

Report for:	Cabinet 17th March	Item Number:	
Title:	Delivering Children's Centres in Haringey: 2015 - 2018		
Report Authorised by:	Zina Etheridge, Deputy Chief Executive		
Lead Officer:	Jon Abbey, Interim Director of Children's Services		
Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key Decision: No		

1 Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to note the engagement which is underway with a range of stakeholders to develop the model for Children's Centres prior to statutory consultation getting underway in June 2015.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

- 2.1 Haringey Children's Centres are a key part of our approach to delivering early help in the borough. We need to change the way we deliver Children's Centres to ensure that, even with reduced levels of resources, parents and carers have good information about what is available in their community and are able to access high quality services that make a difference to them and improve the outcomes for their children. We are working with parents, carer and communities to develop this future picture and set out in this report our commitment to doing this.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- note the high level model for Children's Centres set out in 6.3.
 - note the engagement underway with a range of stakeholders to develop the detailed model for Children's Centres.



- c. agree that the detailed proposed model for Children's Centres will return to Cabinet in June for approval for statutory consultation commencing in June 2015.

4. Alternative options considered

- 4.1 The engagement process is exploring a range of options for the future design of Children's Centres with key stakeholders. The final set of proposals will return to Cabinet before statutory consultation gets underway.

5. Background information – national landscape

- 5.1 Section 1 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to improve the **well-being** of young children in the following areas:
 - a. physical and mental health and emotional well-being
 - b. protection from harm and neglect;
 - c. education, training and recreation;
 - d. the contribution made by them to society; and
 - e. social and economic well-being.
- 5.2 There is also a requirement to reduce inequalities between young children in those areas and to make arrangements to ensure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner which is calculated to facilitate access to those services and maximise the benefits to children and families.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 The new Ofsted Inspection Framework for Children's Centres was introduced from April 2013 and covers four judgements:
 1. Access to services by young children and families, including targeted groups, and the effectiveness of strategies for encouraging take-up
 2. the quality, range and relevance of the universal and targeted services provided, and the impact they have
 3. The effectiveness of governance, leadership & management - specifically performance management arrangement and availability of resources
 4. Overall effectiveness – whether they are meeting the needs of families and achieving outcomes.
- 5.5 Across London and nationally, many authorities are re-modelling their Children's Centre models in order to maximise reach and ability to support the most vulnerable families. Officers from the Council are working to understand the benefits and risks being put forward in other authorities as part of the redesign process.



6. Engagement and emerging model

- 6.1 The development of the Early Help Strategy has underlined the key role Children's Centres play in delivering both a universal offer and early help to families. There are 16 Children's Centres in the borough: five are directly managed by the Council and 11 managed by and located in schools. They vary in quality, reach, size and offer. Eight of the Centres also deliver childcare – of which four are council run and four are run by schools.
- 6.2 To strengthen the offer for all families, there are proposals to remodel Children's Centres which are integral to the early help model with a revised offer which maintains a core of universal provision and offers targeted help for those who need it. This will be supported when commissioning of Health Visitor services transfers to the Council in September this year.
- 6.3 Officers are working with a group of stakeholders from across the Children's Centres system to ensure that the future model is sustainable and improves outcomes for all families in the borough. The current proposals are that:
- a. Children's Centres operate on an integrated locality model fully aligned to Early Help around the Network Learning Communities
 - b. Children's Centres are transformed into hubs which support families from conception to 19 years (25 years for SEN) and build sustainable local capacity to respond to need
 - c. Reduced number of hub centres and key outreach sites
 - d. Strong, but thin, universal offer for all parents, built on strengthened information, advice and guidance and the opportunity to embed the Universal Healthy Child Programme (a core health visiting programme) from October 2015
 - e. Locality team with range of roles including reception, information and advice, family support, health visiting and midwifery, housing, benefits and finances, specialisms such as health, social care and early help
 - f. Strong emphasis on peer support and community development.
- 6.4 The proposals for the future model for Children's Centres will be shaped by the requirements of the statutory guidance and will be linked to the proposals for a revised Childcare Policy for the Council (covered in a separate Cabinet paper). The stakeholder group is therefore working on both elements of the proposals to ensure congruence of approach and model.

7. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 7.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 23rd February included £16.7m of savings to be found within the Priority one budget area. This



included £1.44m savings to be found from changes to the Early Years Service, including changes to Children's Centres. This report sets out the principles for delivering these savings.

7. Assistant Director of Corporate Governance Comments and legal implications

8.1 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted on this Report.

8.2 Under the Childcare Act 2006, the Council has a general duty to improve the well-being of children in their area, and reduce inequalities (Section 1).

8.3 The Council must make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in its area are provided in an integrated manner in order to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their parents (Section 3). The definition of early childhood services include a) early years provision; b) the functions of the Council, so far as relating to young children, parents or prospective parents; c) health services relating to young children, parents or prospective parents; d) information and advice services for parents and prospective parents. The arrangements made by the Council, must, so far as is reasonably practicable, include arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need (Section 5A). "Local need" is the need of parents, prospective parents and young children in the authority's area.

8.4 The Council must ensure that appropriate consultation is carried out before a) any significant change is made in the services provided through children's centre; or b) anything is done that would result in a children's centre ceasing to be a children's centre (Section 5D). A change in the manner in which, or the location at which, services are provided is to be treated as a change in the services.

8.5 The Department for Education has issued statutory guidance titled 'Sure Start Children's Centre April 2013' which the Council is obliged to have regards to. The guidance provides that authorities should have sufficient children's centre to meet local needs and should "not close an existing children's centre site in any reorganisation of provision unless they can demonstrate that, where they decide to close a children's centre site, the outcomes for children, particularly the most disadvantaged, would not be adversely affected and will not compromise the duty to have sufficient children's centres to meet local need. The starting point should therefore be a presumption against the closure of children's centres" (pg 9).

8.6 The guidance further provides that "Local authorities should 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. 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” (pg 10). The Council must meet the requirements of the Act and the statutory guidance in taking forward the proposals relating to children centres."

9. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 9.1 We know that often the most socially excluded residents predominantly have the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 and our future operating model has been designed to ensure that services are made clear and accessible to all groups in the borough, including those that are socially excluded and require either support or protection.
- 9.2 It is not thought that there will be any differential impact upon any of the protected groups outlines in the Equalities Act 2010, as a consequence of the Future Operating Model – however we will ensure that we gather data and undertake analysis to provide assurance that the new model does not impact upon protected groups.

10. Head of Procurement Comments

- 10.1 If any of the outcomes need to go through a competitive procurement process the timescales need to be built in to the implementation of the model.
- 10.2 New Procurement regulations come into effect on the 26th Feb and this specifies that social care opportunities now need to be advertised for open competition if they are valued at over 700,000 Euros over a four year period. Waivers will no longer be allowed under these regulation for spend over 750,000 Euros.

11. Policy Implication

This paper sets out engagement which will lead to detailed proposals for a revised model for Children’s Centres, a fundamental element of our early help approach.

12. Reasons for Decision

- 12.1 This proposal is to enable engagement with stakeholders to continue so that detailed proposals for changes to children’s centres can be considered by Cabinet in June, to enable consultation to take place.

13. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

NA

14. Use of Appendices: Not used

