

CHILDREN'S CENTRES UPDATE

To: Children's and Young People's Committee

Meeting Date: 11th July 2017

From: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Executive Director, Children Families and Adults
Theresa Leavy, Service Director: Children's

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: n/a

Purpose: To update Members on the Children's Centres public consultation.

Recommendation: To be aware of work done to date and timescales for future engagement and public consultation.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This paper updates Members on work done to date on the Children's Centres Programme in Cambridgeshire. This work is part of the Children's Change Programme and seeks to ensure that the work of Children's Centres supports the transformation of services for children and families, particularly the youngest and most vulnerable, whilst delivering the agreed savings target. (£1 million (Business Plan Ref A/R 6.224) in 2018/19)
- 1.2 "We want Cambridgeshire to be a place where all families have the opportunity to thrive, and, we will ensure, where it is safe and in their best interests, our children will live within their families and communities. We will support those families with high quality services that support good outcomes for all our children."
Children Change Programme Vision statement

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Within the Children's Change programme, there is a commitment for the Children's Centre service offer to be at the heart of District-based provision, linking across higher tier provision. This will ensure that Children's Centre services are clearly accessible for our most vulnerable families, and able to respond to the increasing complexities and higher levels of need emerging in the county.
- 2.2 In addition the following themes inform the work within the Children's Centre work programme:
- The move towards Child and Family Centres, which work a flexible day/week/year and can accommodate children across the ages and need range
 - Closing the gap in the outcomes of vulnerable children by bending resources towards priority groups
 - Opportunities for integrating the delivery of services with health and other partners at a District level
 - Building capacity in the provision of child care places in Cambridgeshire
 - Ensuring that Child and Family Centres support families to become more resilient and able to be involved in their communities

3. THE NATIONAL PICTURE

- 3.1 A plan for a national consultation on the future of Children's Centres was announced in September 2015. This is yet to be published, despite a number of announcements from Government indicating that it is imminent. Children's Centre provision has been maintained to a good level and standard in Cambridgeshire during this period of uncertainty; and the future service offer proposal will fit within the requirements of the statute for Children's Centres in the absence of clarity from Government.
- 3.2 Officers have been involved at a national level in participating in an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Children's Centres. This APPG concluded that the expertise and ways of working with families which have evolved during the SureStart era should seek to address the wider needs of more vulnerable families. Activity in Cambridgeshire to respond to this

proposal has included the considerations about Child and Family Centres which places Children's Centre experience and expertise within the wider Children's change programme. A second national response came from the Children's Commissioner in October 2016, with the publication of 'Family Hubs - A Discussion paper' suggesting how a whole family approach could support vulnerable children.

4. CHILDREN CENTRE PROVISION OF THE FUTURE

- 4.1 Work has taken place to model a Child and Family Centre service offer which will have evolved from the current Children's Centre offer and would extend across the 0-19 age range, with a particular focus on families with identified vulnerabilities, we do not anticipate that all of our existing 40 centres would meet this criteria. The future Children Centre provision would be delivered from a number of dedicated Child and Family Centre buildings, alongside delivery from other Council buildings and 'pop-up' locations. It should be noted that current Children's Centre delivery takes place in around 120 places across Cambridgeshire, in addition to the existing 40 centres themselves.



- 4.2 The proposed Child and Family Centres themselves would be family-accessible spaces, in areas of the county with high population and need, where really closely integrated services

will have the greatest impact. These centres will need to operate around a flexible week be open through the year and be suitable for all age children and families. They would provide support for our most vulnerable children; together with a way of coordinating family support across the age range within a family, and across other services where required.

- 4.3 The Joint Commissioning Unit (JCU) gives us the opportunity to develop further integration with Community Health provision. This could include integrated pathways for families which are jointly designed and consistently delivered across Cambridgeshire.
- 4.4 The summary of the rationale of pre-existing provision within each area is shown in Appendix 2.

5. IMPROVING CHILD CARE SUFFICIENCY

- 5.1 The realignment of building use which is under consideration will result in freeing up space in some Children Centre buildings for additional child care provision. Certain conditions exist in respect of the use of former SureStart grants for Children's Centres including ensuring investment continues to be used for families with children under 5, and these conditions will be fully adhered to.

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 6.1 A public consultation will be launched about the proposed Child and Family Centres on 17th July 2017, and will close on 22nd September. The draft consultation document (appendix 1) sets out the proposals and the intended locations for service delivery across Cambridgeshire. The proposals will describe the provision across the four quarters outlined in the picture above and the detail of this at a District level. The proposals have been informed by engagement (as described below) there has been to date.
- 6.2 The consultation will be followed by a further period of transition to new service delivery models from November 2017, with an intended completion date of April 2018.

7. ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

- Officers and Members have been engaged in an ongoing dialogue since May 2016 to understand the current Children's Centre offer and consideration on how these services might look going forward.
- From July 2016, this work was aligned with the emergent Children's Change Programme which placed the Children's Centre work within a district delivery structure.
- A members Seminar was held regarding the future direction of Children's Centres on the 13th January 2017. This presentation included the development of Child and Family Centres, as well as designing our future service delivery around a place-based approach.
- Initial discussions with current providers of Children's Centres within Cambridgeshire have taken place in February 2017, to help to develop early ideas around this work. (this included Children Centres operating from schools)

- Between 20th and 29th June place-based meetings have been held in each District to engage with officers and partners from District Councils, Health, communities, etc to discuss service delivery and collaboration.

8. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Resource Implications

8.1.1 Please refer to paragraph 1.1 of this report.

8.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

8.2.1 There are no significant implications within this category at this time, implications will be presented at the CYP Committee in October following full consultation

8.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

8.3.1 Please refer to Section 6 of the important whereby a Public Consultation is taking place.

8.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

8.4.1 The Community Impact Assessment (CIA) will be presented at the CYP Committee in October following full consultation

8.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

8.5.1 Please refer to Section 6 and 7 of this report

8.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

8.6.1 Members from CYP Committee have previously received a number of updates regarding Children Centre proposals and further information can be found within the draft consultation document

8.7 Public Health Implications

8.7.1 Please refer to 4.3 of this report

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade
Have the procurement/contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes or No Name of Officer:
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Richard McAdam

Law?	
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Theresa Leavy
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Matthew Hall
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Theresa Leavy
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes or No Name of Officer:

Source Documents	Location
<i>Family Hubs: a discussion paper</i> (Children's Commissioner, 2016)	http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publications/family-hubs-discussion-paper