

**Single Member Cabinet Decision****Executive  
Forward Plan  
Reference****E3539****Approval of Capital Budget to enable expansion of Early Years Entitlement and Childcare place provision**

<b>Decision maker</b>	<b>Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b>
<b>The Issue</b>	<p>In the March 2023 Budget, it was announced that there would be a further expansion of the Early Years Entitlement (EYE) offer for working families gradually reducing the eligibility age to 2 in April 2024, then 9 months in September 2024 and increasing the initial starting hours from 15 to 30 from September 2025. The Department for Education (DfE) has increased revenue funding for the funding of eligible children's places and in addition provided a small capital grant budget to help create additional places in areas identified as needing them. In addition, the Council holds some legacy Section 106 funding for early years which can be added to this allocation and help with further place provision in areas where development took place.</p> <p>Finally in the same 2023 Budget announcement it was announced that all Primary School provision will have access to an 8 until 6 term time only offer of Wraparound Childcare for working families so some of the capital allocation could be put towards that offer if required.</p>
<b>Decision Date</b>	6th June 2024
<b>The decision</b>	Agree to the release of the two capital sums to the Business Services Team (under the Director of Education and Safeguarding) for the creation of additional early years education and childcare spaces in areas identified as requiring further provision in order to support the expansion of the EYE offer and Wraparound Childcare offer for working families.
<b>Rationale for decision</b>	<p>The Council have been awarded a capital sum of £349,260.13 to support the expansion of the EYE and Wraparound Childcare offer for working families. The DfE have indicated that the budget should be split on an 80/20 basis in favour of the EYE offer, but this is entirely at each Council's discretion and dependent on their need for place provision. In addition, the Council holds a legacy budget of £110,617.79 S106 funding for Early Years and Childcare which should be combined with the above sum to help create additional place provision within the areas it was granted for.</p> <p>The Childcare Acts of 2006 and 2016 place a statutory duty on the Council to ensure sufficiency of Early Years and Childcare provision. Given the additional responsibilities resulting from the 2023 Budget announcement the Council need to use these funds to ensure that, where required in areas of shortfall, additional places are created so</p>

	that all the eligible children can access a place and that their families are able to work due to reliable and sustainable childcare.
<b>Financial and budget implications</b>	<p>The management of the application for funding, awarding and monitoring process will take up officer time within the constraints of already existing working patterns. This will include colleagues in other teams as part of an evaluation panel.</p> <p>Delivery will be with Council partners in the PVI 9(private, voluntary and independent), childminding and schools sectors so the property processes will be their financial responsibility.</p>
<b>Issues considered</b>	Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Equality (age, race, disability, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation);
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	Early Years Reference Group; School's Forum; School's Standards Board; Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer
<b>How consultation was carried out</b>	In person at meetings or through sharing papers on the subject
<b>Other options considered</b>	None
<b>Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision:</b>	None
<b>Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:</b>	None

<b>Name and Signature of Decision Maker/s</b>	Cllr Paul May Cabinet Member for Children's Services
<b>Date of Signature</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
<b>Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision</b>	

