

**MEETING TITLE AND DATE**

CABINET – 11 March 2015

**REPORT OF:**

**Director of Schools and Children's Services**

c/o Assistant Director Education  
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<b>Agenda - Part: 1</b>	<b>Item: 8</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	
<b>Reviewing and Revising Enfield Children's Centres</b>	
<b>Wards: All</b>	
<b>Key Decision No: 4045</b>	
<b>Cabinet Member consulted:</b>	
<b>Councillor Orhan</b>	

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This Report outlines the work being undertaken to review and develop how Children's Centre services are delivered in Enfield, and to ensure their Ofsted inspection readiness. Children's Centres are a key strand in the Council's Early Intervention strategy and are central to our commitment to reduce inequality and improve the life chances of our children and young people. The changes are much needed to:

- Achieve positive external evaluations of the work of individual Children's centres. Under the requirements of the new Ofsted framework a number of our centres are at risk of being judged as require improvement to be good.3 Centres have already received 'Requires Improvement' judgements and 1 has been judged to be inadequate. Officers are confident that the proposed changes will bring about the necessary improvements and be judged to be good or better
- Increase school readiness for our children and families and to refocus our resources in our greatest areas of need
- Continue to narrow the achievement gap between our children living in poverty and those in more affluent areas
- Ensure all our delivery structures are affordable, efficient and effective moving forward at a time when resources are under increasing pressure
- Develop a strategic overview of the quality of the provision offered at all our centres and clear procedures to track the outcomes for all children and in particular improve our ability to target and reach those in most need.

1.2 The Council's Early Years' Service has been working with all of our centres, their staff and the families to identify a new operational model that will bring about the necessary changes and a 12 week consultation has been undertaken with the parents and the wider community on these proposals.

1.3 If these proposals are approved the work of the centres will not be reduced but enhanced for the benefit of children and their families in Enfield. In addition this will contribute to delivering schools and children's services budget proposals for 2015-16

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report seeks agreement to:-

- 2.1 Retention of 22 sites managed through 5 hubs and spoke model that will unify and simplify management and administration arrangements and foster closer cross-boundary working.
- 2.2 Cease the existing operational agreements with all of our current centres and renegotiate new SLAs/ Contracts with 5 key Hubs
- 2.3 Reorganise the current staffing arrangements to bring together integrated teams across education, health and social services to make the best use of limited resources and our highly skilled workforce.
- 2.4 Develop a unified service delivery model, available to all families regardless of where they live in Enfield, that targets and prioritises those families most at need but still offers services to the whole community
- 2.5 Ensure that financial resources are allocated according to population and deprivation

2.6 Members are asked to approve these changes so that implementation of the 5 Hub Model recommended within this report can start from April 2015 to be fully implemented by September 2015

2.7 To note the Implications for Staffing as set out in section 11 of the report.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Enfield Council has always valued and embraced the development of the Children Centres as a means of providing high quality services for its families and young children. There are currently 12 Centres operating over 22 sites, 19 situated on school premises, but also working in the wider community<sup>1</sup>. The ongoing relationship with our schools is seen as a real opportunity to provide a continuum of services and monitor outcomes as the children make the transition to statutory school provision.

3.2 The Government's Core Purpose of Sure Start Children's Centres<sup>2</sup> is to improve outcomes for all young children aged 0-5 and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged, so children are equipped for life and ready for school and parents can find training and work, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

3.3 In Enfield children's centres are central to our Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy. Increasing levels of deprivation demand that we ensure all our Services are delivering good if not outstanding outcomes for our children and young people.

3.4 We have seen continued improvement in our educational outcomes as our children move through the system and our outcomes at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are improving at an accelerated rate but still below the national average for 'A Good Level of Development'. We know that supporting all parents in preparing their children for school is a vital role for our Children Centres. We also need to make sure we are reaching all our families most in need and targeting our resources towards them.

3.5 Recent Ofsted inspections of our Children's Centres under the new framework clearly show that we are stretching resources too thinly and expecting them to cover too great a

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<sup>1</sup>Department for Education Sure Start On Records (accessed 11/09/2014).

<sup>2</sup><https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-childrens-centres-local-authorities-duties> (accessed 11/09/2014)

number of families. If they remain as they are currently organised and managed, we are faced with the possibility of Centres being judged as 'requiring improvement' at best and in some case as 'inadequate'.

3.6 Change is therefore required now and much must be done, urgently. The Service is proactively working hard to improve service delivery and Ofsted readiness by April 2015 via a Children's Centre Change Programme overseen by a Strategic Board to:

- Improve performance management and data to standards required by Ofsted.
- Improve case file audit, processes and systems, in particular on casework.
- Reviewing and improving current ICT arrangements to an acceptable standard.
- Supporting existing staff teams with a wide package of training, review and audit to staff with a focus on service improvement and consequently Ofsted readiness.

3.7 However, radical change to how Children's Centres are configured is also needed. The current governance structure of the 22 sites is complex and fragmented and is made up of small teams with limited capacity, each independently managing one or a collection of small sites, typically located on school premises. The nature of these teams often means that they lack the capacity to adequately cover the very large catchment or 'reach' areas of the Centre. In addition the service offer is too wide, with Centres offering over 600 different activities to the public. Attendance is also highly varied by centre, with 11 out of 12 centres below 65% target as of November 2014 (65% is required to be judged as good by Ofsted).

### 3.8 Recommended Option. Reconfiguration to 5 Hub and Spoke Hub Model

Reconfiguration of delivery structures from 12 Centres to 5 hubs is proposed, each with a lead body (to be determined), either a host school or a not-for-profit provider.

Area	0-5 Population	Population 40% Most Deprived	Existing Sites
Central	5349	852	Lavender, Chase and De Bohun
East	5811	4516	ELDON, Bush Hill Park & Ponders End, Galliard and Forest
Edmonton	4442	4349	Edmonton, Raynham, Tottenham
North	5308	4355	Carterhatch, POW, Honilands & Oasis + Radiomarathon
South	3971	1861	Bowes, Garfield, Hazelwood, Hazelbury & TAB

### 3.9 Planned Budget for 2015/16.

The budget for each Hub will be weighted according to child population and deprivation levels in the area where the child lives, with a focus on investing in areas the 40% most deprived residential areas.

If this proposal is approved the changes will result in cost effective, improved and enhanced services that will contribute to ensuring that the Schools & Children's Services will meet the budgetary requirements for 2015.

The proposed delivery model would include:

- 5 standalone Children’s Centre consisting of a single Hub (where the Centre is registered – the ‘main’ site) and multiple spoke sites offering some children’s centre services.
- Each Centre would cover a geographical area of Enfield which will be its nominal ‘reach’ or catchment area and would ensure at least 80% of children and families living in that geographical area are registered with and 65% attend Enfield Children’s Centres in any one year 3 times or more per year.
- Each Centre would also have a primary reach area (on which its performance is judged primarily), to register 80% and engage 65% of those families with young children living in areas of higher deprivation<sup>3</sup> (resident within 40% most deprived LSOAs). This will ensure access to all, but in line with the Core Purpose of Children’s Centres, provide a service focus for families with young children in greatest need.
- Management via a single coordinator for each Hub and Spoke Centre, who would manage all aspects of the budget and centre delivery.
- The delivery of services from the centre to be commissioned by the Local Authority to schools or third party providers.
- Clear legal agreement and contractual arrangements are in place between the Council and Centre.
- Delivery of a high quality evidence based services, via new standardised universal and target service programmes for families and children, currently under development.

### 3.10 Comparing Current and Proposed Delivery Models

Current Model	Proposed 5 Hub Model
Approximately 300 hours of universal provision at 22 sites per week – 640 different types of provision are provided.	Approximately 350 hours of universal provision at 22 sites and additional community venues where needed – a maximum of 5 types of event provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baby Talk</li> <li>• Toddler Talk</li> <li>• Get Ready [for school]</li> <li>• Holiday Club</li> <li>• Baby Weighing</li> </ul> Stay and Play curriculum implemented to encourage families to come back again and again.
1/3 of users only attend Centre once in a year – they don’t come back.	65% of all children aged 0-4 and their families attend Centres 3 times or more, ideally 12 times or more.
1468 (54%) of eligible 2 year olds access funded childcare places.	Children’s Centres encourage 2706 (100%) of eligible 2 year olds to access funded childcare places.
Many Centres quieten down during school holiday periods.	Centres will come together to deliver a vibrant and free holiday club across Enfield every day of the summer holidays.
Many Centres undertake some support to parents into volunteering, training and employment, in particular ESOL.	A clear volunteering and apprenticeship programme, with pathways into training (e.g. Childcare NVQ 1 and Business

<sup>3</sup>Defined families with young children aged 0-4 resident within the 40% most deprived nationally Local Super Output Area, according to the 2010 Indices of National Deprivation.

	Administration NVQ 1 delivered by Centres) and then employment, which is tracked and evidenced over time.
3 Requires Improvement and 1 Inadequate Ofsted Inspection Judgments since July 2013.	We are confident that all our Centres will have the capacity to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding under the new model.
36 front-line Staff	44 front-line Staff
16 management structures and contracts	5 management structures and contracts.
12 Ofsted inspections	5 Ofsted inspections

It will be the responsibility of the Hub Lead Body to determine how to spend their budget and structure their staff teams, but examination of likely structures indicates that for the larger centres, the above budgets should be able to fund an increase in front line staff.

Comparing existing and projected staff numbers is ongoing, but initial analysis indicates an increase in front-line staff under this model in areas of highest deprivation.

### 3.11 Consultation Process

In order to make the proposed changes there was a need to consult the public and stakeholders on a reconfiguration of the service.

Children Centres regularly seek feedback from their families and carry out annual satisfaction surveys on existing services. The vast majority of feedback is positive about the work of the Centres and even when the numbers of families who access the services is well below targeted levels they indicate that they value the offer and would like more.

A wide consultation has been carried out with service users and the general public from 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015 via a survey. The consultation was promoted on the Enfield Council website, Informed Families website and via posters displayed in Schools and Children's Centres. Advice was offered to service users about how to respond and support was offered by Centre staff to help individuals, either online or in hard copy format.

In addition Schools, Council Departments and Centre Staff have been consulted on their views on these proposals.

413, responses were received, 310 online, 103 in hard copy.

335 respondents indicated they were a parent/carer. 14 responses were received from Enfield or Children's Centre Employees, 11 from childcare providers and 10 grandparents. 93% of respondents were female. Respondents indicated a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and languages spoken.

### 3.12 Findings

It is clear that the vast majority of service users value children centre provision. There is a recognition that change is needed to make sure that they are fairly distributed, in some cases more effectively organised and that they are prioritised by need, popularity and locality. Work will need to be done to explain how the Hubs will operate to reassure and inform service users that provision will be enhanced.

When consulted, Centre Staff recognised the need to work more closely together under 5 Hubs, but considered this could be done without major changes to staffing structures and wanted a voice in the drawing up of proposals. This includes the 2 centres that employ their own staff, their views were considered as part of the consultation and they will be included in the change process.

Head Teachers and Council Colleagues understand the need for change and agree that resources have been spread too thinly with few frameworks in place to monitor outcomes, ensure quality and coverage across the LA. They are firmly in support of prioritising the most vulnerable while still offering universal provision. The 5 Hub option is the most popular in terms of delivering the key objectives for the service.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**Option 2: Other Options (e.g. 2,4,5 Hub Models)**

A large number of other configuration options were examined by the Strategic Board. The 5 Model was seen to be the best to:

- Ensure existing infrastructure continued to be used and there were no closures to existing sites.
- To ensure Centres were located around natural and meaningful community boundaries and existing provision, in areas of reasonably close proximity.
- To ensure a reasonable geographical size allowing a small team to operate effectively without incurring significant travel time.
- To both ensure universal provision in the more affluent West continued, whilst also enhancing investment in the more deprived East.

To summarise why other models were discounted:

<b>Alternative Proposal</b>	<b>Why Discounted</b>
2 Model, with a horizontal divide Edmonton-Southgate.	Too large an area and not sufficiently community focused. The proposal would involve complex financial and sub-contracting arrangements. It is also unclear where such a large team could be situated so property issues might arise. Some areas further away from the Hub Centre may be overlooked.
4 Model, same in the East but with large Centre in the West, focusing on areas of highest deprivation.	Concerns raised by existing schools regarding the size of the area to cover in the West and the number of sites to oversee operations. This is considered logistically impossible to pursue, even with a large team. It is also unclear where such a large team could be situated so property issues might arise. Some areas further away from the Hub Centre may be overlooked.
5 Model with a vertical rather than horizontal divide along the Palmers Green to Enfield Chase trainline.	Yields an equal reach of 5,000 for all Centres and reflects communities, however there are concerns that this would not necessarily provide enough resource in De Bohun (a pocket of higher deprivation) and Enfield Town – resource may be focused more on the South where there are more existing sites.
Existing Model (12 Centres, 22 Sites)	As above, plus not all Schools are necessarily interested in continuing existing arrangements.

### **Option 3: No change.**

Whilst staff are highly skilled, dedicated and do some inspiring work with children and families in Enfield, the structure is over-fragmented and inefficient. It does not meet the requirements of the new Ofsted framework and is therefore not an option.

## **5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Option 1 would have the following advantages by:

- Ensuring services are cost effective, high quality and fit for purpose for families and children in the area.
- Designing a cohesive offer across the LA that targets the most needy but still offers a universal service
- Reducing the number of Ofsted inspections needed in the short term.
- Uniting a fragmented system, making this easier and better value to operate.
- Ensuring that Children centres remain a core element of Enfield's early intervention strategy, support schools readiness, contribute to raising achievement and narrowing the gap at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

- The 2015/16 budget for the Children's Centres which are subject to the proposed restructure is approximately £3m after accounting for the £400k saving that was approved as part of the 2015/16 budget. The revised funding methodology as outlined in the report will be finalised to ensure that the individual budgets agreed for the Children's Centres will be contained within this overall budget.
- The proposed methodology for allocating funding to the 5 hubs would give each of the hubs a core budget to notionally fund a recommended staffing structure. Additional funding would be allocated based on population and deprivation factors, subject to being contained within the budget remaining after the core funding is allocated. Edmonton CC is currently run directly by the council and direct costs payable for rent, rates, service charges and other running costs estimated at around £220k would need to be met; an additional allocation will be made to this centre to cover these committed costs.

### **6.2 Legal Implications**

- Section 3(2) of the Childcare Act 2006 ('the Act') imposes a duty on local authorities to 'secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner which is calculated to—
  - facilitate access to those services, and
  - maximise the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.'
- Section 5A of the Act requires the arrangements made under s3(2), so far as is reasonably practicable, to include arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.
- Sections 5B to 5G set out a number of requirements for the running of children's centres, the most significant of which is the requirement to ensure that consultation

takes place before making significant changes in the provision of children's centres (section 5G).

- The Council has duties within an existing legal framework to secure the best outcomes for young people. The report recommends a reorganisation of children's centres to strengthen delivery of the service and ensure that it can continue to support the Council in meeting its statutory obligations.
- The Sure Start Children's Centre statutory guidance from the Department of Education means that recipients must have regard to it when carrying out duties relating to children's centres under the Childcare Act 2006.
- The Council must have due regard to its public law duties under Section 149 Equality Act 2010 and specifically to section 5D of the Child Care Act 2006 regarding Children's centres and the duty to consult. The Council is required to ensure there is consultation before making a significant change to the range and nature of children's centres, how they are delivered, or closing or reducing a children's centre. The Council must consult everyone who could be affected by the proposed changes including families, staff, advisory board members and service providers and explain how the Council will continue to meet the needs of families with children under five as part of any reorganisation of services. The guidance emphasises that particular attention should be given to ensuring disadvantaged families and minority groups participate in consultations and demonstrate in their decision how they have taken consultation responses into account.
- The proposals for consultation and the outcome of the consultation must be taken into account as part of any lawful decision-making process to ensure that it is fair, reasonable and proportionate.
- There is a statutory requirement for the Council to undertake a trade union consultation with any staff who may be affected by the proposals which should begin at an appropriate time.
- Any employment matters such as recruitment or redundancies must follow current HR policies and procedures, and employment legislation. All staff, including volunteers are subject to disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks.
- The Council must terminate any existing agreements/SLAs in accordance with the terms of those agreements. Provided that the hubs are existing unincorporated Community Schools, the proposals described in this report are outside the scope of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (the 2015 Regs) as form part of the Council. The award of any contracts to hubs that are not existing Community Schools will be subject to Schedule 3 of the Regs (which are similar in nature to the Part B Services of the 2006 Regs) if the value of such contracts are to exceed £625k.
- All agreements including SLAs shall be in a form approved by the Assistant Director of Legal Services.

### 6.3 Property Implications

It is important to note that Children's Centre sites which have received Sure Start Capital grant must continue to be used for the provision of early years services or the council may be subject to government claw-back of the original capital investment .

## 7 KEY RISKS

Risk	Level	Control Measures to mitigate risk	New Level
Reputational risk if the changes are not implemented	Amber	Good information about the proposed changes and careful programme management	Green
Current structure means that Children Centres can only be judged to Require Improvement or inadequate by Ofsted	Red	New structure will enable the centres to meet the requirements of the new Ofsted framework.	Green
Parents will not receive support and advice and children will not be prepared for school so that outcomes at the end of the EYFS will not improve	Amber	A new framework will ensure that provision is consistent and quality assured and that outcomes are closely monitored	Green
If children centres are closed the government may require that the capital funds are paid back	Amber	All centre buildings will still be used for early years provision and support the LA in meetings its requirements for 2 year old places	Green

## 8 IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

### 8.1 Fairness for All

Tackling the inequalities in the Borough is at the heart of what we want to achieve for Enfield. The proposals will help deliver more efficient and effective front-line Children's Centre services, judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by OFSTED, that deliver good or better outcomes for all children and young people and narrow identified achievement gaps.

The proposals will invest more in areas of highest deprivation whilst also ensuring all children aged 0-4 have access to Children's Centre services. This will help meet "the needs of all residents in the borough, protecting vulnerable residents and providing fair and equal access to services and opportunities".

### 8.2 Growth and Sustainability

The new model will enhance front line provision, particularly in areas of higher deprivation and unemployment. It will help parents and carers with young children access more employment and training support and information, advice and guidance.

### 8.3 Strong Communities

The proposals will help contribute to building strong, cohesive and resilient communities, by ensuring Children's Centres are at 'the hub of the local community'. The proposals will add social capital and encourage volunteering. This will indirectly and directly help Enfield to be a place where people feel proud to live, where people from all different backgrounds are welcomed and supported, where vulnerable people are protected, and where people take responsibility for their own lives and their communities.

## 9 EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

A full equalities impact assessment will need to be undertaken on the impact on staff and groups with protected characteristics as part of the public consultation.

## 10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The current children's centre structure has resulted in a number of centres not achieving key performance targets that Ofsted use to judge effectiveness. The proposed new structure will ensure that recent improvements made are sustained and all centres are judged to good or outstanding

## 11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None are noted.

## 12.HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

The final staffing structure of each of the 5 hubs will be agreed once the details have been finalised in terms of actual boundaries and the numbers and needs of the families in each area. These 2 factors will determine the budget for each of the hubs. However the plan is to bring together the teams in the existing clusters and offer all staff the opportunity of applying for the roles in the 5 larger hubs that will be established.

One Children's centre is directly managed by the LA. All the other staff teams, apart from 2, are employed by the governing bodies of maintained Enfield schools and have existing Council contracts. There will be changes to current ways of working and the new model will require staff to work out in the community or at maybe more than one centre. The aim is to offer staff increased choice and opportunity for promotion and to avoid the need for redundancy where possible.

	<b>Centre Managers</b>	<b>Deputy Centre Managers</b>	<b>Early Intervention Worker EIWs Targetted</b>	<b>EIWs (Stay and Play)</b>	<b>Admins</b>
<b>Existing Structure</b>	15 (2 vacant)	0	15	10	13
<b>Current pay grade</b>	SO2-MM2	N/A	SO1	Sc 4-6	Sc 4-6
<b>New Structure</b>	5	8	15-17	15-17	13
<b>Proposed grade ranges</b>	MM 1 -2	SO2-PO1	Sc6/SO1	Sc 4-6	Sc 4-6

All new posts will be subject to job evaluations

- This restructure is driven by the need to reconfigure Enfield's Children's Centre Service to establish a more structured and consistent approach to delivering excellent Early Years care within the Borough. The proposed changes will also meet the budgetary estimates for 2015/16 and will enhance the future sustainability of the service.
- Currently only 1 of the 22 Children's Centre sites is held and managed corporately, 19 are managed by Schools, though these staff are on LBE contracts of employment, and 2 (TAB & Oasis) are directly linked to independently run schools (non-LBE contracted staff).
- Consultation with unions and affected staff to take place in accordance with statutory regulations and Council guidelines. The authorisation of this report by Cabinet remains subject to union and formal staff consultation. Any changes to the proposed structure of delivery following staff feedback and management consideration as part of the consultation process will be presented to the Director of SCS and Lead Member for final ratification.

- New Role Profiles will need to be submitted for evaluation and, where applicable, generic Role Profiles should be used to increase flexibility and maximise opportunities for redeployment.
- Potentially displaced eligible staff will be given access to the Council's Redeployment opportunities to apply for vacancies arising across the Council as appropriate. If redeployees are confirmed as displaced, they will then have additional rights and will be entitled to be matched to suitable vacant posts arising via redeployment. In addition to redeployment, potentially displaced eligible staff will also be invited to participate in available Staff Support Programmes.
- Whilst the Council's Principles of Managing Re-organisations will be applied, it is proposed that an open ringfence will be adopted and this will include all eligible affected staff across Enfield's Children's Centre Service, working with Schools and Governing Bodies. This process will include assimilation and ring-fencing as appropriate. Posts will be filled on a cascading basis commencing with the most senior posts.
- Although it is proposed that staffing numbers will increase in the new structure, the Centre Manager posts will reduce from 15 (currently carrying 2 vacancies) to 5. Though 8 new Deputy Centre Manager posts are being created, depending on grades and suitability of roles in terms of suitable alternative employment opportunities, some redundancies may prove unavoidable.
- Whilst every effort will be made to avoid compulsory redundancies, in the event that this is not possible, a redundancy payment and early retirement benefits will be payable as appropriate to eligible employees with over 2 years' continuous service.
- In the event that redundancy proves unavoidable, the Redundancy Payment Approval Form must be completed and signed off by the Director of the service. This will then require final authorisation by the Director of Finance before formal notice can be issued and associated payments released.

### **13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

Children's Centres are seen as central to our drive to reduce poverty in Enfield. The new model will facilitate integrated delivery between health, education and social services and build on the range of health services that service users can access at the centres

#### **Background papers**

None