

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

31 AUGUST 2016

THE PROVISION OF EFFECTIVE PREVENTION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE INCLUDING OPTIMISING THE USE OF CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUILDINGS

Summary

1. The Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Children and Families, and Health and Well-being and the Director of Children, Families and Communities and Interim Director of Public Health have been invited to the meeting to discuss the Provision of Effective Prevention Services for Children and Young People Including Optimising the Use of Children's Centre Buildings.
2. [If others are to be invited to the meeting please provide details here]

Background

3. On 16 June 2016, Cabinet considered the Provision of Effective Prevention Services for Children and Young People Including Optimising the Use of Children's Centre Buildings and **RESOLVED: that**
 - a) **the outcome of the procurement process for the integrated 0-19 prevention service set out in paragraph 3 of the report be noted;**
 - b) **the future plans for delivering effective prevention services, within the financial parameters set out in the report (particularly paragraphs 4 to 8 and 35 to 38) and the medium term financial plan be approved, subject to any required consultation as set out in the report;**
 - c) **consultation on change of use for those children's centre buildings where there is likely to be significant change as outlined in paragraph 26 (b) and Appendix 2 with the addition of Brookside at Comberton Primary School – Wyre Forest be authorised;**
 - d) **the proposals for the future use of children centre buildings where consultation is not required as outlined in paragraph 26 (c) and Appendix 2 other than in relation to Brookside at Comberton Primary School – Wyre Forest be approved;**

- e) **the summary of impact of the proposals for the future use of buildings as outlined in paragraphs 27 to 31 and the need for further equality impact analyses to inform the final decisions in respect of the proposed changes outlined in paragraph 40 be noted;**
- f) **the final decisions for the use of children's centre buildings, where consultation is required, be delegated to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, having regard to the outcomes of those consultations and equality impact analyses; and**
- g) **the Director of Children, Families and Communities and the Interim Director of Public Health be authorised to take all necessary steps within their respective responsibilities to give effect to the above including varying and/or extending the existing contracts of the district-based early help providers and public health nursing functions, and the Director of Commercial and Change be authorised to agree appropriate terms for the future use of children's centre buildings.**

4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, parts (c) to (g) were subsequently called-in. If a decision is called-in, it cannot be implemented until the call-in process is completed.

5. The call-in was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) on 1 July 2016. The Board agreed to accept the decisions taken by Cabinet and clear implementation on the 1st July.

6. The Board did however agree to forward the following comments to Cabinet:

- That the final decision on the use of children's centres buildings, where consultation is required, is made at full Cabinet and not by Cabinet Member delegation. The purpose of this request is to provide clearer transparency of the decision in the public's eye, provide a further opportunity for public participation at a Cabinet meeting on the matter and to ensure all Cabinet Members fully understand the implications of the decision being taken;
- That the Children and Families O&S Panel should undertake further pre-decision scrutiny prior to the conclusion of the consultation and report back to OSPB on this. OSPB can then provide Cabinet with feedback before they take the final decision; and
- The Board welcomes the Cabinet Member's offer to hold meetings with local members on Children's Centre sites, in order to discuss local options.

7. This Panel met on the 15th July 2016 to further discuss the decisions taken by Cabinet and to question representatives from some Early Help providers and Schools.

Further Information

8. The Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel has requested further information be provided in order to address concerns expressed in the local media; and to ensure that County Councillors are fully aware of the decision that is to be taken by the Cabinet member with Responsibility for Children and Families in early September 2016.

9. This further information as requested by the Chairman of the Panel is detailed below (Requests are detailed in italics).

CHILDREN CENTRE'S

10. *Provide a list of **all** Children Centre's detailing **all** services that they currently deliver and a list of services that will definitely continue.*

All building will continue to provide advice and guidance including signposting to professionals, activities and local provision. The embedded document outlines the proposed changes for those buildings that have been subject to a formal consultation. The detail in paragraph 14 outlines the proposals for the remaining buildings.

Appendix A – details a table showing the proposed future use of each Children Centre

11. *A list of the budgets for every Children Centre before changes and after proposed change.*

This isn't possible to provide as Children Centres are not commissioned services on a centre by centre basis and don't ask Providers to financially report on this basis. The only centre by centre costs we have are related to running costs (e.g. utilities) and a breakdown is attached at Appendix B.

12. *A list of what the statutory sure start services are (Extract below is taken from the Statutory Guidance – April 2013)*

A Sure Start children's centre is defined in the Act as a place or a group of places:

- which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way;
- through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and
- at which activities for young children are provided.

It follows from the statutory definition of a children's centre that children's centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as it is about providing premises in particular geographical areas.

Early childhood services are defined as:

- early years provision (early education and childcare);
- social services functions of the local authority relating to young children, parents and prospective parents;
- health services relating to young children, parents and prospective parents;
- training and employment services to assist parents or prospective parents; and

- information and advice services for parents and prospective parents.

A children's centre should make available universal and targeted early childhood services either by providing the services at the centre itself or by providing advice and assistance to parents (mothers and fathers) and prospective parents in accessing services provided elsewhere. Local authorities must ensure that children's centres provide some activities for young children on site.

13. A definition of 'significant change' being used in regards to changes in provision at Children Centres and in early help provision.

There is no statutory definition of 'significant change' only what is referred to in the Statutory Guidance which states:-

Local Authorities must ensure there is consultation before:

- Making a significant change to the range and nature of services provided through a children's centre and / or how they are delivered, including significant changes to services provided through linked sites.

The June 2016 Cabinet report set out these proposals, which if implemented would mean no closure of Council-owned children's centre buildings as all of the proposals would result in the ongoing delivery services for young children. However, the changes proposed in 18 of the 32 buildings were considered (using the professional judgement of Officers) to be significant and therefore formal consultation was required, to ascertain their impact, before decisions to implement could be made. It is important to note that there is a wide and varied use of centres so the impact of proposed changes differs between centres.

14. Explanation of why there has not been any consultation on changes for each children centre that was not included in the consultation exercise, with details of what changes are expected at these centres.

The above interpretation of significant change didn't apply for the 14 remaining Children's Centre buildings. Whilst changes are expected across all of the 14 sites they are not subject to the cumulative impact of changes proposed at the other sites.

For example, there will be a change of lease holder at Oaktrees and St Luke's First School – Redditch to the Childcare Provider. However, the Childcare Provider is currently the main user of this site so this change just represents formalising the current and isn't considered to be significant.

Centre	Proposals for future use	Proposed lease holder
Pear Tree Sidemoor - Bromsgrove	This is a standalone centre and will be used by the Parenting and Family Support provider, term time only childcare provider and health provider* A number of sessions are provided at and from this centre – independent providers will be able to continue to deliver from this building alongside parenting sessions and family support from the	Parenting and Family Support provider (Redditch Borough Council)

Centre	Proposals for future use	Proposed lease holder
	provider. This will be the main base for the provider in Bromsgrove.	
Sunshine Poolbrook Centre – Malvern Hills	<p>This space forms an integral part of a wider centre and will become the main base for the provider in Malvern, alongside health provision*</p> <p>There will be a reduction in universal sessions provided directly but the provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and parent led provision, alongside their own parenting support sessions and delivery of family support. The provider will also support the transition of services and service users from Evergreen as the lease for that building expires in 2017.</p>	Parenting and Family Support provider (Action 4 Children)
Sunshine The Grove Primary School – Malvern Hills	The use of this centre as an outreach centre and base for parenting and family support services will continue.	Parenting and Family Support provider (Action 4 Children)
Hollytrees at St Stephen's First School - Redditch	This centre is leased to Redditch Borough Council on a long term lease and will continue to be used as a base for parenting and family support provision, by independent providers and health for activity sessions, clinics and other health provision* and for the on-site childcare/nursery	Parenting and Family Support provider (Redditch Borough Council)
Hollytrees at St George's First School - Redditch	This is a small outreach site and few services are currently delivered from the site. The proposal will allow the school to use the space for funded childcare places.	St George's First School
Oaktrees at St Luke's First School – Redditch	Childcare provider will maintain and increase childcare provision on this site	Little Oaks preschool
Buttercup at Fairfield Centre – Worcester City	<p>Continued use by parenting and family support providers alongside health providers* and childcare provision, for a wide range of activities including parenting support and family support.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in universal sessions provided directly but the provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and parent led provision, alongside their own parenting support sessions and delivery of family support.</p>	Parenting and Family Support provider (Action 4 Children)
Saffron at Stanley Road Primary School – Worcester City	Continued use by parenting and family support providers alongside health* provision for a wide range of activities including parenting support and family support.	Parenting and Family Support provider (Action 4 Children)

Centre	Proposals for future use	Proposed lease holder
	<p>There will be a reduction in universal sessions provided directly but the provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and parent led provision, alongside their own parenting support sessions and delivery of family support.</p>	
<p>Tudor Way at Dines Green Primary School – Worcester City</p>	<p>Continued and expanded use by parenting and family support providers, alongside health* and a childcare provider, and with the potential for use for social care provision.</p> <p>The current childcare provider has a long term lease.</p> <p>A wide range of activities are delivered at this site in partnership with health. There will be a reduction in universal sessions provided directly but the provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and parent led provision, alongside their own parenting support sessions and delivery of family support.</p>	<p>Parenting and Family Support provider (Action 4 Children)</p>
<p>Blossomvale at Abbeypark First School - Wychavon</p>	<p>This is a small room situated directly between two schools and will primarily be used as a base for parenting and family support provision both on and off site and for health provision. The provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and parent led provision.</p>	<p>Parenting and Family Support provider (4Children)</p>
<p>Greenwood at Wychbold First School</p>	<p>This centre (one room and one small office space) is currently used as an office and meeting space only – transfer to school to meet basic need and make available for multi-agency use for meetings</p>	<p>Wychbold First School</p>
<p>Orchard vale at Evesham Nursery School – Wychavon</p>	<p>Continued mixed use including parenting, family support, health and increased use for childcare provision.</p> <p>The main activity room will be used by the nursery (day and term time only) and will be available for the provision of activities and parenting support outside of these times. Health provision will continue in a separate room*</p> <p>There will be a reduction in universal sessions at this centre, as these are provided elsewhere in the community already.</p>	<p>Evesham Nursery school</p>
<p>WANDS at Westlands First School - Wychavon</p>	<p>Continued and expanded use by parenting and family support providers including childcare, family support and potential expanded community use.</p>	<p>Parenting and Family Support provider (4Children)</p>

Centre	Proposals for future use	Proposed lease holder
	A wide range of activities are delivered at this site in partnership with health*. There will be a reduction in universal sessions provided directly but the provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and to continue parent led provision, alongside their own parenting support sessions and delivery of family support.	
Halfcrown wood at St Bartholomew's Primary School – Wyre Forest	Continued use by parenting and family support providers. A wide range of activities are delivered at this site in partnership with health*. There will be a reduction in universal sessions provided directly but the provider will have some capacity to support delivery of sessions by independent providers and to support parent led provision, alongside their own parenting support sessions and delivery of family support.	Parenting and Family Support provider (10:32)
<p>* Health provision can include midwife clinics, health visitor drop in sessions or routine appointments, speech and language provision and in some cases paediatric or specialist clinics. These services are provided by other organisations who will from time to time review and change their provision in line with contracts and demand and other available community buildings (e.g. Health Centres). It cannot be guaranteed therefore that current health provision at these centres will remain unchanged.</p>		

15. A definition of 'those in most need' being used by Officers for this process.

Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Board has recently refreshed its Levels of Need Guidance – this will be used by all Providers (and all professionals working in Worcestershire) on assessing risk and need. A link to the guidance is available here. [Levels of Need Guidance | Worcestershire County Council](#)

In addition to this Providers are being asked to target effort at the bottom 40% areas of disadvantage (Indices of Multiple Deprivation). This is based on the findings of the early help needs assessment and the strong correlation between poor outcomes and disadvantaged areas.

16. We know Early Help Providers have been directly consulted but has each Children Centre been consulted by WCC?

All of the Children's Centres are operated by Early Help Providers so by default they have been directly consulted. We have also:

- Promoted an online survey
- Held face to face sessions with service users in all directly affected Children's Centres

- Contacted all members (with an affected Children's Centre on their patch) and offered a face to face session or an additional facilitated session with service users – we haven't had any take up of this so far
- Held two Member briefing to update on proposals and seek feedback
- Written to all schools that are looking to take over the buildings seeking agreement to the proposals
- Had ongoing meeting with providers on proposed changes and how they are working with the community on sharing information and seeking options for sustaining provision

17. What thought has been given/plans made for other services that are currently delivered in Children Centres such as Foodbanks, Adult Learning, CAB etc

Wherever possible these services will continue although some may need to re-locate to other community venues if they're currently delivered from Children's Centre buildings. For services such as Foodbanks, existing providers would still continue to promote and signpost these services to vulnerable families. We would also look to promote / signpost these services through online information, advice and guidance as well as through the Family Front Door service.

PUBLIC HEALTH

18. Details of any change regarding public health element being proposed

In November 2015, Cabinet agreed a new integrated prevention service for 0-19s using an evidence-based approach to identify and support needs, risk factors and issues early as they emerge to deliver prevention through a progressive universalism approach. This means providing some service for everyone, using those services to find those who need a higher level of support and providing extra support at intensity according to identified need.

The services in scope were the 0-19 public health nursing services and some of the provision delivered by Early Help Providers. An evidence based specification was prepared and tendered but no compliant bids were received. In June 2016, Cabinet approved a revised plan to still move towards the vision of the integrated 0-19 prevention service (Starting Well), within the available budget envelope, but to do this by varying, extending, aligning or integrating existing contracts by 1 October 2016 up to 31 March 2019.

The 0-19 Public Health Nursing service elements including Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership, Breastfeeding Support Service and School Health contracts will be extended until March 2019 and redesigned as an overall 0-19 integrated public health nursing service.

The service will deliver prevention by building community capacity, strengthening family and community resilience and providing the universal and targeted requirements of the nationally mandated Healthy Child Programme. The service will be professionally led by a skilled and competent workforce, integrating a range of practitioners into skill mixed teams. The workforce will include health visitor and community public health nurses, nursery nurses, health care assistants, peer supporters and volunteers and support workers. The service will be delivered in a range of community assets and settings, including homes and schools.

Most of the public health elements proposed within the 0-19 service are mandatory and will continue to be provided through a progressive universalism approach, where extra support is provided in accordance with need. The service will however, be required to deliver a 10% saving due to the reduction in the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant as detailed in the July 2015 Cabinet Paper. These savings will be achieved through integration and amendment of skill mix of the workforce across the service elements. This will mean that all children, young people & families will continue to be contacted/seen universally for their mandatory health & developmental reviews and checks across the age range but that the skill mix of the workforce providing this might differ. Those most in need or more vulnerable will be seen by more senior and experienced staff than those children/families with better outcomes.

Over time, as the Starting Well vision is implemented, the Public Health elements will be integrated with the revised services provided by the existing Early Help providers. The Early Help Providers are being commissioned to provide evidence-based parenting support that will be predominantly focussed in areas of disadvantage and community capacity building. All providers will be required to work together to develop the prevention service, improve outcomes, remove duplication and/or repetition and determine integrated service pathways. A Starting Well Transformation Board, and programme of work, is being initiated to oversee all of this work.

In addition to providing parenting support, the Early Help providers (to be re-named Parenting and Family Support Providers) will also be commissioned to deliver targeted family support and support to those young people who are at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training with the remainder of the contract value (£1.5 million) for the same contract length.

19. How will public health elements be delivered/operate if Children Centre's not part of the consultation close?

The public health elements can be delivered/operate in a variety of settings and are not reliant on Children's Centre buildings. A minimum service is provided universally to all children, young people & families with any additional interventions or support provided at an intensity in accordance with needs. The service is provided in a variety of settings, often in a families own home or in a health centre, a GP Practice, children's centre, a school or college. Health Visitors do provide health clinics in most Children's Centres, however if the building was not available where possible the service would seek to provide the clinic from an alternative community building in the locality or arrange to see the family at their home.

EARLY HELP PROVIDERS

20. Contract variation – The variation is too drastic for interim arrangements to be in place for the next 2 years and could lead to a loss of existing skill sets relating to early help services. Can you provide us with a response to this statement?

With any level of change there is always a risk that skill sets will be lost. All Providers who have a fundamental role in delivering the ambition of the 0-19 Prevention Offer (Starting Well) are being brought together to work collaboratively on implementing the necessary change. This could result in a sharing of skills e.g. through secondment opportunities or ring-fencing roles for certain jobs.

Purpose of the Meeting

21. The purpose of the meeting will be as follows:

- to provide an opportunity for clarification on matters that Members and the Public may not understand;
- to clarify the extent of the change in budget and the consequences of this change; and
- to determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny.

Background Information

Agenda Report and Minutes of Cabinet: dated 16 June 2016 available on the County Council Website [here](#)

Agenda Report and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board dated 1 July 2016 available on the County Council Website [here](#)

Agenda Report and Minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel dated 17 March 2016 and 15 July 2016 available on the County Council Website [here](#).

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this report

Alyson Grice/Samantha Morris, Overview and Scrutiny Officers,
Commercial and Change Directorate (01905 844962/844963)

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) there are no further background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)