

**Democratic Services**

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Date: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
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**To: All Members of the Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel**

**Councillors:** Sally Davis, Sarah Bevan, Liz Hardman, David Veale, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Michael Evans and Nicholas Coombes

**Co-opted Voting Members:** David Williams

**Co-opted Non-Voting Members:** Chris Batten and Edward Joseph

**Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth:** Councillor Dine Romero

Chief Executive and other appropriate officers  
Press and Public

Dear Member

**Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel: Monday, 8th September, 2014**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel**, to be held on **Monday, 8th September, 2014** at **4.30 pm** in the **Brunswick Room - Guildhall, Bath**.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Mark Durnford  
for Chief Executive

**If you need to access this agenda or any of the supporting reports in an alternative accessible format please contact Democratic Services or the relevant report author whose details are listed at the end of each report.**

*This Agenda and all accompanying reports are printed on recycled paper*

## NOTES:

- 1. Inspection of Papers:** Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or a list of the background papers relating to any item on this Agenda should contact Mark Durnford who is available by telephoning Bath 01225 394458 or by calling at The Guildhall, Bath (during normal office hours).
- 2. Public Speaking at Meetings:** The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group. Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting (this means that for meetings held on Wednesdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 4.30pm the previous Friday)

The public may also ask a question to which a written answer will be given. Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services at least two full working days in advance of the meeting (this means that for meetings held on Wednesdays, notice must be received in Democratic Services by 4.30pm the previous Friday). If an answer cannot be prepared in time for the meeting it will be sent out within five days afterwards. Further details of the scheme can be obtained by contacting Mark Durnford as above.

- 3. Details of Decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be published as soon as possible after the meeting, and also circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime details can be obtained by contacting Mark Durnford as above.

Appendices to reports are available for inspection as follows:-

**Public Access points** - Riverside - Keynsham, Guildhall - Bath, Hollies - Midsomer Norton, and Bath Central, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton public libraries.

**For Councillors and Officers** papers may be inspected via Political Group Research Assistants and Group Rooms/Members' Rooms.

- 4. Recording at Meetings:-**

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we require the consent of parents or guardians before filming children or young people. For more information, please speak to the camera operator

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- 5. Attendance Register:** Members should sign the Register which will be circulated at the meeting.

6. THE APPENDED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ARE IDENTIFIED BY AGENDA ITEM NUMBER.

**7. Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are sign-posted.

Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

**Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel - Monday, 8th  
September, 2014**

**at 4.30 pm in the Brunswick Room - Guildhall, Bath**

**A G E N D A**

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 6.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to indicate:

(a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.

(b) The nature of their interest.

(c) Whether their interest is a **disclosable pecuniary interest** or an **other interest**,  
(as defined in Part 2, A and B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

5. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

6. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

At the time of publication no notifications had been received.

7. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 18)

8. RE-STRUCTURING OF THE EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN'S CENTRE AND EARLY HELP (0 - 11 YEARS) SERVICES 2014 - 2016 (Pages 19 - 42)

The Panel will receive and comment on the report to Cabinet at their meeting on September 8th prior to the Cabinet meeting on September 10th.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Mark Durnford who can be contacted on 01225 394458.

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**BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

**EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Monday, 14th July, 2014

**Present:- Councillors:** Sally Davis (Chair), Sarah Bevan (Vice-Chair), Liz Hardman, David Veale, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Michael Evans and Nicholas Coombes

**Co-opted Voting Members:-**

**Co-opted Non-voting Members:-** Chris Batten and Edward Joseph

**Also in attendance:** Briony Waite (Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Services), Charlie Moat (Project Manager, Service Improvement) and Mike Bowden (Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning)

**17 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Panel to the members of the public that were present.

**18 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

**19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

David Williams, a Co-opted Member of the Panel who represents the Church of England Diocese had sent his apologies to the Panel.

**20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**21 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

**22 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

Susan Charles, Chair, Warm Water Inclusive Swimming & Exercise (WWISE) Network addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and is also available online as an attachment to these minutes. A brief summary is set out below.

B&NES Council is currently in discussion with a number of large leisure organisations with a view to awarding a contract to run the B&NES Leisure facilities for the next 30 years, a contract which will include rebuilding the Keynsham Leisure Centre as well as remodelling or redeveloping Bath and other B&NES leisure facilities. This is a golden opportunity to ensure that warm water pools with fully accessible changing facilities that truly meet the needs of disabled children & young people are included in these development plans.

Currently there is extremely limited provision for children & young people who need fully accessible warm water pools to go swimming. With such pools in local leisure centres, disabled children who have learnt to swim in special schools or at specialised swimming lessons would be able to go swimming regularly with family & friends in an inclusive recreational environment, which would help them to remain fit & active and maintain a healthy body weight.

We are looking for your support to ensure that any contract for new & redeveloped leisure facilities includes:

- Warm water pools with water at 32°C which are accessible for them and suitable for their needs both now & when they are older (ie deep enough & large enough for them to be able to swim).
- Furthermore that they will have changing facilities with hoists & changing beds so they are suitable for everyone whatever their level of disability and finally that
- They will be available for them to use on a regular basis and at an affordable price

Only then will they be able to participate in exercise and swimming on an equal basis to their able-bodied peers.

Alexander Jones- Grech, Bath Swim Therapy addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and is also available online as an attachment to these minutes. A brief summary is set out below.

My name is Alexander, I am 10 Years old. I was born with a painful form of dwarfism that affects my bones and joints. Most of the time, I have to move around in my wheelchair.

I wanted to learn to swim with my friends at our local pool but the water was too cold and made my legs really hurt.

I started to go to the Get Wet Set swimming lessons in the hydrotherapy pool at Three Ways School, the water was nice and warm and made my joints less achy, it took a long time but I also learnt to swim really well.

I can use the learner pool at Longwell Green, Bristol but I'm 10 now and usually it's filled with babies and much younger children. In a couple of years I won't even be able to swim there.



When I'm in the water I'm like a fish, I'm the same as everyone else in the water. It's the only proper exercise I get. I would love to be able to swim in a normal pool like my friends do.

I hate to think that after trying so hard to learn to swim that I won't be able to swim anymore when I'm a man, just because the water is not a little bit warmer.

Susan Charles read out a quote on behalf of Simeon Wakely aged 17 who was unable to attend the meeting. He wished to notify the Panel that he fully supports the need for warm water pools that are accessible for all ages.

The Chair also gave permission for Susan Charles to read a statement on behalf of Sheila Hawken who was unable to attend the meeting. Sheila asked for these statements / requests to also be linked to the on-going Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Reform work and asked for it to be factored in when schools and services are drawing up their SEND arrangements / offers.

She also wished to highlight the fact that when young people leave school it is hard to obtain provision for the use of a warm water pool. She added that young people were more likely to maximise their potential the more fit and healthy they were.

She requested that provision of warm water pools be raised during negotiations as part of the procurement process for the new leisure contract.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what provision was there to use warm water pools in our public leisure centres.

Susan Charles replied that she was not aware of any in B&NES that had both the appropriate access to use the facilities as well as having a warm water pool.

The Chair commented that she was aware of the problem that existed locally. She then read out the following statement on behalf of the Council.

*The Council is looking at a range of options – including accessible teaching pools – as it seeks to modernise its leisure facilities, this is supported by the 'Fit for Life' Strategy.*

*The Council and the CCG will be working closely to ensure that the new leisure contract provides the best possible service for local people and supports them to live healthy lifestyles.*

*It is important to clarify that the provision of warm water swimming facilities is not the same as the provision of hydrotherapy services which is a specialist health service provided from appropriately equipped, specialist facilities and funded by the CCG.*

*The Council's objective is to provide accessible leisure facilities, rather than specialist health services, for which there is advice and guidance on best practice produced by Sport England in their 'Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidance Note. (<http://www.sportengland.org/media/30246/Accessible-Sports-Facilities-2010.pdf>)*

*The Council appreciates comments from the public as it continues to develop plans for delivering these options through dialogue with potential contractors as part of the procurement process for the new leisure contract. This contract will be awarded in January 2015, with a contract start date of July 2015.*

She added that the appropriate officers and Members of the Cabinet would be sent a copy of the minutes of this meeting. On behalf of the Panel she also thanked the speakers for attending.

## **23 MINUTES - 19TH MAY 2014**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

## **24 PRIMARY SCHOOL AND YOUNG PEOPLE PARLIAMENTS**

The Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Services introduced this item to the Panel. She explained that around 100 children took part in the event and that both Parliaments were asked to discuss the issue of Narrowing The Gap.

She introduced pupils from Newbridge, Bathwick St Mary's, Bathford, Marksbury, Longvernal and Chandag who were representing the Primary School Parliament. They performed their winning presentation **Every Day Matters** to the Panel.

The presentation incorporated helpful influences and hindrances into a role play, first of all showing all the things that went wrong on Jessica's Day from having a bad night's sleep, to parents arguing, having no breakfast, being told off by mother, getting bullied at school, teachers criticising her, going home in the rain, doing two hours of chores and going to bed worrying about school and home.

The pupils then inverted the day into a good one where Jessica wakes up from a good night's sleep, has a healthy breakfast with a happy family; she is greeted by friends at school and praised by teachers. On her way home the sun shines and she is invited to play a game of football where she scores a goal. After the match, Jessica went home to a loving family where she is encouraged to talk about her day and supported to do her homework.

The Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Services thanked the pupils and said that the presentation showed how everyone has a part to play in making a young person's day go well.

She explained that the Young People's Parliament were asked to debate Poverty, Ethnicity, Gender and State and Private Education. These formed the themes for four separate workshops which the students ran in collaboration with an adult leader.

Young people worked across different schools and youth groups to debate their chosen theme and to produce a presentation for the whole parliament to listen to, ask questions and finally to vote on.

She introduced young people from the Youth Forum, Chew Valley and Wellsway to present the winning theme which was **Gender**.

The young people spoke of how gender stereotyping can be detrimental to both girls' and boys' sense of self and limit their educational and career choices.

Gender stereotyping leads to girls being seen as weak, soft and emotional while boys are seen as physically strong and mentally tough; girls like to shop and boys like to play sport. Women who are leaders are often labelled as bossy, men as authoritative. In terms of careers, males go for jobs in engineering, mechanics and science, while females opt for caring roles, cooking, cleaning and teaching. 90% of engineers are male, 65% of nurses are female. In school, there is still a gender gap in subject performance. Boys do better at Maths than girls. There are three boys to every girl in top Maths sets.

There is a gender pay differential in the UK of 20% while in the rest of Europe it is 5%.

The young people then took part in a role play to show gender discrimination.

A female named Alex arrives at a job interview for an Engineering position.

The male interviewer says she must have made an error on the application form and that he already has a PA.

Alex insists that she has applied to be an Engineer and has all the necessary qualifications.

The interviewer appears to take no notice and asks Alex only whether she has a husband or any children. He finally tells her that the job is no longer available.

They then showed a scenario where a male was being interviewed by a female to become a Primary School Teacher.

The female asks what qualifications he has.

The male says he has the appropriate qualifications and looks after his two nieces quite a lot.

The female then repeatedly points out that he has not applied to work in a Secondary School and asks how he would care for the children.

The male says he has always enjoyed working with children and just needs to be given his first opportunity to teach them.

The female concludes the interview by saying that they are 'looking for a woman'.

The young people asked for teachers to react appropriately to offensive language and for schools to stop using workbooks that contained out of date stereotypes.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if anybody present from Chew Valley would like to explain a little about their EqualStar award.

A young person replied that it was awarded to teachers for enforcing equality within the school. He also wished to praise the school's Equalities Team.

Councillor Sarah Bevan asked how the script was created for the Primary School Parliament.

Judy Allies, Director of Public Health Co-ordinator who helped the pupils on the day replied that they were asked to discuss the environments for helpful and unhelpful learning. She added that it was the pupils' idea to do a role play on the good day / bad day scenario.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked a question relating to the Poverty theme. He said that it was a misconception that young people from poor backgrounds could not afford university fees as funding was available and asked how this theme was discussed.

The Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Services replied that it was mainly the additional expenditure of being at university, such as rental, bills, travel, food, books and field trips that were felt to be the problem.

One of the young people said that she was the first person to be going to university from her family and they had totted up the likely expenditure which was considerable.

One of the young people commented that children from less privileged backgrounds see the barrier as an immediate one.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst commented that her own children had to have weekend jobs to help them through university. She added that she would hate for this to be a barrier and for children to not be able to reach their full potential.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes said that it was worth challenging the myth that exists as in some cases grants of £9,000 were available.

Councillor Dine Romero, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth asked the young people what they would like to see happen next.

One of them replied that they would like children to be taught to stop being derogatory. She added that girls should not be stopped from taking part in activities if they were only female of the group.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst commented that this was not just an issue within schools and called for local sports clubs to be more inclusive.

The Chair wished to congratulate everyone involved for a very well organised event and praised the facilitators for making sure that all pupils / young people were involved. She also asked that the Panel be kept informed of the Parliament dates for 2015.

## 25 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY REFORM

The Project Manager, Service Improvement gave a presentation to the Panel on this item. A copy of it is available on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an attachment to these minutes. A summary is set out below.

### SEND Reform National Update

- Final code of practice issued on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014
- Draft transitional arrangements guidance issued on 10<sup>th</sup> June – statements transfer to EHC plans over 3.5 years
- Implementation grant & 'new burdens' grants to March 2016
- Implement from not for 1<sup>st</sup> Sept – Sept 2014 is a milestone or a beginning, not the end of implementation of the whole reform

### Engagement

- Multi-channel communication in place with a wide range of stakeholders
- Parents involved in all workstreams
- Work underway to engage young people
- Briefings for parents in education settings summer and autumn 2014

### SEND Support

- Estimate 8000+ YP 0-25 with level of SEND
- Work underway with schools/SENCOs and FE sector on SEND support in each phase
- Independent support – B&NES Parent Partnership Service won 'evidence & build' bid to shape IS nationally

### EHC Planning

- 700 – 800 YP with high needs SEN – currently statements of SEN – will be EHC plans
- Model for delivery, EHC Plan template out for consultation (May 2014)
- SEND lead practitioner role established (from August 2014)
- New way of working takes more time – additional posts being recruited

### Next Phase of Work

- EHCP process goes live 1<sup>st</sup> Sept – continue to refine
- Transitional arrangements – draft transfer plan shortly – 700-800 transfer reviews over 3.5 years to April 2018
- Establish partnership to keep local offer under review, work towards full co-production with parents & young people over 3-5 years
- Develop personal budget offer over 2-3 years
- Build whole system approach to SEND support

## Challenges

- Capacity – resourcing – currently to March 2016 – what then?
- Ownership of SEND support – establishing whole system/school/setting approach with all partners
- Personalisation – culture change – person centred thinking, outcome focus, holistic/integrated working
- Ambition/aspiration – expectations often too low
- Achieving true co-production with parents, young people

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if SEND was moving away from a school based setting.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement replied that Education, Health & Care Plans would now run until a young person was 25 years old. He said that the plan would not be solely focussed on education and would seek to prepare them for adulthood.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how much control parents would have over the plan.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement replied that the plan would seek to empower both young people and their parents.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked if any outcomes could be learned from the pilot programme.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement replied that the main outcome from the work of the Pathfinder Authorities was to have created the templates for the Education, Health & Care Plans. He added that the local pilot had shown that parents welcome the more personal element of the process. He said that parents in the main had a realistic approach to services and were thankful for the opportunity to discuss the services with officers.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked what outcomes were expected to be seen in five years' time.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement replied that a Quality Assurance Framework needed to be established alongside a relevant set of performance figures. He added that this could be shown through qualifications, employment or the ability to live independently.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst asked how our percentage of pupils with SEND compared with other local authorities.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement replied that B&NES was where we would expect it to be with an authority of our size. He added the Council was recognised for its good work in this subject area.

Edward Joseph commented that he felt that if higher expectations were set then hopefully that would lead to higher outcomes. He added that the expectations must however not be unachievable.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement agreed that any targets set must be smart ones. He added that he had recently heard one young person with SEN say that they 'Need to be sufficiently stretched'.

Councillor David Veale asked were the numbers of young people being identified with SEN likely to increase.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement replied that they were trying to understand the available data better and plan appropriately for the future.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes commented that he fully supported the reform.

The Chair commented that she too supported the reform and encouraged all Members to take part in discussions / working groups where possible.

## **26 RE-STRUCTURING OF THE EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN'S CENTRE AND EARLY HELP (0 - 11 YEARS) SERVICES 2014 - 2016**

This agenda item had been deferred by the Cabinet until September and therefore the Panel were not able to debate it. The Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth, Councillor Dine Romero said that she would explain the reason for deferral in her Cabinet Member Update.

## **27 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

The Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth, Councillor Dine Romero addressed the Panel. She informed them that she was proud to have taken part in Bookstart Week in June and attended a West of England Schools Sports event.

She informed the Panel that the BBC had recently unveiled Ten Pieces, a new initiative to take classical music into primary schools and inspire a new generation of children to get creative. She added schools could sign up to take part in the project with a range of online resources and UK-wide events.

She made them aware that the expansion plans for Weston All Saints Primary School had been approved at a recent meeting of the Development Control Committee.

She said she had attended the local Apprenticeship Awards and was proud to announce that winner was working for B&NES.

She informed the Panel that the Council had been recognised as one of the top five authorities for their work on Connecting Families by the Government.

She explained that the public consultation on Children's Centres had just finished and a lot of responses had been received. She informed the Panel that the Council

has received a formal 'Right to Provide' expression of interest from Children's Centre staff, seeking to establish a staff mutual to deliver the Council-run Children's Centre Services. She added that the request must formally be considered and responded to. If the Council decided to support such a development, following due consideration this would affect the timing of some of the proposed changes to the new model of delivery.

Councillor Michael Evans asked who submitted the Right to Provide.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that it had been submitted by the managers of the Children's Centres.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she felt that the Panel should be involved prior to the Cabinet meeting in September and called for an extra meeting to be held. She asked if staff would retain their rights and conditions, such as Pensions if they were to work for a Social Enterprise.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that their rights and conditions would be protected for three years.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst expressed her concern as to whether the managers were fully aware of what they were proposing to take on.

Councillor Dine Romero replied that a judgement will need to be given on the viability of the request.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst asked how many staff were to be involved in this process.

Councillor Dine Romero replied that they were still awaiting that level of detail.

The Chair proposed that the Panel hold an extra meeting on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 4.30pm prior to the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September.

All Panel members that were present supported this proposal and asked the Democratic Services Officer to make the necessary arrangements.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for her update on behalf of the Panel.

## **28 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING**

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning delivered a briefing to the Panel in the absence of the People and Communities Strategic Director.

### Collaboration across Primary Schools

He explained that he had been leading on a piece of work with colleagues to develop a new form of primary school collaboration which helps to build a 'self-improving' school support system. He added that the Local Authority has been working with all



schools to look at how such a system could work with a view to beginning this new way of working from September 2014.

Secondary Attendance & Behaviour

He said that an extremely helpful meeting was held with Secondary Schools on earlier today to consider these matters and a number of joint actions have been agreed to improve our collective response to those children and young people at risk of exclusion and disengagement. He added that a further meeting would take place in early October to take stock on progress.

Youth Justice Plan

He informed the Panel that this statutory plan would be presented to Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> July. He added that the Local Authority Youth Offending Team continues to perform very strongly despite constrained resources. He suggested that progress on the Plan could be reported to the Panel in November 2014.

The Chair thanked him for the update on behalf of the Panel.

**29 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel, she asked if anyone had any items they wished to add to the workplan.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked if the report on the 'Role of the Local Authority alongside Academies, Free Schools and Studio Schools' could be added to the agenda for the Panel's proposed extra meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September.

Councillor Michael Evans suggested a future item for the workplan, he asked for a report on Achieving Excellence within School. He said that he really wanted to hear more positive outcomes from schools.

The Chair replied that she would discuss these suggestions with officers.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

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<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	<b>Cabinet</b>	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	<b>10<sup>th</sup> September 2014</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENC
		<b>E2593</b>
TITLE:	<b>Re-structuring of Early Years, Children’s Centres and Early Help (0-11) services.</b>	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<p><b>List of attachments to this report:</b></p> <p>Appendix 1: Summary of consultation            Appendix 2: Right to Provide request - cost benefit analysis            Appendix 3: Examples of service models/budget reductions in other Councils            Appendix 4: Service Design and Commissioning principles</p>		

**1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 To determine the future model for Early Years and Children’s Centres to be delivered within the reduced budget available, following Council budget decisions in February 2014.
- 1.2 To consider whether to support a ‘Right to Provide’ request from Children's Centre staff who would like to explore establishing a ‘staff mutual’ to deliver a range of services.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To note the results of the consultation processes and the range of views expressed by respondents, both for and against each element of the proposed changes.
- 2.2 To agree to implement the new service model as proposed, in order to deliver the cost savings approved in the Council’s approved Medium Term Service and Resource Plan.
- 2.3 To note the ‘Right to Provide’ proposal submitted by Children’s Centre staff who wish to explore the development of a ‘staff mutual’, (which could help to enable some elements of universal provision to be delivered without direct Council funding), and agree to permit the staff to develop a business case.

- 2.4 If the Right to Provide proposal is permitted, agree that the Strategic Director – People and Communities Department and Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to have discretion at key stages to halt the process if it becomes evident that the business case is not going to be viable.
- 2.5 In light of the above, to agree that the Council will continue to be the direct provider of Children’s Centre Services for 9 Children’s Centres until March 2018 unless a staff mutual is established at an earlier date for an appropriate procurement process to be undertaken.
- 2.6 In light of 2.5, ensure the continuation of the Bath West Children’s Centre Services (the 2 Children’s Centres contracted from an external provider) through appropriate procurement mechanisms to run until March 2018 in order to align with the in-house service.
- 2.7 To require both the Council service and commissioned provider to work together to enable the new two-service model to be progressively implemented ahead of a full re-commissioning process to let a contract that runs from April 2018 onwards.
- 2.8 To approve the inclusion of further transitional funds of £104,000 in 2015/16 and plan for transitional funding of £76,000 in the Council Budget for 2015/16. Transitional funding to be spread over the following 2 financial years to support these measures, due to the resulting delay in achieving the full implementation of the new two-service model.
- 2.9 To instruct officers and commissioned providers to continue to promote and explore opportunities to enable some universal services, such as groups and peer networks, to be delivered without direct Council funding.
- 2.10 To ask the Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDS Panel) to receive a report and review implementation of new models a year following implementation.

### **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 3.1 In February 2014 a full Council decision was made to remove £1.535m from the Early Years and Children’s Centre budget with effect from 1 April 2015. A remodelling of all the services within the Early Years and Children’s Centre Budget is required to implement this budget reduction.
- 3.2 For the Children’s Centre Services to achieve this remodelling means moving from a model based on 4 groupings of services (Bath West; Bath East; Keynsham & Chew Valley and Somer Valley) to a model based on two groupings (one for Bath and one for North East Somerset).
- 3.3 A commissioning process is required to move to a model based on two groupings by April 2016. As two of the five Children’s Centres in Bath are commissioned externally, it means sustaining 3 rather than 2 service groupings whilst the commissioning is undertaken. The cost of this in 2015/16 will be £104,000, meaning that £1.431m savings can be achieved with immediate effect from 1st April 2015.

- 3.4 If it is agreed to permit the staff to develop a business case for a staff mutual, the B&NES Children's Centre Services will need between 12 and 18 months to complete this process. This means a further delay of 2 years until 2018, until the two groupings model can be fully implemented following competitive tendering. However, the providers will be expected to work together to achieve the development of a single service grouping for Bath and make efficiencies over this period and the transitional protection would taper accordingly.
- 3.5 In addition to the 'one-off' transitional cost of £104K in 2015/16 (set out in 3.3), supporting the development of the business case would require a further £76K over the following two years (see 3.4). The additional transitional funding request is therefore for a total of £180,000 (£104,000 plus £76,000).
- 3.6 Other than the move to the two-service model, all the other changes to Children's Centre Services can be implemented through a staff restructuring process. The same applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage Team and Parent Support Advisor Services. Whilst this will result in some reduction in posts within the Early Years and Children Centres Services, including First Steps, those affected will be offered the opportunity to express an interest in early retirement and voluntary redundancy and every effort will be made to manage this sensitively through normal policies, with the expectation that very few compulsory redundancies will be required. Where there are redundancy costs the expectation is that these can be met from the Severance Reserve.
- 3.7 New models for the Specialist Family Support and Community Play services will be developed as part of the commissioning process. Options for remodelling health related support services within reduced budgets are being considered.
- 3.8 The full development of a business case for the staff mutual will require some external professional advice. Staff leading the mutual development can apply to the Government's Cabinet Office to access training, consultancy and professional advice. Other external sources of funding will be sought to support this work.
- 3.9 Staff who are developing and commissioning the mutual, whilst having very different roles, will need to commit officer time to supporting the development.

#### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Consideration has been given throughout the preparatory work to issues relating to need, poverty, disability and disadvantages of children and families. Service reductions have been designed to ensure those children and families most in need of help continue to receive "early help" services.
- 4.2 The statutory guidance for Children's Centres states that before making a significant change to services, the Council must formally consult everyone who could be affected by the proposed changes, for example, local families, those who use the centres, children's centre staff, advisory board members and service providers. Particular attention should be given to ensuring disadvantaged families and minority groups participate in the consultation.
- 4.3 Children's Services need to reduce the costs of delivering Children's Centre and Early Year's Services, and officers have reviewed the budget reductions and

models being developed elsewhere in the country. The models proposed in Bath and NE Somerset are consistent in principle with those being developed elsewhere. The key difference is that no Children's Centre buildings are being closed and a staff mutual is being supported to help mitigate some of the reductions. A comparison is attached in Appendix 2.

- 4.4 The Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet approved a set of Service Design and Commissioning principles which have been applied to the new models (see Appendix 4).
- 4.5 The Council has received a Right to Provide request from staff, seeking to establish a staff mutual to run the current council managed Children Centre Services. This must be formally considered as part of the Council's commissioning process, taking into account the social and economic benefits this may bring, along with any associated risks and costs.

## **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 In February 2014, full Council made the decision to remove £1.535m from the Children's Centre and Early Years budget with effect from 1 April 2015. A full remodel of services is required to implement this budget cut. Work has been done with the Early Years, Children & Youth Policy Development Panel to develop the Children's Centre model, and extensive consultation with service users and stakeholders has been undertaken and has been considered in determining the new models.
- 5.2 Transitional funding of £200k already agreed by full Council enables implementation to take place on a planned and phased basis in 2015 and changes to be gradually embedded over a period of time.
- 5.3 Full Council in February 2014 agreed to put £300K back into the Children's Centre and Early Years budget reducing the saving required from £1.8m to £1.535m. This will help mitigate against the more extreme impacts of the reductions for the most vulnerable children and families by ensuring the quality of the settings, supporting the costs of running the buildings and the continuation of some nursery provision for very vulnerable children as part of the funded service.

### **Proposed Models**

- 5.4 The reduced Council budget will fund and commission the following core services. This does not prevent the delivery of wider services where these can be delivered without Council funding.
- 5.5 In summary the new core models proposed are as follows:
  - 5.5.1 Children's Centres: it is proposed to commission and fund only targeted groups (no Council funded universal groups); reduce opening times of the non-hub centres to match times when the Children's Centres are running targeted groups and activities, and the consolidation of back office and management functions by moving from 4 to 2 groupings of services in the new model.

- 5.5.2 Early Year Foundation Stage Service (EYFS): it is proposed to commission and fund targeted delivery of training and support to Early Years settings where they have had, or are at risk of, a poor Ofsted inspection, or where there are high numbers of children who have complex needs. Other non-targeted training support will be charged for.
- 5.5.3 Parent Support Advisory Service; it is proposed to move to a model of full cost recovery by charging schools and Behaviour and Attendance panels.
- 5.5.4 Community Play and Specialist Family Support: These services are commissioned externally and the contracts expire during 2015. A sector review is under way as part of the commissioning process to look at how these services need to be reshaped in the light of recent service developments such as the establishment of the Connecting Families service and the reduced financial envelope. These services will then be specified and commissioned within the reduced budget.
- 5.5.5 Commissioned health related support services: Options for remodelling the services are being considered with other commissioners and providers as part of the commissioning process for Community Health Services.

### Consultation feedback

- 5.6 Extensive service user and stakeholder consultation has been carried out on the proposed changes. This has highlighted a range of risks and opportunities and a summary of the feedback is attached in Appendix 1. The main issues arising from the consultation and the Equality Impact Assessment, along with a response to each, is shown in the table below.

	<b>Issue/risk</b>	<b>Mitigation /opportunities</b>
1	Concern about the loss of universal services, in particular the opportunity for peer support and social networking	Continue to explore and test out the delivery of universal groups without council funding through the development of the social enterprise. For instance by putting in place appropriate and sensitive charging arrangements.  To explore options for the service to work collaboratively with their local communities to build capacity for parents to develop peer and social networks.
2	Concern about the loss of opportunity for children to interact socially and play together in universal groups	As above, but also ensure that other locally provided universal play and toddler groups available in the local community are well publicised.
3	Concern about the stigma attached to targeted services	Ensure referrals are appropriate and made sensitively and that targeted services are delivered in a sensitive way (as they are currently).

4	Some concern regarding management reductions affecting service quality and capacity	Ensure effective use of IT systems to support delivery of service. Commissioners need to ensure the new service is well aligned to new commissioned Health Visitor specification and ensure QA systems are in place to monitor quality of service.
5	Concern about management reduction and ability to manage the multi-use of the buildings.	Clear systems and signed protocols will continue to be in place with partners who use buildings.
6	Concern about reduced opening hours and service users knowing what these are.	Maximise use of IT systems and social media to ensure clear information about opening times and where families can seek assistance if the Centre is shut. Explore development of a Children's Centre app. Ensure clear signage at each Children's Centre.
7	Concern about reduced opening hours and increased travelling costs if families need to travel to another Children's Centre if their nearest centre is closed.	The delivery of targeted groups and home visiting support will continue at the same service level and continue to be provided through a range of community venues including Children's Centres as they are currently, so this shouldn't increase the need to travel. This will include making effective use of the Children's Centre mini bus (Harry Van).



8	Concern about buildings being underutilised as community resources and having limited opportunity to generate income through charging.	<p>Make more use of Children’s Centres as community facilities for the delivery of other related council and community services, especially other early help services for families with young children. For instance exploring options for some Children’s Centres to develop into Community Hubs, providing an outlet for other council and community run services as well as using more buildings to co-locate nurseries.</p> <p>Many parents indicated they are prepared to consider paying something towards the costs of delivering universal groups. The service needs to develop and apply charging arrangements sensitively and discretely with regard to affordability. This will involve development and agreement of a charging policy which includes charging for office space, room hire and charging for some universal groups.</p>
9	Whilst proposals for EYFS team was generally supported, some concern was expressed about reductions in quality.	Continue to explore opportunities to generate income through training and support services, and enhance training and support available on-line and through social media.
10	The Parent Support Advisor service is highly valued by schools and parents, and the benefits recognised.	To continue the dialogue with schools about continuing to contribute to the costs.

### Right to Provide request

- 5.7 Alongside the consultation, the Council also received a ‘Right to Provide’ request from Children’s Centre staff, seeking to establish a staff mutual to run the Council managed Children’s Centre service. Right to Provide is where staff in the public sector are given the right to set up their own organisations to deliver the services they provide, sometimes referred to as ‘spinning out’. It is a Department of Health Initiative for Health and Social Care, launched as part of the ‘Transforming Community Services’ agenda and mirrors the right to challenge provisions under the Localism Act.
- 5.8 A Right to Provide can take many legal forms, including an employee or staff led mutual, cooperatives, co-owned businesses and social enterprises, joint ventures and partnerships. Most staff-led enterprises formed under Right to Provide are social enterprises, defined as businesses established to address social need. Core to every social enterprise is the trading of goods or services. Whilst they can be funded by local authorities or grants, social enterprises are

fundamentally about business approaches to achieving public and social benefits. Social enterprises have social objectives and all the profits from trading are ploughed back into the service for social benefit.

- 5.9 Since the Right to Provide provisions were introduced, an increasing number of social enterprises have been created by establishing independent organisations to run what were previously local authority or health run services. Sirona Care and Health is an example of a local social enterprise, which delivers what was previously PCT and B&NES managed social and health care services.
- 5.10 Broadly there are five stages to the process of establishing a staff-led organisation. These take an average of between 12-24 months to complete in total.
  - 5.10.1 Expression of interest and initial assessment of the proposal to decide whether it is worth exploring further through the development of a business case and plan.
  - 5.10.2 Development of a business case and initial business plan and assessment of the feasibility of becoming a staff-led organisation.
  - 5.10.3 Development of a detailed business plan for the new organisation. This will be the blue print for the staff-led organisation, demonstrating the viability and sustainability. The business plan and model will be evaluated and subject to full due diligence.
  - 5.10.4 Transition, where shadow arrangements are put in place, including a shadow board. Preparation for the transfer of staff, contracts, assets, and registering and establishing the new organisation.
  - 5.10.5 The staff-led organisation is established and the service leaves the council and is subject to a commissioning process.
- 5.11 The development of a business case for further consideration and evaluation by the Council does not equate to agreeing the establishment of the mutual, which would be subject to a subsequent Cabinet decision. The main resource would be the commitment of staff time.
- 5.12 The consequence of the decision to support the development of the business case is that it delays the implementation of two-service model. Development is conditional on approval of some one-off transitional funding, as detailed in paragraph 3.5 above, to support two providers over the transitional period.
- 5.13 The advantage of giving staff the time to develop a business case is that it could give benefits in terms of the continued delivery of a wider range of services and external funding opportunities. A cost benefit analysis has been completed and is attached and shows the benefits of permitting the staff time to develop the business case.

## **6 RATIONALE**

- 6.1 The models proposed allow the budget reductions to be made with the least adverse effect on children and families in greatest need. These have already been substantially adjusted from those originally proposed.

- 6.2 Models have been developed in line with the design and commissioning principles previously agreed, e.g. efficiencies and management reductions ahead of front-line services (see Appendix 4).
- 6.3 Similar models are being implemented nationally and other authorities are making greater budget reductions (see Appendix 3).
- 6.4 The models were developed with stakeholder engagement, including PDS panel, and the service providers.
- 6.5 Key concerns raised through consultation can be mitigated as described above.
- 6.6 Support for the development of the staff mutual business case allows greater engagement of staff and the opportunity to explore further mitigations. Delaying full implementation allows both of these things to be fully explored in the most timely manner.
- 6.7 The Council's contract for Bath West needs to be renewed and should be commissioned in accordance with Standing Orders etc. Aligning the end date with the commitment to retain current services in-house to March 2018 enables both to be re-tendered in a more coordinated manner and potentially enables greater benefits to emerge.
- 6.8 There is scope (and willingness) for the two providers (commissioned and Council) to work together to deliver in partnership and achieve the new two-centre model before March 2018.

## **7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 7.1 Delivery of budget reductions requires that the services are remodelled. An early commitment was made not to close Children's Centres as this would erode accessibility in a greater way as well as requiring payback of the capital investment.
- 7.2 All the proposals seek to minimise potential impacts for service users, especially those with greatest needs. Any reduction in savings for one service requires greater budget reduction in another which would increase potential impact.
- 7.3 Cabinet could decide against exploring the right to provide request. However, this may well demotivate staff and lose opportunities outlined in the Cost Benefit analysis in Appendix 2.
- 7.4 Any other options would have greater financial consequences in delay or inability to deliver the required savings.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Formal consultation took place for the changes proposed for Children's Centre services, the Early Years Foundation Stage Team and Parent Support Advisors where new service models are proposed. This took place over a six week period between 26th April and 6th June 2014. Informal consultation was

undertaken for Community Play and Specialist family support as new models are still to be developed as part of the commissioning process.

- 8.2 Views about the proposals were sought through a variety of methods in order to engage families and stakeholders in the consultation process. The consultation focused on seeking the views of those families and stakeholders who are most likely to be affected. Responses were sought through a mixture of online and paper questionnaires, through groups run by the services and interviews.
- 8.3 In terms of the Children’s Centre consultation, 298 questionnaires were completed. Over 70% of respondents were parents or carers with at least one child under 5 and just over 50% were currently using or had used a Children’s Centre Service. In addition 274 families were consulted through the groups and 25 partners and wider stakeholders were consulted, and 40 children in nursery and play groups were asked what they enjoyed and what difference it made to them through arts and crafts. A summary of all the consultations and feedback is shown in Appendix 1.

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council’s decision making risk management guidance, along with an Equality Impact Assessment.

<b>Contact person</b>	Debbie Forward, Senior Commissioning Manager, Preventative Services, People and Communities
<b>Background papers</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cabinet 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013</li> <li>2. Cabinet 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013: Restructuring of the Early Years, Children’s Centre and Early Help (0-11 years) Services 2014-2016.</li> <li>3. Early Years, Children &amp; Youth Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel: Re-structuring of the Early Years, Children’s Centre and Early Help (0-11 years) Services 2014-2016.</li> <li>4. Council briefing for meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014</li> <li>5. Cabinet 12<sup>th</sup> February: Restructuring of the Early Years, Children’s Centre and Early Help (0-11 years) Services 2014-2016.</li> <li>6. Council Budget Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014.</li> </ol>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format.</b>	

## **Re-structuring of the Early Years, Children's Centre and Early Help**

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### **Summary of Consultation Results**

#### **Introduction**

Between 25<sup>th</sup> April and the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014, extensive consultations were undertaken with children, parents, stakeholders and relevant staff to seek views on proposals to save £1.5 million in the next financial year from the Council's Children's Centre and Early Years budgets. They fund a range of support services as follows:

1. Children's Centre services
2. Early Years Foundation Stage Team
3. Parent Support Advisors
4. Specialist Support for families with complex needs
5. Community Play services

Formal consultation took place for the changes proposed for Children's Centre services, the Early Years Foundation Stage Team and Parent Support Advisors where new service models are proposed. Informal consultation took place for Community Play and Specialist family support, as new models are still to be developed as part of the commissioning process.

#### **1. Children's Centre Consultation**

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Views about the proposals were sought through a variety of methods in order to engage families and stakeholders in the consultation process.

- i) A questionnaire was designed to seek the views of families on the proposals and how they thought they may be affected. It was available on-line on the Council's website, and in paper form at Children's Centres, One Stop Shops, Libraries and Leisure Centres. A total of 298 questionnaires were received during the consultation period (122 postal/176 online). Over 70% of respondents were parents or carers with at least one child under 5, and just over 50% were currently using or had used a Children's Centre service.
- ii) Consultation also took place with parents attending groups run by the Children Centre Services. 29 groups were attended (14 universal, 10 targeted, 2 parent forums, 2 other organisation led groups and 1 parents volunteer training session). 274 families attended these groups. Group discussions included asking what families valued the most about the Children's Centre groups, what difference it had made to their family, explaining each of the proposals and then asking for feedback. The group consultations were also used as an opportunity to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage families to share their views.
- iii) Children using Children's Centres were consulted and 4 children's groups were visited and approximately 40 children were asked what they enjoyed most

about the group they attended and the difference it had made. Responses were articulated and strengthened through art and crafts.

- iv) Key stakeholders were also consulted including Advisory Board Members, partners from Health, Education Groups using Children's Centres.

### **a) Service User feedback**

#### **- Proposal to commission and fund targeted services only**

The biggest concern expressed by parents was the proposal to not commission and fund universal groups. 64% of respondents (96 families) who are current/ previous service users disagreed with this proposal (67% of questionnaire respondents overall). The key concerns were:

- i) The loss of peer support provided by the universal groups and not being able to access these when needed. Many parents described these services as a lifeline when they most needed them and feared this proposal would increase their social isolation.
- ii) The way in which families in greatest need would be classified and concern that they themselves would not meet the criteria.
- iii) The potential stigma attached to targeted groups which may be a barrier to families using them.
- iv) Opportunities for early help may be missed with universal groups.
- v) Reduction of the opportunity for children to mix socially, play and interact with other children and the loss to the wider community benefit this may bring

#### **- Paying to attend groups**

Nearly 80% of respondents said they would consider paying to attend some of the universal groups, with 27% willing to pay between £2 and £5 and 51% under £2.

#### **- Proposal to creating two service groupings (consolidating management and administration)**

40% of respondents (60 families) who are current /previous service users (and 40% of respondents overall) disagreed with the proposal to consolidate the management and administration of Children Centre services to reduce costs, however 32% did agree with this change. Of those who disagreed, the main concern was the potential impact on the quality of the service and the potential travel costs if families had to travel to one of the 4 main Children's Centres. This was a particular concern expressed in the group discussions, not just in the rural groups such as Chew Valley and Peasedown St John but also in Weston and St Martin's Garden Children's Centres.

#### **- Proposal to reducing opening times of some Children's Centres**

45% of respondents (67 families) who are current / previous service users (48% of questionnaire respondents overall) disagreed with the proposal to reduce the opening times to when the Children's Centre staff were running groups at the centre, whilst 25% agreed. The two main concerns expressed by parents were being unable to access the service when needed, with the effect that this may have on increasing isolation, and the cost of travelling to an open centre. Parents asked for more clarity about the reduced opening hours proposal.

## **b) Children’s Centre Advisory Board feedback**

The concerns raised echoed those of parents around the potential stigma associated with targeted groups and how universal provision is often the gateway to targeted support, as well as concern over the future quality and capacity of the service if the management is combined.

Concerns were highlighted such as managing the buildings and equipment, co-ordinating lettings to partner organisations and accountability for health and safety.

Specific concerns were raised about the proposed model by Chew Valley, particularly about the outreach/home visiting and the impact this may have on increasing isolation of families living in rural areas and the loss of peer support gained from interacting with other families in group settings. This was felt to be particularly likely where there is limited opportunity for them to develop naturally. The other concern expressed related to the coverage of Chew Valley and the need to consider cross boundary working with North Somerset.

Specific concerns were raised by the First Steps Board of Trustees that the proposals didn’t fully reflect the First Steps model where much of the contact with families is through the delivery of their day care provision. Particular concern was expressed about the consequences of not having funding to provide a flexible day care model, which was felt might have an adverse effect on children.

## **c) Wider Stakeholder feedback**

A common theme was concern over how those most in need will be classified, plus concern over reduced access to universal groups and opportunity to detect issues early. Schools and nurseries who are currently located on the same site as a Children’s Centre expressed concern about the potential increase in footfall to their receptions, or enquires to the nursery staff if the centre is closed.

Concern that the Children’s Centre buildings are currently underutilised as community resources and the ability to charge for the hire of rooms/office space was expressed by most stakeholders. Many useful ideas, offers and suggestions were made which will be explored as the new model develops.

Most stakeholders confirmed they would be happy to continue using the Children’s Centre venues but would need to review lone working arrangements. Further issues raised included the capacity of health visitors if the support of Children’s Centre workers was withdrawn and Social Care also expressed concern regarding their future capacity and how the proposals would affect their ability to “step down” families they are working with to universal provision.

## **d) Children’s feedback**

Children most valued the opportunity to play with other children and outside, particularly where the family home didn’t have a garden.

## 2. Early Years and Foundation Stage Team Consultation

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The Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) team currently provide free training and support to over 300 early years and childcare settings across Bath and North East Somerset. In order to make the required savings to the Early Years budget, it has been proposed that the EYFS team focus their resources and services into the areas of highest priority which have been defined as:

- Ofsted graded “Inadequate” or “Requires Improvement”
- Settings supporting vulnerable children (in line with the Narrowing the Gap criteria)
- Support for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Support for Equalities practice

An explanatory email explaining the proposal and questionnaire was circulated to all early year settings including infant and primary schools, group-based early years settings, childminders, out of school and holiday clubs, maintained nurseries and independent school nurseries.

Out of 21 responses, nearly 50% were from childminders, 32% from privately run groups (e.g. privately owned nurseries) followed by 11% from voluntary or committee run group based settings. Over 90% agreed that it is right to prioritise support to the above settings. 70% also agreed that it is reasonable to ask settings to pay for their training and development and the majority agreed that the current annual Early Years Hub Package Membership is affordable.

A quarter of respondents indicated that the reduction of subsidised support and training would have a high impact on their setting and comments reflected concerns about the cost of future training and how highly settings value support from the EYFS team. Additional comments from this consultation included concern about how the increase in costs for training could be passed to families and the possibility that some settings would take up fewer training opportunities.

A number of suggestions were made, including expanding on-line help and support, making compulsory training (such as safeguarding) free and only charging settings for those courses considered to be for enrichment purposes.

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### 3. Parent Support Advisors consultation

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The Parent Support Advisor (PSA) service works with parents/carers of children ages 5-11 and aims to build trust and positive communication between parents and schools to ensure children achieve better outcomes. Views from both schools and parents who have accessed the service in the past year were sought as part of this consultation.

#### a) Schools Consultation

13 schools responded to a Survey Monkey questionnaire which asked:

- How do you rate the PSA service?
- What are the benefits to children?
- What would be the impact on your school if this funded service ceased?

Over 60% of respondents described the service as excellent, 27% described it as good. 58% listed improved parental relationships as the most beneficial aspect to children followed by 33% improved engagement in school. Concerns were expressed that if the service should cease there was a danger of increased long term behavioural difficulties and difficulty in engaging with harder-to-reach parents.

Just over 90% of respondents indicated this service should be a priority for the Council and over 60% were of the view that the Schools Forum should pay for the PSA if council funding stops. Out of 8 schools that responded, 63% indicated they would not continue to “buy in” the service as a cluster if the service was not subsidised by either the Council or Schools Forum and 80% confirmed they would not be able to pick up funding of a minimum of 1 day per week to keep the PSA post available.

#### b) Parents Consultation

Five parents who had received or were still receiving support from PSAs were interviewed and asked:

- What work did the PSA do with you and your child?
- Has this support made a difference to the way that your child or you interact with the school?
- How could the service better reach people who need it?

All parents highly valued the service provided by PSAs and two parents commented how they felt it was the only service available to them to support communication with school and how they didn't feel judged. The interviews also revealed the flexible way in which PSAs work with families with varying levels of need, with parents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and with parents of children with learning disabilities.

Parents particularly valued help in navigating services to support them and their child as well as the co-ordination of practical support to apply for an SEN statement and organising Team around the Child (TAC) meetings.

## **4. Specialist Support for Families with Complex Needs consultation**

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Southside Family Project is currently commissioned to provide specialist family support for children aged 0-11 years and families who have not traditionally engaged with statutory services or who have entrenched complex needs. Issues may include; domestic violence, substance misuse, neglect, relationship conflict, loss and bereavement, adult mental health and fathers not engaged with their children.

This informal consultation focused on how to reshape services by asking:

- What do you value most about the services you received?
- What difference has the provision made to you and your family?
- How could the service better reach people who really need it?

### **a) Service User Consultation**

A focus group was held with 16 parents from Southside Specialist Family Support (which supports 45 children from 0 up to 25 years of age).

Participants commented on how they value the whole family approach and how important it was being able to reach staff whenever they needed help. Many of the parents who took part had experienced traumatic events at home which had made it extremely difficult for them and their children to feel part of their community. Social isolation was a previous issue which had been overcome by staff initially visiting them at home. A high number of parents experienced mental health problems and described their experience of provision as a “lifeline” at a time of crisis which had developed into a trusting and longstanding commitment to subsequently train themselves to become peer parent support workers.

### **b) Children’s Consultation**

One young person indicated how valuable it was that the whole family had received support.

### **c) Stakeholder’s Consultation**

Professional play workers, family workers, social workers and the Connecting Families team were consulted for their views on how the service supported their work.

A key theme to emerge from conversations with stakeholders was the importance of both universal and targeted provision being available to complement each other. Concerns were raised about the potential for families being less likely to benefit from targeted groups and less likely to engage if there is not universal support, due to associated stigma. Social Care professionals refer to the service as a means of stepping down support to families who have been on child protection plans and universal provision offers a way for families who have previously received high level support, to touch base and for staff to monitor their progress.

## 5. Community Play Services

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Bath Area Play Project and Wansdyke Play Association is currently commissioned to provide open access community play sessions to 5-13 year olds and their families, through play days, play rangers in parks, targeted one to one Family Play Inclusion work and Playful Families groups.

Again, this informal consultation focused on how to reshape services by asking:

- What do you value most about the services you receive?
- What difference has the provision made to you and your family?
- How could the service better reach people who really need it?

### a) Service User Consultation

Visits were made to four universal community play sessions in Bath, Midsomer Norton and Clandown and three targeted Family Play Inclusion groups. 46 parents were consulted (45% from targeted provision) and 47 children (64% from targeted provision).

The targeted family groups commented on how they valued the whole family approach and being part of the group alongside their children as opposed to being separated as a family with children of different ages attending different groups. Several parents commented on how play, as an intervention, is accessible and easy to take part in.

Parents spoke about feeling isolated because of their lack of confidence in parenting and fear of being judged, due to their children's difficult behaviour. Parents also spoke about mental health problems and how they felt accepted and included at play sessions. A high proportion also confirmed that the sessions were the only opportunity they had to meet other parents and for their children to play with other children.

In four cases, parents stated they had received information from play workers that they had not had previously from schools, social care or primary care. This included how to access benefits for carers of disabled children and links to extra-curricular activities.

### b) Children's Consultation

A key theme from conversations with children was how they valued time with play workers, could talk to them about any worries and how, if they didn't use play rangers or family play support, they would play indoors on their computer games and were not allowed to the park unless play rangers were there.

### c) Stakeholder Consultation

Professional play workers, family workers, social workers and the Connecting Families team were consulted to gain views on how the Community Play Service supports their work. Visits were also made to Behaviour and Attendance Panels in each locality (primary and secondary) to inform them of the consultation and welcome feedback on how they worked with the service.

A key theme to emerge from conversations with stakeholders was that this was one of the only preventative services targeted at 5-13 year olds besides the Parents Support Advisor (PSA) service. Several professionals commented on how using play as an intervention is a positive and unthreatening way to establish relationships with both children and their parents. Schools represented on the Behaviour and Attendance Panels suggested that the Family Play Inclusion Service could continue to be funded through the Schools Forum. They reported on how the service offered an independent, family focused service which helped support their work with children and young people having difficulties with school as a result of their behaviour.

## Initial Cost Benefit analysis- the 'Right to Provide' expression of interest

	Pros	Cons
1	Explores the potential to draw in additional investment over and above any contract funding from B&NES, either through its trading or through grants such as Children In Need. The staff group believe there is an opportunity to generate significant income by 'trading' some of their services.	The development of the staff-led organisation will need 12 -18 months to develop a business case and prove viability. This means the Children's Centre service is unable to move fully to the new model with two service groupings with effect from 1st April 2015, and would have to operate on the basis of three groupings for the transitional period in which the mutual is being developed. This means a saving of just under £1.4m of the £1.5 can be delivered in 2015/16 - the transitional cost of this is calculated to be £104k in 2015/16 and £76K spread over the following two years as transitional costs taper
2	Potential to address the funding gap and retain some aspects of the service that will no longer be funded and commissioned through B&NES budget such as universal groups.	Both staff developing the mutual and commissioning staff would need to commit time and resource to support the development of the mutual.
3	Reduces the likelihood of negative publicity about the changes	There may be an adverse reaction to the services being externalised and the additional transitional cost .
4	Builds capacity in the local market of organisations able to bid for and deliver commissioned Children's Centre services. This would support the Council's 'Think Local' procurement policy.	
5	Supports stability during a period of significant change	May be perceived as a loss of the opportunity to remodel the Children's Centre service
6	Seen as an attractive option as it's not 'privatisation' of public sector services. Any income generated commercially is used for social benefit and ploughed back into the service to meet its social objectives.	There is a risk that the staff mutual is not viable and sustainable and its establishment cannot be supported. This is likely to incur additional one-off costs. An alternative plan will need to be agreed. If the proposal is supported, there will be a recommendation for the Director and Cabinet member to have discretion at key points in the process to halt the process.
7	The existing service providers (B&NES	The establishment of a staff mutual

	<p>and First Steps) are interested in investigating the potential to develop some form of collaboration, with the potential to offer a seamless transition from the current arrangements to the new model. This would minimise any disruption to the services and families and staff.</p> <p>It will be a requirement of the providers that they work together to achieve the development of a Bath service grouping and full implementation of the model</p>	<p>and the creation of a Bath Service group is made more complex because the Children's Centre service in Bath West is managed externally by First Steps and there is a risk that the collaboration between the internal and external service does not work.</p>
<b>8</b>	<p>Opens up the possibility of further collaboration with other staff mutuals such as Sirona Care and Health</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p>The process actively engages staff in the service and increases morale, they know that if their business case is strong they have a chance of continuing to provide the service.</p>	

### Children Centre Services - examples of changes due to budget reductions in other Local Authorities

1. **Swindon.** £380k budget reductions achieved to date through the amalgamation of Children Centre services and the closure of 4 out of the 14 centres. A further budget reduction of 37% of the £2.1m budget has been proposed from April 2015 and suggestions for making these reductions are currently out to consultation. Options include combining Children's Centre Services, closing further centres and remodelling to make the brief of the centres wider.
2. **North Somerset.** Children Centre Service reviewed in 2012 following £80k budget reduction and service remodelled with 14 Children's Centres combined into 4 groupings and many lower-demand centres open on a part time basis.
3. **Somerset.** Children Centres combined into 5 groupings, 17 out of 44 buildings 'de-designated' as Children's Centres. Staff reductions made in management and administration, with resources focused on front-facing family support work. Children's Centres now deliver 0-19 Early Help services.
4. **Devon.** All Children's Centres are externally commissioned. 5% reduction of the £8.6m budget has been achieved and further 15% planned. They consulted on proposals earlier this year to achieve this. Main proposals are to redesign services by reducing management and overheads; focusing the funding on services for young children and families rather than on running Children Centre buildings; changing the number of buildings used as Children's Centres and transferring other buildings for use by other Early Childhood Services. Other community venues may be used to deliver Children's Centre Services, plus the reviewing of opening times and the further development of community groups to deliver universal services in Children's Centres.
5. **Suffolk.** Proposed reduction of £2.9 million from Children's Centre services. Proposals currently being consulted on. Proposal is not to reduce service levels but close 9 Children's Centre buildings with high running costs and low take up, and deliver services through more outreach in other venues and through home visits.
6. **Plymouth.** In light of significant budget reductions, reshaping Children's Centres by clustering 16 centres into 6 clusters and consolidating management and administration.

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## **Service Design & Commissioning Principles**

1. Together with our partners, to assess and respond early to the needs of individual children, families and communities in order to keep them safe and help them thrive and avoid their needs escalating to specialist (costly) services
2. Using evidence based approaches to reduce inequalities for targeted groups, through tracking individual children's progress
3. Providing a mixed economy of provision that ensures strong integrated working across agencies and settings
4. The voice of the child is heard and listened to
5. Support children to develop secure attachments and emotional resilience
6. Supports children and families to have healthy lifestyles
7. Supports parents to have positive parenting aspirations and parenting skills
8. Supports children across all early years settings to develop well and be ready for school

### **Model Ensures**

9. We meet Statutory Guidance to reach a "Good" Ofsted judgement at Children's Centre Inspections and ensure children develop well and are ready for school
10. Families and communities are enabled to participate fully in their community

11. We focus resources on reducing inequalities and narrowing the gap for those most in need
12. We are able to respond to the emerging “Local Offer” as part of the SEND Reforms for children with additional needs
13. We strengthen the integration and information sharing with health partners
14. There is a linked Social Worker in each Children’s Centre Hub to ensure robust arrangement for the safeguarding and protection of children
15. There is a linked Health Visitor in each Children’s Centre Hub, and where possible, premises remained shared with Health Visitors
16. Value for money by ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of services by targeting 75% of the spend on front facing service delivery and less than 15% on overheads. The model should ensure back office functions are delivered as efficiently as possible