achieve the service transformation and efficiencies.
3. Nearly 2,500 children and their families who will not be able to easily access the remaining Children Centre buildings will be offered a service through the proposed Foundation Years outreach service.
4. Possible increase in economic activity in the voluntary and independent child care provision (PVI) as parents access alternatives to council provision
5. Challenges in maintaining well established partnership relationships

## **10. Background papers**

- Rewiring Public Services, Children's Services, LGA, 2013
- Evidence for the Frontline, Alliance for Useful Evidence, Dr. Jonathan Sharples, 2013
- Integrated Commissioning Strategy for Early Years services for children with additional needs 2008-2011, Devon County Council, 2008
- The Tail, How our schools fail one child in five: what can be done, Marshall, 2013
- Strategic toolkit for planning integrated working, 4 Children, 2010
- Bright Futures: local children local approaches, LGA, 2013
- Report of the Children and Young Peoples Health Outcomes Forum, The CYP Forum, 2012
- The State of the State 2013, In Search of Affordable Government, Deloitte and Reform, 2013
- Children and Families Bill, DfE, February 2013
- The Foundation Year: Preventing poor children becoming poor adults, Frank Field, Dec 2010

- Supporting Families in the Foundation Years, Frank Field, 2010
- Best Practice for Sure Start: The Way Forward for Children's Centres, Report from the all party parliamentary sure start group, July 2013
- Birth and Beyond, Department of Health, 2011
- Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance, Department for education, April 2013

## **Contact**

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