

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Paul May , Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Councillor Charles Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 9th September 2017 (for single Member decision)	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2988
TITLE:	Future management of outlying Bright Start Children Centre Service Buildings	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
None		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Bright Start Children's Centre Services are remodelling the management of the outlying buildings in line with the Council's decision taken to change the management oversight of these buildings from the Council to Voluntary Sector organisations or other bodies (e.g. schools where the building is on a school site). The current management arrangement of the nine Children's Centre buildings requires a significant amount of financial and staffing resource to keep them open and compliant in terms of Health and Safety and Ofsted Inspection requirements as they are part of the Local Authority, this would be greatly reduced if not managed centrally.
- 1.2 The Bright Start Children Centre Service is remodelling to develop a sustainable programme within its current budget whilst minimising impact on children and families that are most in need.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Members are asked to;

- 2.1 Agree the proposal for each of the outlying buildings listed below in section 5 of this report, as this will help to resolve the ongoing budget pressures.
- 2.2 To note other actions already completed to balance the budget - the service has already ceased the non-viable traded activity, restructured the staffing and ceased providing the two 2-year old units (where there was sufficient childcare in the respective areas).

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 These building related proposals will save the Council an estimated £59K and will enable the Bright Start Children's Centre Service to balance its budget at the end of 2017/18.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Children – Under the Children Act 2004, the Council has to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the exercise of any of its functions.
- 4.2 Public Health & inequalities – the Council has a statutory duty to promote the health & wellbeing of the inhabitants of its area and reduce inequalities amongst its population.
- 4.3 Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 section 198
Arrangements for children's centres are particularly relevant:
- 4.4 Section 5A of the Act: The duty to make sufficient provision of Children's Centres to meet local need, so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure all children and families can be reached effectively, especially the most deprived.
- 4.5 Section 5D: The duty to consult before establishing, significantly changing or closing a Children's Centre.
- 4.6 Ofsted inspects Sure Start Children's Centres in England under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 (as amended by the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009); although we believe this will soon change however no announcements have been made to date.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 Bright Start Children's Centre Services are remodelling the management of the outlying buildings in line with the Council decision taken to change the management oversight of these buildings to Voluntary Sector organisations or other bodies as listed below:
- 5.2 **Weston Children Centre** is currently managed by Bright Start Children Centre Services. The proposal is that the management of this building will go to Weston All Saints Church and the building itself will be subject to an asset transfer to Weston All Saints Church as well.
- 5.3 This arrangement will protect all of the current building users, including First Steps (Weston) Nursery, 101 after school & holiday club, Centre for the Deaf, Youth Club and many others. Weston All Saints will be required to protect the space for use by children, young people and families to protect against the possibility of a Sure Start capital clawback.
- 5.4 The Council will continue to maintain the structure of the building and any costs in relation to the asbestos and the roof. The details of this will be set out in the Heads of Terms which will be agreed between both parties before the handover will take place.

- 5.5 The terms of the Community Asset Transfer will be the subject of a further Member approval once the principles are established.
- 5.6 **Chew Valley Children Centre** is currently managed by Bright Start Children Centre Services. The proposal is that the management of this building will go to Chew Valley Secondary School, as the building is on the school site.
- 5.7 This arrangement will protect all of the current building users, including the Health Visitors, although these will need to make separate arrangements with the School going forward. The School will be required to protect the space for use by children, young people and families to protect against the possibility of a Sure start capital clawback in a form to be determined by Legal Services
- 5.8 The Council will need to surrender the existing lease with the school.
- 5.9 **Midsomer Norton Children Centre** is currently managed by Bright Start Children Centre Services. The proposal is that the management of this building will go to Midsomer Norton Primary School, as it is on the school site
- 5.10 This arrangement will protect all of the current building users, including the Health Visitors, although these will need to make separate arrangements with the school directly going forward. The School will be required to protect the space for use by children, young people and families to protect against the possibility of a Sure start capital clawback
- 5.11 The Council will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the School to permit occupation of the premises and protect the ongoing commitment for continuity of use by children young people and families.
- 5.12 **Paulton Children Centre** is currently managed by Bright Start Children Centre Services. The proposal is that the management of this building will remain with the Children's Centre but the proportional costs will be increased to reflect the usage by the client to which it is leased (a private nursery). It is proposed that a room will be kept available for use by Social Care and Children Centre services as required.
- 5.13 **Annexe on Castle Primary School site** is currently managed by Bright Start Children's Centres. The Children's Centre has not used this space for at least the last 2 years and the school have been keen to take on its management. It is proposed that this is now officially enabled
- 5.14 The Council will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the School to permit occupation of the premises and protect the ongoing commitment for continuity of use by children young people and families.

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 This option has been chosen as it can be achieved within the time scale required and has the least impact on families and children as it ensures the ongoing provision of Children's Centre Hubs in the key areas (Radstock, Keynsham and central Bath) as previously agreed by the Council in 2014.
- 6.2 It has a positive impact on staffing and front line services as services can be focussed on the delivery of services to children and families as opposed to the management of buildings.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 *No other options were considered at this point*

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 As this paper is refining the decisions made previously and services can still be maintained through rental of spaces within these and other buildings, a further consultation has not been completed during this phase however individual families affected would be consulted as would all staff especially those affected by those decisions following the council guidelines.

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.

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Background papers	<i>None</i>
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