



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
MEETING
18 JULY 2006**

Report of the Corporate Director for Children and Young People

**Extension of Contract with The National Children's Home to
Provide a Family Centre in Mackworth/Morley**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To approve the extension of the existing contract with the NCH to provide a Family Centre in Mackworth/Morley (Step In Family Centre) until August 2007. This extension is required in order to allow time to consider a new contract which will integrate the centre with other children's services in the area.
- 1.2 Under Contract Procedure C6, a waiver of the Contracts Procedure Rule C15 relating to the requirement to obtain tenders is sought.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the last six years the social services department has commissioned the NCH to provide a Family Centre on Stepping Lane. The Centre provides a service to vulnerable children, including children in need; children on the child protection register and looked after children and their carers. The activities held at the centre include: parenting skills training, groups to raise self-esteem, playgroups, child health clinics, assessment of children in need, crèche places, therapeutic play activities, respite care and contact sessions for looked after children.
- 2.2 The contract has already been running for 6 years and the services provided are of a good standard. There are advanced plans to integrate Step In Family Centre with Mackworth/Morley Sure Start to form a Children's Centre and some Sure Start staff are already being managed by Step In. However, it is necessary to await developments of the integration of services in Area Panel 1 before a new contract can be drawn up.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Step In Family Centre provides a range of supportive services to vulnerable children and their families. Increasingly, the Centre is concentrating on the most vulnerable children with level 3 and level 4 needs i.e. children at risk of significant harm and at risk of becoming looked after; as well as children already in the looked after service.
- 3.2 The plan is for the next contract to include arrangements for integrating all services to children in the area. It is the Government's expressed intention (Every Child Matters) that Local Authorities should set up Children's Centres to provide services needed by vulnerable children and to include the voluntary sector in those centres.

**For more information
contact:**
Background papers:
List of appendices:

[Maureen Darbon, 01332 717182, e-mail: maureen.darbon@derby.gov.uk](mailto:maureen.darbon@derby.gov.uk)
None
Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The cost of providing the service is £200,000 per annum to the Council and is within the approved budget. This covers the staffing costs and some of the running costs of the Centre. The management is provided by NCH.

Legal

2. The Council must provide a range of services to support children in need and their families in order to comply with the Children Act 1989.

Personnel

3. If the contract is not renewed then five members of staff will be made redundant. The Council would be responsible for paying the redundancy costs.

Equalities impact

4. NCH, the service provider, have a clear equalities policy commensurate with the Council policy. The service is provided for children in need irrespective of their cultural or ethnic background.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The proposal is consistent with a number of priorities in the Corporate Plan, that is:
 - improving the quality of life in Derby's neighbourhoods
 - encouraging lifelong learning and achievement
 - building healthy and independent communities.