



Derby City Council

COUNCIL CABINET
11 November 2015

ITEM 12

Report of the Cabinet Member for Safeguarding
and Children and Young People

Reconfiguration of Children Centre Services

SUMMARY

- 1.1 As a result of the Government continuing to cut local government funding, the Council has to make substantial changes to its budget. The Council has already delivered £116m of savings between 2010 and 2015, with a further £50m to deliver between 2016 and 2019.
- 1.2 This report sets out proposals to save in the region of £300K by re-configuring seventeen children's centres to ten. It is important to note that there is no intention in reducing the delivery of Children's Centre services and the city will still be able to ensure that the Children's Centre core offer is maintained. This will continue from a reduced number of main centres and using other community venues. The front line staff will continue in the Council's employment to ensure delivery to the most vulnerable children and their families.
- 1.3 The seven centres contained in the report have been identified because they are centres built in later phases of the children's centre programme, and are so in less deprived areas of the city than the ten centres it is proposed remain open. In addition, all of the seven centres are on or near schools sites, and it is proposed that schools take over the ownership, management responsibility and all running costs of the seven centres. There is appetite from head teachers in all seven areas to this proposal.
- 1.4 This proposal would result in the Children's Centre portfolio retaining responsibility for ten centres. It would be our recommendation to reconfigure the following children's centres:
 - Mickleover/Littleover
 - Chellaston
 - Meadow Lane
 - Oakwood
 - Westend
 - Babbington
 - Spondon

- 1.5 In order to progress the reconfiguration of these centres we would be required to go out to full public consultation as stated in the Children's Centre Statutory Guidance 2013. This is a lengthy process requiring a full-time project would take in the region of nine months to complete.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To agree to undertake a statutory consultation on the reconfiguration of Children's Centre services from seventeen to ten designated buildings.
- 2.2 To agree to the consultation considering how the current Children's Centre buildings could be used more effectively for services for families with under 5's with a focus on those centres on school sites.
- 2.3 To agree to the consultation considering the handover of ownership, running costs and management responsibility of seven Children's Centre buildings to the schools they are located with.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Children's Centre budget has already taken a 67% reduction over the past three years. This has included:
- A complete re-structure of the service from individual Children Centre teams into a locality model
 - A reduction of opening hours in half of the centres across the localities
 - The tendering out or closure of childcare delivered by the local authority in the Centres
 - A reduction in evidence based parenting programmes delivered to families
 - A reduction in the number of PEEP programmes delivered
 - Maintenance of essential spend only for the last three years which has prohibited any new developments taking place.
- 3.2 The severe financial pressure the council is under means that all options have to be explored to make further savings.



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Report of the Acting Strategic Director for Children and Young People.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 There are currently seventeen Children's Centres in Derby City, all managed and run by the local authority in three locality clusters. They were developed in the city from 2004 and originally grew out of Sure Start Local Programmes, early excellence centres, neighbourhood nurseries or from partnerships with local schools. All meet the Children's Centre core purpose:

- Child development and school readiness.
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills.
- Child and Family Health Services.

All centres are now focused on targeting those most vulnerable with a significantly reduced universal offer.

- 4.2 The reach figure for Children's Centres in the city is in excess of 17,000 under fives. There is less pressure from DFE and Ofsted to deliver out of set buildings, as long as there is evidence that children are getting access to services close to where they live.
- 4.3 The amount of reduction in the budget so far has meant that, although services have continued, there is little more to save without cutting direct services to the most vulnerable. This has been identified in recent inspection reports.

- 4.4 Children's Centre buildings have been developed to offer use by other Children and Young People services.
- Contact for children and families takes place in the majority of the buildings
 - Parenting Assessments take place in at least 2 centres in each locality where it is not possible to offer this in the child and families own home
 - Childcare is provided by a third party provider in six of the centre buildings which generates a revenue income
 - Speech and Language Therapy rent space at Sinfin which provides some revenue income
 - Accommodation is provided to the previous Moorfields Children's Home administration staff following their new build at Sinfin Children and Young Peoples centre
 - The centres are used for touch down spaces for CYP staff when out in localities
 - There is capacity in a number of the buildings to accommodate an under 11's multi agency team. Currently this happens at Osmaston / Allenton Children's centre.
 - Opportunities to raise further income through rental of space is being pursued
- 4.5 Discussions have taken place with all of the Head Teachers about the opportunity for them to take responsibility for the buildings identified and all have agreed in principle that there is an appetite to move forward with the reconfiguration. In order to avoid capital claw back we would need to prove to the DFE that there is still an appetite to deliver services for under 5's. Detail is set out below.

4.6 Locality 1&5

Westend Children's Centre (in the grounds of Central Community Nursery School), although there is now a separate entrance into the children's centre, the building is an integral part of the Central Community Nursery school.

There is an appetite from the Head Teacher to take on the responsibility of the building and use it for delivery of the 2 year old Flying Start and to plan for the 30 hour free entitlement.

Numbers currently at the nursery are low and the developments above would support an increase in numbers.

Meadow Lane (Adjacent to the main school building on the Meadow Farm Primary School site). The school are keen to be more involved they would like to be able to access the school from the Children's centre entrance for families who currently have a long walk to the school entrance side. There is a sufficiency issue for 2 year olds in the area.

Oakwood (Not attached but close to the foundation stage unit in the main school) There are some challenges for the school to take responsibility for the centre as their budget is tight however, in principle they would want to explore what could be moved forward. There is a provider running their after school care and this could be transferred into the children's centre. In addition, 2 year old Flying Start and 30 hour free entitlement could be explored further.

Spondon

This building is currently attached to the Foundation Stage Unit of the school; however there are plans in place to re-build the school. The building has some capacity as we closed the childcare last year and relocated some centre activity into the childcare area.

Locality 2

Chellaston (The centre is on the Junior school site some distance from the main school building.)

There is a positive relationship with the school which run before and after school provision out of the centre 5 days per week. This was part of the original Agreement as the School allowed the LA to have a piece of their land at a minimal charge. The Head Teacher is keen to take responsibility for this building and will continue to deliver Before and After School Activity during term time and move the Holiday club into the centre. In addition the centre would be used for extra curricula activity such as music and small study groups. Unlike the rest of the centres, Chellaston was funded from Extended Schools funding which we can demonstrate will continue. There is less of a risk here.

Locality 3&4

Mickleover/Littleover

This centre is adjacent to Brookfield Primary School.

There is a positive relationship with the school which uses the centre from time to time. There is a path in place that links the school to the centre.

The Head Teacher is keen to take responsibility for the building and if possible move her Foundation stage one class into it. The Head would like to consider the possibility of delivering the 30 hour offer and explore the possibility of some 2 year old Flying Start.

Babbington

This is attached to Stonehill Nursery School, the Nursery School will be federated with Dale Primary School from the Autumn term. There is a sufficiency issue for 2 year olds in the locality and the centre could be developed to offer 2 year old provision. The Head Teacher is keen to use the building and take responsibility for it.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Retain all of the centres with a reduced offer of services or make no additional savings.
- 5.2 Offering the buildings out to other organisations to deliver services this may be a lengthy process and would be more of a challenge to ensure that services for under 5's can be delivered.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Janie Berry, Director of Governance Janice Hadfield Liz Moore Maureen Darbon, Acting Director Early Help and Children's Safeguarding Fiona Colton, Head of Service, Early Help, Locality 2
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Fiona Colton 01332 641164 Fiona.colton@derby.gov.uk Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance (April 2013) Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Breakdown of Children's Centres

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Reduction in responsibility of seventeen centres to ten would save £151, 285 in premises costs

Should we only have responsibility for ten centres, there would be additional staffing savings as structures would need to be remodelled to be fit for purpose. A proposal to restructure management and reception roles would need be developed. No reduction in front line staff would be proposed as the reach of under 5's will not reduce.

A restructure of staffing following reconfiguration would result in further savings in the region of £150,000. However, if this proposal were accepted, more work would need to be completed on the potential staffing structures and this would have to go out to consultation in line with Council policy.

It must be highlighted that there is a risk of capital claw back. This would be in the region of:

- £3,220,000 for 7 centres. There is less chance that there will be capital claw back at Chellaston Children's Centre as a majority of the project was funded by the extended schools capital programme.

For more detail see the attached table – Appendix 2

Legal

- 2.1 The Council must follow the provisions of the Childcare Act 2006 and the associated Statutory Guidance for Children Centres published in 2013 before any significant changes to services provided through a relevant children's centre can be made. This means that statutory consultation must take place as prescribed by the DfE Statutory Guidance.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Statutory Guidance, the Council is required to consult everyone who could be affected by the proposed changes, for example, local families, those who use the centres, children's centres staff, advisory board members and service providers. Particular attention should be given to ensuring disadvantaged families and minority groups participate in consultations.
- 2.3 The consultation should explain how the local authority will continue to meet the needs of families with children under five as part of any reorganisation of services. It should also be clear how respondents views can be made known and adequate time should be allowed for those wishing to respond. Decisions following consultation should be announced publically. This should explain why decisions were taken.

- 2.4 The Council must also have due regard to its equality responsibilities in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010. There is a need to undertake a detailed equality impact assessment (EIA) to identify any impacts on those with protected characteristics and to keep the same under constant revision both before and throughout the consultation process, prior to any firm decision being made, so that it can be taken into account as part of the decision making process.
- 2.5 Any other legal issues or implications which become apparent during the consultation process and following its conclusion will be considered accordingly as and when they arise.

Personnel

- 3.1 The proposal, if implemented, would see the line management of Children's Centre staff retained by the Council.
- 3.1 Subject to the decision of Cabinet, consultation with staff and the Trade Unions would need to take place with regard to a proposed organisational staffing restructure in line with Council policy. Should the proposal be implemented there potentially could be redundancy implications and costs.

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- 4.1 None directly arising from this comment

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Families would be required to travel further at some points to access Children's Centre services.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 There would be less responsibility for the operational coordinator who manages the health and safety and risk assessment during Children's Centre activity.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None directly arising from this report

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 A detailed piece of work and decisions around the process and responsibility of handing over the buildings would need to be undertaken with both CYP and Corporate Asset Management. There may be some risk of capital claw back.

Risk Management

9.1 None directly arising from this report

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 None directly arising from this report

Appendix 2 –Breakdown of Children’s Centres

Number of Centres	Names of Centres	Number of under 5's registered	Premises savings	Staffing Savings	Possible Capital Claw back	Risks
Reduce from 17 centres to 10. 3 centres in two localities and 4 in one locality.	Locality One					
	Oakwood	543	£20,064		£400,000	Some families will have to travel to access services. For all of these centres it may mean a bus journey as all centres are further than pram pushing distance.
	Meadow Lane	477	£19,388		£360,000	Health partners will be required to relocate clinics.
	Westend	1163	£14,485		£250,000	Families in West end could walk to Becket Children’s centre or Derwent children’s centre
	Spondon	752	£30,595		£640,000	
	Locality 2					Risks are as above.
	Chellaston	967	£30,332		£760,000	Some families will have to travel to access services. For all of these centres it may mean a bus journey as all centres are further than pram pushing distance.
	Locality 3&4					Health partners may be required to relocate clinics.
	Babbington	576	£9,998		£340,000	Activities would need to be planned in alternative venues to ensure reach is met for those most vulnerable.
	Mickleover/Littleover	1942	£26,423		£470,000	

Total	7 Centres	6,420	£151,285	£150,000	£3,220,000	
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