

Draft Proposal and Terms of Reference

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

1. Background and Introduction

- i. This review flows from the development of the Medium Term Service Resource Plan 2013 – 2016 for the Children's Service. Each Department was tasked with identifying a range of areas of activity where either efficiencies or service reductions could be made. Within Children's Services the Early Years and Children's Centre Services area was identified for savings as profiled below:

2013 – 14	£ 273,000
2014 – 15	£ 228,000
2015 – 16	£1,834,000

- ii. At the meeting of Council on 19th February 2013 which agreed the budget 2013 – 2016 an amendment was agreed which deferred the implementation of budget reductions in Early Years and Children's Centre Services until 2014 – 15. The revised savings profile is set out below:

2013 – 14	£ 0
2014 – 15	£ 501,000
2015 – 16	£1,834,000

- iii. The amendment is shown as Appendix A and included an instruction to 'provide a report to the Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to allow further consideration of implications of these savings and for potential alternative options to be reviewed.' This paper is the start of that process as agreed at the Early Years, Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 25th March 2013 (Item covered in Strategic Directors' Briefing).

2. The issue

- i. During the MTSRP process the service was clear that no definitive proposals had been developed to deliver the total saving of £2,335k. It was stated that detailed proposals would have to be brought forward to fully re-structure the Early Years and Children's Centre Service area with that work beginning in 2013 ready for complete implementation by April 2015.
- ii. This timescale was identified because of the scale of the reduction to be made; the need to ensure a continuing focus on the most vulnerable young children and their families; the critical interface

between Early Years and Children's Centre Services and the statutory social care services; the work of Connecting Families initiative and the range of community, voluntary and private sector partners, along with statutory partners with which the Council works to deliver its Early Years, Children's Centre and Early Help Services/offer.

- iii. Given the above, the issue is: How to develop a range of service delivery models for Early Years and Children's Centre Services which recognise and accommodate
- The uncertain financial climate over 2014 – 2016.
 - A focus of council resources on those young children and their families in need of effective early help and support
 - The role and 'value added' of community, voluntary and private providers in the wider Early Years and Children's Centre landscape.
 - The role of Connecting Families in addressing the needs of up to 200 of our most disadvantaged families, many of whom have young children.
 - A clarification and acceptance of the role for statutory partners particularly Health Services around early identification, help and support.
 - The 'threshold' for referral/access to statutory social care services for children deemed 'in need'.
 - A clear policy/strategy for 'Early Help' as defined in the Munro Review and the role of Early Years and Children's Centre Services in that policy.

3. Process/Timeframe

- i. Briefing and context: Three Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel workshop sessions over May, June and July as follows:

- May – Local statistics on services, levels of need/demand, outcomes.
Local drivers for change (new Statutory Guidance on Children's Centres, new Ofsted Inspection Frameworks, LA Audits, etc.)
National drivers for change (New Inspection Frameworks, Working Together 2013, Research findings etc.)
[22nd May]
- June - Evidence base for what works (Early Intervention Foundation, C4EO, HE Research, NCH etc.)
[8th June]
- July - Initial options/models evaluated using data from local context and evidence base.
Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to then provide a 'steer' on which options officers to develop further. Suggested maximum of three

models developed (due to service/officer capacity and timescales).

[8th July]

- ii. Task and Finish Group (PDSP). From mid-July to late September Task and Finish Group scrutinises/develops the three options/models with a report to Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 14th October. Dates for meetings will be circulated shortly.

Task and Finish Group sponsors (and attends) informal consultation with parents, the Children's Centre Advisory Boards and First Steps Board of Trustees; the 0-11 Multi-Agency Group, on the development of options/models. This fits with service practice for re-commissioning of services and it engages service users/customers from the initial stages of the work.

Task and Finish Group to consider how each model specifically relates to (i) Early Help and (ii) Connecting Families as part of the work on each model. Each model to have a SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis and an initial Equalities Impact Assessment.

The Task and Finish Group will be open to all Panel members. The Chair will require a 'core' group which includes a representative from each political group.

- iii. Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel makes formal recommendation to Cabinet member and Cabinet for 13th November.
- iv. Service initiates formal consultation January 2014.
- v. Panel members are welcome to make informal visits to the Children's Centres during July and August in liaison with Sara Willis, Service Manager – 0-11 Outcomes, 01225 395023.

4. Outcomes

- i. 3 possible models of operation based upon an evaluation of each against Section 2 and taking into account any relevant statutory guidance from the DfE for Early Years Services and Children's Centres.
- ii. Recommended option for re-structure of service to Cabinet for consideration and future implementation.
- iii. Children's Service in a position to make initial changes from April 2014 with the aim of making savings of £501k in 2014 – 15 in alignment with final service model which will be consulted upon and implemented from 1st April 2015.

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Early Years and Children's Centre Review

Activity	Timeline
1. Panel Briefing 1	22.05.13
2. Panel Briefing 2	10.06.13 (14) *
3. Panel Briefing 3	08.07.13 (17)
4. Task and Finish Group (4 meetings - July x1, September x3). Plus consultation	w/c 15.07.13 (5)
5. Concludes	27.09.13 (50)
6. Papers published	03.10.13
7. Additional PDSP	14.10.13 (5)
8. Informal Cabinet	25.10.13 (8)
9. Papers published	04.11.13 (5)
10. Cabinet	13.11.13 (13)
11. Formal Consultation	01.01.14

() Working days

* 4:00pm – 5:15pm (Prior to Corporate Parenting Group)