1. **Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet’s agreement to move to consultation on proposals for the future delivery of Children’s Centre services. This is part of the implementation of an early help strategy focused on children and young people aged 0-19 years old within a context of shrinking public sector finances. There is a need to remodel the way children’s centre services are delivered within the borough to contribute to the delivery of the reductions in the Council’s early years budget by 2018. Changes to the current children’s centre delivery model are subject to statutory consultation and therefore, permission is being sought from Cabinet to carry out a formal consultation with service users, stakeholders and residents on the basis of the detailed proposals contained within this report.

1.2 The proposals have been developed over recent months, including through engagement with stakeholders, including parents, carers, governors, head teachers and staff from across the children’s centre system and professional partners.
2. **Cabinet Member introduction**

2.1 We’re committed to enabling every child and young person in Haringey to have the best start in life and Haringey children’s centres are a key part of our approach to delivering that commitment. We’re proposing to develop a new model for future children’s centre services in Haringey – so that they offer a greater number of services to a wider range of people. In developing this new model we want to build on the good work that children’s centres are already doing and - by working more closely with parents, carers and our partners health and the wider community - use our scarce resources to build on this work where possible. We believe that these proposals utilise available resources to the best effect so that more children and families in Haringey are healthier, happier and more resilient.

2.2 These proposals are built around focusing our resources on a reduced number of centres, most of which will be located in areas where need is greatest, so that support can be extended to all families with children and young people aged up to 19 years old - or 25 in the case of those with special educational needs and disabilities – rather than just to families with children aged between 0-5, as is the case now.

2.3 These proposals would see nine of Haringey’s current sixteen children centres stay open and be enhanced to offer a wider range of services –to this wider group of people. The other seven sites would close as children’s centres, but we would support them to become part of a network of Community Access Points, providing some services found at children’s centres and signposting people to other forms of support where necessary.

2.4 These plans have developed following extensive consultation between the council, children’s centre staff, parents, school governors and head teachers, carers and others. From this engagement work we know that many people have strong feelings about how children’s centre services should be provided across the borough. The statutory consultation will provide us with a further opportunity to gather views more widely and will inform final proposals.

2.5 We know that further work is needed to determine how the Council address the challenges of ensuring that, across the borough parents and children are able to access affordable and sustainable childcare that is of the highest quality and makes a difference to the longer term outcomes for children.

3. **Recommendations**
Cabinet is asked to:

3.1 Approve for consultation, the proposals for the reduction in numbers and closure of children’s centres in the borough as set out in Paragraph 9.0 of this report.

3.2 Approve a 90 days period of consultation to commence in June and end in September 2015.

3.3 Agree that a report on the outcome of the consultation and final proposals for children’s centres in the borough be submitted to Cabinet in November 2015 for a decision.

3.4 Agree that the outcome of the activity relating to childcare policy, outlined at 12.6, be submitted to Cabinet at a later date.

4 Alternative options considered

4.1 To retain the current model and number of Children’s Centres in Haringey as full service centres. This, however, cannot be achieved within the available budget.

4.2 To resource only those centres that will be delivering in our most disadvantaged areas and offering the of the full core offer to the most vulnerable families. The Council, however, is fully committed to a universal offer which reduces stigma and effectively enables access to targeted services for those most vulnerable families.

4.3 To make a higher level of savings to Children’s Centres in order to create greater flexibility in the commissioning budget. This proposal was, however, rejected on the grounds that the model for Children’s Centres is at the heart of the Council’s early help approach and needs to enable access for all local families to high quality information and advice.

5 Background information

5.1 In February 2015, the Council agreed a budget which includes total savings of £1.44m to be delivered across the Early Years budget by 2018. These savings should be seen in the context of the Council’s need to reduce its overall expenditure by £70m as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2015-18.

The extract from the MTFS, set out at Table 1, shows the profile of the savings to be taken over the three years to April 2018.
Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>2015-16 £000’s</th>
<th>2016-17 £000’s</th>
<th>2017-18 £000’s</th>
<th>Total £000’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- remodel Childrens Centres</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 The early years expenditure to date has comprised of three main areas:

- Council early years teams;
- Commissioned services;
- Devolved budgets to Children’s Centres.

Currently commissioned services include:

- Health services;
- Grants to the voluntary sector for specific programmes of outreach work; and
- Targeted childcare places.

Over the next three years, there will need to be reductions in the commissioning budget available for early years and the way in which we are able to meet our corporate priorities and statutory duties will need to be transformed.

5.3 Haringey Council’s Corporate Plan (2015-2018) sets out the following key objectives:

Priority 1: Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education

Objectives:

- All children will have the best start in life
- Children and young people across Haringey excel at school, making the most of their potential
- All young people will have access to excellent employment or higher education opportunities
- Children and young people will be healthier, happier and more resilient and those who need extra help will get support at the right time
- Children and families who need more support will be helped earlier before issues escalate

- All children and young people will be safeguarded from abuse

5.4 The Childcare Act 2006, places a duty on the Council to:

- Improve the well-being of children in their area, and reduce inequalities (Section 1)

- 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)

- Make arrangements that, ‘so far as is reasonably practicable’, include arrangements for sufficient provision of children’s centre to meet local need (Section 5A)

5.5 Achieving the required reduction in the early years budget requires a change in the way we deliver early years in the borough so that, even with reduced levels of resources, parents and carers have access to good information about the services available in their community and are able to access high quality services that make a difference to them and improve outcomes for their children.

5.6 The transformation of early years is a fundamental element of our early help strategy and approach. We recognise that early years represents the best early intervention opportunity to improve outcomes for local residents and their families and to reduce the cost of fixing problems later. By building individual and family capacity at a local level, we can strengthen the resilience of families to respond to future needs and circumstances. We also recognise that the needs of parents and families continue as their children grow older and that the support and interventions available through Children’s Centres can be beneficial to all families in the borough and complement support available through other settings such as schools and health providers.

5.7 Work is underway in Haringey to develop the partnership operating model for Early Help which will enable a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to the delivery of Early Help. The aim is to provide a continuum of help and support to respond to the different levels of need of children and families through universal, targeted and specialist services based on a model of locality-based multi-agency working. The
Early Help offer implements a whole family approach for families with children from 0 – 19, and up to 25 for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

5.8 We recognise that families often access early help through Children’s Centres, schools, health services and the voluntary and community sector. As part of the wider system of early help, the Haringey Early Help and Prevention Services (including family support services and youth services) are reconfiguring into three teams. The teams will be much more closely integrated with schools and children’s centres to enable clear pathways and swift access for families to targeted early help support. This will include access to specialist support to address issues relating to domestic abuse, adult/child mental health, substance misuse, housing and employment support.

5.9 Services and agencies including community safety, police, housing and employment support are considering how they can align resource to deliver shared outcomes for families through the locality structure.

5.10 The overarching aim is to enable families to access the right help, at the right time and in the right place by delivering support to families within their communities as far as possible and minimising unnecessary referrals and assessment.
5.11 Over the next three years, commissioning for early years services, including children’s centre service delivery will be focused on impact, supporting community and parental capacity and improving outcomes for all children, but particularly those children that we consider to be the most vulnerable or disadvantaged.

6. Children’s Centres in Haringey

6.1 There are currently 16 designated children’s centres in Haringey. Of the sixteen, 5 are directly managed by the local authority and the remaining 11 are managed by schools.

6.2 Since 2011, the sixteen centres in Haringey have been organised into four ‘clusters’. The cluster model was introduced to support joint planning and service coordination between children’s centres. The governance for each cluster is through a Children’s Centre Cluster Advisory Board that is expected to provide the support and challenge to each of the centres within each cluster; ensuring that centres are achieving value for money, making best use of the resources available, improving outcomes for children and driving up the quality of services available.
6.3 The current portfolio of children’s centres and link sites is funded through the council’s general fund at £2.4m per year.

6.4 Children’s centres are integral to the emerging early help model in Haringey and play a key role in the early identification of needs through a universal service offer, that provides pathways to additional support where required.

6.5 The establishment of an Early Help Strategy for the borough underlines an approach to the remodelling of children’s centres that places emphasis on;

- the ‘whole family’;
- children identified as disadvantaged, vulnerable or ‘at risk’ and/ or their parents/carers, who regularly access local services other than children’s centres;
- an early help approach that encourages resilience;
- the early identification of need in a universal service context;
- multi-agency assessment and clear referral pathways within a strong community-based network of services;
- reducing the escalation of needs;
- supporting children ‘stepping down’ from children’s social care intervention;
- supporting the capacity within the community for peer-support, self-support and self-sufficiency through a locality based model;
- a commissioning approach where needs, flexibility and community assets influence the pattern of service delivery within localities
- stronger, cross sector approaches that build effective local partnerships, common purpose and professional competence and confidence through increased co-location and joint working

7 Engagement

7.1 Between February and May 2015, officers undertook a programme of work with children’s centre stakeholders including parents, carers, governors, head teachers and staff to develop proposals for the future operating model for children’s centres.
Activity included attendance at Parents Forums across the children’s centres and workshops with parents, professional partners and children’s centre representatives.

7.2 Engagement activity

Officers took a partnership approach to engaging stakeholders, particularly service users, in the redesign of our children’s centres. This approach was taken with the intention of:

- Involving service users and stakeholders in a problem-solving, solution-focussed approach
- Harnessing the insight from services users and building it into the design of the future model
- Enabling stakeholder voices to be heard and reflected, as best as possible, in the proposals
- Testing how proposed delivery models can best meet needs

7.3 The engagement process explored a range of options which were evolved through discussion, the exchange of ideas and the use of feedback loops.

The following table shows the engagement undertaken:

**Table 2:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feb-15</th>
<th>Mar-15</th>
<th>Apr-15</th>
<th>May-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s centre representative group</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent forums</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️⭐️⭐️⭐️⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⭐️⭐️⭐️⭐️</td>
<td>⭐️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay and play session</td>
<td>⭐️⭐️⭐️⭐️</td>
<td></td>
<td>⭐️⭐️⭐️⭐️</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⭐️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.4 The children's centre group was made up of 21 individuals representing the views of parents, governors and staff and we engaged with over 200 parents.

Appendix I provides a summary of feedback gathered during the stakeholder engagement process.

8 Developing Proposals for the Redesign of Haringey’s Children’s Centres

8.1 During the Council’s consultation on its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) between December and January 2015, early thinking on the future operating model for children’s centres was shared with children’s centre representatives. Over 100 people, including children’s centre staff, governors, head teachers and representatives from the early years private, voluntary and independent sector attended consultation events to share their views on the proposals for early years.

This provided some initial feedback on the following proposals:

- A reduced number of children’s centres, working with key outreach sites
- Children’s centre transformed into hubs which provide access to support for children and young people from conception to 19 years old (25 years old for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and their families
- Children’s centres operating as part of an early help offer that is delivered on a locality model aligned with the Haringey schools’ Network Learning Communities (NLCs)
- A strong, universal offer for all parents, built on a strengthened information, advice and guidance offer, peer support and community development; enabling local community capacity to respond to need
- Embedding the universal Health Child Programme (HCP), a health visiting led programme, from October 2015
- Teams bringing together a range of professional roles, through stronger partnership working, shared early help practice, assessment and referral pathways and where appropriate, shared work spaces

8.2 Detailed proposals for a future operating model for Haringey’s children’s centres have now been developed, informed by the engagement process and the requirements set out in the statutory guidance1.

---

1 ‘Sure Start Children’s Centre April 2013’, Department for Education
Through the engagement process, some key design principles were developed and agreed with stakeholders. These are detailed at Appendix II.

8.3 In addition to the design principles, development of the proposals also considered:

- The need to operate within a reduced budget, whilst ensuring access to a range of high quality services that are effective and support improved outcomes for children and young people
- Commissioning for better outcomes
- The differences in need that exist across the borough, with particular focus on the number of children under 5 years old in each area, and the levels of deprivation
- Opportunities to improve coordination and access to a range of services for families with children aged 0-19
- The accessibility of buildings and transport links
- How far people are willing to travel to access services
- Building size and facilities
- The need to ensure that remaining centres have sufficient capacity to work effectively across each area

8.4 The proposals outlined below aim to secure services that we believe are important to children, young people and their parents, whilst operating within a reduced budget. By focusing our resources carefully, working closely with health and other partners and delivering services that are most needed and where they are most needed, we can continue some of the most effective work that children’s centres already do.

8.5 We know from the engagement process that children’s centres are valued by users and also that local parents and stakeholders feel strongly about retaining centres within their local community. Despite their contribution to these proposals, many parents and some children’s centres oppose any reductions in the budget and the number of children’s centres.

8.6 The proposals set out within this paper are believed to be ones that will enable the Council to best meet its corporate aims and objectives for children and young people, within a reduced budget, working in partnership with others and the community.

9 **Haringey’s children’s centres – key proposals**

9.1 The proposals outlined below are intended to set out our intentions to develop a clear, consistent framework for children’s centre in Haringey to operate within.
Summary of the key proposals

We are proposing to:

- Widen the focus of children’s centre services from 0-5 years of age to 0-19 years of age, and up to 25 years for children and young people with special educational needs.
- Establish five children’s centre planning areas, aligned with Haringey Schools’ Network Learning Communities (NLCs)
- Reduce the number of designated children’s centres from 16 to 9.
- Close seven designated children’s centres
- Increase current service availability to include evenings, weekends and across 48 weeks of the year.
- Identify community access points across the borough where children and families can access a wider range of services as part of a 0-19 children’s centre service offer.
- Establish new Children’s Centre Advisory Boards (CCAB) for each children centre planning area
- Develop Parent Engagement Forums for each children’s centre planning area.

Proposed designated children’s centres

9.1.1 There are currently sixteen children’s centres in the borough covering the majority of the wards. The profile of centres compromises of five centres that are directly managed by the Council and eleven centres that are commissioned through schools. Appendix III shows the profile of centres across the borough.

Currently centres are focused on access to services for 0-5 year olds and their families. We are proposing to extend the access to Children’s Centres to all families with children from 0 – 19, and up to 25 for children with special educational needs and disabilities. This builds on a family focused approach already adopted by children’s centres

9.1.2 The future model proposes the retention of nine designated children’s centres across the borough. They would be organised across five planning areas which align to Haringey’s Network Learning Communities² (NLCs) with greater provision in

---
² There are six Network Learning Communities (NLCs) in Haringey. They are communities of schools, secondary, primary, special and nursery schools and were developed to enhance transition, planning and joint working between schools in the borough. Non-school children’s centres are members of their relevant NLC.
areas of greatest need and provide direct access for children, young people and families.

9.1.3 In determining which centres would be retained as designated children’s centres, a number of factors were taken into account. The core criteria were:

- Need and populations
- Accessibility and transport links
- Building size and facilities
- Overall, a spread of locations to ensure access across the Borough, taking into account levels of need.

9.1.4 The children’s centres will retain a strong universal ethos and offer. The future model will focus on outreach, peer support and community development – enabling parents and local communities to help themselves and actively working to build their capacity to respond to need. Parents have been keen to see, reflected in the new model, opportunities for them to build their own capacity and skills, take up volunteering, and ultimately employment opportunities and this will be an important feature of how centres will be expected to operate in the future. There will be a core, consistent set of services that centres will be expected to deliver and clear and consistent outcomes that they will be expected to achieve.

They will operate as part of a wider early help offer delivered across a locality.

9.1.5 We would like to see all Children’s Centres develop as vibrant centres in their local communities – offering a range of services and using the space as fully as possible and encouraging local community and peer support groups to operate from or bring services there. We want this to be led from the local community as much as possible.

9.1.5 The centres that are proposed to be retained as designated children’s centres are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s Centre</th>
<th>Ward coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadwaters</td>
<td>West Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Lane</td>
<td>Northumberland Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembury</td>
<td>Bruce Grove/Tottenham Hale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokesly*</td>
<td>Alexandra/Crouch End/Hornsey/Highgate/Fortis Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowland Hill</td>
<td>White Hart Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangle</td>
<td>Seven Sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welbourne</td>
<td>Tottenham Green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.1.6 Feedback throughout the process has underlined the importance of ensuring that families are able to access children’s centre services in ways that meet their needs and therefore it is proposed that service availability in the nine remaining centres will be across 48 weeks of the year, extended days and some weekends.

9.2 Proposed closures and Community Access Points

9.2.1 It is proposed that the following centres are closed as children’s centres. This will mean they are de-designated and both the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted would be notified. They will no longer recorded as children’s centres by Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bounds Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campsbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlsmead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noel Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Grove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonecroft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ladder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2.2 In all proposed children’s centre planning areas, it is recognised that there are a wide range of agencies and organisations already providing services for children, young people and their families. It is expected that designated centres will, as they already do, build and maintain strong relationships with those other agencies to ensure that parents and carers accessing the centre have good information about what is available across the children’s centre area and to facilitate signposting and referral processes between the centre and other partners in the community.

Within the proposed model, these ‘community access points’ are defined as any setting or venue where existing services for children and families take place and partnership working between them and the designated centre would increase access to services. E.g. Schools, Health Centres, GP surgeries and Community Centres.
9.2.3 Centres that are no longer retained as designated children’s centres could, along with other sites in each children’s centre planning area, act as community access points, providing access into wider children’s centres services. Services will be coordinated by a designated children’s centre and may be delivered by a partner agency, community partner or parents themselves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s Centres we are proposing to close</th>
<th>Current services to be maintained</th>
<th>Potential services accessed in the future (maximum opening hours per week: 15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bounds Green</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and other appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advice sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campsbourne</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and other appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advice sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlsmead</td>
<td>2 year old free early education provision</td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and other appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advice sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noel Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and other appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advice sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Grove</td>
<td>2 year old free early education provision</td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and other appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advice sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonecroft</td>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and other appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advice sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ladder</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stay &amp; Play</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Ladder
9.2.4 The map at Appendix IV sets out the location of the proposed children’s centres and community access sites within the future model.

9.3 The Service Offer

9.3.1 The statutory guidance for children’s centres was updated in April 2013 and replaced a previously prescribed core service offer with a direction about the core purpose of children’s centres. The guidance sets out the core purpose as;

‘…..to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in;
- Child development and school readiness;

- Parenting aspirations an parenting skills; and

- Child and family health and life chances’

(Sure Start Children’s Centres Statutory Guidance, DfE, 2013:7)

9.3.2 In the context of early help, we are proposing to introduce a service offer that will establish a clearer, more consistent children’s centre service offer that will reflect variations based on differing levels of need across the borough and strengthen the links between services across the 0-19 age range.

Universal Offer

9.3.3 As well as a strong universal offer, we will support those children who need targeted interventions more readily in the places where they or their families go within the local community. This will be achieved by:

- The provision of targeted outreach to those least likely to engage in services;
- The provision of high quality, integrated early help and family support services that engage families and enable us to identify and intervene at an early stage;
- Strong partnerships and multi-agency working that reduces duplication, maximise resources and enhance professional practice; and
The use of evidence-based practice and interventions that have been proven to make the biggest difference to improved outcomes for children and families.

9.3.4 Each designated centre would continue to provide a core universal offer. The proposed offer includes new services alongside existing services that may be delivered differently and in ways that improve accessibility and engagement from potential service users.

9.3.5 The vision for each children’s centre is for them to act as a hub for improving outcomes for local parents and families in their locality. We want them to be key points of local access for parents and families where they are able to benefit from peer support, good information and advice and both universal and targeted provision at the earliest opportunity. Working with our stakeholders, we have identified the range of interventions which parents most want to see delivered through Children’s Centres including stay and play, health advice and interventions and more generalist information and advice. Throughout this process, we have been mindful that parents and families have a diverse range of needs and assets and that the offer accessible through Children’s Centres needs to reflect this. We have, for example, focused on developing resources to enable peer support – for both mothers and fathers – and an enhanced parental role in delivering services on the ground in response to stakeholder views.

9.3.6 To facilitate our wide-ranging offer, we want the Centres to be spaces where practitioners from different organisations and disciplines can both offer sessions and be co-located to offer better integrated services and work together round families. Reflecting the multidisciplinary approach that underpins our early help strategy, the centre will host or provide access to, via signposting, a range of professionals and service providers.

9.3.7 As well as investing through this model in fixed roles attached to Children’s Centres, we are also seeking to enhance the range of targeted interventions which would be developed from our early help needs assessment and a commissioning based approach. The centres will be the base for a range of co-located services which will be both accessible through the centres and offered through enhanced outreach in settings where parents are likely to go, for example schools, libraries or GP premises. It is important that the Centres add value to existing services and that the services they offer are available in a number of ways and not solely through parents coming to the centres.

9.3.8 **Targeted Offer**
A range of targeted commissioned services, across the conception to 25 age range, will be provided from children’s centres and other community venues to complement a universal children’s centre offer.

It is not intended that the targeted offer will be identical in each locality but tailored according the predominant needs identified amongst children, families and communities. Consideration will be given to the most appropriate access point for services, which may not necessarily be the children’s centre given the age of potential service users or their level or type of need.

Key also to this approach will be the enabling of the community to develop and maintain sustainable community-based support to which this targeted service offer can add value.

Appendix V and VI summarise a proposed minimum universal and targeted service offer and family information service offer.

9.3.9 A key consideration in the proposals is the availability and access to services for families given the proposed reduction in the designated children’s centres.

9.3.10 It is proposed that the retained designated children’s centres would provide access to services with a greater degree of flexibility than is available in the current model; ensuring access is extended across 48 weeks of the year and some evening and weekend access is available.

9.4 Staffing and resources

9.4.1 As part of the proposed children’s centre model, it is likely that the current configuration of staffing is changed and a number of job roles created or revised. There will be a reduction in the number of management posts and increase in the number of roles undertaking outreach and delivering early help intervention.

9.5 Management and Accountability

9.5.1 The introduction, in 2013, of a new framework for Ofsted inspection of Children’s Centres draws far more on the Council as the Accountable Body for children’s centres than previous inspection arrangements. With reference to children’s centres as delivery mechanisms for early help services, there is an expectation that
the Council is clear about how the service offer, coordination and integration of services reflect an understanding of needs and contribute to improved outcomes for children and reduce inequalities, particularly for those families in greatest need of support.

9.5.2 Where a retained designated centre is school based, it will be managed by school governance arrangements and will be delivered through the school entering into a service level agreement with the Council. Responsibility for the children’s centre performance will rest with the school’s governing body and will be monitored by the Council.

9.6 Governance

9.6.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Council to ensure that all children’s centres have in place a Children’s Centre Advisory Board (CCAB). The purpose of the CCAB is to provide support and challenge to each children’s centre; ensuring that representation reflects local stakeholders and engages parents in shaping local service delivery.

9.6.2 As part of the future children’s centre operating model, it is proposed that there is one CCAB for each children’s centre planning area, with the exception of the Muswell Hill/Highgate and Hornsey and Stroud Green planning areas, which it is proposed are covered by one CCAB.

9.7 Parental involvement

9.7.1 We are keen that the future delivery model builds on the levels of parental involvement already seen across our children’s centres. The MTFS consultation process and our subsequent engagement activity highlighted the key role parents and carers play, and can continue to play, in determining what is needed to meet their needs, shaping how provision should or could be offered and taking a role themselves in supporting each other and their community.

9.7.2 It is proposed that our current approach to parent involvement is strengthened to ensure that parents continue to play a role in shaping services and doing more for themselves within their community.

9.7.3 The new role of learning and volunteer coordinator will support the capacity of parents to volunteers, get access to opportunities that will enable them to build skills and play a role in the governance around the children’s centres. Alongside this, and supported by this role, will be the establishment of parent engagement forums. The aim of the forums will be to ensure that in each children’s centre planning area,
local parents are able to have a voice in how services in their area are delivered, contribute to their community through volunteering and parent to parent support and participating in the delivery of local services.

10 Benefits and risks of the proposed model

10.1 Benefits

10.1.1 The model proposes a strengthened universal offer based on enhanced information, advice and guidance for all families and centred on the universal healthy child programme.

10.1.2 The model creates a strong locality basis for future operation which functions for families of children of all ages to support improved outcomes, linked to clusters of schools, in Network Learning Communities.

10.1.3 The model strengthens individual, family and community capacity by a co-ordinated approach built on strong peer support and other community opportunities.

10.1.4 The model proposes greater integration of services and stronger partnership working between the Council’s own services and our key partners. Embedding the new model within the emerging early help approach will mean an improved service offer, strengthened by more effective assessment and referral practice. This should lead to more seamless access to support for those who need it.

10.1.5 The retention of de-designated children’s centres as delivery sites may support other developments across the borough, including access to 2 year old free early education places and parent-led support activity.

10.2 Risks

10.2.1 The most significant change will be the reduction the number of designated children’s centres currently serving Haringey communities. In some areas this will mean some families may need to travel further to attend a service at a children’s centre.

10.2.2 The proposals rely on a commitment to partnership working and multi-agency approaches. Reductions in funding to other public sector bodies as well as the limited availability of funding to support the voluntary and community sector agencies may impact on the future delivery of services by partners.
10.2.3. It is possible that when the consultation is concluded and the detailed financial modelling is completed there will be insufficient funding to support a hub and spoke model – focusing resources on the hubs alone. However the initial aim will be to produce a network of full Children’s Centres and delivery sites.

11 Statutory Consultation

11.1 The Council, in fulfilling its duty to make arrangements for the provision of children’s centres, retains responsibility and accountability for the children’s centre offer available in the borough. The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009\(^3\), places a requirement on the Council to consult ‘everyone who could be affected’ by the proposed changes to the current children’s centre model.

11.2 Cabinet members are being asked to give approval for the Council to commence a statutory consultation on the proposals set out in this in report.

11.3 If approved, the consultation period will take place between June and September 2015 and will be seeking the views of residents and directly affected groups including:

- Parents, carers and other service users of children’s centres
- School staff and Governors
- Children’s Centre staff
- Ward Councillors
- Professional partners and commissioned organisations
- Community and voluntary sector service providers
- Staff in other Haringey Council services

11.4 The consultation process will include approaches to ensure our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families; including those for whom English is not their first language are able to participate in the consultation.

11.5 Cabinet are being asked to agree to a consultation exercise which will take place from June to September 2015. This is longer than the recommended 90 day period to account for Summer holidays. It is proposed that we will consult on the following:-

1) The service offer
2) The proposals around which of the existing children’s centres will become children’s centre hubs, and which will become a key delivery site
3) Creating parent engagement panels
4) The opening hours of services

---

\(^3\) Section 5D
5) Involving parents in the delivery of service delivery

11.6 A variety of methods will be used during the consultation to enable all stakeholders to actively participate. This will include:

- Questionnaires, which can be completed online, with hard copies available on request and from children’s centres
- Public consultation events
- Focus groups with parents with children under five attending existing children’s centres, including young parents, fathers, and families with children who have special education needs
- Outreach activity to capture views of families who have children under five that do not currently use children’s centres
- Meetings with:
  - Children’s centre staff
  - Current cluster Advisory Boards and Governing Bodies
  - Ward Councillors
  - Staff and managers in Local Authority services and partners

11.7 It is expected that the outcome of the statutory consultation will be reported to Cabinet in November 2015 with recommendations on the future operating model for children’s centres in Haringey.

12 Childcare

12.1 There are no immediate changes planned for the level of childcare provision currently available in children’s centres. There are, however, aspects of the arrangements around the maintained childcare provision currently offered alongside our children centre service delivery that need further consideration as part of a wider review of the sustainability of affordable, high quality childcare.

12.2 It is clear that childcare and early education remain a high priority for national government. The Conservative government’s pledge to increase the free early education entitlement, for 3 and 4 year olds, from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week for working parents, will require significant planning and preparation in order to ensure that the Council is able to ensure fulfil its statutory responsibilities within a national context of reducing public sector expenditure.

12.3 Whilst we wait further information from central government on the requirements on the Council in relation to the extension of the free entitlement, it is clear that this is one of a number of key challenges for the Council in its role as commissioner and...
childcare market manager. In order to deliver better outcomes for children, young people and families in the borough, a clear childcare policy framework is required.

12.4 Competing demands on resources means that the choices the Council will have to make in the future in relation to the delivery of childcare and early education in the borough will need to be underpinned by coherent policy.

12.5 There are a number of policy approaches that the Council could consider but it is clear that for each and every one of the policy options available to the Council, there will be an impact across the whole of Haringey’s early years sector. Some aspects of the policy options set out in this paper for consideration will have a more significant effect on particular early years providers. To this end, officers will be working with those likely to be most significantly affected to appraise specific options and possible solutions.

12.6 Further analysis of the options is underway through a number of actions by officers including:

- The completion of a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA)
- An impact analysis of the proposed increase to 30 hours in the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds for working parents
- A review of the current Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) with representatives from Haringey’s schools and the private, voluntary and independent early years provider sector
- Consultation on proposals to introduce new childcare fee arrangements across the maintained childcare provision linked to developing sustainable childcare in children’s centres
- A review of the Nursery School provision in Haringey

12.7 The outcome of the work undertaken by officers will inform proposals for Haringey Council’s childcare policy and these will be submitted to Cabinet at a later date.

13 Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

13.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council in 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. The changes to the Children’s Centre delivery model and the Childcare Policy Framework outlined in the report should contribute to the delivery of these savings; however the exact details are not clear at this stage and will need to be fully considered by Cabinet in due course.
Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and legal implications

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

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

14.2 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.

14.3 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. The Council must have regard any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State.

14.4 The Sure Start Children's Centre April 2013 statutory 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).

14.5 The statutory 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 in the Act and the statutory guidance in taking forward the proposals relating to children centres in its area.

14.6 The Local Authority is subject to the Equality Act 2010 and under a duty to ensure its public sector equality duty and should ensure an Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken as part of the consultation process, An initial Equalities Impact assessment is included at Appendix VII and needs to be updated as the consultation progresses.

15 Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

15.1 Our proposals will successfully align with all other service model options to form a holistic, whole system redesign. The impact of which will be positive by enabling only those families needing high level service receiving them, whilst families with lower level needs being supporting within the community via the early help offer.

15.2 We do 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.

15.3 An initial Equalities Impact assessment is included at Appendix VII

16 Head of Procurement Comments

16.1 The proposal to go out to formal consultation does not have any immediate procurement impact. If the consultation identifies any needs for the commissioning
of future services, this would need to go through a competitive procurement process and the timescales need to be built in to the implementation of the model.

16.2 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 (£approx £625,000) over a four year period. Waivers will no longer be allowed under these regulation for spend over 750,000 Euros.

17 Policy Implication

17.1 There are clear policy implications for the proposals set out in this report. The report outlines an option for how the Council, through redesigning its children’s centres, can continue to meet its statutory duties for the delivery of children’s centres under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009)

17.2 The challenges for the provision of high quality, accessible, affordable and sustainable childcare across the borough are clearly evident and the work to establish a clear policy direction for the Council is essential to determine how these challenges can be met.

18 Reasons for Decision

18.1 The Council are required to undertake a statutory consultation where it proposes to make changes to its children’s centre delivery model. The proposals in this report seek to address how the Council may continue to meet its statutory obligations for the provision of children’s centres in light of significant budget reductions.

19 Use of Appendices

19.1 Appendix I - Summary of feedback gathered during the stakeholder engagement process.
19.2 Appendix II - Key design principles
19.3 Appendix III - Profile of centres across the borough
19.4 Appendix IV - Location of the proposed children’s centres and delivery sites within the future model.
19.5 Appendix V - Proposed minimum universal and targeted service offer
19.6 Appendix VI - Proposed Family Information Service Offer
19.7 Appendix VII – Equality Impact Assessment

20 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

N/A