



## **Reconfiguration of Children's Centres**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for consultation on proposed changes to the delivery of children's centre services in Derby City ensuring the Local Authority's statutory duty to provide sufficient Children's Centres to reach under-fives and their families is met and provide a more efficient and effective service.
- 1.2 Children's Centres play an integral part of a local authority early intervention strategy and offer services to families with children under the age of five years. However, a number of recent national reviews of the use of the centres have highlighted that the focus must be on how we can enable Children's Centres, working with other professionals, to better target those most in need of their services to intervene earlier.
- 1.3 The original ring fence of the Sure Start Grants has been lifted with a view to the Local Authority being able to make decisions which more closely reflect local need. Children's Centres need to be more targeted on providing services to those most vulnerable children and their families who are deemed as in need or at risk. The newly created Early Intervention Grant, of which the children's centres funding forms part, has been significantly reduced for 2011/12 and a further reduction in 2012/13.
- 1.4 Six Children's Centres have been identified as part of a potential reconfiguration of services. In addition, there are a number of recommendations for alternative service delivery models.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To consult on the following proposed changes to Children's Centres:
  - to reconfigure Children's Centre provision to provide four centres in each of the three localities of the city. The localities are 1 and 5 covering Spondon, Oakwood, Chaddesden, Derwent; Mackworth Morley, Darley, Allestree; locality 2 covering Alvaston, Boulton, Sinfen; and locality 3 and 4 covering Normanton, Arboretum, Littleover, Mickleover, Abbey. This will result in the reduction of separate centres from 18 to 12
  - to reconfigure the reach areas and delivery models for the remaining 12 Children's Centres to ensure the council continues to meet statutory requirements.
  - to consult with schools to transfer the management of Children's Centres to them where they are located on school premises
- 2.2 To agree to an eight-week consultation period commencing on Monday 24 January 2011, ending on 21 March 2011.

- 2.3 To carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on the proposed changes during the consultation period.
- 2.4 To bring a further report to the Cabinet meeting on 12 April 2011 with the findings of the consultation exercise and Equality Impact Assessment and further recommendations.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Principles that were taken into account in proposing these recommendations were:
- a reduction in funding from Government and change of national policy direction
  - to provide a single consistent service delivery model across all centres
  - address the inconsistent performance by centres against targets to work with under fives and their families
  - cost of staffing maintaining 18 centres within the current financial climate.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 There are 18 Children's Centres in Derby, all managed and run by the Local Authority. Children's Centres have been developed in the city since 2004 and originally grew out of Sure Start local programmes, early excellence centres, neighbourhood nurseries or from partnerships with local schools. There is no single delivery model covering all 18 centres as Government guidance and core offer requirements were changed over the development period

All meet the Children's Centre current core offer of the following services:

- Integrated Early Years Support and Childcare
  - Child and Family Health Services
  - Family Support - universal and targeted
  - Adult Learning and access to Job Centre Plus services
  - Outreach Services from other agencies/professionals
  - Families' Information Service
  - Childminding Support services.
- 4.2 Children's Centre services are available to over 14,405 children under five and their families in the city, of which 59.4% - 8,551 receive services. However, there is a range of 13.3% to 100% achieved. Ofsted recommend at least 50% of the children in the reach area of the centre should receive services. In some areas this is reflected with the achievement of high reach figures. However, this is often where families are more able and affluent to move around and seek out services for themselves, whilst those families identified as most vulnerable who need services are not accessing them.
- 4.3 The Government's funding for Children's Centres for next financial year now forms part of a newly created grant called the Early Intervention Grant. This grant for Derby has been reduced by £1.8m for the financial year 2011/12 and a further £300k for the following year.
- 4.4 The Early Intervention Grant is a ring-fenced grant with a specific focus on early intervention services and strategies for children and their families. As a consequence, Children's Centres will form an important part of an early intervention approach. Indications from the DfE are that whilst the Local Authority must adhere to its statutory duty to provide Children's Centres, there should be a focus on supporting those hard to reach most vulnerable families and those children where the gap in attainment is the lowest.

- 4.5 Current policy is also indicating that there will no longer be a requirement to provide full day care in Children's Centres in the most disadvantaged areas or provide qualified teachers to support this provision. Reconfiguration of the Children's Centres across the three localities, whilst reducing the number of centres, will still ensure that those most vulnerable will continue to have access to services.
- 4.6 Staffing models in Children's Centres are inconsistent due to evolving out of existing larger Sure Start local programmes and other initiatives and are to be fully reviewed as a part of wider service restructuring. A consistent model needs to be developed and adopted across all Children's Centres in conjunction with the proposed reconfiguration of the reach areas.
- 4.7 In the past, commissioning of individual services and activities from the centres has been ad hoc and needs to be co-ordinated under a single coherent strategy. This work is now well underway to ensure future services provide value for money and achieve better outcomes for children and families.
- 4.8 The proposals are to close the four centres situated in areas identified as less disadvantaged in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The IMD is a guide with identified indices for income employment, education, skills and training, health and barriers to housing used as a guide by the previous government and Ofsted. These are:
- Mickleover/Littleover
  - South Chaddesden
  - Oakwood
  - Chellaston.
- 4.9 The additional two centres are where there are no specific Children's Centre buildings or where there is under-performance against reach targets and where the lowest reach target for the city is. These are:
- Derwent
  - Peartree.
- 4.10 **Mickleover/Littleover.** Located in an area identified as less disadvantaged in the IMD. This is a separate building located on the site of Brookfield Primary School. The proposed change will be to return the building to the school and re-focus the accommodation to support additional Early Years provision and also deliver a new service for children with autism. Satellite services will continue to be delivered from Oaklands Avenue, which is part of the Austin Sunnyhill Children's Centre in Littleover. A room will be retained in the building at Brookfield to continue delivering some Children's Centre services. Whilst the reach figure for this centre is high and well met, services can be delivered from an alternative Children's Centre and outreach.
- 4.11 **South Chaddesden.** Located in an area identified as less disadvantaged in the IMD. This is a separate building located at Meadow Farm Primary and will be offered to the school to use. It is a small centre with limited space available. Currently there is low reach, but the centre has only been open six months. The proposed change will be to provide satellite services managed and co-ordinated from North Chaddesden Children's Centre based at Cavendish Close Infant School. Options for future use of the building at Meadow Farm Primary School will be considered, including youth services in the evenings and extended schools' services.
- 4.12 **Oakwood Children's Centre.** Located in an area identified as less disadvantaged in the IMD. This is a separate building located at Parkview Primary School. Services can be co-ordinated and managed with delivery from an alternative Children's Centre such as Spondon. Options are then to look at the school making use of the accommodation to provide additional space.

- 4.13 **Chellaston Children's Centre.** Located in an area identified as less disadvantaged in the IMD. This is a separate building located on land owned by Chellaston Junior School, which is a foundation school. The proposed change will be to manage and provide co-ordinate services from Boulton Children's Centre and or Osmaston/Allenton Children's Centre. Use of the building will then be offered back to be used by both the infant and junior schools.
- 4.14 **Derwent Children's Centre.** Located in an area regarded as disadvantaged in the IMD, which includes North Chaddesden Children's Centre. This has no designated building and provides services from Derwent Stepping Stones and Beaufort Primary School. Services provided at Derwent Stepping Stones, Beaufort Primary School and Revive Healthy Living Centre could continue to be delivered, but co-ordination and management provided through North Chaddesden Children's Centre. Derwent Children's Centre was designated as a phase one Children's Centre with a high reach figure of 1,312 under fives, but low performance to date of just 175 under fives or 13.3% of the reach target. Removal of the childcare subsidy could impact on the sustainability of childcare provision, but should be negated by the provider continuing to receive alternative funding from the two-year old pilot scheme, which will be continued post-March 2011.
- 4.15 **Peartree Children's Centre.** Located in an area regarded as disadvantaged in the IMD, which includes both Rosehill and Babington Children's Centres. There is no designated children's centre building as the Children's Centre is housed in a building owned by the Junior School, which also delivers extended and community services with satellite Children's Centre services running from an additional room within Harrington Nursery School. This centre has the lowest identified reach target in the city and those children and families could receive services from Rosehill and Babington.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Retain all 18 Children's Centres with a reduced offer of services, restricted opening hours which would limit access and availability of these services. However, this would result in the Local Authority not providing the statutory core Children's Centre offer.
- 5.2 Long-term, the Local Authority will be considering other options for the running and management of the remaining 12 children's centres with a view to schools and voluntary sector agencies taking on responsibility. However, in the first instance, the LA must realise the savings that are necessary from these proposals.
- 5.3 Alongside the proposals, the restructure of Children's Centre staffing will support the increased reach and expanded areas that other children's centres will pick up.

**This report has been approved by the following officers:**

<b>Legal officer</b> <b>Financial officer</b> <b>Human Resources officer</b> <b>Service Director(s)</b> <b>Other(s)</b>	Stuart Leslie, Director of Legal and Democratic Services Alison Parkin, Head of Finance CYPD Alimun Nessa, Project Manager Rita Silvester, Service Director
<b>For more information contact:</b> <b>Background papers:</b> <b>List of appendices:</b>	Name Fiona Colton 01332 716386 e-mail Fiona.colton@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – List of current childrens centres

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
---------------------

**Financial**

- 1.1 Current spend on delivering 18 Children's Centres is £4,850,609.
- 1.2 Proposals on the attached appendix show a reduction in expenditure of £826,084 with the proposed reconfiguration of the six Children's Centres. £500,000 forms part of the proposed CYP budget savings, will contribute to CYP savings and £300,000 will support staff to continue to offer services in those areas targeted where reconfiguration is necessary.
- 1.3 Children's Centres funding now forms part of the early intervention grant, of which Derby's allocation has been reduced by £1.8m for 2011/12 and a further £300k in 2012/13.
- 1.4 Redundancy costs will be kept to a minimum through vacancy control and redeployment procedures. However, a contingency within the early intervention grant has been identified should it be required.

**Legal**

- 2.1 There is a general requirement to consult on proposals such as these and it should meet the following criteria:
  - the consultation must be at a stage when proposals are still at a formative stage
  - sufficient reasons for the proposal must be given so as to permit intelligent consideration and response
  - adequate time must be given for consideration and response
  - the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals.

**Personnel**

- 3.1 There will be some redundancy costs if staff are not able to fill vacant roles.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment on each of the six centres will be completed reflecting the outcomes of the full consultation to be undertaken on the proposed reconfiguration of the Children's Centres.

**Health and Safety**

- 5.1 N/A

**Carbon commitment**

- 6.1 N/A

## **Value for money**

- 7.1 Reconfiguration of the centres will provide savings and produce a more cost-effective and consistent staffing structure across the city. Long-term, more effective commissioning of services will reduce costs.

## **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 8.1 There are links to the Council's Priorities, in particular:
- giving you excellent services and value for money.

Locality	Children's Centre Summary proposals	Address 1	Ward(s) coverage	Reach target (under 5s)		
				Reach	Registered Children	%
1	Derwent To transfer services to North Chaddesden	Beaufort Community Primary School Hampshire Road	Derwent	1312	175	13.3
1	Spondon To consult on future management arrangements	Asterdale Primary School Borrowash Road	Spondon	676	369	54.6
1	North Chaddesden To consult on future management arrangements	Cavendish Close Infant School Audrey Drive Chaddesden	Derwent/Oakwood/Chaddesden	711	514	72.3
1	South Chaddesden To transfer services to North Chaddesden and return building to school	Meadow Farm Primary School Chaddesden	Chaddesden/Derwent	663	142	21.4
1	Oakwood To transfer services to Spondon and return building to school	Park View Primary School Springwood Drive Oakwood	Oakwood	452	123	27.2
2	Osmaston/Allenton To consult on future management arrangements	Lord Street Nursery School Allenton	Alvaston/Boulton/Sinfin	933	525	56.3
2	Sinfin To consult on future management arrangements	Sinfin Lane Sinfin Moor,	Sinfin	604	358	59.3
2	Alvaston To consult on future management arrangements	Lakeside Primary School 875 London Road	Alvaston/Boulton	801	604	75.4
2	Boulton To consult on future management arrangements	Oakwood Junior School Alvaston	Boulton/Alvaston	759	868	114.4

Locality	Children's Centre Summary proposals	Address 1	Ward(s) coverage	Reach target (under 5s)		
				Reach	Registered Children	%
2	<b>Chellaston</b> To transfer services to Boulton and Osmaston Allenton and return building to school	Chellaston Junior School Maple Drive Chellaston	Chellaston	855	380	44.4
3	<b>Austin/Sunnyhill</b> To consult on future management arrangements	Browning Street Sunnyhill	Normanton/Blagreaves	696	584	81.0
3	<b>Rosehill</b> To consult on future management arrangements	The Big Building 17-19 Lowerdale Road	Arboretum/Normanton	1143	720	63.0
3	<b>Becket</b> To consult on future management arrangements	Becket Primary School 35 Stockbrook Street	Becket/Abbey	621	467	75.2
3	<b>Pear Tree</b> To transfer services to Rosehill and Babington	Pear Tree Community Junior School Pear Tree Street	Normanton/Arboretum	442	214	48.4
3	<b>Babington</b> To consult on future management arrangements	Stonehill Nursery Stonehill Road	Arboretum/Normanton/Abbey	774	269	34.8
4	<b>Mickleover/Littleover</b> To transfer services to Austin Sunnyhill and return building to school	Brookfield Primary School Mickleover	Mickleover/Littleover/Blagreaves	1318	1301	98.7
5	<b>Mackworth/ Morley</b> To consult on future management arrangements	Reigate Primary School Reigate Drive	Darley/Mackworth	680	567	83.4
5	<b>West End</b> To consult on future management arrangements	Central Community Nursery Nuns Street	Allestree/Darley	965	391	40.5