

Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel 15th November 2016

Children's Centre Briefing Paper

Final report - explanatory note and summary of changes

This report considers two related but separate issues. Firstly, the cost of running the B&NES managed Children's Centre Service, its overspend and the options for bringing this service back into balance, and secondly the need to develop a sustainable Children's Centre Service for the whole of Bath and North East Somerset in the future. The latter involves First Steps, a local charity who are contracted to deliver the Bath West Service and whose contract expires at the end of September 2017.

A number of meetings had taken place between commissioners and First Steps to discuss the various options for commissioning the Bath West contract when the current contract expires. During the course of these discussions a number of changes were agreed to the approach and assurances given and the Children Centre paper was updated to reflect the discussions. Unfortunately, due to an error the draft report rather than the final paper was circulated to Panel Members and published on the B&NES web site. The final report has now been circulated and the table below summarises the changes from the draft version for ease of reference.

	Draft report	Final report
1.2	The current Children's Centres service delivery model of two separate organisations (i.e: Bath and North East Somerset Council and First Steps, Bath) each requiring back office functions and management	Deleted
2.1	Exploring options to commission and deliver a Bath and North East Somerset Council Children's Centre Service through one provider when the contract with First Steps for Bath West Children's Centre service expires at the end of September 2017. This will enable more efficient use of resources (generate efficiencies) and deliver a more sustainable service in the future as well as provide a consistent children's centre service offer for families with young children across the whole area	Exploring options to commission and deliver a Bath and North East Somerset Council Children's Centre Service through one provider when the contract with First Steps for Bath West Children's Centre service expires at the end of September 2017.
3.2	There is an existing budget for externally commissioned service (that is currently provided by First Steps). The projected budget for this commissioned work for 2017/18 is an additional	3.3 There is a separate budget for the externally commissioned service for Bath West (currently provided by First Steps). The projected budget for this

	£425,000.00.	service for 2017/18 is £425,000.00. Whilst the Bath West service is delivered within budget, there is potential to make more efficient use of resources by commissioning one rather than two Children's Centre services. This would create a more sustainable service in the future.
5.8	To explore options to commission and deliver a B&NES wide Children's Centre service through one provider to enable more efficient use of resources and provide a sustainable and consistent children's centre service offer for families with young children across B&NES.	<p>To explore options to commission and deliver a B&NES wide Children's Centre service to enable more efficient use of resources and provide a sustainable service. The options which will be considered as part of the commissioning process currently include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current arrangements and mixed economy and proceed with tender for Bath West. • Explore and strengthen partnership arrangements between Bath West and B&NES delivered Children's Centre services. • Bring Bath West into the Council to deliver as one Council managed Children's Centre service. • Tender both the council run and external Children's Centre services to procure one new contract for one Children's Centre service. • Include the Children's Centre Service within Your Care, Your Way (YCYW).
5.9	Previous 5.9 has been moved to 5.10	This piece of work will be undertaken with the engagement of both providers and will be

		completed by March 2017. This will inform the future commissioning process.
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