

## MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/2015 - REPORT NO.

**MEETING TITLE AND DATE /  
ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER  
DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

**PORTFOLIO DECISION OF**

**Councillor Orhan**

**REPORT OF:  
Director of Schools and Children's  
Services**

c/o Early Years Head of Service  
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Agenda - Part:	Item:
<b>Subject:</b>	
<b>Redefining Enfield Children's Centres</b>	
<b>Wards: All</b>	
<b>Key Decision No: (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Cabinet Member consulted:</b>	
<b>Councillor Orhan</b>	

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Core Purpose of Sure Start Children's Centres<sup>1</sup> is to improve outcomes for all young children aged 0-4 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.

This paper considers options to reconfigure Enfield Children's Centre Services, to deliver the Children's Centre Core Purpose by:

- Clarifying the Service vision and offer to families with young children.
- Ensuring better targeted service delivery, reflected in the achievement of 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted inspection results for Centres.
- Prioritising better use of resources, toward more front-line services in areas of greatest need.

Initial discussions on how to achieve improvements have taken place with a range of stakeholders including Head Teachers (of schools where Centre sites are based) and other Centre Providers.

Concluding from this, it is recommended that improvements can be most effectively achieved via the following general principles, now recommended for further development and consideration through a statutory 12 week public consultation<sup>2</sup>:

- The creation of 5 Hub and Spoke Centres to simplify management and administration and foster closer cross-boundary working across the existing 12 Centres and their 23 sites.
- Development of a unified service delivery model, available to all families regardless of where they live in Enfield.
- Shift the balance of resources from investment in infrastructure and channel more into front-line service delivery.
- Ensuring that financial resources are indexed according to population and deprivation (i.e. 'need').

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-childrens-centres-local-authorities-duties> (accessed 11/09/2014)

<sup>2</sup>The Children's Centre Statutory Guidance (Ibid) requires a 12 week public consultation should changes to Children's Centres be proposed.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Members and Officers:**

- Approves a statutory 12 week public consultation October 2014 to January 2015 on the option to create 5 Hub and Spoke Centres.
- Note the intention for Cabinet to consider the consultation findings and proposals on February 11th 2015.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

Enfield Children's Centres and Staff offer many exciting opportunities for young children and families. There are 12 Centres operating over 23 sites, 19 situated on school premises, but also working in the wider community<sup>3</sup>. However, there is a present and real challenge of Ofsted readiness under the new inspection framework implemented since April 2013<sup>4</sup>. Two Enfield Centres have already received "requires improvement" judgements under the new inspection Framework. Furthermore there are indications that under the new framework more Enfield centres are at risk of receiving 'requires improvement' judgments.

To further evidence the challenge faced at Enfield, as of 31/03/2014, the % of Enfield Children's Centres receiving 'Good' or 'Outstanding' Ofsted judgments was 55%, notably below the London average of 74% and second lowest when benchmarked against statistical neighbours<sup>5</sup>.

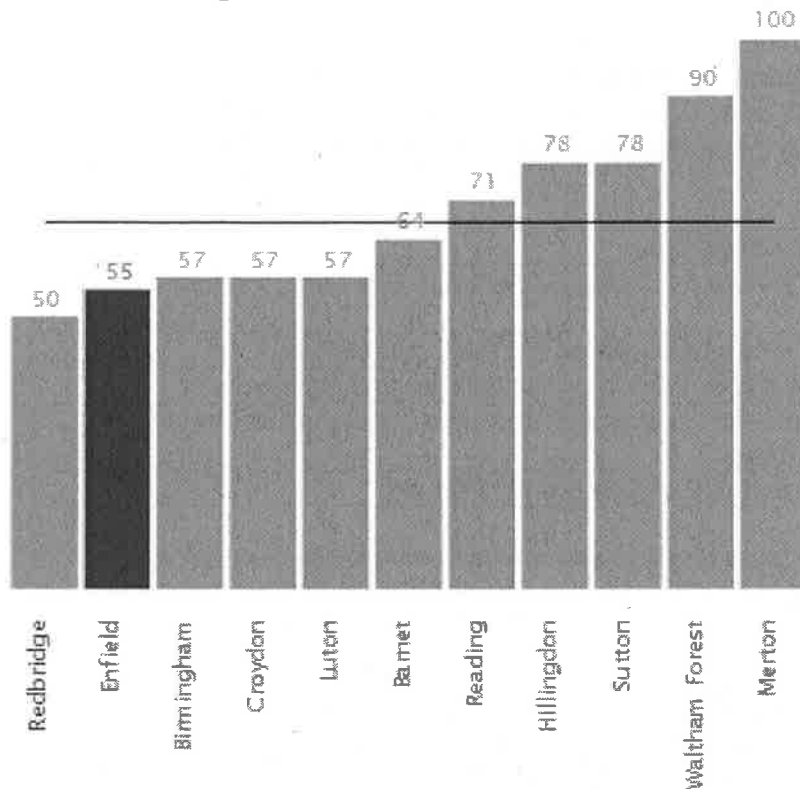
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<sup>3</sup>Department for Education Sure Start On Records (accessed 11/09/2014).

<sup>4</sup><https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-childrens-centres-local-authorities-duties> (accessed 11/09/2014)

<sup>5</sup>Ofsted Data Data View, <http://dataview.ofsted.gov.uk> (accessed 11/09/2014).

Percentage good or outstanding  
in Enfield compared with similar local authorities  
( England national level 31/03/2014 — )



The Service is proactively working very hard to improve service delivery and Ofsted readiness by December 2014 and registration levels are rising at all centres. However, there are underlying problems which can only be resolved via service-wide review. The most challenging problem is rooted in the complex and fragmented governance structure of the current network. Whilst Staff are working relentlessly to improve, the current structure contains multiple small teams with limited capacity, each independently managing one or a collection of small sites, typically located on school premises.

Therefore there is a need to consult the public and stakeholders<sup>6</sup> on a possible reconfiguration of the service by July 2015 to:

- Ensure funding is focused on more front-line service delivery for families with young children, targeted at areas of higher deprivation and need.
- Join up our efforts across 'boundaries', to share efforts, learning and expertise together.
- To make better use of existing resources and to achieve value for money.
- To further extend the scale Children's Centre provision offered during school holidays, when schools are closed but Children's Centres remain open.

### Options

Four options for service reconfiguration (to achieve the above service and savings) have been considered in depth:

<sup>6</sup>Stakeholders is defined as members of the Public with particular focus on families with young children, Children's Centre Staff and Centre Strategic Leads, Schools, the TAB Centre, Voluntary and Community Sector, partner agencies working at Children's Centres, Council Members and MPs and for technical issues, opinion and advice, Enfield Council Departments (in particular finance, legal and HR departments).

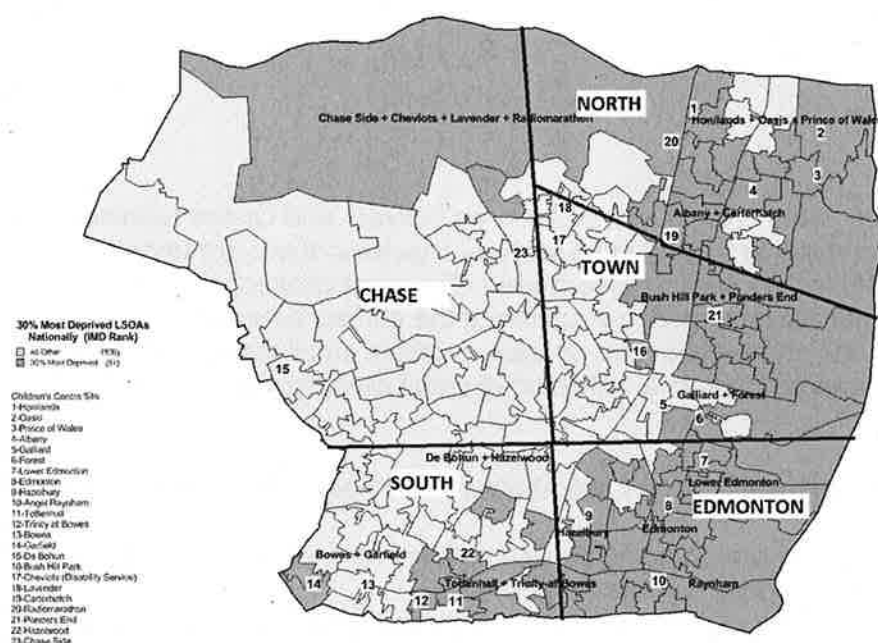
1. Reconfiguration to 5 Hub Model (Recommended)
2. Reconfiguration to 10 Hub Model (Not recommended)
- 3. Close centres (Not recommended)
4. Do nothing (Not recommended)

### Recommended Option 1. Reconfiguration to 5 Hub and Spoke Hub Model

Reconfiguration of delivery structures from 12 to 5 hubs is proposed, each with a lead centre (to be determined via stakeholder consultation), to be either delivered by the host school of the main site or a not-for-profit provider.

Name	Proposed Active Sites
North	Carterhatch Autumn Close, Carterhatch Bell Lane, Prince of Wales, Honilands
Town	Lavender, Chase Side, Bush Hill Park and Galliard
Edmonton	Lower Edmonton, Edmonton, Hazelbury and Raynham
South	Bowes, Garfield, Hazelwood, and either Trinity-at-Bowes or Tottenhall sites.
Chase	De Bohun and use of Community Venues

An illustrative map of how this *might* be realised (plans are still being scoped) is below:



The proposal would in no way reduce services, but instead significantly increase provision to the public. If approved, service improvements and savings would be achieved through:

- Removal of subsidies paid for day care services run from Enfield Children's Centres, as this is no longer a statutory part of the Children's Centre Core Purpose. Day care services would not be able to close – support will be given from the Local Authority to ensure they become 100% self-sufficient by March 2015.
- Reduction in site running costs at sites.

### The Delivery Model

At this stage the proposal focuses on general principles, to moving towards a hub and spoke model. More detailed proposals would be scoped through the consultation period, including definition of catchment areas and the detail of HR, Finance, Legal, Commissioning, ICT and Asset

Management implications. Within the Council technical work streams would be established to take this work forward from October 2014. Stakeholder representatives would be invited to participate wherever possible, bearing in mind availability and capacity to do so.

The 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. 50% would attend more than 4 times 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>7</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.
- The possible reduction in use of some non-Local Authority-owned sites, and wider use of a broader range of community venues, detail to be determined.
- 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.
- Provision of Centre Services by either the Host School of the main site or a third party organisation.
- 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.

**Five Centres are recommended because this model ensures:**

- Greater focus on families and children with greatest need, whilst also ensuring continued access for all.
- Value for money Centre management and administration – focusing more on front-line services.
- The five areas reflect naturally distinct and meaningful communities in Enfield, with distinct socio-economic and health needs. This is unlike existing reach areas, which exclude some users living very close to certain Centres.
- More uniform approach to resource allocation, which is properly indexed to population, deprivation and sites, to ensure Centres are properly resourced according to local need.
- Easier engagement between the Council, commissioned providers and Centres.
- Centrally commissioned providers (such as CAB, CAMHS, Health and Job Centre Plus) have the capacity to deliver at all Centres – they can deliver at 5 not 12 Centres. This proposal of 5 centres would ensure that every family would have local access to the full range of Children's Centre commissioned services as required by government.
- Discretionary budget is available to all Centres, so they may spend on things identified by the centre and advisory board of distinct community need.
- An increase in community over school focus on centre delivery, whilst also ensuring host schools continue to remain centrally involved in Centre delivery – for example, by ensuring services are multi-site and not reduced during school summer holidays.

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<sup>7</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.

- Closer engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector in delivering Children's Centre services.

The draft budget below demonstrates how the existing resources could be used to deliver this. The indicative total running cost is budgeted at £2,198,000 + £250,000 2015/16 contingency budget to allow for reconfiguration costs.

Indicative proposed budgets by Centre<sup>8</sup> could be:

	<b>2012 Population (0-4)</b>	<b>Deprivation (IMD)</b>	<b>2014-15 Budget</b>
<b>Edmonton</b>	6800	Very High	£558,000
<b>Town</b>	5660	High in East	£481,000
<b>North</b>	4400	High	£408,000
<b>South</b>	3700	Medium	£375,000
<b>Chase</b>	3445	Low	£236,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£2,058,000</b>

At this level of funding, as a minimum each Centre (except Chase, which is smaller in population size and more affluent, consequently smaller in budget) could afford:

- To keep employing existing Centre Managers, however some Managers may focus on Hub Coordination, others Outreach Management.
- 1-2 Administrators and receptionists (to include finance support)
- One Outreach Staff Member and one stay and play worker per 1,500 children.
- Sufficient funding to run their physical Hub and Spoke Sites
- A discretionary budget to spend on priority areas to the Centre.

In liaison with Enfield Council, Centres would have some discretion on how best to spend their Hub budget according to how they and their community best see fit, as long as it:

- Delivers the forthcoming Enfield Children's Centre Strategy and Core Purpose
- Promotes consistency in service delivery across Enfield.
- Ensure decisions and allocations are clearly evidence-led.
- Is community not site-focused, covering the entire Hub geographical area.

<sup>8</sup>The budget is calculated based upon a base of £65 per child (0-5) living in the reach area. In addition a supplement of £25,000 is paid per site to remain fully operational in the Hub area – this may be reduced in time. An additional total allowance of £108,000 is allocated to areas with higher deprivation according to IMD rankings. The design ensures both service coverage of all parts of Enfield, whilst also targeting resources towards areas of higher deprivation. The base budget is based upon the essential running and staffing costs considered necessary to run a Hub, although Centre Management will have discretion in how this budget is allocated on the ground.

## Consultation Process

Stakeholders would be consulted on their views on these proposals and how they might be taken forward. Stakeholders would include:

Stakeholder	How Consulted
Members of the Public, with particular focus on families with young children	Consultation questionnaire, advertised in Centres and Schools and on the Council website.  Discussion at all autumn Centre Advisory Boards and Parent Forums
Children's Centre Staff	Via working group meetings in October/November facilitated by Enfield Council.
Partners working at Children's Centres – Health, Children's Social Care, Job Centre Plus, Voluntary & Community Sector and Commissioned Providers.	Consultation questionnaire and workshops in October / November.
Council Members and MPs	Informal workshop in October / November and formal consideration of final proposals at February 2015 Cabinet.
Council Departments (on technical issues)	Development of technical work streams to further consider staffing, financial and contractual implications.

The results of the consultation will be carefully examined and reported to Cabinet in February 2015 alongside final recommendations, with any final decision flagged as Key at this stage, in terms of the Council's governance arrangements.

## Provisional Timeline

September 2014	Cllr Orhan is consulted on the proposals and options and approves DAR recommendations to consult the public.
20 <sup>th</sup> October- 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Statutory Public Consultation commences October 2014-January 2015. Work commences between Early Years' Service and Schools on making Day Care provision cost-neutral. Various workshops with stakeholders undertaken during October and November 2014.  Programme plan and internal workstreams developed.
February 2015	Cabinet report on proposals February 2015 to approve proposals. Decision taken on whether a second consultation on technical detail delivery is needed.
July 2015	Proposals implemented by end of July 2015

## 4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### Option 2: 10 Hubs.

This is not recommended as would require more administration and management and site running costs. There would be significantly less flexibility to re-direct resources to front line needed to improve services and Ofsted inspection readiness. Furthermore commissioned partners would continue to lack the capacity to provide services across the entire network.

### **Option 3: Full closures of Centres and their services**

This is not recommended, as closure of Centres would reduce centre front-line services to the public. It would also not be popular with the public. This would also prevent the Council achieving statutory requirements in terms of Children's Centre delivery and of the Two Year Old Offer. It could also make the Council liable to significant capital grant claw back (total liabilities are £10,385,000 should Centres close).

### **Option 4: 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 is concluded that the changes needed to improve performance and make savings are not achievable under the current structure.

## **5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Option 1 would have the following advantages by:

- Ensuring services are fit for purpose for families and children in the area.
- Reducing the number of Ofsted inspections needed in the short term.
- Uniting a fragmented system, making this easier and better value to operate.
- Providing flexibility for potential savings, should they need to be made.

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

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

The indicative Children Centre budgets, identified above, can be contained within the existing budget provision. The Director of Schools and Children's Services advises that the proposals will result in no reduction in service, increase provision and produce savings. Detailed financial implications of the proposals will follow the consultation.

### **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—  
(a) facilitate access to those services, and  
(b) 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 recommended proposals set out in this report comply with the above legislation.

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 states that local authorities "*should not close an existing children's centre site in any reorganisation of provision unless they can demonstrate that, where they decide to close a children's centre site, the outcomes for children, particularly the most disadvantaged, would not be adversely affected and will not compromise the duty to have sufficient children's centres to meet local need. The starting point should therefore be a presumption against the closure of children's centres*".

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 will need to be taken into account as part of any lawful decision-making process to ensure that it is fair, reasonable and proportionate.

Preparation of an equality impact assessment concerning the proposals will help ensure the Council considers its ongoing duties under the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and consider how its decisions will contribute towards meeting these duties.

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.

### 6.3 Property Implications

This proposal will not affect Council properties and service delivery from most existing sites will remain unaffected. It is however 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.

## 6 KEY RISKS

Risk	Likelihood	Mitigation
Proposals are not supported by Members.	Medium	Portfolio Holder Approval from Cllr Orhan needs to be sought before any public consultation commences.
Schools may be spending allocated budgets differently to how day care subsidy is. Therefore they may need to generate more than the subsidy to become cost-neutral.	High	This is the School's decision and responsibility, but support and advice will be needed by the Early Years Team to help this become cost-neutral.
Host schools might wish to use day care buildings for alternative use.	Medium	Need to explain we must continue day care services unless absolutely unavoidable.
Proposals cause some schools to return centres to Council management due to Ofsted inspection risk and other priorities.	Medium	This may happen anyway under 'no change', given the challenges of the new Ofsted framework. It might open up opportunities to commission Hubs out also.
Public opposition to what is perceived to	Medium	This proposal is around the reconfiguration and

be 'closures' and reduction to public services for needy families and children.		reuse of sites, not closures. Communication of the benefits of the proposals with Members, key stakeholders, staff and the public will be critical to ensuring success. A communications group and strong programme management are recommended.
Timescales slip.	Medium-High	This would require careful programme planning to deliver by July 2015. A programme plan and timetable would be drawn up and board established (DMT) and include HR, Financial and Communications (Internal/External) work streams. A contingency budget is also set out in the proposal to mitigate this.
Host schools may need significant help to become cost-neutral on day care, or if we are to commission out. This may affect wider Early Years Team resources and time.	High	Early Years team to provide support with host schools. Commissioning Team to allocate time for commissioning advice and procurement support should this option be pursued.

## 7 IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

### 7.3 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".

### 7.4 Growth and Sustainability

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

### 7.5 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.

## 8 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 proposals will streamline performance management and improve Ofsted readiness of Centres. Centres themselves would be supported by the local authority in terms of quality performance monitoring, allowing Managers and Staff more time to use monitoring and deliver front-line services.

**11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

None are noted.

**12. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

Since there are currently no planned closures of the children's centres, then there are no HR implications that need to be added to the DAR.

**13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

None are noted. The proposals should increase front-line services and consequently provision of public health information, advice and guidance provided by Centres.

