



Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

18th January 2012

Subject : Response to Call-in of decision of Cabinet 29th November 2011: abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres – Outcome of Consultation, Options and Implementation

1 Purpose of the Note

1.1 This Briefing note has been drafted in response to a Call-in of the decision made by Cabinet 29th November 2011 regarding the abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres – Outcome of Consultation, Options and Implementation. The decision was called-in by Councillors Mrs Johnson, Mrs Dixon and Bailey on 8th December 2011: *'To further investigate the advantages and disadvantages of why sessional care should be the preferred option over a remodelling of the existing full service'*

2 Information/Background

2.1 The table below outlines a chronology of decisions and events relevant to the call-in:

Event in 2011	Description
Cabinet 29 th November resolved:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) To note all relevant materials, including the responses to the consultation received to date, the petitions and the Equality Impact Assessment.2) To consider the recommendations made by Scrutiny Board 2 on 13th October 2011, those being:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) that the results of the consultation so far be forwarded to the Cabinet, with the request that it takes them into account when making its decisions on this issue, along with any further findings arising during the remainder of the consultation period.b) that the Scrutiny Board supports the view that starting the new child care arrangements in April would be more disruptive than necessary for those children due to begin primary school in September and therefore it asks the Cabinet to consider delaying the start until September 2012.c) that the Cabinet be requested to consider allowing each of the City Council's Children's Centres to organise its own sessional day care provision, so that it best meets the needs of the parents/carers who wish to use it.3) To consider the models of service delivery as set out in this report and approved the preferred option as set out in paragraph 2.7. of the report [Note: it is para 2.8]4) To agree that the Project Team progresses the implementation of the preferred option.5) To approve the introduction of a new fee structure from April 2012 that is built on a more robust business model, moving from the current £3.75 per hour to £5.00 per hour.
Cabinet Member (Education) 23 rd November recommended:	When considering the models of delivery of sessional care and approving the preferred option at their meeting on 29 th November 2011, the Cabinet take into account the issues raised through the petitions as part of the wider consultation responses.
Scrutiny Board 2 13 th October	Scrutiny Board 2 considered the consultation key findings and made recommendations to Cabinet
SCRUCO 9 th August	Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee concurred with the decision of Cabinet.
Call-in- Received 28 th July	Call-in validated 1st August 2011, submitted to Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

Scrutiny Board 2 28 th July	Report outlined the consultation process and Scrutiny Board 2 engagement in that process.
Cabinet 19 th July resolved to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres. 2) approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option1) 3) agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework. 4) agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet in October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan. 5) request that Scrutiny Board (2) participate in the consultation process by seeking the views of parents and any other interested parties and to consider the various proposals put forward.

- 2.2 For clarity, the report to Cabinet on 19 July 2011 presented why there was an urgent need to change the provision of day care services in Childrens' Centres. A number of options were presented for a viable service in the future; one of these was moving to a mixed economy of provision, including part-time (sessional) care. This was the preferred model and a rationale for this being the best alternative was presented in the report to Cabinet on 19 July, under Option 1. Cabinet approved this Option 1 being taken forward, defined as:

A transformed service delivered in house.

Introduce a 'mixed economy' of provision determined by local need, which would include:

- *Reduce provision from full time care to part time (sessional) care for children over 2 years. This would mean that no children under the age of 2 years would have access to a day care place in a Council run Sure Start Children's Centre*
- *A review of management structures and job descriptions*
- *Transfer the Social Care day care budget to the Early Years' Service who would then act as the broker in securing places for vulnerable children.*

- 2.3 Therefore, the decision to move to a sessional care model was taken on 19 July. After this date, consultation was carried out on the detail of how the model would be implemented in practice. Detailed options were put forward to Cabinet on 29 November 2011 for implementing the transformed mixed economy service. The report to Cabinet presented, and took account of, the responses to the consultation, including those from Scrutiny Board 2 and the Cabinet Member for Education.

- 2.4 The 9 settings that were subject to this review are those Children's Centres that currently offer full day care provision, which are Tile Hill, Canley, Stoke Heath, Bell Green, Foleshill, Moathouse, Radford, barley Lea and Middle Ride.

3 The Cabinet Decision of 29 November 2011

- 3.1 Six options were put forward to Cabinet on 29 November 2011 as set out in the report section 2.2 and (1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b). Option 3a was recommended and approved:

Option 3a - *Retain the current model of service delivery i.e. full day care, all year round for children birth-5 until August 31st2012. The part time sessional care model (option 2b) would then be implemented from September 1st2012: 20 hours per week - morning sessions only at 7 settings, morning and afternoon sessions at 2 settings. This option offers a 'wrap around' at either the beginning or end of the session that parents could pay for.*

- 3.2 By way of background, the advantages to the mixed economy provision model, as presented in 19 July Cabinet report, were included in Appendix 1 (Option 1). The other Options (2-4) which were rejected on 19 July were included in Appendix 1 merely as background; these were not being considered on 29 November as alternatives to Option 1.

- 3.2 Between July and November, consultation was carried out including reports and discussion at Scrutiny Board 2. As a result of this, officers conducted further work on options to include delaying implementation until September 2012, and allowing each centre to organise its own sessional day care provision, to meet user needs. Within the report on 29 November, Option 3a was recommended because it addressed and responded to the key issues raised by parent'/carers, Elected Members and Trade Unions, through the consultation process, these being:
- a delay to the implementation minimises the disruption to children due to move to school in September 2012-01-09.
 - providing parent with the opportunity to pay for up to an additional 5 hours per week 'wrapped around' and in addition to the 15 hours nursery entitlement, which will support them remaining in employment and their access to Working Tax Credit.
 - to offer increased places in two of the centres addresses concerns around the lack of alternative provision in some areas of the city.
 - an increase in fees brings the centres in line with the market rate in the city and reflects the fact that there has been no fee increase since 2009. Even with the increase, there is still a significant subsidy of the provision and without the increase in fees there would be an overall reduction in the target saving.

Therefore, the consultation responses taken as a whole indicated that the sessional day care model would enable service users' needs to be met effectively; there was nothing raised during the consultation which led service management to query the suitability of sessional day care as being the best model to meet future needs and be financially viable'.

AUTHOR'S NAME : Chris Wainwright

DIRECTORATE : Children, Learning and Young People

TEL : 024 7683 3645

CABINET

29th November 2011

Cabinet Members
Present: -

Councillor Mrs Bigham
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Duggins (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Harvard
Councillor Kelly
Councillor A. Khan
Councillor J. Mutton (Chair)
Councillor O'Boyle
Councillor Townshend

Non-Voting Opposition

Representatives present:- Councillor Blundell
Councillor Foster

Other Members present:

Councillor Bailey
Councillor Gazey
Councillor Mrs Lucas
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor Welsh

Employees Present:-

P. Barnett (Chief Executive's Directorate)
S. Brake (Community Services Directorate)
F. Collingham (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Dear (Chief Executive's Directorate)
J. Evans (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
C. Forde (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
M. Godfrey (Community Services Directorate)
C. Green (Director of Children, Learning and Young People)
D. Haley (Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate)
G. Holmes (Chief Executive's Directorate)
S. Iannantuoni (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
R. Innes (Community Services Directorate)
P. Jennings (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
L. Knight (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
G. Makin (Community Services Directorate)
B. Messinger (Director of Customer and Workforce Services)
J. Moynihan (Chief Executive's Directorate)
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)
H. Peacocke (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
M. Reeves (Chief Executive)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
J. Venn (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Wainwright (Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate)
C. West (Director of Finance and Legal Services)
M. Yardley (Director of City Services and Development)

Apologies

Councillor Ruane
Councillor Skipper

Public business

80. abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres – Consultation Responses

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People, which detailed the outcome of the consultation on the review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres and outlined options and proposals for implementation.

The Cabinet noted that a revised Equality Impact Assessment had been completed and circulated in advance of the meeting. It was further noted that the Cabinet Member (Education) had considered two petitions in relation to the consultation, at a meeting held on 23rd November, 2011, and the minutes from that meeting which outlined the content of the petitions and the concerns of the petitioners were also circulated for consideration.

The fundamental service review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer from Sure Start Children's Centres, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families. The review had also been driven by local policy direction, reflecting the developing early intervention and prevention agenda.

A number of options were outlined in the Case for Change report, these being to transform the service in house; commission out the service to a private provider or to close the provision completely. Cabinet was requested to approve the preferred option, which was to continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over, and to consult on this option.

Consultation had been carried out with parents and carers, staff, trade unions, the private, voluntary and independent sector and also the Children, Learning and Leisure Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2). The responses from the consultation with parents/carers, whilst relatively low, had been almost exclusively been from working parents, where concerns had been raised about their capacity to continue in work and/or training if the service was reduced to part time care. This was predominantly due to the service no longer meeting their needs together with the concern about higher costs of day care in the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector. Therefore, the greatest impact was likely to be on those parents. The appendices to the report submitted provided full details of the responses to the consultation.

Having considered the responses, the proposed preferred model recommended for implementation, was for 7 centres to open for either a morning or an afternoon session, 5 sessions per week for 38 weeks of the year, whilst the remaining 2 centres would offer a morning session and an afternoon session and that parents would have the option to 'buy in' additional time at the beginning or the end of the session and in the middle of the day. This recommendation addressed, in part, some of the recommendations made during the consultation. This recommended model contained a number of significant changes from the model consulted on and reflected the response to the consultation and comments from Scrutiny Board 2 on the proposed service changes.

It was further proposed that the recommended model be implemented at the beginning of the autumn term (September 2012). It was further proposed to increase fees from April 2012, from the current £3.75 per hour to £5.00 per hour, as there had been no increase in parental fees since September 2009. The report indicated that this still represented a substantial subsidy as it was not sufficient to recover full costs. To recover full costs would be likely to make the fees unaffordable for most families.

The savings target for the review was to make an overall saving of £1m in the financial year 2012/2013. Detailed methodology and costings for the recommended option were included in Appendix 5 of the report. It was noted that local authority pay and conditions prohibited the service from ever being self financing unless the fees were increased significantly. This would probably exclude most parents and make the centres more expensive than any other provider in the city. To introduce a day care model which was based on a cost recovery model would result in parental fees increasing from the current £150 per week to approximately £250 - £300 per week.

The recommended model contains a number of significant changes from the model consulted on. These changes reflect the response to the consultation and comments from Scrutiny Board 2 on the proposed service changes.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet:-

- 1) Note all relevant materials, including the responses to the consultation received to date, the petitions and the Equality Impact Assessment.**
- 2) Consider the recommendations made by Scrutiny Board 2 on October 13th 2011, those being:**
 - a) that the results of the consultation so far be forwarded to the Cabinet, with the request that it takes them into account when making its decisions on this issue, along with any further findings arising during the remainder of the consultation period.**
 - b) that the Scrutiny Board supports the view that starting the new child care arrangements in April would be more disruptive than necessary for those children due to begin primary school in September and therefore it asks the Cabinet to consider delaying the start until September 2012.**
 - c) that the Cabinet be requested to consider allowing each of the City Council's Children's Centres to organise its own sessional day care provision, so that it best meets the needs of the parents/carers who wish to use it.**
- 3) Consider the models of service delivery as set out in this report and approve the preferred option as set out in paragraph 2.7.**

- 4) **Agree that the Project Team progresses the implementation of the preferred option.**
- 5) **Approve the introduction of a new fee structure from April 2012 that is built on a more robust business model, moving from the current £3.75 per hour to £5.00 per hour.**

Cabinet Member (Education)
Cabinet

23rd November 2011
29th November 2011

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Education) - Councillor Kelly

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Children, Learning and Young People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres - Outcome of consultation, Options and Implementation

Is this a key decision? Yes

If agreed, the proposal in the report is likely to result in the in the Council making significant financial savings resulting from an abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres. The proposal will also have an impact on families living or working in areas comprising of 2 or more wards.

Executive Summary:

The Fundamental Service Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres has been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer from Sure Start Children's Centres, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families. The review has also been driven by local policy direction, reflecting the developing early intervention and prevention agenda.

A number of options were outlined in the Case for Change report, these being to transform the service in house; commission out the service to a private provider or to close the provision completely. Cabinet was requested to approve the preferred option, which was to continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over, and to consult on this option

The preferred model recommended for implementation, is that 7 centres would open for either a morning or an afternoon session, 5 sessions per week for 38 weeks of the year, whilst the remaining 2 centres would offer a morning session and an afternoon session and that parents would have the option to 'buy in' additional time at the beginning or the end of the session and in the middle of the day. This recommendation addresses, in part, some of the recommendations made during the consultation

The recommended model would be implemented at the beginning of the autumn term and included an increase in fees from April 2012, from the current £3.75 per hour to £5.00 per hour,

as there has been no increase in parental fees since September 2009. This still represents a substantial subsidy as it is not sufficient to recover full costs. To recover full costs would be likely to make the fees unaffordable for most families.

The savings target for the review is to make an overall saving of £1m in the financial year 2012/2013.

Detailed methodology and costings for the recommended option are included in Appendix 5. Refer to paragraph 5.1 for the financial implications.

Local authority pay and conditions prohibits the service from ever being self financing unless the fees were increased significantly. This would probably exclude most parents and make the centres more expensive than any other provider in the city.

To introduce a day care model which is based on a cost recovery model would result in parental fees increasing from the current £150 per week to approximately £250 - £300 per week.

The responses from the consultation with parents/carers, whilst relatively low, has been almost exclusively been from working parents, where concerns have been raised about their capacity to continue in work and/or training if the service is reduced to part time care. This is predominantly due to the service no longer meeting their needs together with the concern about higher costs of day care in the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector. Therefore, the greatest impact is likely to be on those parents. The recommended model contains a number of significant changes from the model consulted on. These changes reflect the response to the consultation and comments from Scrutiny Board 2 on the proposed service changes.

In addition, 2 petitions have been received in relation to the consultation and it is proposed that these be considered by the Cabinet Member (Education).

The first, an e-petition, bears 8 signatures and reads:

"Save our Childrens' Centres and Nurseries for All – We want the Council to continue its excellent work as the main service provider of all Sure Start programmes in particular the running of all day care provision (nurseries). To develop a new business model that promotes expansion over cuts in this area and to lead a national debate on day care for the under 5's"

The second bears 3,210 signatures and reads:

"Save Our Child Care – we the undersigned, call upon you to preserve the provision of child care for children in Coventry's Children's Centre and Sure Start service. Many parents need to return to work due to financial commitments and it is important there is adequate provision of suitable child care in all areas."

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member (Education) is recommended to consider the petitions that have been submitted and recommend that the Cabinet:

- 1) Take into account the issues raised through the petitions as part of the wider consultation responses.

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Take into account all relevant materials, including the responses to the consultation received to date, the petitions and the Equality Impact Assessment.
- 2) Consider the recommendations made by Scrutiny Board 2 on October 13th 2011, those being:
 - a) that the results of the consultation so far be forwarded to the Cabinet, with the request that it takes them into account when making its decisions on this issue, along with any further findings arising during the remainder of the consultation period.
 - b) that the Scrutiny Board supports the view that starting the new child care arrangements in April would be more disruptive than necessary for those children due to begin primary school in September and therefore it asks the Cabinet to consider delaying the start until September 2012.
 - c) that the Cabinet be requested to consider allowing each of the City Council's Children's Centres to organise its own sessional day care provision, so that it best meets the needs of the parents/carers who wish to use it.
- 3) Consider the models of service delivery as set out in this report and approve the preferred option as set out in paragraph 2.7.
- 4) Agree that the Project Team progresses the implementation of the preferred option.
- 5) Approve the introduction of a new fee structure from April 2012 that is built on a more robust business model, moving from the current £3.75 per hour to £5.00 per hour.

List of Appendices included:

1. Options – Advantages/Disadvantages
- 2a Parent/carer Consultation – key findings
- 2b Parent Consultation Response
- 2c Scrutiny Board 2 Consultation Response
- 3a Staff consultation – key findings
- 3b 'Frequently Asked Questions'
4. Trade Union Responses
5. Financial methodology and costings
6. Interim Equality Impact Assessment

Other useful background papers:

- Fundamental Service Review – Key Milestone documents: - Located ED Room121
- KMD 01 - Project Brief
 - KMD 02 - Project Initiation Document
 - KMD 03 - Baseline Report
 - KMD 05 – Case for Change Report
 - KMD 06 – Detailed Design and Implementation

The full consultation survey, FAQ's and other document relating to the consultation can be found on www.coventry.gov.uk/consultations

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

While the consultation outcomes have been considered by SB2 on 13th October, this particular report will not have been considered by them.

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

Yes - Cabinet Member (Education) - 23rd November 2011

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres - Preferred Model and Implementation

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 On July 19th 2011, Cabinet received a Case for Change report that outlined the preferred option for the continued service of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres, which was to:
- Continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day care for children birth -5 years to part-time sessional care i.e. 15 hours part time care for children aged 2 years and over.
- 1.2 Cabinet considered alternative options, taking account of the benefits and disadvantages as outlined in Appendix 1
- 1.3 Cabinet agreed that the Project Team could start consultation and progress the preferred model of service delivery as set out in the report
- 1.4 The abc Project Team have progressed this, taking into account the responses from parents, staff, stakeholders, Elected Members and Trade Unions.

2. Options to be considered and recommended proposals

- 2.1 There are six options for the cost effective delivery of child care as part of the Sure Start Children's Centre Core Offer, which identified cost savings and improvements that would ensure a sustainable service within the context of the whole Children's Centre.
- 2.2 Option 1a - 15 hours per week - morning or afternoon sessions at 9 settings
Implemented from April 2012
- Option 1b - 20 hours per week - morning or afternoon sessions at 9 settings
This option offers a 'wrap around' at either the beginning or end of the session that parents could pay for. This would be implemented from April 2012
- Option 2a - 15 hours per week - morning sessions only at 7 settings,
morning and afternoon sessions at 2 settings
This would be implemented from April 2012
- Option 2b - 20 hours per week - morning sessions only at 7 settings,
morning and afternoon sessions at 2 settings
This option offers a 'wrap around' at either the beginning or end of the session that parents could pay for.
This would be implemented from either April or September 2012
- Option 3a - Retain the current model of service delivery i.e. full day care, all year round for children birth - 5 until August 31st 2012. The part time sessional care model (option 2b) would then be implemented from September 1st 2012

- Option 3b - Implement the part time sessional care model from April 2012 (options 1 or 2), but continue to offer full day care only to those 3 and 4 year olds who would be due to move to school in September. The part time sessional care model (option 2b) for all children 2- 5 years would then be implemented from September 1st 2012
- 2.3 The proposals to retain a service for those children who are due to move to school in September are based on responses from parents who have currently identified this need. Further assessment of demand will be undertaken should this option be approved in order to confirm its viability within the identified budget.
- 2.4 Whichever option is approved by Cabinet, the model of service delivery will have common features which shape the service, those being to reduce provision from the current full time care model i.e. all day care from 8.00 am – 6.00 pm for 48 weeks of the year, to part time (sessional) care for children over 2 years i.e. for only part of the day. For example a 3 hour session in the morning or the afternoon and would be open term time only.
- 2.5 The model would offer part time care for children over 2 years old, and so those 3 and 4 year olds, accessing their free entitlement, would be able to attend 5 mornings or 5 afternoons a week and not have to pay.
- 2.6 Parents who wished to access additional 'wrap around ' would be able to do so at the beginning and end of the day and they would be charged £5 per hour.
- 2.7 The rationale for selecting sessional care as the preferred option is –
- This fully supports the policy direction of the Children, Learning and Young People (CLYP) Fundamental Service Review (FSR) in relation to early intervention and Sure Start Children's Centres role in prevention, early intervention and intensive service delivery
 - Has the potential to retain the skills of 44% of the current workforce and a revision of the job descriptions supports the move towards a more integrated and flexible workforce.
 - Provides more places for vulnerable children, specifically those who would be funded under the expanding 2 Year Old Programme
 - Achieves the target saving
 - Potential to make additional savings in the Social Care budget as increased numbers of vulnerable 2 year olds become eligible for up to 10 hours per week of grant funding
 - Family support services are based within and integral to the centre and therefore the services are easily accessible and more cost effective
 - Some of the rooms in the centres would be made available for the provision of additional family support services and may also support the policy direction of the CLYP FSR in the co-location of integrated services.
 - Working in a more targeted way would lead to more children/families being assessed, which, in turn, would potentially increase the number of children/families being supported through the Common Assessment Framework and a reduction in the number of referrals to the Referral and Assessment Service/Looked After Children

2.8 **Recommended proposal**

The recommended option is 3a. This would keep all centres open until August 31st 2012 retaining the current service. It would introduce the part time sessional care model from September 1st 2012 (2b) which would provide up to 20 hours per week per child -

morning or afternoon sessions at 7 settings and morning and afternoon sessions at 2 settings .

This option responds to concerns raised by parents/carers, Elected Members and Trade Unions in relation to how disruptive it would be for those children due to begin primary school in September if the new model were to be implemented from April 2012 as this could result in them having to move to another childcare provider for the period April – September and then move again to school. To maintain the service for nursery aged children until the end of the summer term significantly reduces the number of children who will be affected in this way, primarily because many parents choose to use informal childcare arrangements in the holidays.

Providing parents with the opportunity to pay for additional hours ' wrapped around' the nursery entitlement specifically responds to and meets the needs of those parents who have to work at least 16 hours per week in order to access Working Families Tax Credit together with those parents who are employed part time and needed some extra hours to allow them continue with their current working pattern.

This option also addresses the issue raised in some consultation events concerning the lack of alternative provision. Further work on the availability of childcare within the local areas is being undertaken and where there may be the need, officers would consider increasing places where appropriate.

The phased approach to implementing the new model clearly reflects and addresses all the recommendations made by Scrutiny Board 2 together with those raised by parents in relation to those children who will move to a primary school in September.

It also provides parents of younger children, a longer time to make the necessary arrangements for a planned and smooth transition to another day care setting where appropriate.

Trade Unions have raised concerns about the abc Review of day care in Children's Centres and the CLYP FSR in relation to both the implications for staff and redeployment opportunities and the correlation between the refocus of the day care services and the broader Early Identification and Prevention agenda. This option is likely to bring implementation of the two reviews into alignment.

The remaining 5 options were considered but the Project Team agreed that none of them responded to issues raised as fully as the preferred option.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Consultation commenced on August 11th and ended on November 12th 2011. Parents/carers, Members, staff and other providers have been asked for their views during this period.
- 3.2 Members of Scrutiny Board 2 discussed the consultation process and survey at their meeting on July 28th. They agreed that parent consultation sessions should be held in each of the Council's Children's Centres and that Scrutiny Board 2 members and ward councillors should be invited to attend those meetings.

3.3 Scrutiny Board 2 further considered the initial findings and key issues on 13th October 2011 and made the recommendations as detailed earlier in the report.

3.4 Consultation with parents/carers

During the consultation period parents/carers were encouraged to take part in several ways. They could attend one of 20 consultation events which took place across the 10 centres, fill in a survey online or at their centre. Comment boards were also set up at each centre for people to post their views or questions and parents were told they could also speak to Centre Managers.

3.5 Although invitations to the consultation events were sent to 887 parent/carers only 49 attended, along with 14 councillors. Questions asked at each of the events were posted online, along with the answer, and displayed in each centre.

3.6 237 people responded to the consultation online, 188 of which were current users of the service.

3.7 Similar issues were raised at the events and through the online consultation including concerns about:

- being able to remain in employment/education/training
- disruption to children starting primary school in September 2012 that may be caused by implementing changes in April
- moving to another provider due to a perception that the quality is not as good as that in the Children's Centre
- parents who currently access Working Families Tax Credit will be affected as they are required to be in work for a minimum of 16 hours per week
- stigmatisation of nurseries if they were for predominantly 'vulnerable' children
- a fee increase. If the fees increased to £250 - 300 per week to make the nurseries viable this would be too high for many parents.

A more detailed report of the consultation can be found at Appendix 2a & 2b

3.8 Consultation with staff

Staff in the nurseries have also been consulted with, both through management briefings and with Trade Unions. The consultation process ran for 90 days though the key consultation events took place during August and September. The consultation ended on November 12th 2011.

The main issues raised were around how people would be selected for posts, how the Council would determine a child was 'vulnerable', retention of full-time staff unable to move to part-time posts because they can't afford to do so and the possible impact of the CLYP review.

A more detailed report of the issues they raised can be found at Appendix 3a & 3b together with the 'Frequently Asked Question'

3.9 Consultation with Unions

Formal staff and trade union consultation commenced on the 10th August 2011 for a period of 90 days. The consultation period was due to end on the 7th November 2011 but following a request from the trade unions, the consultation period was extended for a further five days and ended on the 12th November 2011.

There have been regular monthly meetings with Trade Unions over the past few months which have more recently moved to weekly. Throughout this time information has been shared, including proposed models and revised job descriptions.

It was also agreed with the trade unions that they would provide us with detailed feedback as we went through the consultation period. However, at the time of writing this report, a formal trade union response has yet to be received but this will be tabled when received

N. B. Trade Union Response Appendix 4 (received from NUT)

Centre Managers have worked with Union representatives to arrange and host meetings with the representatives and their members. Trade Unions have also had access to the consultation website and the FAQ's posed by their members

Trade Unions have formally requested that management suspend the progress of the review in order to bring it into line with the CLYP FSR and asked that the issues are discussed in more detail.

3.10 Consultation with Private, Voluntary and Independent sector

All full day care providers and childminders were invited to attend a briefing about the review and to provide an opportunity to identify any challenges and/or opportunities the review might potentially have on their provision. The response from the 18 providers and 14 Childminders who attended was very positive, demonstrating a definite desire to work more closely with Children's Centres and also about the potential positive benefits for their businesses. However, there were some concerns raised about starting a child in April and felt that September is preferable, particularly if the child is only going to be in the setting between April-Sept only.

4. Timetable for implementation

Cabinet approval to progress options	July 2011
Undertake design planning and produce a Detailed Design Plan	July – November 2011
Brief all staff on the proposed options and the revised structure	July 2011
Consultation with Trade Unions, parents and other key stakeholders on proposed options and revised structure commences	August – November 2011
Project Team receive responses to the consultation	November 12 th 2011
Consultation period ends	November 12 th 2011
Project Team's final response to the option	November 2011
Seek Cabinet approval to approve implementation plan	November 2011
Revised/new Job Descriptions submitted to Job Evaluation Panel.	November 2011
Staff notified of the process for deployment to new structure, including opportunities for ER/VR	1st to 30 th December 2011
Job matches/interviews for new posts	November to 30 th December 2011
Appointments	November to 30 th December 2011
Redundancy notification letters issued	By December 30 th 2011
Implement new model of service delivery	**April 2012

** Should the recommendation be approved to implement the review with effect from September 2012, then the timetable will be adjusted accordingly

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

The medium-term financial strategy has savings for the Childcare FSR of £500K in 2011/12 rising to £1M in 2012/13. Due to delays in the implementation process the savings for 2011/12 are being delivered via short-term efficiency savings (e.g. holding posts vacant).

The detailed costing for the recommendations are included at Appendix 5. In summary this option delivers the £1M saving in full year.. Where additional hours are offered to parents the charge to parents is £5 per hour. This is in line with the market rate of childcare provision in Coventry, although there would still be some subsidy of this additional provision as the actual costs per hour of running the day care is nearer £6 per hour assuming occupancy is at 85%.

Should implementation be delayed, and all provision remain open on the current basis until the end of August 2012 (option 3a), then this would mean we could only make a reduced level of saving. Based on costs and income levels in 2011/12 this would reduce the saving, meaning we could only achieve approximately £685K saving. This would be reduced to £577K if we did not increase the parental fees to £35 per hour.

5.2 Legal implications

5.2.1 The s6(1) Childcare Act 2006 requires the local authority to secure so far as is reasonably practicable sufficient childcare for children aged up to 14, or 18 in the case of a child with a disability, for parents in their area to enable them to, take up or remain in work, or undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work .

S6(2) of the Childcare Act 2006 provides in determining whether the childcare is sufficient the local authority must have regard to the needs of the parents for provision for which the childcare element of working Tax Credit is payable and the provision of childcare that is suitable for children with a disability.

S7(2) of the Childcare Act 2006 requires the local authority to secure free early years provision for all eligible children in their area of 520 hours a year over no fewer than 38 weeks a year.

The Childcare Assessment Regulations 2007 requires the local authority to carry out a full assessment of the sufficiency of childcare provision in their area every 3 years and prescribes with whom the local authority must and should consult when preparing assessments of sufficiency of childcare.

The local authority is required to have regard to statutory guidance including the: Securing Sufficient Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities in carrying out their childcare sufficiency duties.

5.2.2 S17 of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on the local authority to ensure appropriate services are provided to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need.

5.2.3 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes a non delegable ongoing duty known as the public sector equality duty (“the duty”), on the local authority to have due regard to three specified matters in the exercise of their functions:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age;disability;marriage and civil partnership;race; sex; sexual orientation;religion or belief;pregnancy and maternity; gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it; and
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6. Other implications

The local authority is required to carry out a full assessment of the sufficiency of childcare provision in their area every 3 years and a review annually. The day care in Children's Centres will be part of this and provision will be informed by local supply and demand for day care.

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The proposals contribute to the council's core aims of: ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution; making places and services easily accessible.

The service will have a greater focus on targeting and supporting vulnerable children and their families. This will particularly benefit those children who will be referred to the Children's Centres by other agencies such as health and Social Care as they will be able to access the 2 Year Old funding entitlement in a local, community based ,high quality early years setting

6.2 How is risk being managed?

The key risks of this project are being monitored and managed within a Risk Log. These are regularly reported and reviewed by the abc Transformation and Delivery Board

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

6.3.1 There are currently 118 staff employed to work in the nurseries across 9 centres, which equates to 97.3 fte, and 8 cooks. 75 are full time all year round, 25 are part time all year round and 14 are term time only.

There are currently 24 vacancies, including maternity leave and long term sickness.

6.3.2 The option of part time, term time only places will reduce the staffing to 55 posts, which equates to 30.25 fte staff who will be on part time contracts.

6.3.3 Some of the staff may have the opportunity to be redeployed into other posts within the Children's Centre and therefore the service would retain the skills and expertise of those staff.

- 6.3.5 Any reduction of staff will be considered as part of the consultation stage with staff and the trade unions and the City Council's Security of Employment agreement will be observed.
- 6.3.6 In addition, working practices such as revised roles and responsibilities, management structures and change of work locations for staff will also form part of the staff and trade union consultation stage.
- 6.3.7. The decision to cease all day care for babies and children under 2 years will free up at least one room in each centre which will therefore become available to deliver additional Children's Centre services and activities

6.4 Equalities / EIA

An EIA specific to this review has been completed alongside the development of the Detailed Design and Implementation Plan. The final EIA reflects the outcomes of the consultation which ended on 12th November (see Appendix 6 Interim EIA)It includes and takes account of the following:-

- a) The impact of the proposals on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and includes recommendations for mitigating any adverse impact on those with relevant protected characteristics
- b) Clear actions with appropriate timescales:
- c) That it clearly sets out the nature of the Public Equalities Duty in order for decision makers to address themselves to the right questions when considering the impact on persons with relevant protected characteristics, e.g. race, disability, pregnancy, maternity, age etc. and consideration of whether any positive steps need to be taken to accommodate groups with protected characteristics.

- 6.4.1 Of the parents who have responded to the consultation, those parents who are working will be the most affected, predominantly because they are concerned that the fees at an alternative provision may not be affordable.
- 6.4.2 Whilst 34% of parents felt the new model would not meet their needs, 59% said a part time morning or afternoon session would. Given that parents who use sessional care are more likely to be on low income or 'vulnerable' the change is unlikely to have a significant impact on them. By creating more places for 2 – 4 year olds the new model will be increasing those places for vulnerable children
- 6.4.3 38% of respondents were from a non-white British background, these responses coming predominantly from Foleshill and Hillfields almost all of whom only used part time care
- 6.4.4 There is only one male worker currently in the Children's Centre day care provision
- 6.4.5 75% of the staff are White British, 51% are aged between 25 – 34 and 23% between the ages of 35 and 44
- 6.4.6 Members will be provided with the final version and updates on any amendments to the EIA as the programme progresses through the implementation stages

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

Some parents may no longer be able to access day care within walking distance of their home and therefore may need to drive or take public transport to an alternative day care provision.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

The proposed model will facilitate working relationships and partnership arrangements with local PVI providers in the Children's Centre reach areas in order to ensure that families receive a seamless service. This could be particularly beneficial to PVI sector as they may increase their admissions and as a result be supported in their financial sustainability. The model provides opportunities to identify potential partners who could be co-located on the Children's Centre sites where space has become available

Report author(s):**Name and job title:**

Chris Wainwright, Neighbourhood Service Manager
Neighbourhood Services – Early Years and Childcare

Directorate:

Children, Learning and Young People

Tel and email contact:

02476 833645 / chris.wainwright@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Neelesh Sutaria	HR Manager	Children, Learning and Young People	06/07/11	07/07/11
Mike Coult	Assistant Director - Programme Office	Transformation Project Office	02/11/11	15/11/11
Andy Pepper	Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)	Children, Learning and Young People	04/11/11	15/11/11
Lara Knight	Governance Services Officer	Customer and Workforce Services	11/11/11	15/11/11
Michelle Salmon	Governance Services Officer	Customer and Workforce Services	11/11/11	15/11/11
Jo Moynihan	Communication Officer	Chief Executive's Offices	04/11/11	15/11/11
David Woodhouse	Information Analyst	Children, Learning and Young People	04/11/11	15/11/11
Brenda Bell	Accounting Technician	Children Learning and Young People Finance & Legal	09/11/11	15/11/11
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Rachael Sugars	Finance Manager	Children Learning and Young People Finance & Legal	04/11/11	11/11/11
Julie Newman	Children, Learning and Young People and Adults Legal Services Manager	Children, Learning and Young People Adult and Education Legal Team	04/11/11	11/11/11
Christine Ford	Assistant Director(Legal Services) and Monitoring Officer	Finance and Legal Services Directorate		14/11/11

Colin Green	Director	Children, Learning and Young People	04/11/11	10/11/11
Councillor Kelly	Cabinet Member (Education)		07/11/11	15/11/11
Other members				

This report is published on the council's website:
www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Appendices

1. Options – Advantages/Disadvantages
- 2a Parent/carer Consultation – key findings
- 2b Parent Consultation Response
- 2c Scrutiny Board 2 Consultation Response
- 3a Staff consultation – key findings
- 3b 'Frequently Asked Questions'
4. Trade Union Responses
5. Financial methodology and costings
6. Interim Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1 Options

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Option 1: Introduce a mixed economy of provision, determined by local need. This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a reduction in the provision from full day care to sessional care for children over 2 years (excluding children under the age of 2) - a review of the staffing structures and job descriptions of staff - the Early Years and Childcare Service to manage the Social Care childcare budget and act as broker in securing places in early years settings for vulnerable children 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves target saving • Fits with the CLYP FSR in relation to early intervention • Review of the management structure and job descriptions fits with the corporate delayering model • Revision of the job descriptions supports the move towards a more integrated and flexible workforce. This would result in staff being able to take on a variety of roles and responsibilities, such as working in the day care, delivering outreach activities, supporting children and families in their homes. • Provides more places for vulnerable children, specifically those who would be funded under the expanding 2 Year Old Programme • By retaining services on the Children's Centre site, the family support services are based within 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % redundancies and % reduction in hours from full to part time depending on the model adopted by each nursery • Loss of baby places for all those centres reducing to sessional care • Lose the skills and experience of some staff if they choose to leave the service, preferring not with to work to a revised job role or work for a PVI provider • Some parents may have to travel further to access day care if choice is reduced in the local area. • No place available in Children's Centres for vulnerable babies and under 2's. Local Authority would have to buy in places in PVI settings that may have limited skills and experience in providing (high-level) family support/CAF's so would require increased levels of support from Social Care and Children's Centres outreach teams • Support visits to individual children in different settings is not cost efficient or as effective as having the family support staff on site.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>and integral to the centre and therefore the services are easily accessible and more cost effective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retains the skills of a % of the current workforce • Limited closures resulting in fewer redundancies • Where there are closures, there is still the capacity to offer provision specifically targeted at vulnerable 2 year olds and their families. • Management of the Social Care childcare budget by Early Years would provide a coherent and consistent approach to the allocation of places, specifically vulnerable babies and young children • Provides an opportunity to develop a meaningful partnership with childminders and the PVI day care sector • Some of the rooms in the centres would be made available for the provision of additional family support services and/or for use by partners to deliver services. • (as above) may also support the CLYP FSR in support of co-location of integrated services. • Reduction of places leaves in place the infrastructure to enable the centres to remain flexible in meeting childcare demand in the local community. • Working in a more targeted way would lead to more children/families being assessed, which, in turn, would potentially increase the number of children/families being supported through a CAF and a reduction in the number of referrals to LAS/LAC 	

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to save on the Social Care budget if vulnerable 2 Year olds can access the 2 Year Old Entitlement grant funding • Fewer parents would need to seek alternative day care provision as there are many who only take up sessional provision • Provides the ability to respond to needs identified as part of the Sufficiency Duty 	
<p>Option 2: Progress to an open tender process whereby all centres have the day care delivered by PVI providers - See option 1</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could possibly save more than target (though uncertain) • Some posts would be retained through the TUPE arrangements • No or few parents would have to seek alternative day care provision • Opportunity to engage with PVI sector providers through the introduction of a robust and challenging SLA arrangements whereby they would be required to adhere to specific • Retain the staff skills • Links to government agenda of 'Big Society' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves the savings in theory but additional resource implication in terms of TUPE arrangements and support to families across many PVI providers. • Lose the skills and experience of some staff if they choose to leave the service, preferring not to work for a PVI provider • Significant increase in resources required from Children's Centres to support vulnerable children/families. Support visits to individual children in different settings is not cost efficient or as effective as having the family support staff on site. • Potential to have inconsistent structures such as staffing and fees across the centres if some were managed by a range of PVI providers, which may be confusing for parents. • Loss of skills if PVI provider re- structures organisation and make changes to terms and condition • Lack of swift response to family support intervention • Intervention can only happen on the invitation of the PVI provider • Nursery could be seen as independent to the Children's Centre rather than integral to it, and would cease to be an integrated centre.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 3: Close all day care in the Children's Centres	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves more than the target saving of £1 million • Capacity to extend the family support by the reinvestment of the available resources in outreach staff who would work with the PVI sector in support of vulnerable families • Opportunity to engage with and develop partnership arrangements at an operational level with PVI sector providers • PVI providers would benefit from an increase in admissions, supporting their sustainability. • Additional highly skilled practitioners available to work in PVI sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If vulnerable children are placed in PVI settings, the Children's Centre will have to provide an outreach family support service which is not as cost effective as the services being on the same site. There could be additional travel involved and it may be that there is only one child in that setting that would require additional support. • Lack of swift response to Family Support • Intervention can only happen on the invitation of the PVI provider • Loss of highly skilled workforce as PVI sector would not match the salary of the LA • Impact on sufficiency - reduced number of places available • Large number of redundancies result in negative media attention • Could impact on public perceptions of Children's Centres • Lack of opportunity for access to universal services - decreasing early identification / intervention opportunities
Option 4 – A combination of Options 2 and 3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See options 2 & 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See options 2 & 3

Consultations with parents and carers

Invitations to consultation events and workshops were sent to 887 parents/carers.

20 parent/carer consultation events have taken place across the 10 centres
49 parent/carers attended those (i.e. 5.5% of those invited)
4 events had no parent/carers attend
5 events had 1 parent/carer attend
8 events had 5 or less parent/carers attend
2 events had 6 parent/carers attend
1 event had 9 parent/carers attend
a total of 14 Elected Members attend 11 events

Whilst the majority of parent/carers who attended the sessions were working parents, there was also representation from parents who used part-time and sessional care, together with a few who were parents whose children were due to start nursery in the next few months/weeks.

Key findings

- (a) For parents who had children who are due to start primary school in September 2012, disruption caused by two transitions was a significant concern.
- (b) Working parents felt that their capacity to remain in work was compromised for a number of reasons:
 - as fees are higher in a lot of other day nurseries, many parents felt they would be unlikely to afford them and would therefore give up work as a three-hour session would not be long enough to undertake even a part-time job
 - unwillingness to move to another provider due to a perception that the quality is not as good as that in the Children's Centre, particularly in relation to staff qualifications and pay.
 - where other family members help with the care of the child because they live local to the Children's Centre, if the child had to be moved to another provider outside of the area, it may impact upon the extended family's ability to continue with that support
- (c) Parents who currently access Working Families Tax Credit will be affected by this option as they are required to be in work for a minimum of 16hrs per week
- (d) Radford and Stoke Heath were the two areas where there was the most concern about local availability and choice of alternative childcare.
- (e) If the children in the nurseries were predominantly 'vulnerable' then would the nursery become stigmatised and seen as an extension of Social Care and therefore not promoting social inclusion. Some parents questioned whether the city council would introduce a 'screening process' in order to identify 'vulnerable' families
- (f) If the centres ceased to offer day care for children under 2 years, questions were raised as to how the centres would ensure that those children, if placed in a PVI setting, would receive family support services.

- (g) There was concern that under the preferred option the centres would cease preparing meals on site but for many 'vulnerable' children, the cooked lunch at the nursery may be the only proper meal they receive.
- (h) A majority of parents accepted that the fees should increase, but as with the on-line survey, the view was that to increase fees to the amount that would make the nurseries viable would be too high to be affordable i.e. £250 - £300 per week
- i) Many parents asked about the potential to increase the occupancy and whether that, in turn, would increase revenue and allow the nurseries to continue to run as they are

On-line survey

The survey opened on August 14th and ran until November 12th

237 parents have responded to the consultation through the online survey

188 are current users of the service

68 used the nursery for full day care

57 used sessional care

33 used sessional care and paid for some additional 'wrap around' hours

Key findings

- (a) 83 (42%) parents are concerned that they will not be able remain in employment, with 58 (26%) being in full time employment and 51 (23%) being employed part time.
- (b) 38 (19%) are concerned about their ability to remain in education/training
- (c) 83 (37%) parents said the sessional times quoted would no longer meet their needs.
- (d) 133 (60%) parents would not be able to pay the £250-£300 per week estimated cost of maintaining the current level of service; less than one in five would be able to.
- (e) 105 (55%) parents had some concern about disruption to children that may be caused by implementing in April, as many of these children will be going on to start primary school in September 2012, having changed childcare provider once already this year
- (f) Some concern that private settings do not, in some parents' opinions, offer the same quality as Children's Centre day care
- (g) 123 (56%) parents access the Children's Centres on foot. Concerns were raised over accessibility of local private provision for carless households
- (h) 153 (68%) parents said they would have to find alternative provision if the proposed model were to be implemented. However, 46 said they did not know, or weren't sure, where to get advice on what alternative provision is available in their area and suggested the Council could provide such advice as one means of supporting them through the transition

This has been addressed through referrals to the Family Information Service and each centre holding information about alternative provision in the local area

Suggestions made by parents in response to the options presented included:

- Could nurseries continue to offer provision for those children who are due to start primary school in September 2012 to avoid the disruption
- If there is a high demand in some areas and very low in another, would the Council consider closing one/some and enhance the provision at another
- Could the nurseries offer some additional 'wrap around' services so that parents could buy some extra hours, for example during the lunch time or at the beginning and/or end of the day. This is particularly in relation to parents accessing Working Tax Credits.
- Would the Council consider exploring a 'business model' for centres in areas where there was a lack of provision, recognising that whilst it would result in a significant fee increase, it would allow them to continue to offer a service for parents in that area

COVENTRY SAVE OUR CHILDREN'S CENTRES!
RESPONSE TO THE ABC REVIEW OF DAY CARE IN
SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Our campaign and this response includes the views of parents from Children's Centres across the city, '*Coventry Women's Voices*' and the *National Childbirth Trust Coventry Branch* which have been collated throughout the consultation period

August – November 2011

For further information please contact Samantha Lyle on samlyle2001@hotmail.com or
Caroline Wood on caza_wood@yahoo.co.uk

Please vote against the reduction of Sure Start day care services and maintain Labour's pioneering work on social inclusion and tackling child poverty – thank you for taking the time to read our response.

Overview of our response

- Sure Start's main aim is to reduce social exclusion and child poverty through the provision of many services including day care. Universal access is a defining feature of Sure Start.
- Children are born into their circumstances and do not become 'in need' once they reach two years old.
- The first step in preventing child poverty is to encourage parents to undertake training to enable them to gain employment and stay in employment with the provision of affordable child care.
- As of 29.09.2011 39 parents are concerned that they would no longer be able to remain in employment, 17 are concerned about their ability to remain in education and 33 parents stated that the sessional times would no longer meet their requirements.
- Scrutiny Board noted that as of 29.09.2011 44 parents expressed concerns about disruption that may be caused for children that are moving to primary school in September 2012, having changed child care provider once already this year.
- The fundamental service review has been commissioned to prioritise access for the most vulnerable children and families rather than for working parents but many working parents are vulnerable on low income with little or no family support. Many

only have access to public transport and are therefore limited to the nurseries they can access.

- There is abundant evidence that shows that narrowly targeting any type of services does not work especially those which are prone to stigmatisation.
- There is concern that the holistic approach with vulnerable families will not be carried out by private nurseries.
- Having a balance of different children from different backgrounds provides positive role models for all children and promotes social inclusion. A room full of children with for example language delay will not help those children who need good modelling.
- A significant proportion of parents accessing children's centres day care are isolated as they are a lone parent or have English as a second language and have little or no support from families.
- If some children's centres are reduced to part time, term time only they will be unable to provide sufficient places for children on CAF's and child protection plans. There will also be reduced availability of staff members/key workers to attend meetings with parents, case conferences and CAF meetings that do not necessarily fit within sessional times to ensure the safeguarding of our children.
- There are significant dangers to vulnerable children during the school holidays. Provision is necessary to safeguard the most vulnerable children as supported by social care.
- PVI's main cost cutting comes by employing less qualified staff and paying at least 50% of them the minimum wage. This proposal asks currently well remunerated and

valued childcare practitioners to enter into a private labour market that prioritises profit over remunerating practitioners' skills and experiences appropriately.

Rationale for our campaign and reasons to reject the preferred option

Evidence based strategies for our city: We believe that because our city has high levels of inequalities, the Sure Start programme is an important part of a much needed strategy of social inclusion in our highly segregated city. We believe that it takes many years to see the long term benefits of programmes like Sure Start and a fundamental aspect is the day care provision. There is increasing evidence to show that it works, that its good for workers, parents, children and therefore it is not too much of a stretch to say all of our citizens. We believe that although Sure Start nurseries provide just 7 percent of the city's day care provision, it is a vital part of our city's infrastructure and to lose or reduce it would be to all our detriment.

Excellence in day care provision: Sure Start nurseries are one of the most well received services that this Council operates and has become a leading provider of day care services in terms of excellence. By its own review the Council leads the way for PVI nurseries. We believe that the Council's staffing costs represent a much truer picture of the cost and therefore value of day care services. We believe that the private sector devalues childcare practitioners and children by paying its workers much lower wages than the Council currently does. We recognise that the vast majority of day care workers are women and that this is a profession that has historically and presently remains lowly paid and poorly recognised. To insist on childcare practitioners to accept low wages in the private sector contributes to gender inequality via the gender pay gap.

Parents not potholes: We believe that, while a review may be necessary in these unprecedented financial times, the Council should extend not reduce the provision of day care and look to new business models to make it pay, as well as prioritising it over other budgets. If, as we are constantly told, we are in unprecedented financial times why are

potholes and the Olympics taking priority over social inclusion, hard working parents and children?

Substantive responses to the executive summary

'The Fundamental Service Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres has been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer from Sure Start Children's Centres, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families.'

Our response: Firstly, Council officers and Councillors have been talking as though day care services are being subsidised. Another perspective would be that they are not being run using the most efficient business model. The Council could do a number of things to improve financial efficiency that do not include reducing the service. For example much more could be done to increase capacity at some Centres and, over time, a more efficient mix of staffing grades could be put in place. Some parents have indicated that they would be happy to pay higher fees; a sliding pay scale could be put into effect. Alternatively, the Council could decide to recognise the important role of the service and *choose* to subsidise it as many other services are. Labour Councillors could challenge the government's cuts and work with Councils across the country to lobby the government and hold it to account for its election promises - not to touch Sure Start. We suggest that this Council put its energies into defending a flag ship Labour policy and lobby national government to put the ring fence back in order to protect Sure Start services including day care provision.

Secondly, we believe that providing a service for the 'most vulnerable children and families' is a fundamentally flawed concept for a number of well evidenced reasons. For example, because of the close relationship between child poverty, social in/cohesion, education attainment and parental employment, one of the fundamental tenants of the Sure Start programme is social inclusion (Department for Work and Pensions, 2002). The programme aimed to increase social inclusion by helping parents and children who were at risk of social exclusion through a whole range of courses and activities. The then Labour government recognised a number of fundamental foundations that needed to be in place to achieve this. Providing high quality childcare was one. Another was making the services universal in order to avoid generating stigma around the programme. Compelling parents to participate in such

programmes and activities is acknowledged not to work. The most successful way of ensuring that those most in need do access programmes is to promote them to everyone. In turn this produces another form of social cohesion by bringing together communities of parents who might otherwise live in ignorance, or worse fear, each stigmatising and demeaning the other.

Extract from executive summary

'Reduce provision from full time care to part time (sessional) care for children over 2 years. ie sessions of a specific length, 3 hours for example, rather than all day from 8.00 am – 6.00 pm'

Our response: We recognise that day care for the under two's is the most expensive aspect of the service, just as it is in the private sector. However, we believe that only providing sessions to the over two's utterly undermines Sure Start's commitment to helping parents back into work as paid maternity leave is drastically reduced by 6 months and ends once a child is 9 months old. Furthermore, it undermines Sure Start's commitment of promoting social cohesion and also undermines the Council's alleged commitment to the provision of services for the most vulnerable families. It does this by failing to recognise that children are largely born into their circumstances, families have multiple and complex needs which day care provision can help to address. Needs do not and will not wait until a child turns two years old.

The provision of sessional-only care will inevitably lead some parents into a childcare trap, leaving them unable to make steady and strong pathways into employment with such limited sessions available. In order to access some benefits parents are forced to work 16 hours, however the review suggests only providing sessions which total the free entitlement of 15 hours. This clearly demonstrates that the Council is only interested in providing a service for parents who currently do not work, which merely compounds those parents' social needs. The preferred option seems to ignore the needs of parents who work more than 15 hours a week and presumes that they do not need the current service simply because they are working. This fails to understand the complex needs of families and assumes that working parents have a monopoly on good parenting skills and are equally able to assess and access private nursery

provision. Private nursery provision is very patchy across the city and therefore not a sufficient number of places are available.

Parents currently using the Sure Start service are more than happy with it and therefore want to continue to use it. They would also like current and future siblings to enjoy the same service.

Please vote against the reduction of Sure Start day care services and maintain Labour's pioneering work on social inclusion and tackling child poverty – thank you for taking the time to read our response.

APPENDIX 2C

Children, Young People, Learning and Culture Scrutiny Board (2) - 13th October, 2011

abc Review of Day Care in Children's Centres – Parent/Carer Consultation Outcome – consideration and recommendations

Consideration by the Board

1. The Board considered a briefing note giving details of the consultation process relating to the Cabinet's preferred option for the future delivery of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres (including statistics on attendances at consultation events and responses to an on-line survey) and of the key findings to date. It noted that the consultation would last for 90 days, ending on 12th November, 2011.
2. The Board discussed the information in the briefing note and questioned the relevant officer on various aspects of the process and findings. Points raised by the Board were:
 - the low attendances at the consultation events, despite 900 letters being sent out to parents/carers and efforts made to publicise them, and the low response to the on-line survey. It asked the officer to try to find out why this was the case and to make efforts to contact "hard to reach" parents, using ways other than letters e.g. telephone, home visits
 - whether an Equalities Impact Assessment had been done. The Board noted that an assessment had been undertaken at the commencement of this review, but that this now needed to be further developed to reflect the outcome of the consultation and parents'/carers' responses
 - whether parents had been given information about the alternative provision available. The Board were told that the Family Information Service had sent out explanatory leaflets and offered to hold workshops
 - the need to reassure parents/carers that the quality of alternative provision was good
 - starting the proposed new childcare arrangements in April would be too disruptive for children due to start primary school in September
3. Two parents whose children would be affected by the proposed new arrangements attended the meeting at the invitation of the Board and gave observations on the proposals.
4. The officer indicated that the following issues raised by those responding to the consultation would be considered further:
 - the provision of day care in Radford and Stoke Heath, where there was a lack of alternative provision
 - the impact the proposals might have on those parents/carers currently accessing Working Families Credit and whether/how this could be mitigated
 - the provision of additional "wraparound" services so that parents/carers could buy extra hours
 - where there is high demand in one area and low demand in another, whether one centre could be closed/reduced and provision enhanced at the other
 - exploring a "business model" for centres in areas where there was a lack of provision, recognising that whilst this would result in a significant fee increase, it would allow them to continue to offer a service

Recommendations

Having considered the briefing note and the information/undertakings given by the officer, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- 1) that the results of the consultation so far be forwarded to the Cabinet, with the request that it take them into account when making its decisions on this issue, along with any further findings arising during the remainder of the consultation period.
- 2) that the Scrutiny Board supports the view that starting the new child care arrangements in April would be more disruptive than necessary for those children due to begin primary school in September and therefore it asks the Cabinet to consider delaying the start until September 2012.
- 3) that the Cabinet be requested to consider allowing each of the City Council's children's centres to organise its own sessional day care provision, so that it best meets the needs of the parents/carers who wish to use it.

Consultation with staff

Nursery staff have been able to access a number of Briefings where Early Years and HR officers were in attendance to answer questions. A 'Frequently Asked Question' board was set up on the consultation website. Questions raised both to the briefings and those sent in by individuals and groups have been posted there. There are currently 93 questions and a full response submitted by the Nursery Managers (see below)

A majority of the questions and responses by staff related to employment, terms and conditions, such as –

- Position of the G4 and their ability to be able to move to a G3 post
- Pay differentials, including p/t TTO and leave entitlement
- Opportunities to take ER/VR
- How salary protection works
- The status of individuals on Maternity Leave
- Vacancies/secondment opportunities in other areas of CLYP
- Concerns about the move to decrease the G4 posts and increase G3 posts and the potential impact on quality
- How would the decision be made re: the role of Deputy in those settings where there are more than one G4 post?

Other issues raised -

- What is the status/entitlement of those people who move to a seconded post?
- Would staff be supported in writing CV's and interview techniques?
- What would be the selection criteria if there were more people than there are posts available?
- Term time only part time hours restricts access to training and development opportunities
- Significant concerns were raised about the retention of staff who are unwilling/unable to move from full time to part time because they can't afford to do so
- Questioned the service's ability to attract sufficiently qualified staff to maintain the current quality if a majority of the current staff leave?
- There was a strong feeling that the minimum level of staffing will not allow time to support release time to provide the current level of family support/Common Assessment Framework etc
- What is the implication of the posts being city wide and not attached to a specific Children's Centre?
- How will the Local Authority determine the definition of 'vulnerable'?
- How will vulnerable children be supported during school holidays?
- Given the fact that the nurseries will be caring for predominantly vulnerable families who could have complex needs, how will the current staffing structure allow time to attend case conferences, Core Group etc?
- Will there be further changes under the CLYP FSR?

Nursery Managers met and submitted a collective response which raised the following points –

Whilst Managers recognised that some of the intensive aspects of family support may require specialist training, many of the nursery staff are already equipped and contributing to I components of family support within their current role e.g. parenting advice, CAF, SC plans and assisting with the outreach programme that stretches across the city. The proposed model aims to target those families who are considered to be vulnerable and as a result the need for family support could increase.

Their proposal was to have full time staff employed in a dual job role - am nursery, pm family support for nursery families. This has been forwarded to the FSR Team

Questions and Answers

Daycare Consultation Process

1. What does 0.9 mean on the proposed staffing structure?

A. This is 0.9 of a full time equivalent post. In the proposed structure this reflects two part time (20 hours per week) on a term time only basis.

2. Has there been consideration given to joining nurseries together?

A. This would either mean closing one nursery to expand another or creating more places in one nursery and reducing provision in another.

3. Is there an expectation that grade 4 post holders will apply for grade 3 posts?

A. This will be an individual decision and discussed at 1 to 1 meetings. Should an employee apply for a lower graded post they would be afforded salary protection, appropriate. Levels of earnings will be protected up to a maximum value of 10% of the former earnings level for a period of three years or until the new earnings reach the former level, whichever is the sooner. During the period of protection increments and cost of living rises will not be paid. Thus the 10% is related to the earnings "frozen" at the point of transfer to the new job.

Where the employee accepts a post on less hours as suitable alternative employment pay protection will be applied pro rata to the hours worked.

In circumstances where the loss of income exceeds the 10% protection ceiling then the value of the whole of the 3 year 10% protection can be paid over that three year period in ways, which meet individual or operational need. No more than 50% of the 3 year value can be paid in any one of the 3 years.

4. What is the difference between grade 3 and grade 4?

A. The grade 3 range is from £15,039 to £17,161, grade 4 ranges from £16,830 to £20,198. There is an overlap of two salary points.

5. Grade 3 posts do not undertake planning and do not have key children so is this going to be left to grade 4 post holders?

A. No changes had been proposed to the grade 3 job description, except for references to flexibility. However if it is felt that the job description does not

accurately reflect the job requirements then this can be considered as part of the consultation process. Staff working in a nursery would all be working to the requirements of the EYFS, and that includes observation and assessment and key working

6. What will be the situation if through the EYFS there is a requirement that all staff are Level 3 qualified?

A. The Service operates in accordance with the Welfare requirements with 50% of staff being qualified to this level. It would be an aspiration to have all staff obtain Level 3 but if colleagues now obtain this qualification they would not automatically gain promotion.

7. As more than half of the posts will be at grade 3 who will be given priority for these Posts?

A. This will need to be discussed further with trade union representatives.

8. When did the consultation process begin?

A. Formal consultation began on 9th August 2011 for a period of 90 days. TU colleagues have indicated that a 30 day consultation period is adequate and that it commenced on 15th September.

9. Can a request for ER/VR be made at any time?

A. The corporate scheme will end on 20th September however colleagues can select this option following their 1 to 1 meeting.

10. Is term time only the only option being considered as this could result in more vulnerability as in certain centres the provision is used more during school holidays?

A. The Children's Centre offers all year round services and provision and consideration would need to be given as to how vulnerable families could be supported during the holiday periods.

11. Are cooks included in the new structure?

A. As the provision will be on a part time basis it is proposed that meals will not be provided, the cook positions will therefore be disestablished and the proposal is that

notices will be issued by the end of December. This will be discussed further with trade union colleagues.

12. If an employee is seconded to a grade 5 post will they receive a promoted salary?

A. An employee will be paid the appropriate rate for the higher level job they are undertaking (where the full duties of the higher post are undertaken for periods in excess of one month, backdated to the start date)

13. How many Children and Family Worker vacancies are there?

A. There are 7 x grade 5 Children and Family Worker posts and 3 x 18.5hr Family Assistant posts.

14. Staff may not understand the role of a grade 3 post if they do not currently have any in the nursery?

A. If the proposed changes are implemented there would be a full induction programme for all staff so they fully understand roles and responsibilities

15. If staff are on maternity leave is the consideration for VR the same?

A. Yes.

16. If staff are seconded to alternative posts how will their positions be back filled?

A. There will be a need to move staff around to accommodate this and if necessary to employ agency staff.

17. Is there any comparable information as to the salary scales within the PVI?

A. Information can be obtained by contacting the Family Information Service through coventrycis@coventry.gov.uk or a self search on <http://coventry.fsd.org.uk>

18. Where on the grade 3 range will staff be placed?

A. This will depend on an individual's current salary position and will be discussed at 1 to 1 meetings.

19.Why has it been decided that Radford and Moathouse will have am and pm provision?

A. This was determined on the basis of need although we now have an opportunity to consider this.

20.How will the provision respond to parental issues and queries within the new management ratio?

A . The structure will have an extra grade 3 position within the structure.

21.If there are sickness absences within another nursery could staff be moved across the city to cover?

A. This already happens, and will continue to do so, but only with the agreement of the staff.

22.Can staff be degraded from a grade 4 to a grade 3?

A. It is not intended to downgrade posts.

23.Will grade 4 post holders automatically move into grade 3 posts?

A. This needs to be discussed with trade union colleagues.

24.Are there issues regarding the ratio for SEN ?

A. The Children's Centres have been fortunate in having the facility to offer additional support to children with SEN. However, this is over and above the requirements of Ofsted.

25.If seconded to another post can staff still apply for VR?

A. Yes, they retain the same rights as their colleagues.

26.Can you explain the role of MDTs?

A. The Multi Disciplinary Teams consist mainly of family support teams focusing on very vulnerable families.

27.How would the responsibility for deputising be undertaken specifically if there are 2 grade 4 posts?

A. Advice would be sought as to how this would operate, although the responsibility would be in all grade 4 job descriptions consideration would have to be given to how this will be implemented.

28.Would deputising affect the grade of the post?

A. This would only apply if the cover was for a continuously long period such as sickness cover when colleagues would receive an acting up payment.

29.What about an annual leave entitlement?

A. Although annual leave cannot be taken during term time a payment is made within the annual salary along with a payment for bank holidays.

30.How many MDTs are there?

A. 6

31.Has there been any thought given to the use of the empty rooms?

A. No detailed consideration but there may be an expectation that these are used for family support. The Space could also be used to offer additional services such as Health programmers, Adult Education etc.

32.Could you explain the current situation with the peripatetic posts?

A. These are on hold until after consultation, they have been ringfenced for nursery staff.

33.Do the Grade 3 and Grade 4 job descriptions have to go through job evaluation?

A. At this point they are not considered significant changes so there will be no need to go to job evaluation.

34.Has a buy out of hours been considered?

A . No, however a request can be made by trade union representatives for this to be considered formally by management.

35.Is a buyout payment subject to tax and national insurance deductions?

A . Yes.

36.Are all posts available to all staff?

A. This will be discussed further with trade union representatives.

37.When will staff know the outcome of their application through the corporate redundancy scheme?

A. Normally it is a few weeks after the closing date, which is 20th September, however consultation ends on 12.10.2011.

38.What consideration has been given to the continuity of care for the children?

A. This will be taken account of when determining the models.

39.When will staff know the outcome of the parental consultation and the cabinet decision?

A. The intention would be to try and advise staff as soon as possible, a full communication plan would be put into place. Hopefully this would follow the Cabinet Report being approved on November 29th 2011

40.The feeling is that parents do not understand the impact of the changes?

A. A request will be made at ABC Board to ask if more detail can be provided to parents. The Board may consider an update Newsletter to parents.

41.Would there be a possibility of shadowing an employee currently on the bumped redundancy list?

A. There is a need to maintain the service provision but managers will try to be as flexible as possible and it is hoped that colleagues will help by backfilling posts where this may be necessary.

42. Is there a criteria of how parents will be selected?

A. There is currently work being undertaken as part of the FSR to agree a common definition of 'vulnerable'

43. How do you calculate redundancy if you currently work term time only?

A. There is no difference between the calculations for term time and full time.

44. With regard the day care review and staff hours and pay scale changes would you be able to calculate the expected monthly income for the following; level 3 TTO, level 4 TTO, level 3 20 hours a week.

A. See attached chart

45. If competitive Interviewing take place what is the process and will the EYTLs be part of the selection panel ?

A. Competitive interviews will be used as part of selection for secondment opportunities with the appropriate MDT manager involved. In relation to the posts within the proposed structure a selection criteria will be used which is still to be agreed with trade union colleagues. At present competitive interviews are not part of this criteria, this may change through the consultation process.

46. When will parents know of the proposed staffing structure ?

A. Not until we have been to Cabinet on November 29th as it will not be until then that we will have an agreed structure and an implementation plan that has been through the political process.

47. On the sample model for Tile Hill the ratio of qualified staff is less than the 50% Ofsted requirement ?

A. The proposed model is made up of 100% qualified staff, i. e. G 3 will have a Level 2 qualification

48.Can a staff member on an existing secondment express an interest for the MDT posts?.

A. The secondment will be open to nursery staff only at this point.

49.How many G5 SFSW posts are vacant?.

A. We are currently undertaking an audit of vacancies. We will share this with teams when we have the details.

50.How many G4 outreach Peri posts are vacant ?.

A. See above.

51.Will staff qualified in EYP secure their posts in favour of those staff without ?

A. Everyone will be subject to the agreed selection process.

52.Will staff qualified in EYP get preference to citywide location ?.

A. As above.

53.Can a staff member who wishes to become a childminder be trained in Food Hygiene whilst still in post, paid by CCC via WFD?.

A. The re-training option is available to employees who wish to train for work within the Council or outside of the Council. Choosing this investment package, will, by definition, mean that the employee is utilising the investment and will not be seeking enhanced early retirement or enhanced redundancy payments.

Retraining for alternative work whether inside or outside the Council will be undertaken in the employee's own time. Excepting in circumstances where that retraining is provided directly by the Council and there is no replacement cost for the employee absent from their usual place of work. (See Security of Employment Agreement).

54.Some staff are happy to move to 20 hours TTO as long as they can remain at a G4 level

A. This can be further discussed at 1 to 1 meetings.

55.Some staff are happy to reduce to 20 hours as long as they can remain initially at a

local centre (understanding that the post is citywide as and when required).

A. Assurances cannot be given about employees' preferences and how the redeployment in to the posts will happen until everyone has had their 1-1 meeting.

56.When will the proposed Family Support Model be shared

A. We don't have a model for Family Support - if there are any they would be part of the FSR on early Intervention that is currently underway.

57.It is felt that at 20 hours TTO @ G6 the Sessional Manager post will not be able to attract staff of a high calibre as opposed to an AYR G6 Sessional Manager.

A. The post of Sessional Care Manager has leadership and management responsibilities and we would hope this will attract people who have these skills and abilities.

58.Could a TTO Sessional Care worker apply to become a PT AYR G4 Outreach worker as this will give continuity to families in respect of keyworker and CAF LP ie for 2year funded children .

A. When we are able to release the Peri posts that are currently being held, the nursery staff will be able to consider them as a redeployment opportunity. There will however first have to be discussions regarding preferential consideration and ringfencing.

59.If a staff member works as a Nursery Worker on 37 hours @ G4 AYR and within the process reduce to TTO at G3 , will that staff member receive 70% of their wage for one year and have a protected salary for three years ?

A. See answer to question 3.

60.If nurseries are term time only what happens to the most vulnerable children as this is the time when they become more vulnerable?

A. See question 10

61.What happens if no staff takes up these hours as they will be on less than half wages and could not afford the drop in salaries?

A. We hope that sufficient staff will opt to stay and work in the nurseries. If we were to be in the unfortunate position of not having enough staff we would go through the normal recruitment process

62. Apart from the few peripatetic workers jobs that have been frozen what other avenues are open to those who will be out of a job?

A. During the 1 to 1 meetings the options will be explained as part of the Security of Employment Agreement. Colleagues will have the options to volunteer for redeployment. They will then be given access to view any vacancies that arise that are available for redeployees and will be given preferential consideration

63. Why were we lead to believe that it would be around 50% cuts to the service - this is 75%?

A. The cuts are a 50% reduction based on staff, from 110 to 55. However, the reduction in the hours has resulted in a greater reduction in fte staff overall.

64. With the new proposal how can you expect the same standard of care?

A. The nurseries will still be well within the Ofsted requirements in relation to numbers and qualifications.

65. Noting the number of social care families we have how can we attend the core groups and case conferences and complete the complex work this involves. This is already extremely hard when we are full time and fully staffed. Where is the safe guarding that we thought was paramount to Sure Start?

A. We have built in an additional G.3 to each centre over and above the ratios required to help alleviate some of the pressures. However we do recognise the challenges this may bring.

66. There will be too much pressure on the Sessional Care Manager if she is expected to take on more than one post and continue to offer a service to the families when working 20 hours?

A. The sessional Care Manager will, only have one post / one set of responsibilities which are specific to the role.

67.How can the manager attend meetings, case conferences, etc if they are in the afternoon? Attending these meeting is vital for the welfare and safeguarding of our children?

A. This is something we will have to consider further.

68.Where do we fit in time for staff meeting, supervision, one to ones, and training?

A. These should be feasible with the additional G3 in post and the posts will be p/t for 39 weeks of the year, whilst the nurseries will only be over 38 weeks; thus allowing an extra 5 days to support CPD / training etc. opportunities.

69.If we reduce to Grade 3 how will that impact, as apparently they are not required to do observations, write reports or change nappies?

A. See Q5 and Q14

70.What happens if staff are off sick who provide cover?

A. We have built in an additional G.3 to each centre over and above the ratios required to help alleviate some of the pressures. However we do recognise the challenges this may bring.

71.Will voluntary redundancies be available again if this plan is approved?

A. Following consultation and during the one to one meetings colleagues will be asked if they wish to apply for voluntary redundancy.

72.How can staff apply for secondments and what is available?

A. Details have already been circulated regarding the application process for the secondments to Children & Family posts. Secondments may be available for other posts advertised particularly if they are temporary.

73.Will there be a freeze on jobs in the Education Dept. and not just in CLYP e.g. teaching assistance SEN workers etc. to accommodate the amount of job losses we will have?

A. We are working with H.R. and the Recruitment Team to explore how we can offer the best support to those who may seek alternative employment.

74. Will there be help for staff with CV's and interview techniques?

A. Yes – staff can access the corporate training and / or specific training can be arranged.

75. Will there be other changes made after the full service review?

A. We have no idea as yet, as to what if any changes may result from the F.S.R.

76. How do the council expect staff to pay a mortgage, provide for a family, etc. on a part time, term time only contract? This was asked by a member of the team who is a single parent.

A. Options will be available to staff and these will be discussed at 1 to 1 meetings.

77. Please can the terms and conditions of the "Buy Out" and redundancy schemes be explained in more detail as staff could really hear the gentleman from HR last night.

A. The calculation for redundancy is based on an employee's age, length of service and weekly salary. There is a redundancy calculator on the intranet which can provide an estimated figure. A buy out has not yet been formally requested by trade union colleagues, should this be the case further discussions would be necessary to agree a criteria.

78. How do we express an interest in the redeployment?

A. At the 1 to 1 meeting.

79. What Jobs are actually available?

A.

80. If people are successful in secondment what conditions will be available to them?

A. The person would be appointed to the terms and conditions of the post they are selected to cover.

81. When the secondment finishes what happens then? Will staff still be entitled to VR/ER? Will they have a job to come back too?

A. As their substantive post will remain in the Nursery Daycare area they will continue to be included in the consultation process, will be invited to a 1 to 1 meeting and given the options that are available to them, which may include VR/ER.

82. If a staff member gets turned down for VR/ER in October would they be guaranteed it in March?

A. Initially requests for volunteers for redundancy will be made, if there are too many colleagues applying or not enough then the selection criteria will be applied.

83. If a staff member is on secondment at present and the finish date is due to finish in December is there still a chance of extending that if need be?

A. A discussion would need to take place based on the individual circumstances.

84. If you get a peri/family support post, can you request a job share or flexible working hours?

A. All full time posts are open to job share, unless exempt, the working pattern would be discussed with the Service Manager. A request for flexible working can be made however it would depend, having considering the needs of the service whether this can be supported.

85. Are the peri/family support post permanent positions?

A. If this is in relation to the MDT secondment opportunities, these posts are temporary until March 31st 2011

86. Can staff bring their children to nursery? (Even when working in nursery or peri)

A. We have a policy on Childcare for Staff and we will continue to follow that.

87. If you are working in peri full time, will you still have the option to have time off in the school holidays, (if other workers are Term Time Only)

A. There would be no automatic right to take leave during school holidays. A request for leave would have to be considered and approved by the Manager, although they would try and accommodate employee's requests.

88. If we are TTO and we have an emergency and need to have time off, how do we take it? (i.e. our child is ill, do we take it as holiday and make it up, unpaid leave, etc)

A. This is normally covered by taking unpaid leave through 'the Emergency Leave for Dependence Policy', however an agreement may be reached with the manager that a member of staff can 'make up' the hours at an agreed time.

89. With nursery posts going to sessions TTO, some people may be forced to take up a second job to make up the loss of wages. How flexible are staff expected to be in these situations?

A. There would be an expectation that colleagues work the contracted sessions. Should they choose to accept an additional post elsewhere they should notify their line manager.

90. With the large amount of money we are expected to be saving, why are we ordering resources etc. from expensive companies, rather than looking at a cheaper option? E.g. buying from Wilkinson's for art resources or materials rather than ESPO or TTS etc

A. The City Council is bound by Procurement requirements and through that there are preferred suppliers that we have to place our orders with.

91. How are staff supposed to do training or meet with parents or be party to family support meetings or meet with the manager for 1-1's appraisals or to discuss concerns re their key children, as ratios do not permit?

A. See Question 65

92. Are you expecting all staff to undertake key worker responsibilities for the children even if they are level 2 and inexperienced?

A. We will obviously be seeking to recruit staff who have had experience of working in a daycare setting. All members of staff will have access to professional developments, opportunities and be supported by their managers and other colleagues to develop their skills.

93. Are you expecting the staff to maintain developmental records for a group of up to 8 children in their own time- if not when?

A. We have built in an additional G3 post over ratio to help to support some release / cover time. The opening hours will be 15 hours and staff will be appointed on a minimum of 20 hours which will also support the extra work pressures.

94. Who will deputise in the sessional care manager's absence whilst maintaining appropriate ratios?

A. The G4 post(s) will have Deputy responsibilities though we will need to further explore how this is managed where there are more than one G4 in post.

95. At Stoke Heath, we currently have children who attend Stoke Heath Primary School with a member of staff for their grant education place. These children will not be able to attend in the morning as the sessions are full so what will happen to these funded children from April for their last term?

A. We recognise this is a real concern for many staff and parents and we will consider how to support these children.

96. I have recently completed Triple P accreditation for primary care and also seminar. As a requirement of attending the training a contract was signed by myself and the nursery manager to agree a commitment for delivery. Failure to deliver the required 50 primary care sessions and 3 seminars in the first year may not be met now with the threat of redundancy and the agreement suggested that if so then individuals would be responsible for the cost- approximately £900 in total. What will happen it will be out of my hands and I cannot deliver if I have no role?

A. We will follow this up with colleagues in the Parenting Programme and Children's Centre Managers, but we hope that those individuals who have undertaken the Triple P Programme will continue 'business as usual' for the next 7 months and hopefully this would allow sometime to meet at least some of the delivery requirements.

However, individuals will not be personally responsible for any costs incurred as a result of not being able to fulfil the training obligation.



Coventry Teachers' Association,

NUT Office,
Hearsall Primary School,
Kingston Road,
Coventry,
CV5 6LR.

Tel. 024 76670182

Fax. 024 76715792

coventry.nut@btconnect.com

Mobile: 07958 985 614

12/11/11

Response to consultation on Sure Start day care provision

Dear Chris

I am responding to the consultation on day care in Sure Start Children's Centres on behalf of the Coventry association of the National Union of Teachers which represents trade unions across the city.

We recognise that early intervention with vulnerable children can help to lay the basis for a better life and that the establishment of Sure Start was a great achievement of the previous Government. Centres were opened across the city to provide a universal service.

Educational practice and theory shows that a good social mix of mixed ability is best for advantaged and disadvantaged children. Most parents understand that it makes no sense to funnel children with a range of needs into one provision to the exclusion of others. Even worse the excellent support given to the centres by trained teachers has now been withdrawn.

The Sure Start Children's Centre Planning Guidance indicated that Children's Centres were a key delivery mechanism to achieve the objectives of ***Every Child Matters***, and a key part of early years' service delivery by local authorities. By reducing the day care element of the provision, we believe that this demonstrates that **every child clearly does not matter**.

We are already way behind other countries in terms of child care. Coventry NUT is totally opposed to the proposed changes and urges Coventry City Council not to reduce the child care day provision in the Sure Start centres which will result in the loss of jobs of trained child care workers and also lead to less quality child care in the city.

We would therefore wish to make the following points:

1. We should be looking at ways of **investing** in child care across the city to ensure that women in particular can return to employment with ease and be assured that their children are cared for in quality affordable child care settings. Rather than a consultation on reducing the provision, we should be ensuring that this provision is expanded.
2. Many working parents are on low income with little or no family support. Part time/flexible contacts are increasing. The day care provision provided by the Children's Centres, although only 7% of the total number of child care places across the city, is of such a high quality and of such importance, we cannot afford to lose this provision.
3. Many women struggle with child care in the holidays and day care provision in these centres needs to be provided throughout the year.
4. There are struggling parents in all walks of life, and the reason for Sure Start's success is that it is universal, it should be there to support anyone who needs it. Sure Start was set up to stop problems before they happen and to improve social mobility, reduce inequality and tackle social problems by bringing people from all backgrounds together to help each other. These cuts will take the heart out of the provision.
5. Councillors, instead of considering cuts to this service, should be reaching out to communities and trade unions to seek a way of setting up a city-wide campaign to challenge this government's assertions that the money has been ring fenced. These aspirations for social mobility set out in the original proposals for Sure Start, mean nothing without the money to implement them. Axing local authority budgets, which leads to reduced public services and social provision, takes away the very means by which adults and children can maximise their potential in life. There is nothing fair in such an agenda. This must be challenged.

We were horrified to read that the City Council is considering closing completely a number of Children's Centres in the city. We are totally opposed to this proposal and will be contributing to that consultation in due time

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Nellist". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Jane Nellist
Joint Divisional Secretary

Appendix 5 - Costing Methodology - Day Care Option for 2012/13

Preferred Day Care Option

Staff Costs	£802,731
Grant Income	(£452,355)
Parental Income	(£68,907)
Running Costs	£265,500
Total	£546,969
Budget - EIG	£1,585,978
Savings achievable 2012/13 (Full Year Implementation)	£1,039,009
Additional costs if delay implementation till Sep 2012	£462,047
Savings achievable (Part Year)	£576,962
Additional income if charging £5/hour from Apr-Aug 12	(£108,303)
Savings achievable (Part Year)	£685,265

Costing Methodology for Scenario 2b

25 hours per week - morning sessions only at 7 settings, morning and afternoon sessions at 2 settings (including 2 hours of wraparound at 2 settings open pm and 1 hour at other settings). Includes 30 mins set up and 30 mins clear up.

Staffing are funded at mid scale points and posts are funded on term time only basis.

Figures are based on accommodating:-

Children Numbers

144 (3 and 4 year olds)
136 (2 year olds)
280 Total

If the implementation is delayed until September 2012, the additional costs will be £462,047 and result in the achievable savings of £576,962 in 2012/13.

If implementation is delayed and additional income is raised from April – August assuming parental fees are increased from £3.75 to £5 per hour. This will create £108,303 additional income and result in the achievable savings of £685,265 in 2012/13.

Assumptions:

Delayed Opening until September 2012: Assumes expenditure and income levels are in line with the 2010/2011 financial year (i.e. occupancy/staffing levels). Increased income assumes same number of sellable hours, but at an increased rate (i.e. £5 not £3.75).

Opening from September 2012: Assumes general occupancy level at 85%, although a more prudent take up of wraparound has been included.

All parental fees set at £5 per hour.

Assumes a similar level of running costs to previous years, except for groceries. Assumes continuing level of income for 3 and 4 year old entitlement (15 hours per week funded from Dedicated Schools Grant). Assumes that the only 2 year olds accessing the provision are those receiving free entitlement (10 hours per week funded from Early Intervention Grant).

INTERIM

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM
Fundamental Service Reviews**

Background/ Scope

Name of review	DAYCARE IN CHILDREN'S CENTRES
Project Lead	ANDY PEPPER
Project Manager	JANE GOODYER & CHRIS WAINWRIGHT
Officer completing EIA	DAVID WOODHOUSE
Other members of EIA Team	Chris Wainwright

1. Briefly describe the purpose of the service on which this review is being carried out

As is, the service provides Full Daycare places for children birth to 5 years at ten of the 23 Children's Centres around the city. Daycare supports some parents and carers in training and/or employment, others who access part-time care and some who only access the free entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds. Approximately 7% of total childcare places are provided through the Children's Centres.

The most recent statutory guidance makes clear that although the Local Authority has a duty to assess childcare provision and ensure that availability is sufficient to meet the local need, actually providing full daycare directly is not a feature of the Children's Centre core offer.

2. Who does this service affect or benefit, and in what way? e.g., school children, all Coventry residents etc.

In the communities served by the ten Centres, children from birth to five years old and their parents and carers can access full daycare services through the Children's Centres. The review proposes changes to this model – the recommended option would see the Centres offering

sessional care places instead of full daycare for three- and four-year-old children, while retaining support for vulnerable 2-year-olds, and/or allowing private providers to meet the demand for daycare services, where possible.

3. What do you know about any equalities issues for this type of service both in Coventry and nationally?

Daycare staff at all grades are predominantly female, reflecting the wider pattern within childcare in general – the DCSF publication *Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2008* reports "between one and two percent" of the childcare and early years workforce being male.

There is some concern nationally that newly-arrived and BME families, especially those without proficiency in English, do not take advantage of formal childcare, including Daycare, often because they are unaware of the options available to them – formal childcare arrangements often being different or even non-existent in their culture – or because they "need reassurance about the quality of childcare and about the potential benefits for themselves and their children".

There is a dearth of useful information, locally and nationally, with regard to the religion or sexual orientation of either staff or service users, but one limited study has suggested that LGB parents may tend to prefer informal childcare to formal. This is not considered to be a firm conclusion as the studies in question were working with small datasets and were not controlled for other socio-economic factors.

The daycare service offered through the children's centres is taken up by both working and non-working families, however there is not sufficient provision for all working parents to access the subsidised Children's Centre daycare offer (nor is there any requirement upon the authority to make that level of provision available, since sufficiency is defined to include private provision in addition to services offered by the Council). This creates a disadvantage for working parents who do not access the subsidised offer, either through the Centres lacking capacity at the periods they need, or simply through unawareness of the offer.

Option 2 of the 19 July 2011 Cabinet Report would see the current Daycare staff transferred into private-sector employment under TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) – arrangements which would protect their current contracts and conditions. It is difficult to foresee the precise equalities impact of this, as it would involve tendering each Centre's daycare services out individually. However, since the Council would no longer be operating the service directly, and be moving into more of a monitoring and advisory role, it would be likely that we as a Council could not directly promote an equalities agenda as we are able to when supplying an in-house service; this option would certainly mean that Daycare in the city would become peripheral to the developments of the preceding Early Years and Childcare Service equalities assessment, and to any equalities aspect of the ongoing, wider Children's Centres review. Nonetheless, they would still be required to follow the Public Sector Equality Duty, as they would be providing services under contract to a

local government body.

Council pay and conditions in this sector are above the "going rate" – although, under Option 2, TUPE regulations would initially protect these staff's current arrangements, future developments would likely see a downward pressure, where statutorily possible; the Single Status framework would no longer apply to protect these skilled, "traditionally female" posts from the possibility of indirect discrimination.

Consultation

This section on consultation should be completed if this EIA relates to a new or significantly changed service- please see the guidance note on how to carry out consultation

4. Please state who you have consulted with about this service, how you have consulted, whether consultation responses have been received, plus any other relevant information.

Children's Centre daycare staff and responsible management have been engaged throughout the review through verbal and written communication, and have been key partners in collecting data and forming the options for the outcome of the review.

Responses have been delivered directly, at meetings with staff attended by members of the project team, and through contact outside these meetings between the team and Children's Centre management.

Service users have been made aware of potential changes through the Children's Centre management, with guidance from our project communications officer; responses from service users have generally been addressed to the Children's Centre managers, although we have received some written communications expressing parents' views. This has both allowed service users the chance to input into the process from an early stage, and also to provide a long notice period that full daycare at Children's Centres has been under review, ensuring that they have time to put alternative arrangements in place.

Between 14/08/2011 and 12/11/2011, service users have been consulted through a series of public question-and-answer sessions held at the relevant Children's Centres, attended by Project Board members and also in many cases by Elected Members; in addition, an online survey has been made available which collects responses to specific questions as well as allowing responders to provide free-form suggestions and commentary.

5. Please summarise the outcome of the consultation exercise.

No equalities issues were directly raised by the initial design-stage consultations with staff.

Through the later formal consultation, it appears that changing to the sessional care model will have a large impact on working parents, and on

parents in further education and training; several have reported that the hours of availability laid out in the survey questions would not allow them to continue with their current job or course, In equalities terms, this impact is likely to be greatest on single parents and/or on families where both parents are either employed or in education or training.

Some parents expressed a concern that PVI providers would be less able than the Children's Centres to support their children's needs, in particular that the standards of care would suffer from the loss of integration of daycare and other support services.

The consultation exercise is ongoing at the time of writing; this assessment will need to be reviewed in the light of the outcome of this consultation.

Data collection

6. What is your data telling you about the impact that implementation of the review outcomes will have with regard to equalities?

Please consider issues relating to race, gender (including transgender), disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, poverty, looked after children, and any other issues that you consider to be relevant- inequality is disadvantage in all forms.

Workforce Equalities

As per paragraph 5, Early Years staff potentially affected by the Daycare review are predominantly female, with only one male employee being listed in an EY/Nursery post across the relevant centres.

The 25-34 age band accounts for 52.1% of the Children's Centres' EY/Nursery workforce as a whole, with another 23.1% being in the 35-44 group.

74.4% of the workforce identify as White, and 11.6% of records are incomplete with regards to ethnicity, with the largest minority group being Asian or Asian British, at 9.0%. Black (3.3%) and Mixed Heritage (1.7%) employees are also present in small numbers. Different Centres have different proportions of ethnic minority employees; the highest (including Unknown as "ethnic minority") is Foleshill at 50%, while all staff at Middle Ride are White British.

Data on the religion and sexual orientation of staff are too incomplete to draw conclusions; in over 60% of employee records, the item on sexual orientation is unanswered (56.2%) or marked "Prefer Not To Say" (4.1%). Of those who did respond, two (1.7% of the total records) listed a homosexual orientation.

Under religion, over 50% of responses are blank, with Christian (31.4%) and No Religion (11.6%) the two most common responses where the information is available. Muslim (3.3%), Hindu (1.7%), Sikh (0.8%) and "Other" (0.8%) are also reported as responses in small numbers.

3.3% of staff reported themselves as disabled, with 15.7% not answering or explicitly refusing to provide the information. 81% reported themselves as not being disabled.

Any outcome involving staff redundancies or transfers into private sector employment would, therefore, be impacting a majority White British, and almost uniformly female workforce; however, the staff profiles of the different centres are sufficiently heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity that there could be a perception of ethnic inequality in the outcomes, if there was any appearance that the new system was harsher against (e.g.) Foleshill than against Willenhall.

That some staff do report as disabled means that further investigation must be undertaken with regard to these individuals to ensure that appropriate opportunities are available for them to transfer their skills into the new model.

The specialised nature of the work performed by the staff involved with Children's Centre daycare means that there may be few redeployment opportunities available after the implementation of the new model. In addition, wages for any staff who move to private sector employment will likely be lower – it is already established by analysis undertaken prior to this review that Coventry LA daycare staff are paid above the market levels. For some staff, this may be mitigated by the increased working flexibility a private-sector contract could provide – though this will, of course, depend on the employer.

Since there are over 100 staff working in the area affected by this Review, including 75 full-time staff, and the proposed changes will mean reducing this to 55 part-time/term-time only posts, there are significant HR implications, and it will be important to maintain clear communication with both the staff concerned and the Trade Unions to ensure that employees are not disadvantaged in the process.

Service User Equalities

Daycare take-up covers a wide diversity of ethnic groups across the Centres, with significant variation between them. Overall, 50.2% of children registered for Daycare services at the ten centres are White British; setting aside those whose ethnicity is unspecified (6.8%), the next largest group are Mixed White/Black African children (7.6%). However, for example, at Foleshill Children's Centre, just 13.8% of registered children are White British, while 25.5% are Asian Pakistani. In general, each of the ten Centres has at least one and usually more than one ethnic minority group which accounts for more than 5% of its registered Daycare children, according to eStart data.

Across the Centres, 52% of parents are White British; the range at individual Centres runs from 83.9% at Canley, to just 8.5% at Foleshill. Foleshill, however, has 19.7% of parents with unknown ethnicity.

One responder in the "other comments" area of the survey raised the

issue that many local ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses run until 12:30; this would imply that ethnic minority users of Centre daycare, under the sessional care model, will thus have to pay for the additional 12:00-1:00 hour, which will cause problems if they are unable to afford the expense.

With regard to poverty and deprivation, the Centres which currently offer LA daycare provision all serve areas which are among the city's, and indeed England's, more deprived areas, according to the IMD and IDACI indices – in six of the Centre reach areas, the average neighbourhood ranks amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England by the IMD; and the reach areas' average IDACI ratings, roughly representing the proportion of children living in low-income benefit claiming households, range from 22.2% (Tile Hill) to 50% (Foleshill). The proportion of places taken up by children whose families reside within that Centre's reach area varies from Centre to Centre, from 43% to 85%.

44.1% of responders to the online survey estimated that the proposed change would affect their ability to stay in work, and a further 19.4% believed that their ability to stay in education or training would be affected. Meanwhile, 45.2% of responders believed that the changes would make childcare too expensive for them to afford.

Less than one in five of the parents who responded believed they would be able to afford to pay fees at the £250-£300 per week rate which was calculated as necessary to make the current service financially viable. This has implications for the viability of Option 2 (19 July Cab. Rpt.). Since the organisations taking over tendered-out daycare services - and the staff employed to provide them - would be doing so under TUPE regulations, they would have to maintain the Council contracts and conditions, leaving them with little option but to raise charges to accommodate this – and most likely making the daycare service unaffordable to these more deprived families.

54.3% of responders stated that they walk to their Children's Centre, and one responder in the free-text comments section stated a concern that PVI provision may not be easily accessible for carless households. This should be regarded as a deprivation issue (The National Travel Survey 2010 reports that nationally, 49% of households in the lowest income quintile had no car, vs. just 9% in the highest quintile); support in finding alternative childcare will need to take this into account.

3.5% of children in daycare had some kind of special need. The types of need vary from behavioural disorders, to Autistic Spectrum Disorders, to physical disabilities such as visual impairment or epilepsy. Underlining the variable profiles of service users across the city, three of the centres had no children with listed special needs, and three more had only one such child, while Radford had 17 out of a cohort of 204 (8.3%).

The variability of service user profiles across the centres, along with similarly wide variability in the levels of private provision, means that the outcomes of this review will need to be tailored at a local, centre-by-centre level; any universal outcome put in place at city level would likely

have a different impact in different areas, and risk failing to meet the needs of one of the groups predominantly concentrated in one area.

Assessment

7. After implementation, will there be any areas of low or high take-up by different groups of people?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, please give details.

The recommended new model will not bring any specifically new areas of high or low take-up, but will very likely inherit the imbalances generally experienced at city and national level in the area of formal childcare, such as lower take-up by male parents and carers, challenges in attempting to engage teenage parents, and raising awareness of the available services among families with cultural or linguistic barriers to overcome.

8. Are there likely to be any barriers to equal access following implementation?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, what can be put in place to minimise the impact of this?.

The issue of gender equality in childcare staffing is likely to persist after implementation – i.e. efforts to attract higher numbers of male staff are hampered by traditionally low rates of pay and a female-dominated work "culture".

When asked whether the new model would mean that they had to find alternative childcare provision, only 15.6% of online responders answered with a definite "No"; however, only 58.4% of responders believed they knew where to get advice about their alternative options. This highlights an informational barrier that will need to be addressed by offering support and advice to parents who wish to switch to alternative provision.

A move to sessional care would create barriers for working parents who need access to Full Daycare (8am to 6pm). We would be able to mitigate this to some degree by working with affected service users to help find them alternatives to the provision they are currently using. In addition, the preferred option includes the possibility of allocating additional resources where it would not currently be possible for PVI daycare providers to provide sufficiency. There is also the possibility for centres to offer an additional hour at the beginning and end of their standard sessions (Option 1b and 2b in the November 2011 Cabinet Report), in order to fit better with part-time working patterns, and provide enough childcare availability to allow parents to work enough hours to claim the Working Tax Credit.

Since a majority of parents access the Children's Centres on foot, any significant extra distance or time in travelling to a PVI provider would potentially create time barriers for working parents, and ease-of-access barriers for multiple groups including disabled parents and expecting mothers. A parent responding to the online survey reported specific concerns over access to private provision for carless households in the Stoke Aldermoor area. This is another situation where allowing local-level flexibility will be vital in meeting local needs – in the November 2011 Report, the greater flexibility is offered by 1a and 1b.

An overall reduction in capacity, as part of making the target saving, would likely mean that "vulnerable" children referred from other agencies will have to be placed in PVI nurseries; there were concerns that the staff in the private sector may not have the skill set to support the child and their family. Resources allowing, an outreach program could be developed to mitigate this risk by supporting the setting in their efforts to provide for "vulnerable" children and families.

Option 2 (19 July) has the greatest potential implications for the affordability of daycare in the City, since it makes the savings partly by seeking to transfer our staffing costs en masse to the PVI sector, and would force the organisations to pass costs on in turn to end users; this would create a higher barrier to all users, but especially the more deprived.

9. Are there likely to be any barriers to equality of outcomes for different service users following implementation?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, what can be put in place to minimise the impact of this?.

Since the Children's Centres serve different areas of the city with widely variable demographic profiles and levels of private provision, there is a risk that any universal outcome of this review would disadvantage one area, and hence one group, compared to another. An essential part of mitigating this particular risk is to allow a variety of tailored outcome options at the level of the Centre, rather than attempting to define a single "one-size-fits-all" outcome. Therefore, although the model does prescribe sessional care in order to achieve the target saving, the recommendation is that Centres should have the freedom to organise that sessional care at a local level, according to the needs of the local community.

There was some concern raised during this design phase that the new model might result in predominantly "vulnerable" children using the Centre nurseries, and lead to a perception that the nurseries were an extension of Social Care, thus creating a stigma rather than promoting social inclusion. There was also some concern registered about the withdrawal of Centre-provided meals, since these may be the only proper meals that a "vulnerable" child receives in the course of the day.

Under Option 2 and 3 (19 July), vulnerable children and families accessing Daycare would be further removed from intervention by, and

referred access to, the additional support services that the Children's Centres provide; more so Option 3, since Option 2 does not remove the Daycare service from the Children's Centre's location, only from its organisational oversight.

It will be important to ensure that expecting mothers are aware of the changes to the model so that they can make alternative childcare plans in advance – they may be less engaged in the daycare review process than parents with children currently attending the Centre. However, the ante-natal services offered through the Centre are to continue, and likely to expand following the Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate Review – this would be an effective channel to ensure that expecting parents are kept up to date.

If the new model is implemented in April, there is an issue in that some children will have to switch childcare settings just a few months before making another switch, between nursery and primary school. This loss of stability would affect only those children using Children's Centre daycare, creating a potential disadvantage by comparison with their peers who are using other arrangements. The Option 3a-3c group in the November 2011 report seeks to mitigate this by offering means to maintain a continuity of care for these children until they move up to primary school in September 2012.

Option 3c has the greatest potential negative equalities impact of the Option 3 choices; the Nurseries to remain open would likely be selected by perceived demand, and if there were not enough children requiring daycare up to September, a small group of children from that area would be exposed to the loss of stability discussed above.

Summary

10. Please indicate which of the following best describes the outcome of your EIA. You may tick both the first two boxes if both are applicable.

- The redesigned service will have a positive equalities impact
- The EIA of this review has identified a need to address some equalities issues. Actions to address these are detailed below.
- There wasn't enough information to be able to draw any conclusions, so this EIA will be reviewed at a later date
- Implementation is expected to have no equalities impact

Developing equality actions

If this EIA has identified that this service needs to be improved in order to promote equality and diversity positively, please explain how you plan to do this.

You should develop equality actions and insert the key actions in the table below. Strategic equality actions should be embedded into operational plans.

Action	Timescales/ Milestones	Who will monitor this?	How/ where will this be embedded?
Support parents in finding suitable alternative childcare where sessional care would not meet their needs	Immediate – parents will not necessarily be able or willing to wait for implementation of the new model before arranging alternative childcare	Abc Project Officers and Team Children's Centre Managers	Early Years and Childcare Service Operational Plan and Children's Centre operational plans
Assess resource capacity to develop private - sector outreach program for the support of "vulnerable" families who may be referred to these providers	Prior to implementation of the new model	Abc Project Officers CLYP FSR as part of the review of family support in Children's Centres Team Children's Centre Managers	As part of the ongoing FSR Methodology / Project Plans
Centres to to determine specifics of their local sessional care offer in response to local need and demand	Prior to implementation of the new model	Abc Project Officers and Team Children's Centre Managers	As part of the ongoing FSR implementation and evaluation documentation.

Approval

This EIA has been completed by: David Woodhouse/Chris Wainwright

Signed (Head of EIA Team)

Name (please print)

Date

Countersigned: (Project Sponsor)

Date:

A copy of this signed review should then be forwarded to jaspal.mann@coventry.gov.uk

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

9th August 2011

Scrutiny Co-ordination

Committee Members Present: Councillor Blundell
Councillor Mrs Dixon (Substitute for Councillor Foster)
Councillor Gannon (Substitute for Councillor Ruane)
Councillor Lakha
Councillor Lancaster
Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)
Councillor McNicholas (Deputy Chair)
Councillor M. Mutton
Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Welsh

Economy, Regeneration and
Transport Scrutiny Board
(Scrutiny Board 3) Members
Present (By Invitation):

Councillor Maton

Other Members Present:

Councillor Bailey
Councillor Kelly (Cabinet Member (Education))
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Skinner

Employees Present:

C. Forde, Finance & Legal Services Directorate
J. Goodyer, Children, Learning & Young People Directorate
C. Green, Director of Children, Learning & Young People
G. Holmes, Chief Executive's Directorate
J. Moynihan, Chief Executive's Directorate
J. Parry (Assistant Chief Executive)
H. Peacocke, Customer & Workforce Services Directorate
M. Reeves (Chief Executive)
M. Salmon (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Wainwright (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)

Apologies:

Councillor Foster
Councillor Ruane

Public Business

39. Consideration of Call-in - Stage 2 - Abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres

The Committee received a report of the Director (Children, Learning and Young People) that had been considered by Cabinet (their Minute 21/11 refers) and was Called-in by Councillors Blundell, Mrs Dixon and Mrs Johnson.

The report indicated that the abc review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families. The overall remodelling of the service delivery of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been driven not only by the need to operate more efficiently, but also by national and local policy direction and local need. A number of options for the future delivery of the service had come out of the review, including: to continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over; to transfer the service, or part of it, to another provider in the Private, Voluntary or Independent sector; to stop delivering the service altogether; and a combination of the options.

The net cost of the Service was currently £1,585,978, funded through the Early Intervention Grant. Hillfields Children's Centre received no direct funding from the grant but was still part of the review as the costs associated with the service were comparable to the other centres, £149,045. A target saving had been set for this review of £0.5m in 2011/12, rising to £1.0m in 2012/13. These savings would be realised through short term, one off efficiency savings of £500k in 2011/12 and £1m in 2012/13 through £940k of staff savings and £60k in reduced running costs.

The report recommended the delivery of the service be continued in house with a reduced offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over. The preferred model of service delivery and the full rationale for selecting this as the preferred option was detailed in the report. It was proposed to undertake consultation on this option between August to October 2011, to include full participation and engagement with parents and any other interested parties in the consultation process and to give consideration to all comments and options resulting from the consultation.

The Cabinet had agreed to:

- 1) To approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.
- 2) To approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option1)
- 3) To agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework.
- 4) To agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet in October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan.
- 5) That Scrutiny Board (2) be requested to participate in the consultation process by seeking the views of parents and any other interested parties.

The reason for the call-in was:-

- 1) To further understand what form and who will be consulted in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.
- 2) To further understand the reasons why one model of service delivery is being agreed in principle at the start of the consultation, whilst other service models could be suggested during the consultation and should be afforded equal weight.

The call-in had been deemed valid by the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on advice from the Assistant Director (Democratic Services) and in conjunction with the Council Solicitor/Assistant Director (Legal Services), the Call-in reason having met the requirements of the Council's Constitution Scrutiny Rules on the Call-in Procedure and the criteria decided by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

Councillors Blundell and Mrs Dixon spoke in support of the call-in.

The Cabinet Member (Education) made the following comments to the Committee:-

- £1.8m subsidy had been provided by the Authority to support the service.
- The Authority needed to ensure value for money in its provision and that it was targeting the appropriate groups.
- There was a change in the provision of day care policy nationally that it should focus on the vulnerable. Principles have been prepared and guidance is expected in the Autumn 2011.
- There was a planned timetable for consultation that included a schedule for consulting every Children's Centre – 18 meetings arranged between 15th August and 18th September 2011.
- The consultation would be wide, not exhaustive and would include full participation and engagement with parents and any other interested parties.
- The preferred option was the model on which consultation would be based, with the purpose of offering one option being to provide a starting point for discussion.
- A survey had been drafted on which parents would be consulted, prior to it being finalised for use for the consultation.
- The consultation was genuine and would not limit the content of responses.
- Parents would be provided with full details of the options including advantages and disadvantages.
- Consideration will be given to all comments and options resulting from the consultation.

The Committee were informed by the Chair of Children, Learning and Leisure Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2), that the Board had considered the report at their meeting in July 2011 and had decided that in order for them to be part of the Consultation, Members and Ward Councillors be invited to the Consultation Meetings at Children's Centres to seek the views of parents and other interested parties with the aim of getting a comprehensive range of views from those likely to be affected. A report on the outcomes of the consultation would then be brought to the Board in September 2011, to enable them to make recommendations to the Cabinet, taking into account the consultation outcomes.

The Committee considered the Call-in, the comments of the Chair of Scrutiny Board 2, and the response by the Cabinet Member (Education) and, following a show of hands, decided to concur with the Cabinet decision.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee concurs with the decision of Cabinet:-

- 1) To approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.**
- 2) To approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option1)**

- 3) To agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework.**
- 4) To agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet in October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan.**
- 5) That Scrutiny Board (2) be requested to participate in the consultation process by seeking the views of parents and any other interested parties.**



To

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

9th August 2011

Subject : abc Review of Day Care in Children's Centres – Consultation Process

1 Purpose of the Note

1.1. To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee about the process and audience for the consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.

1. 2. To further explore the reasons why one model of service delivery is being agreed in principle at the start of the consultation, whilst other service models could be suggested during the consultation and should be afforded equal weight.

2 Information/Background

2.1 On July 19th 2011, Cabinet received a report that outlined the Fundamental Service Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.

A number of options were outlined in the Case for Change report. These include:

- 1) Continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over;
- 2) Transfer the service, or part of it, to another provider in the Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) sector;
- 3) Stop delivering the service altogether;
- 4) A combination of the above.

Cabinet agree that the Project Team progresses the preferred model of service delivery as set out in the report (Option1) to the Detailed Design stage.

2.2 On 28th July, the Scrutiny Board 2 agreed that consultation sessions should be held in each of the Council's Children's Centres and that Scrutiny Board 2 members and ward councillors should be invited to attend those meetings. The aim is to get a comprehensive range of views from those likely to be affected by the proposed changes.

A report on the outcomes of the consultation will be brought to the Board for consideration, so that it can decide what recommendations it wants to make to the Cabinet.

2.3 Officers are currently working with each centre on the consultation arrangements, planning to have them take place in the 10 centres starting w/c 15th August.

Officers have planned a meeting with a group of parents on Tuesday 9th August to enable them to consider the draft consultation document and to make any suggestions for improvement.

3 Consultation Process

3.1 Target audiences

- Parents/carers who are current or past users of day care services in Children's Centres :
 - Full time
 - Part time
 - With child/ren under 2
- Prospective users of day care service
- Private, voluntary and independent day care providers
- Children's Centre Partnership Advisory Boards
- Key stakeholders including PCT, Children's Social Care, Job Centre Plus etc
- Staff who work in the nurseries in the Children's Centres
- Trade Unions

3.2 Purpose of the consultation with parents

- To raise the understanding of the preferred option and of the support available to parents to access alternative provision for their children;
- To seek view of parents and service providers about the likely impact of implementing the preferred option;
- To identify any support that parent/carers feel they would want from the Children's Centre
- To provide an opportunity for alternative proposals to be explored and shared with elected members.

3.3 Consultation methods

The consultation process will run for 90 days though the key consultation events will take place during August and September.

- Workshop sessions will be held in each of the Children's Centres for parents/carers, involving Scrutiny Board 2 Members and ward councillors. This will be an introductory presentation about the abc Review, the options that were considered and the rationale behind the preferred option. Parents will then be invited to make either a collective or individual response to the survey.
- Invitation to complete Survey Monkey questionnaires will be sent out to service users and partnership members
- The Survey will be uploaded onto the CCC Website
- Specific meetings with identified service providers / professionals, such as Social Care, PCT Strategic Leads, will be held
- Presentations at Children's Centre Partnership Advisory Boards will be delivered
- A consultation workshop with day care providers in the private, voluntary and independent sectors is planned for September

The consultation list is not exhaustive and the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services gave a clear commitment at Cabinet to consider all submissions relating to this review.

4 Preferred method of delivery of day care in Children's Centres

- 4.1 A review of day care in Children's Centres had been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer from Sure Start Children's Centres, with a target saving of £1m.
- 4.2 The review was part of the Year 2 abc Fundamental Service Review programme and as such worked within the abc Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework, Following this framework requires the project team to generate a number of options, the potential implications of each option explored and the preferred option identified.
- 4.3 The overall remodelling of the service was driven not only by the need to operate more efficiently, but also by national and local policy direction, whereby resources are targeted at the most vulnerable children and families, ensuring early, timely and effective interventions.
- 4.4 Option 1 had key advantages over the other options that were considered and it was therefore presented to the Project Board, Transformation Programme Board and finally Cabinet for approval.
- 4.5 As part of the consultation on the preferred option, an additional question will be added that will invite parents and other stakeholders to identify other models that would meet service priorities and achieve the required saving of £1m.

AUTHOR'S NAME : Chris Wainwright

DIRECTORATE : Children, Learning and Young People

TEL : 024 7683 3615

CABINET

19th July, 2011

Cabinet Members
Present:

Councillor Mrs Bigham
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Duggins (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Harvard
Councillor Kelly
Councillor A. Khan
Councillor O'Boyle
Councillor Townshend

Non-Voting Opposition

Representatives present: Councillor Blundell
Councillor Foster

Other Members Present:

Councillor Auluck
Councillor Bailey
Councillor Field (For item of business in Minute 25 below)
Councillor Mrs Fletcher
Councillor McNicholas (For items of business contained in
Minutes 22, 28 and 31 below)
Councillor Nellist

Employees Present:-

H. Abraham (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
S. Bennett (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
S. Brake (Community Services)
D. Cockcroft (City Services and Development Directorate)
F. Collingham (Chief Executive's Directorate)
M. Coult (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Forde (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
J. Goodyer (Children, Learning and Young People)
C. Green (Director of Children, Learning and Young People)
B. Hastie (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
S. Heawood (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
S. Iannantuoni (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Moynihan (Chief Executive's Directorate)
D. Nuttall (Community Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)
H. Peacocke (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Wainwright (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
M. Yardley (Director of City Services and Development)

Others present:-

M. Kipps (PricewaterhouseCoopers)

Apologies

Councillor Mutton
Councillor Skipper
B. Messinger (Director of Customer and Workforce Services)
M. Reeves (Chief Executive)
B. Walsh (Director of Community Services)
C. West (Director of Finance and Legal Services)

Public business

25. abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which indicated that the abc review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families. The overall remodelling of the service delivery of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been driven not only by the need to operate more efficiently, but also by national and local policy direction and local need.

The abc review of council run day care in Children's Centres covered the 10 centres in Middle Ride, The Barley Lea, Canley, Tile Hill, Radford, Foleshill, Hillfields, Stoke Heath, Moat House and Bell Green, which together provided 7% of childcare places available across the City. There were a total of 23 Children's Centres in the City, three run by the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector (PVI's), one a maintained Nursery School, with the remainder being council services. The remaining centres did not offer day care as part of the core offer.

Nine of the Children's Centres were directly subsidised through the Early Intervention Grant at a total net cost of £1,585,978. Hillfields Children's Centre received no direct funding from the grant but was still part of the review as the costs associated with the service were comparable to the other centres (£149,045). A target saving had been set for this review of £0.5m in 2011/12, rising to £1.0m in 2012/13. These savings would be realised through short term, one-off efficiency savings of £500k in 2011/12 and £1m in 2012/13 through £940k of staff savings and £60k in reduced running costs.

Sure Start Children's Centres were part of the local system of universal services for all children under five years and their families, and provided access to seamless integrated services and information. Children's Centres operated in a number of different contexts and through different delivery models determined by local need and levels of deprivation. They were a key vehicle for improving outcomes for young children whilst helping to reduce inequalities between the poorest children and their peers.

The Statutory Children's Centres core offer included integrated early education and day care, child and family health, family support and improving access to training and employment. However, recent Children's Centre Guidance removed the duty to provide day care 8am – 6pm referring to the need to ensure it was available rather than the requirement to provide. The Childcare Act 2006 imposed a statutory duty on local authorities to make sufficient provision of childcare to meet local needs and states that day care provision should only be made by the local authority when there is no other provider able or willing to do so. The 2009 Children's Centres Statutory Guidance stated any planned changes to Children's Centres services, such as day care, must be fully consulted on.

A review of day care in Children's Centres was undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit Service in October 2009. The review established that;

'The Children's Centre nurseries spent a higher proportion of their budgets on employee costs compared to the private, independent and voluntary sector, paying higher salaries and overheads'

The review also found that *'the Children's centre nurseries incurred much higher costs that would not significantly improve even if full capacity were to be achieved.'*

During the review, the team collected baseline information about how the service currently works and the following conclusions were drawn:

- Local authority pay and conditions prohibits the service from ever being self financing unless the fees were increased significantly. This would probably exclude most parents and make the centres more expensive than any other provider in the city.
- All of the staff have a recognised childcare qualification, a majority at NVQ Level 3 and some managers having a Level 4. This has a direct impact on the quality of the provision
- Overall quality of day care provision in Children's Centres is better than a majority of providers in the PVI sector
- Parents were not actively seeking places in Children's Centre in order to access or self refer for additional family support
- Currently 70% of parents using the day care are in work and/or training and of the 159 children who are taking their place in September, 141 are working parents – 88%. Therefore, those parents could use other PVI providers
- Places for vulnerable children were restricted due to the high take up of places by families who are less disadvantaged and require less support.
- All providers in the Children's Centre reach areas had vacancies for children under 2 years and most had vacancies for children over 2 years so a reduction in capacity would not have a significant impact on sufficiency

In light of the baseline findings, a design for a new service model was proposed, which took into account five key principles:

- a) The day care service can be wrapped around the family support structure. This means that nursery and Children's Centres are in close proximity to each other to maximise their mutual support in dealing with families in need of support.
- b) The day care service provides support to vulnerable children. There is sufficient capacity to take children whose parents are being supported by social care colleagues in Children's Centres.
- c) The day care service meets the needs of working parents.
- d) The day care service provides sufficient quality to meet Ofsted requirements.
- e) The day care provision in an area enables the Council to meet its statutory responsibility for ensuring nursery places are available.

Based on the above findings, there were four options for the cost effective delivery of child care as part of the Sure Start Children's Centre core offer, whilst also identifying cost savings and making improvements that will ensure a sustainable service within the context of the whole Children's Centre:-

- 1) Continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over;
- 2) Transfer the service, or part of it, to another provider in the Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) sector;
- 3) Stop delivering the service altogether;
- 4) A combination of the above.

The report recommended Option 1 above as the preferred model of service delivery and the full rationale for selecting this as the preferred option was detailed in the report. It was proposed to undertake consultation on this option between August to October 2011.

The Cabinet also considered a petition, bearing 130 signatures, requesting the preservation of the provision of child care in Children's Centres and Sure Start services, which was presented by Councillor Field, who attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners.

The Cabinet discussed the issue in detail, particularly in relation to ensuring full participation and engagement with parents and any other interested parties in the consultation process and that Cabinet would consider all comments and options resulting from the consultation.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, Cabinet:-

- 1) Approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.**
- 2) Approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option 1).**
- 3) Agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework.**
- 4) Agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet in October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan.**
- 5) Request that Scrutiny Board (2) participate in the consultation process by seeking the views of parents and any other interested parties and to consider the various proposals put forward.**

Cabinet
Children, Young People, Learning and
Culture Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2)

19th July 2011

28th July 2011

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Education) - Councillor Kelly

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Children, Learning and Young People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres

Is this a key decision? Yes

The proposal in the report is a key decision as it will result in the Council making significant savings resulting from an abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres. The proposal will also have an impact on families living or working in areas comprising of 2 or more wards.

Executive Summary:

The abc review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres has been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families.

The overall remodelling of the service delivery of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres has been driven not only by the need to operate more efficiently, but also by national and local policy direction and local need.

A number of options for the future delivery of the service have come out of the review. These include:

- 1) Continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over;
- 2) Transfer the service, or part of it, to another provider in the Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) sector;
- 3) Stop delivering the service altogether;
- 4) A combination of the above.

Currently the net cost of the service is £1,585,978 – funded through the Early Intervention Grant. Hillfields Children's Centre receives no direct funding from the grant but is still part of

the review as the costs associated with the service are comparable to the other centres (£149,045).

A target saving has been set for this review of £0.5m in 2011/12, rising to £1.0m in 2012/13.

These savings would be realised through short term, one off efficiency savings of £500k in 2011/12 and £1m in 2012/13 through £940k of staff savings and £60k in reduced running costs.

Cabinet is requested to consider the options and to approve the preferred option which will be developed more fully in the next stage of the Fundamental Service Review process.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.
- 2) Approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option1)
- 3) Agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework.
- 4) Agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet In October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan.

List of Appendices included:

None

Other useful background papers:

Fundamental Service Review – Key Milestone documents: - Located ED Room121

- KMD 01 - Project Brief
- KMD 02 - Project Initiation Document
- KMD 03 - Baseline Report
- KMD 05 – Case for Change Report

The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning. Dame Clare Tickell

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/F/TheEarlyYearsforlifehealthandlearning.pdf>

Graham Allan - Early Intervention - Next Steps

- <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/early-intervention-next-steps.pdf>

Safeguarding in the 21st Century Jane Barlow

- www.rip.org.uk

Prof. E. Munro - The Munro Review of Child Protection

- <http://www.education.gov.uk/munroreview/downloads/TheMunroReviewofChildProtection-Part%20one.pdf>

Frank Field - 'The Foundation Years' preventing poor children becoming poor adults'

- <http://www.frankfield.co.uk/files/download.php?m=documents&f=101203100838-TheFoundationYears.pdf>

C4EO Grasping the Nettle: "Early Intervention for children, families and communities"

- http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/earlyintervention/files/early_intervention_grasping_the_nettle_full_report.pdf

Ian Kennedy Getting it Right for Children and Young People. Overcoming Cultural Barriers in the NHS to meet their needs

- www.dh.gov.uk/en/publications

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes – Children, Young People, Learning and Culture Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2) - 28th July 2011

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: abc Review of Day Care in Children's Centres

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The abc review of council run day care in Children's Centres covers centres Middle Ride, The Barley Lea, Canley, Tile Hill, Radford, Foleshill, Hillfields, Stoke Heath, Moat House and Bell Green. These are the 10 Children's Centres managed by the Council and together they provide 7% of childcare places available across the city. There are a total of 23 Children's Centres in the city - three are run by the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector (PVI's), one is a maintained Nursery School, and the remainder are council services. The remaining centres do not offer day care as part of the Core Offer.
- 1.2 There are nine Children's Centres that are directly subsidised through the Early Intervention Grant at a total net cost of £1,585,978. Hillfields Children's Centre receives no direct funding from the grant but is still part of the review as the costs associated with the service are comparable to the other centres.
- 1.3 Sure Start Children's Centres are part of the local system of universal services for all children under five years and their families, providing access to seamless integrated services and information. Children's Centres operate in a number of different contexts and through different delivery models determined by local need and levels of deprivation. They are a key vehicle for improving outcomes for young children whilst helping to reduce inequalities between the poorest children and their peers.
- 1.4 The Statutory Children's Centres Core Offer includes integrated early education and day care, child and family health, family support and improving access to training and employment. However, recent Children's Centre Guidance removed the duty to provide day care 8am – 6pm referring to the need to ensure it is available rather than the requirement to provide.
- 1.5 The Childcare Act 2006 imposed a statutory duty on local authorities to make sufficient provision of childcare to meet local needs and states that day care provision should only be made by the local authority when there is no other provider able or willing to do so.
- 1.6 The 2009 Children's Centres Statutory Guidance states any planned changes to Children's Centres services, such as day care, must be fully consulted on.
- 1.7 A Review of day care in Children's Centres was undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit Service in October 2009. The review established that;

'The Children's Centre nurseries spent a higher proportion of their budgets on employee costs compared to the private, independent and voluntary sector, paying higher salaries and overheads'

- 1.8 The review also found that *'the Children's centre nurseries incurred much higher costs that would not significantly improve even if full capacity were to be achieved.'*

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 During the review the team collected baseline information about how the service currently works and the following conclusions were drawn:
 - Local authority pay and conditions prohibits the service from ever being self financing unless the fees were increased significantly. This would probably exclude most parents and make the centres more expensive than any other provider in the

city.

- All of the staff have a recognised childcare qualification, a majority at NVQ Level 3 and some managers having a Level 4. This has a direct impact on the quality of the provision
- Overall quality of day care provision in Children's Centres is better than a majority of providers in the PVI sector
- Parents were not actively seeking places in Children's Centre in order to access or self refer for additional family support
- Currently 70% of parents using the day care are in work and/or training and of the 159 children who are taking their place in September, 141 are working parents – 88%. Therefore, those parents could use other PVI providers
- Places for vulnerable children are restricted due to the high take up of places by families who are less disadvantaged and require less support.
- All providers in the Children's Centre reach areas have vacancies for children under 2 years and most have vacancies for children over 2 years so a reduction in capacity would not have a significant impact on sufficiency

2.2 In light of the baseline findings, a design for a new service model is proposed, which takes into account five key principles:

- a) The day care service can be wrapped around the family support structure. This means that nursery and Children's Centres are in close proximity to each other to maximise their mutual support in dealing with families in need of support.
- b) The day care service provides support to vulnerable children. There is sufficient capacity to take children whose parents are being supported by social care colleagues in Children's Centres.
- c) The day care service meets the needs of working parents.
- d) The day care service provides sufficient quality to meet Ofsted requirements.
- e) The day care provision in an area enables the Council to meet its statutory responsibility for ensuring nursery places are available.

2.3 Based on the findings, there are four options for the cost effective delivery of child care as part of the Sure Start Children's Centre Core Offer, whilst also identifying cost savings and making improvements that will ensure a sustainable service within the context of the whole Children's Centre.

Option 1 A transformed service delivered in house

Introduce a 'mixed economy' of provision determined by local need, which would include:

Reduce provision from full time care to part time (sessional) care for children over 2 years. This would mean that no children under the age of 2 years

would have access to a day care place in a Council run Sure Start Children's Centre

A review of management structures and job descriptions

Transfer the Social Care day care budget to the Early Years' Service who would then act as the broker in securing places for vulnerable children.

Option 2 Transfer the service to another provider

Progress an open tender process, whereby all centres have the day care delivered as a commissioned, outsourced service but remaining in the Sure Start Children's Centres.

Staff would be subject to Security of Employment and therefore TUPE arrangements would be in place for those staff wishing to transfer from the local authority to a PVI provider.

This option is not recommended for the following reasons –

- Achieves the savings in theory but has additional resource implication in terms of TUPE arrangements.
- Lose the skills and experience of some staff if they choose to leave the service, preferring not to work for a PVI provider
- Loss of skills if PVI provider re-structures organisation and make changes to terms and condition
- Intervention can only happen on the invitation of the PVI provider
- Nursery could be seen as independent to the Sure Start Children's Centre rather than integral to it, and would cease to be an integrated centre
- Potential to have inconsistent structures such as staffing and fees across the centres if some were managed by a range of PVI providers, which may be confusing for parents.

Option 3 Stop delivering the service

Close all the day care provision in the Sure Start Children's Centres and work with providers in the PVI to deliver this element of the Core Service This option would result in the redeployment or redundancy of all staff

This option is not recommended for the following reasons –

- If vulnerable children are placed in PVI settings, the Sure Start Children's Centre will have to provide an outreach family support service which is not as cost effective as the services being on the same site. There could be additional travel involved and it may be that there is only one child in that setting that would require additional support.
- Lack of swift response to Family Support
- Intervention can only happen on the invitation of the PVI provider
- Loss of highly skilled workforce as PVI sector would not match the salary of the LA
- Impact on sufficiency – significant reduction in the number of places available
- Large number of redundancies

- Could impact on public perceptions of Sure Start Children's Centres
- Lack of opportunity for access to universal services - decreasing early identification / intervention opportunities

Option 4 A combination of Option 2 and Option 3

Outsource day care services in some centres and cease service delivery in those remaining.

This option is not recommended for the reasons outlined above

2.4 Recommended Proposal

Option 1 - A transformed service delivered in house

i.e. Reduce provision from full time care to part time (sessional) care for children over 2 years. ie sessions of a specific length, 3 hours for example, rather than all day from 8.00 am – 6.00 pm

Rationale for selecting this as the preferred option –

- This fully supports the policy direction of the Children, Learning and Young People abc review in relation to early intervention and Sure Start Children's Centres role in prevention, early intervention and intensive service delivery.
- Review of the management structure and job descriptions fits with the Council's aim to improve management structures and reduce the layers of management to improve efficiency and communication across the organisation.
- Retains the skills of 46% of the current workforce and a revision of the job descriptions supports the move towards a more integrated and flexible workforce.
- Loss of 301 full day care places is offset by the creation of 300 part time places thus lessening the impact on provision overall
- Provides more places for vulnerable children, specifically those who would be funded under the expanding 2 Year Old free entitlement.
- Achieves the target saving of £1 million allocated to the review.
- Potential to make additional savings in the Social Care budget as increased numbers of vulnerable 2 year olds become eligible for up to 10 hours per week of grant funding.
- Family support services are based within and integral to the centre and therefore the services are easily accessible and more cost effective.
- Management of the Social Care childcare budget by Early Years would provide a coherent and consistent approach to the allocation of places, specifically vulnerable babies and young children.
- Provides an opportunity to develop a meaningful partnership with childminders and the PVI day care sector.
- Some of the rooms in the centres would be made available for the provision of additional family support services and may also support opportunities for the co-location of integrated services.
- Reduction of places leaves in place the infrastructure to enable the centres to remain flexible in meeting childcare demand in the local community.
- Working in a more targeted way would lead to more children/families being assessed, which, in turn, would potentially increase the number of children/families being supported through a Common Assessment Framework (a standardised approach to conducting an assessment of a child's additional needs and deciding

how those needs should be met) and a reduction in the number of referrals to social work services.

- Fewer parents would need to seek alternative day care provision as there are many who only take up sessional provision

3 Consultation

3.1 Official consultation will take place August to October 2011.

3.2 To date, the review has engaged key stakeholders and feedback has been reflected in the Case for Change Report where appropriate.

3.3 Information has been shared and feedback sought in the following ways:

- Parents currently using the day care were surveyed in order to ascertain the reasons for choosing the provision in Sure Start Children's Centres
- Parents who currently use the nurseries have received updates on the process and parents who are enquiring about places have been made aware that there is a review being undertaken. Feedback has been received from parents in relation to this.
- Parents have all received letters assuring them that they would receive three months notice of any changes to their current day care arrangements with the centre
- Managers of the nurseries have been meeting every month/six weeks and their views have been sought on possible options.
- Staff have contributed to the review's understanding of current and future service delivery through workshops, on-line exercises, surveys and potential models of delivery and since October 2010 staff have been invited to attend termly briefings
- The Project Managers have met with the Trade Unions on a regular basis and TU representatives have attended a meeting with Sure Start Children's Centre Managers to discuss possible options.
- The Project Managers and Project Lead have met with Cabinet Members and portfolio members on a regular basis.
- The Steering Group and Board have met regularly as an integral part of the process

3.4 A formal consultation process involving parents, staff, members and trade unions will form part of the next stage of the review. This will be guided by the local authority's Statutory Duty to consult on any proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres. Views of Scrutiny members will be sought as part of the consultation process.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1

Seek Cabinet approval to progress options	July 2011
Undertake design planning and produce a Detailed Design Plan	July – September 2011
Consultation with Trade Unions, parents and other key stakeholders on proposed options and revised structure commences	August – October 2011
Brief all staff on the proposed options and the revised structure	July 2011
Project Team receive responses to the consultation	October 2011
Consultation period ends	October 2011
Project Team's final response to the option	October 2011
Seek Cabinet approval to approve implementation plan	October 2011

Revised/new Job Descriptions submitted to Job Evaluation Panel.	November 2011
Staff notified of the process for deployment to new structure, including opportunities for ER/VR	November to 30 th December 2011
Job matches/interviews for new posts	November to 30 th December 2011
Appointments	November to 30 th December 2011
Redundancy notification letters issued	By December 30 th 2011
Implement new model of service delivery	April 2012

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

The Council's financial plans include savings arising from this review of £0.5m in 2011-12 rising to £1m in a full year.

The review has looked at a series of options and is recommending Option 1 to be implemented from January 2012. This would achieve a full year saving of £1m from 2012/13.

The saving of £500k required in 2011/12 will be achieved by a mixture of part year savings from implementing the option from January 2012 and managed short term efficiency savings, eg delays in filling vacant posts in other Early Years areas.

5.2 Legal implications

The public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 came into force on 5th April 2011 (under EA 2010 (Commencement Order No 6) Order 2011). Decision makers must have due regard to avoid discrimination and advance opportunity for anyone with the relevant protected characteristics which are disabilities, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. "Due regard" requires more than just an awareness of the equality duty. It requires rigorous analysis by the public authority, beyond broad options.

Consideration needs to be given to any possible impact on vulnerable children, safeguarding procedures and support under the Common Assessment Framework. At the present time it is believed that the recommended option will not have any negative effect on safeguarding procedures and support under the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). The Family Support Teams in Sure Start Children's Centres are not part of this review and therefore those resources will still be in place to support vulnerable children and families. Additional training and development opportunities in safeguarding procedures are currently being planned for the PVI sector to ensure they are better equipped to support vulnerable children and families. There will be no changes to any arrangements or commitments made to services where a child has been subject to a Care or Supervision order.

This will need to be reviewed once the consultation has been concluded, in light of any concerns raised.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The proposals contribute to the council's core aims of: ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution; making places and services easily accessible.

The service will have a greater focus on targeting and supporting vulnerable children and their families. This will particularly benefit those children who will be referred to the Children's Centres by other agencies such as health and Social Care as they will be able to access the 2 Year Old funding entitlement in a local, community based ,high quality early years setting. This is particularly significant given recent research that –

'a child's development score at 22 months can serve as an accurate predictor of educational outcomes at 26 years ' (Early Intervention – The next steps . Graham Allen)

6.2 How is risk being managed?

As part of the abc programme, the review is subject to regular monitoring and review including risk management. The risk register is regularly reviewed by the project team and project board.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

If Option 1 is accepted, then this will result in a significant reduction in staffing levels required. There are currently 118 staff employed within the Children's Centre Day Care provision and the revised service delivery model may result in a 54% reduction. This will be considered as part of the consultation stage with staff and the trade unions and the Council's Security of Employment agreement will be observed. In addition, working practices such as revised roles and responsibilities, management structures and change of work locations for staff will also form part of the staff and trade union consultation stage.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

The Early Years and Childcare Service currently has an up to date Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) which is service specific and relates to the Children's Centres

Work on an EIA specific to this option is at an advanced stage and will conclude before the official consultation begins. It will include and take account of the following:-

- a) A full assessment of the impact of the proposals on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and will include recommendations for mitigating any adverse impact on those with relevant protected characteristics
- b) Will be in line with any existing local policy on EIAs:
- c) Any actions required are sufficiently clear with appropriate timescales:
- d) Ensure that the consultation process enables those with limitations in understanding and/or communicating to participate fully in the consultation process from the start;
- e) That it clearly sets out the nature of the Public Equalities Duty in order for decision makers to address themselves to the right questions when considering the impact on persons with relevant protected characteristics, e.g. race, disability, pregnancy,

maternity, age etc. and consideration of whether any positive steps need to be taken to accommodate groups with protected characteristics.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment –

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The proposed model will facilitate working relationships and partnership arrangements with local PVI providers in the Children's Centre reach areas in order to ensure that families receive a seamless service. This could be particularly beneficial to PVI sector as they may increase their admissions and as a result be supported in their financial sustainability. The preferred model provides opportunities to identify potential partners who could be co-located on the Children's Centre sites where space has become available

Report author(s):

Name and job title: Jane Goodyer, Head of Early Years and Childcare.
Chris Wainwright, Neighbourhood Services Manager, Early Years and Childcare.

Directorate: Children, Learning and Young People

Tel and email contact: (024) 7683 2272/3615
Jane.goodyer@coventry.gov.uk Chris.wainwright@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Jane Goodyer	Head of Early Years and Childcare	CLYP	03/06/11	23/06/11
Chris Wainwright	Neighbourhood Services Manager	CLYP	03/06/11	17/06/11
Rachael Sugars	Finance Manager	CLYP	14/06/11	20/06/11
Neelesh Sutaria	HR Manager	CLYP	08/06/11	23/06/11
Mike Coult	Assistant Director – Programme Office	Transformation Project Office	10/06/11	23/06/11
Andy Pepper	Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)	CLYP	13/06/11	21/06/11

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Officer	Customer and Workforce Services	09/06/11	14/06/11
Jo Moynihan	Communications Officer	Chief Executive's Offices	20/06/11	21/06/11
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Rachael Sugars		Finance & legal	14/06/11	20/06/11
Legal: Rebecca Knight	Senior Legal Officer	Adult and Education Legal Team	13/06/11	16/06/11
Director: Colin Green		CLYP	10/06/11	23/06/11
Members: Cllr Lynnette Kelly			20/06/11	23/06/11

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