

Cabinet Meeting Resolution

Executive
Forward Plan
Reference

E2593

Re-structuring of the Early Years, Children's Centre and Early Help (0 - 11 years) Services 2014 - 2016

Date of Meeting	13-Nov-13
The Issue	<i>The PDS Panel received the report of the Task & Finish Group following their review of Early Years, Children's Centre and Early Help (0 - 11 years) Services. Cabinet considered the Panel's recommendations at its meeting on 13th November 2013, together with the Minority Report from Councillor Liz Hardman.</i>
The decision	<p>(1) To NOTE that the Early Years, Children & Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel had a number of questions, in particular which services will be provided at the Children's Centres under the proposed new model, who will run the various Children's Centres, and to whom these services will be available;</p> <p>(2) To NOTE the issues raised in the Minority Report; and</p> <p>(3) To FORMULATE their response to the Panel's recommendations and to the Minority Report.</p>
Rationale for decision	Recommendations contained in this report take into account local data; statutory requirements under the Childcare Act 2006 (sufficient Children's Centres; sufficient quality places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds), the public sector Equalities Duty and the local authority's duty to moderate the Foundation Stage Profile at the end of Reception Year in school. The outcome of any change will be to secure statutory duties and target resources upon those children and families in greatest need.
Other options considered	<p>The models considered by the Early Years Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel were: to reduce all budgets as proposed with existing services scaled back accordingly, offering targeted services only: Option 1 would be delivered within the existing structures of a mixed Council and voluntary sector model; Option 2 was a model that reduced budgets and considered a health provider to run an even more integrated model of delivery of all services; Option 3 was a model to reduce budgets and outsource all services to the third sector. All models considered a small commissioning team remaining in the Council.</p> <p>Officers and the Task & Finish Group considered closing some centres and keeping a smaller number open. This was rejected because of the presumption by central government not to close Children's Centres and the need to continue to provide some targeted services, and the cost of repaying the capital grant.</p> <p>Outsource all provision was considered. This was rejected because of the length of time to prepare a new service specification which would not achieve savings in timeframe required i.e. TUPE implications. Initial</p>

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review suggests the services required can most effectively be provided by a model of keeping all buildings but restricting their use for Children's Centres, whilst maximising community access to these assets. Following this restructure, outsourcing is not precluded as a future delivery option.

Reduce all direct non statutory functions i.e. Play and Specialist Family Support functions. Rejected because the voluntary sector have and do bring in considerable leverage from other charitable groups, increasing the total funds available to children and families in the area, as well as bringing community capacity to the authority.

The Decision is subject to Call-In within 5 working days of publication of the decision