

Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet

On 21 July 2009

Report Title. Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – Action Plan

Report of **Peter Lewis, Director Children and Young People's Service**

Signed :

Contact Officer : Eveleen Riordan, Acting Head of Place Planning. Ext 5019

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key decision**

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

- 1.1 From the 1st April 2008 local authorities have had a duty to secure sufficient childcare to enable parents to work, or to undertake education and training leading to work. In fulfilling this duty, local authorities will help to shape the childcare market in response to what parents need.
- 1.2 A Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) was conducted in Haringey in 2007/2008 and published in 2008. It provides information on the supply and demand for childcare, and identifies where any potential gaps in provision may be. Annual updates are expected for the CSA, with the next complete CSA to be published in 2011.
- 1.3 To address the identified gaps in Haringey's provision, we are required to produce an Action Plan that outlines what actions we propose to take to shape the borough's childcare. The Action Plan is a yearly requirement and the actions outlined represent the first stage in addressing the gaps that have been identified in our borough. It is this Action Plan that we are seeking member's endorsement of.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

- 2.1. Without good affordable childcare many parents who want to work are unable to do so. Parents with disabled children face particular difficulties because of the shortage of suitable childcare options. This plan aims to address these gaps in provision.
- 2.2. Parts of the borough suffer severe deprivation and high levels of unemployment. It is particularly important therefore that through the Plan we are able to target help to those areas where it will have most impact and assist in reducing child poverty

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

- 3.1. The CSA Action Plan links to the CSA which was first carried out in 2008.
- 3.2. Sufficiency of childcare in the borough will contribute to the Council's Priority 3 "Encouraging lifetime well-being, at home, work, play and learning" and Priority 5 "Delivering excellent, customer focused, cost effective services".
- 3.3. The CSA Action Plan links to Priority 18 of the Children and Young People's Plan which states that we will improve access to services for parents and young people that support them to be more economically active, and Priority 3 which states that we will improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. That members endorse the five Actions outlined in the first Childcare Sufficiency Action Plan.

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

- 5.1. The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to secure sufficient childcare to enable parents/carers to work; and to provide information to parents/carers about childcare and a wide range of other services that may be of benefit to them. The Act gives all local authorities a key role in shaping the childcare market in their area.
- 5.2. Haringey produced their first Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) in 2008. An executive summary of the CSA can be found at Appendix 2. The CSA provides information on the supply of and demand for childcare and identifies gaps in provision across the borough.
- 5.3. An Action Plan to address the gaps in childcare provision was developed with stakeholders, including officers from Early Years, Working Parents' Information, SEN officers, Information and Communication, and Commissioning and

Contracts. We were also given some consultant time through GOL via the services of Cordis Bright who provide consultancy, research and performance improvement services to help local authorities achieve better outcomes for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

5.4. The Action prioritises 5 main objectives for this coming year:

- **Objective 1:** improve the affordability of childcare
- **Objective 2:** Improve provision for disabled children and those with special educational needs
- **Objective 3:** improve take-up of before-school and after-school provision
- **Objective 4:** Increase holiday provision for all ages
- **Objective 5:** Develop a long term commissioning strategy for childcare

5.5 In formulating the 5 objectives, regard has been had to those parts of the borough where there are less parents/carers employed in work – that is, in the north and the south networks. The type of gaps identified varies within these networks and from ward to ward within each of the two networks, but they generally include: 1) affordability as an issue as opposed to the supply of childcare – there is a surfeit of childminders in these networks (with up to a 70% vacancy rate). One reason for this is that parents are most likely to use friends and family for their childcare and are not taking up formal childcare options. 2) After school provision – parents have indicated that they would like to use this facility, but there is little or no spare capacity. 3) Flexibility of childcare is an issue as a regular/weekly slot does not always match demand, and there is an indication that there is a need for a day by day access to childcare as opposed to a fixed access.

5.6 These gaps in the North and South Networks are addressed by Objectives 1, 3 and 5.

5.7 We have already taken steps to support parents in being able to seek work or training, for example the provision of 500 free full time nursery places in these networks, and the Families into Work programme based in Northumberland Park which provides a multi agency approach to tackling worklessness and the need for education and/or training for families. The Objectives outlined in paragraph 5.4 above will all contribute to supporting families in all of the networks to secure the childcare that meets their needs by tailoring provision to both need and demand.

5.8 The remit of a Childcare Commissioning Officer and the development of a long term commissioning strategy will focus more closely on the discrete differences in gaps from ward to ward, and from network to network, and develop a strategy that responds to the differences in the gaps identified from ward to ward.

5.9 Future Action Plans will continue to address the gaps and help to ensure that we are sufficient in our childcare across all provision and that we meet the needs of all

those that seek childcare in our borough.

5.10 The actions in this Plan should now evolve into a series of commissioning priorities that will form the basis of a remit for the role of a Childcare Commissioning officer.

5.11 Both the CSA and the Action Plan also inform the use of early years quality and access funding. This is the subject of a separate report on this agenda entitled Early Years Quality and Access Capital Grant Programme.

6. Other options considered

6.1. There were a number of gaps identified in the CSA. These included:

- more affordable childcare for families on low incomes;
- more holiday provision for all ages;
- more childcare places, facilities and trained staff for those children with special educational needs or who are disabled;
- more flexible childcare arrangements in terms of time and cost;
- more affordable under 3 full-time provision;
- easier access to before and after school provision for all primary school aged children;
- increase the awareness of 0-19 services available in each ward;
- review and rationalisation of childcare places available for 0-19 year olds.

6.2. By working with the consultants and using their expertise in this area, we were able to prioritise the 5 objectives outlined in 5.4 above. Future Action Plans will focus on other gaps identified in our gap analysis, including the affordability of under 3 full-time provision and the review and rationalisation of childcare places available for 0-19 year olds.

7. Summary

7.1. We are required to produce an Action Plan to address the gaps that our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment has identified. We have used the services of consultants who are experienced in producing Action Plans across the capital, and we have worked closely with colleagues to ensure that the Action Plan is robust and deliverable, and addresses the gaps that we have identified in the most efficient way. The services of a dedicated Childcare Commissioning Officer will help to ensure that the targets and actions that we have identified are addressed.

7.2. If agreed, a future version of the CSA Action Plan will integrate work with the Early Years Quality and Access Capital Grant Programme on improving access and curriculum. The focus of this expenditure will be:

- Supported evaluation by settings and schools to ensure the sustainability of the programme and continued use of any developments linked to Early Years training;
- Supporting the improvement of settings in areas of high deprivation in order to deliver our Early Years Outcome Duty of narrowing the gap in children's achievement;
- Supporting improvements in PVI and Childminder sectors to encourage a level playing field of provision while continuing to support improvements in the maintained sector;
- Effective use of capital to develop Early Years services; and
- With respect to the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, where under-capacity exists we will, where possible, use the fund to support the development of new places, for example increasing the SEN provision throughout the borough.

8. Chief Financial Officer Comments

- 8.1. The implementation of the Action Plan has financial implications that need to be considered to ensure that it is sustainable on an on-going basis.
- 8.2. In particular, the sources of funding for the appointment of a Childcare Commissioner needs to be identified and any review of the fee levels set by the Authority will have financial implications.
- 8.3. The objectives of implementing the Single Funding Formula include ensuring that all settings are funded equitably for the free entitlement (3 and 4 year olds) and on the basis of actual children attending those settings – consequently any funding inefficiencies should be minimised for these children.
- 8.4. For other areas it is important that provision is matched to demand as closely as possible to avoid funding provision that is either not required or not accessible to parents: regular review of supply and demand is therefore essential.

9. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 9.1. The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on the content of this report. The Childcare Act 2006 places a raft of duties on the Council to promote the well being of young children and to ensure that sufficient early childhood services are provided in its area. Of particular relevance to this report is the duty placed on the Council by Section 6 of the 2006 Act which requires it to secure that sufficient childcare is provided to meet the requirements of parents to enable them to take up or remain in work or undertake education or training to assist them in obtaining work. Section 11 of the 2006 Act requires the Council to make an assessment of the sufficiency of provision of childcare in its area and to keep the assessment under review. Such assessments must be made at intervals of no more than three years. Endorsement of the recommendation at paragraph 4.1 will assist the

Council in complying with its duties under the 2006 Act.

10. Equalities &Community Cohesion Comments

- 10.1. The Action Plan will help to address inequalities in access to childcare places in the borough and ensure childcare places are available for disabled children and young people. The targeting of help in areas of high unemployment will particularly assist children and young people from black and minority ethnic communities.

11. Consultation

- 11.1. The CSA, which has been used to develop this Action Plan, has a consultation period of three months, during which time over 15,000 questionnaires were sent out, and focus groups were held to collect formation on the availability and accessibility of childcare. Time was also spent at the Children's Centres and other events to inform parents and gather feedback. Information on the supply of childcare and early years education was collected from the Family Information Service (FIS) and a telephone survey was carried out with all providers to ensure that information was up-to-date. Questionnaires were sent to childcare providers and to Haringey employees asking their views about the local childcare market.
- 11.2. The Action Plan was then developed, using information from the CSA, with stakeholders, including officers from Early Years, Working Parents' Information, SEN officers, Information and Communication, and Commissioning and Contracts. We were also given some consultant time through GOL via the services of Cordis Bright

12. Service Financial Comments

- 12.1 The actions in the CSA Action Plan present a series of commissioning priorities that will form the basis of a remit for the role of a Childcare Commissioning Officer. A sum of money has been identified in the Service's budget to fund this role.

13. Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

- Appendix 1 – CSA Action Plan
- Appendix 2 – Executive Summary of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA)

14. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 14.1. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

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Appendix 1 CSA Action Plan

Haringey childcare sufficiency action plan

Introduction to the action plan

This Childcare Sufficiency Action Plan has been designed using evidence from Haringey's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) which was produced in 2008. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment will be fully reviewed every three years, with the next review due to take place in 2011. The Action Plan focuses on those areas in Haringey where there is evidence of market failure, and seeks to ensure that the actions and objectives are achievable and realistic. The Action Plan will be updated annually, with the next update in 2010.

The Action Plan is focused on contributing to improvements in outcomes for children, young people and families. It prioritises the local authority's market management role, as commissioners and brokers, and seeks to involve key partners in the implementation of actions.

The Action Plan links to a number of other strategic priorities, including:

- **Changing Lives: The Children and Young People's Plan** – this Plan gives an overview of all of the priorities that stakeholders have for children and young people. Priority 18 seeks to improve access to services for parents that support them to be more economically active.
- **The Local Area Agreement** - the delivery Plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy. Some of the key challenges are focused on poverty and work.
- **The Working Neighbourhood Fund** – a three year fund that will be used to boost enterprise and tackle worklessness.

- **Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan** – aims to ensure that council services and local partners are working in a joined up way to reduce child poverty in the borough and ensure that today's children do not become the parents of poor children tomorrow.

It is intended that the outcomes of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and subsequent action plan will inform that development and implementation of Haringey's Extended Services, Children's Centre and Commissioning Strategies. In addition, the implementation of our Early Years Quality and Access Capital programme and the Pathfinder programme for the delivery of the flexible offer for 3 and 4 year olds will be informed by the outcomes of the audit.

The Action Plan was developed through a workshop with stakeholders held in December 2008. It prioritises five main areas where we will focus action:

- **Objective 1: Improve the affordability of childcare**
- **Objective 2: Improve provision for children with disabilities and special educational needs**
- **Objective 3: Improve take-up of before-school and after-school provision**
- **Objective 4: Increase access to and awareness of holiday provision for all ages**
- **Objective 5: Develop a long-term Commissioning Strategy for Childcare**

The implementation of this action plan will be monitored by the Children and Young People's Service on a yearly basis. This is the Council's first Action Plan and represents our first step in reducing the gaps in childcare provision across the borough.

Objective 1: improving the affordability of childcare

The affordability of childcare in the borough is a barrier to take-up. Affordability is an issue borough wide, particularly:

- among younger parents/carers and those attending training courses,
- in provision for 4-5 years olds,
- in full time provision for under 3s
- for children with disabilities.

TARGETS: We intend to appoint a Childcare Commissioner to develop a detailed communication and market strategy for childcare in the borough. This role will help us to ensure that we target actions at those parents/carers where affordability is a barrier to take-up in the first instance. The Authority is required to implement a single funding formula from April 2010 in order to fund, on an equitable basis, the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds¹ and review Haringey's fee charging policy. The CSA highlighted that the percentage of parents/carers who know about and are using working tax credits² (WTC) is currently 48%. Parents/carers living in the north and south networks were more likely to be using WTC. One of the first roles will be for the Action Plan to increase the percentage of parents who know about and are using WTC from its current 48% to 60%. By doing this we will be addressing the gap in the market where parents/carers are not working, or are struggling to work because of the affordability of childcare. In order to effectively do this we will need to undertake an audit of how and where information on WTC is disseminated to parents/carers in Haringey.

We will need to balance actions between those that will benefit parents/carers already using childcare and who find its affordability a problem, and those parents/carers who do not use formal childcare and the main barrier to take-up is affordability. The role of affordability for children with disabilities is covered more fully under Objective 2.

¹ From 2010-11 LAs are required to introduce a single local funding formula for funding Early Years provision

² If you are responsible for a child or young person, you can get Working Tax Credit provided you work at least 16 hours a week and your income is low enough

Actions for Objective 1: improving the affordability of childcare

Actions	Milestones	Target dates	Lead officers
Appoint a Childcare Commissioner to develop a detailed community and market strategy for childcare		November 2009	Head of Children's Network West
Undertake an audit of how and where information on WTC is disseminated to parents/carers in Haringey	Audit	December 2009	Working Parents Information Officer
Coordinate a campaign of information dissemination on WTC	Design and test campaign Campaign launch	Jun 2010 September 2010	Working Parents Information Officer
Commission training offered by One Parent Families ³ on 'better off' ⁴ calculations for parents/carers	Identify target group Commission in place Council training	September 2009 December 2009 December 2009	Head of Workforce Development
Single Funding Formula for the free entitlement.	Implementation of a single formula – Phase 1 Review and refinement of Single Funding model – Phase 2	April 2010 April 2011	Head of Children's Network West/ Head of CYP Finance
Formal review of Haringey's fee charging policy		April 2011	Head of Children's Network West

³ One Parent Families/Gingerbread merged in 2007 to create the biggest national charity for one parent families

⁴ Better Off Calculations (BOC) is a computer programme which aims to show customers that attend job centres that they are better off in work than when living on benefits

Objective 2: Improve provision for Children with disabilities and SEN

The CSA has highlighted a number of issues that are experienced by parents/carers with disabled children or with SEN. The CSA, which had been informed by feedback from focus groups with relevant parents, set out that our priorities should be:

- Further research to better understand the improvements needed by this group in relation to age-group, location, type of disability/SEN. Once we have carried out this research we will have a better understanding of the key issues that parents/carers have.
- This should be matched to a more detailed analysis on the supply of childcare for children with disabilities and SEN
- We need improved mainstream provision and prioritised access (not full time) for disabled children who can operate in the mainstream end
- We need a quicker assessment and referral system for short breaks for the chronically sick and more disabled children who want 1) specialist services, and 2) mainstream facilities.
- We need to focus on the 11-14 age group who are currently less well provided for

TARGETS: The targets that we have set as a result of the CSA and a focused workshop with key officers who deliver the provision for SEN are:

1. To increase the capability, skills and confidence of universal providers to meet a wide range of needs, including those of children & young people with disabilities, in a safe environment
2. To have a swift and easily accessible assessment process with a single point of access
3. To work with all providers to embed specific workforce competencies in the commissioning process
4. To ensure that information on provision for children & young people is widely available and easily accessible to all families, using a variety of formats
5. To provide a single point of access for securely held quality data that is user friendly, with a clear baseline to allow multi agency use – and to facilitate effective analysis and planning
6. To ensure that safeguarding children & young people is at the heart of all policies, procedures and provision

A measurable of these targets is we want to ensure that accessibility to childcare is to be increased by 15% when measured against the baseline data taken in 2009/10.

Actions for Objective 2: Improve provision for Children with disabilities and SEN

Actions	Milestones	Dates	Lead Officers
Undertake a detailed mapping exercise to better understand the current take-up of childcare by disabled children, the needs they have and the how these needs are catered for by childcare providers.	Mapping of provision and current uptake of childcare by disabled children completed Consultation event held Evaluation Process in place to capture user feedback and inform future developments Disability awareness training for all providers	July 2009 TBC April 2011 July 2010	Head of Additional Needs and Disabilities
Embed the 'Aiming High: better support for disabled children and their families' ⁵ transformation programme into all of our work practices	Aiming High Disability Forum established to oversee implementation of project plan and secure high level sign-up	July 2009 – March 2011	Head of Additional Needs and Disabilities
Build on the Early Support Programme ⁶ as a single point of referral for childcare needs	Creation of a single point of referral Information shared on termly basis with Heads of Children's Centres to inform planning	On-going	Head of Additional Needs and Disabilities Manager of Specialist Child Health Services – GOSH in Haringey

⁵ In May 2007 the government published **Aiming high for Disabled Children**: to improve outcomes for those with special needs and their families.

⁶ **Early Support is a national programme** to improve the way that services for young children with disabilities in England work together and with families.

	Include provision of short break in Team Around the Child (TAC) approach		
Establish the use of CAF to access provision for children and young people with disabilities and:	Awareness raising and training sessions held for staff	September 2009	Head of Additional Needs and Disabilities
Ensure that all families receive the outcome of their referral for childcare provision within 4 weeks.	Assessments and reviews to provide information for short breaks via the CAF	September 2009	
	Family Support Panel to monitor response to families to ensure 4 week target is met	September 2009	
Work with settings to develop their capacity to offer inclusive childcare and meet specific workforce competencies	Training for providers to develop their capacity to meet a wide range of needs including children with disabilities.	Ongoing	Head of Additional Needs and Disabilities
	Review the training programme (ongoing) to ensure changing needs and trends are addressed as well as feedback from stakeholder evaluations and consultations	Ongoing	Head of Service 0–19yrs
Audit the information about childcare and financial support available to parents	Carrying out of audit.	December 2009	Childcare Commissioner

/carers of disabled children			
Devise promotional campaign to frequently used venues and services and establish a quarterly newsletter and web presence	<p>Information on provision produced in user friendly formats and widely available in community and frequently used buildings</p> <p>Newsletter circulated widely</p> <p>Website and FIS kept up-to-date</p>	Ongoing	Head of Information and Communications
Incorporate data on PVI and other providers into a single comprehensive database to which all relevant agencies can have access	Collect all PVI data and input onto database	April 2010	Childcare Commissioner
Enable 100% of providers to implement new safeguarding procedures	Introduction and, where appropriate, training, of safeguarding procedures to all providers	October 2010	Childcare Commissioner
Implement a rolling programme to regularly sample the take-up of safeguarding training on children with disabilities by providers	<p>Training programme in place</p> <p>Roll out the training programme to all providers</p>	<p>July 2010</p> <p>April 2011</p>	Childcare Commissioner

Objective 3: Improve take-up of before school and after school provision

The CSA told us that there is surplus capacity in the availability of before school and after school provision that is provided across the borough. There was a high indication by parents that they would like to use this provision but are not doing so currently, although this did vary across the borough: for example more than 20% of respondents in Alexandra, Noel Park and Seven Sisters wards indicated that they would like to use after school clubs but were not doing so. Initial indications are that take-up is low for a variety of reasons, including affordability, location and accessibility for those with particular/special needs.

TARGETS: Firstly we need to improve the take-up of the existing before and after school provision. To improve take-up we need to understand more fully why parents/carers would like to use before and after school care but are not doing so. Once we have improved take-up of existing provision, we will work to see whether we need to further increase the number of parents/carers who would like to use provision and expand accordingly. We also need to improve the provision of before and after school care for the 8 -13 year olds, as this has been identified as an area that needs to be developed and where there is currently a gap in the market. We also need to ensure that all schools achieve the DCSF target of delivering the full core offer by September 2010.

Actions for Objective 3: Improve take-up of before school and after school provision

Actions	Milestones	Dates	Lead officers
Undertake more research to: - a) Have a better understanding of the barriers to take-up of before and after school provision; and b) Identify the discrete needs of the 8-13 yr olds	Formulate questionnaire for parents/carers Roll out questionnaire to parents and analyse responses Commission focus groups of 8-13 yr olds & parents	December 2009 January to March 2010 February 2010 – April 2010	Extended Schools Coordinators
Put measures in place to respond to analysis of the barriers and needs	Match existing provision with identified need. Produce communication plan incorporating marketing strategy to ensure all stakeholders are informed.	April 2010 onwards	Extended Schools Coordinators
Put a Quality Assurance system in place to improve existing provision, benchmark take-up rates and work with providers to improve and align where appropriate		April 2011	Head of Children's Network West
Working with Job Centre Plus, produce guidelines and marketing material to inform parents of Working Tax Credit (WTC)	Guidelines produced and distributed	January 2010	Working Parents Information officer
Ensure all schools achieve target of delivering Extended	Extended Service Strategy produced	September 2009	Head of Children's Network West

Services full core offer (FCO) by September 2010	85% of schools delivering FCO 100% of schools delivering FCO	October 2009 September 2010	Extended Schools Coordinators
Ensure that breakfast clubs are offered at schools identified as being in most need	Model funding agreed Regular monitoring	July 2009-06-17 Ongoing	Extended Schools Coordinators

Objective 4; Increase access to and awareness of holiday provision for all ages

The CSA found that there is a proven demand for holiday provision, but that there are difficulties for some users in securing the appropriate provision to meet their requirements. There also needs to be improvements in the availability and publicity of holiday provision – parents and carers need to know what it is available at an early stage in the year so that they can plan their childcare to fit in around work hours and school holidays. Often the provision is there but it is not publicised sufficiently early enough or extensively enough to capture the market it is aimed at. A marketing strategy for holiday provision also needs to have an emphasis on capturing the hard to reach groups that have been identified as part of a Needs Analysis.

TARGETS: We want to increase the percentage of parents/carers who agree that “there is a good choice of holiday play schemes to access” from 20% to 30%. We want to reduce the percentage of parents/carers who use childcare in the holidays but report that they find it difficult to secure the childcare that they need from its current 18.1%. We will publicise provision for both general and specific communities to increase knowledge of and access to holiday provision. We need to improve the current marketing that we have for holiday provision. Our Summer Programme, for example, should be available by Easter at the latest so that parents/carers have some certainty when planning holiday provision to meet their needs. Parents and carers have also stated that the opening times of holiday provision does not reflect wrap around care and so they are unable to secure the hours that enable them to continue working through the school holidays, particularly at Easter and over the long summer school holiday. Overall, we are aware that we need to improve our coordination role in organising and increasing holiday provision.

Actions for Objective 4; Increase access to and awareness of holiday provision for all ages

Actions	Milestones	Dates	Lead officers
Update the Needs Analysis of parents/carers	Update the current Needs Analysis Carry out a new Needs Analysis	December 2009 January 2010	Extended Services Coordinators
Increase and improve marketing, including the publicity of the Summer University Programme, on where provision is provided.	Develop a marketing strategy for holiday provision, with an emphasis on the hard to reach groups that have been identified.	July 2010	Deputy Head of Youth Services (Universal) Head of Information and Communication
Offer the role of Parent Support Advisers and the Transition Programme as a standard entitlement ⁷	Parent Support Advisors are available to all Year 6 Students.	June 2010	
Improve the availability and consistency of Summer Programme Delivery, including parental awareness of forthcoming programmes	The full Summer Programme should be available by Easter of every year, with an overall aim to have the full holiday programme available in January of each year	Easter 2010, and then January 2011, and January in subsequent years from 2011	Extended Services Coordinators
Ensure holiday provision across the age ranges is available	Carry out a mapping and gap analysis exercise	December 2009	Extended Services Coordinators
Develop planning, commissioning and quality assurance model for holiday provision		March 2010	Extended Services Coordinators

⁷ Offered to Y6 pupils who are making the transition to secondary school

Objective 5: Develop a long-term Commissioning Strategy for Childcare

The CSA told us that the inflexibility of childcare can be a barrier to parents taking up and retaining work. The Flexible Offer⁸ is a DCSF requirement and is being implemented through a separate Action Plan. We also have anecdotal evidence, from talking to parents in workshops and face to face, that, in addition, there may be parental demand for more flexible childcare, especially around 1) enabling attendance at job interviews, 2) enabling attendance at training courses, and 3) emergency childcare.

TARGETS; we need to develop a long-term Commissioning Strategy for Childcare through the role of a Childcare Commissioning Officer. We must meet the DCSF target that, by 2009, Haringey (as a Pathfinder) offers 15 hours of free early education to all 3 and 4 year olds over a minimum of three days. 100% of children should have access to the flexible offer by September 2010. We also need to put in place a means of measuring parental demand for flexible provision beyond free early education by April 2010.

⁸ From September 2010, every local authority must offer 15 hours of free early education to all 3 and 4 year olds, over a minimum of 38 weeks. That offer must be made available flexibly, to meet parental demand over a minimum of three days. As a step towards that, from September 2009, all local authorities will be required to make the offer available to 25 per cent of their most disadvantaged 3 and 4 year olds.

Actions for Objective 5: Develop a long-term Commissioning Strategy for Childcare

Actions	Milestones	Dates	Lead Officers
Appoint a Childcare Commissioning Officer to develop a detailed and flexible community and market strategy for childcare	Appointment of Childcare Commissioning Officer	November 2009	Head of Children's Network
Development of a Commissioning Framework for Childcare 0-14. to include assessment of impact within an evaluation framework		September 2010	Childcare Commissioning Officer
Work with providers to ensure that the DCSF target can be delivered in all of the relevant settings	15 hours of free early years education being provided to all 3 and 4 olds in the borough	September 2009	
Undertake further research with parents/carers to understand the flexibility that is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with parents/carers to understand the type of flexibility they require Engage with providers to gauge the demand that they experience for flexible provision and the barriers to providing this Use the Flexible Offer as a case study of demand for flexible provision 	September 2009 to July 2010	Pathfinder Coordinator

Appendix 2

Executive summary of the CSA

Background

From the 1st April 2008 local authorities have a duty to secure sufficient childcare to enable parents to work, or to undertake education and training leading to work. To fulfil this duty, local authorities will help shape the local childcare market in response to parents needs.

A childcare sufficiency assessment has been conducted in Haringey over the last 6 months. It provides information on the supply and demand for childcare, and identifies where any potential gaps in provision may be. The childcare sufficiency assessment includes an analysis of potential gaps between supply and demand at ward level, including information on:

- the types of childcare available;
- the ages of childcare for whom care is available;
- the affordability of childcare;
- the times at which childcare is available;
- the needs of children with either a special educational need or disability;
- the location of childcare.

How the data was collected

To gather the views of parents/carers, over 15,000 questionnaires were sent out via all schools, children's centres, play centres, job centres and health care visitors. Officers visited all the children's centres and a Polish drop-in group to gather views from users.

Just over 730 questionnaires were received back. Focus Groups were held with parents/carers who were Turkish, Kurdish, Somali and parents whose children had a special educational need or disability. The focus groups explored the issues raised in the survey in more detail.

Information on the supply of childcare was collected from the Family Information Service (FIS). This was supplemented was a telephone survey to all childcare providers to ensure the information was still up to date. Questionnaires were sent to both childcare providers and Haringey employers asking them about their views of the local childcare market.

Presentations were conducted at a number of forums to raise awareness and seek views from childcare professionals. The forums attended were:

- 0-5 forum;
- 5-11 forum;
- annual Health Carer visitor forum;
- children's centre and Head teacher meeting.

Supply of childcare

The supply of childcare varies from one part of the borough to another, both in terms of the number of places available and in the pattern and combination of different types of care. There are childcare places currently not used across all types of settings, particularly among childminders. Within the east of Haringey, data indicated that childcare settings in the Private Voluntary Independent (PVI) and maintained sectors generally had vacancies, particularly for 3-4 year old places, whilst in the west most PVI and maintained provision was generally full.

There is a good supply of breakfast and after school club places for 5-11 year olds across the borough. However, there are places currently not used across both types of settings and areas of Haringey.

Demand for childcare

Parents/carers with children under the age of 3 found it difficult to find suitable and affordable childcare places.

Parents/carers with children over the age of 3 were more likely to state that affordability was a barrier in accessing childcare. Parents whose children had a special educational need or disability, found it very difficult to find and secure childcare that catered for their specific needs. In some cases affecting parents ability to be in full-time employment. Those settings offering childcare were heavily oversubscribed and had very long waiting lists. Breakfast, after school clubs and school based care are important for parents of school aged children. A number of parents indicated that they would like to use this provision, but found it difficult to access or their child's school did not provide this type of care. Parent/carers find it difficult to access formal childcare during the holiday periods which enables them to continue in full-time employment.

Main findings from the childcare sufficiency assessment

The main findings from the information collected in the childcare sufficiency assessment are:

- more affordable childcare for families on low incomes;

- more holiday provision for all ages;
- more childcare places, facilities and trained staff for those children with special educational needs or disabilities;
- more flexible childcare arrangements in terms of time and cost;
- more affordable under 3 full-time provision;
- easier access to before and after school provision for all primary school aged children;
- increase the awareness of 0-19 services available in each ward;
- review and rationalisation of childcare places available for 0-19 year olds.

Next steps

We have a legal duty to secure sufficient childcare for parents/carers which will allow them to either work or undertake training. We will develop an action plan based on these findings, informing us how we can make childcare better for parents/carers in Haringey.