



# Equalities Analysis Assessment

<b>Name of proposal</b>	<b>Children's Centres Savings Proposals</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Alastair Pettigrew</b>
<b>Other stakeholders</b>	
<b>Start date of Equality Analysis</b>	<b>May 2015</b>
<b>End date of Equality Analysis</b>	<b>June 2015</b>

<b>Title of Project</b>	Budget Savings Proposal: Children's Centres
<b>Lead officer</b>	Alastair Pettigrew
<b>Other stakeholders</b>	Children and young people; Parents and families; Children's Centre providers; MPs; local councillors.
<b>Start date of Equality Analysis</b>	May 2015
<b>End date of Equality Analysis</b>	June 2015

### **1: Background to undertaking an Equality Analysis**

- 1.1 This Equality Analysis Assessment (EAA) is being undertaken to identify whether budget proposals to re-shape the Children's Centres and their services will adversely affect Lewisham's children, young people and their families and whether it will negatively impact upon protected characteristics<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Lewisham Council has already reduced its revenue budget by £93m since May 2010. The Government's continued squeeze on public spending means that the Council needs to make further savings of around £85m over the next three years. The proposal to re-shape the Children's Centres and their services is one of the savings proposals which was put forward in September 2014.
- 1.4 This EAA will be a scoping exercise to try to identify the service users that may be affected by the proposal, and to identify and understand any potential negative impacts from taking the savings proposal forward, together with developing mitigating actions to minimise any negative impacts identified. This EAA will contribute towards the decision making process.
- 1.5 This EAA will:
- (1) consider whether the proposal is compliant with the new public sector duty;
  - (2) consider the impact of the proposal;
  - (3) analyse whether the proposal is likely to have a positive or negative impact on different protected characteristics within the local community; and
  - (4) identify mitigating actions to address any disproportionately negative impact.

<sup>1</sup> Protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership (only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)

## **2: Changes to the service**

### **2.1 Statutory duty - what needs to be provided:**

Local authorities are required to make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated way that facilitates access to services and maximises the benefits to children, parents and prospective parents. The arrangements made under section 3(2) of the Childcare Act 2006, as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, must include arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.

### **2.2 Current service provision:**

Children's Centres in Lewisham are commissioned out to school-based providers and a voluntary organisation. They offer both a universal and targeted service, predominantly to families with children under 5, but also work with families with children aged 0-19 particularly where older children are the siblings of younger children in the family.

It is estimated that 9721 adults (114,833 contacts) and 6988 children age 0-4 (49,504) contacts used the service between April 2014 and March 2015. This is based on usage data available to the Council through commissioned providers and entered on to the Tribal Connect database.

### **2.3 The proposal and changes to the service:**

The proposal is to re-designate some Children's Centres and re-shape some existing services from October 2015 onwards. Services and opportunities for parents to access support will continue to be provided by the Council through the Children's Centres which remain as well as maternity services and health visitors with which greater links are being developed alongside the increased links with Children's Social Care. Development of re-designated Children's Centres will be explored and could include better use of the voluntary sector and community-led provision to ensure continued delivery of services to children and families, particularly targeted support to families who need it most.

### **3: Assessment of data and research**

#### **3.1 General Context & Local Demographics:**

Lewisham is the second largest inner London borough and in 2011 was home to approximately 274,900 people (GLA population estimates) which is set to grow by around 11,000 by 2015. Lewisham has a slightly younger age profile than the rest of the UK; children and young people aged 0-19 years make up 24.5% of residents, compared to 22.4% for inner London and 23.8% nationally. Births in Lewisham increased by 34% between 2000/01 and 2009/10 and will continue to increase at a similar rate for the next 5 years.

Lewisham's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment shows that from data in 2010, Lewisham is the 15th most ethnically diverse local authority in England, and two out of every five residents are from a black and minority ethnic background. The largest BME groups are Black African and Black Caribbean: Black ethnic groups are estimated to comprise 30% of the total population of Lewisham. This rises to 77% of our school population, where over 170 different languages are spoken by our pupils.

Deprivation is increasing in Lewisham. The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation ranked Lewisham 31<sup>st</sup> out of 354 local authorities (LAs) in England compared to a rank of 39 in 2007. On the specific indicator of income deprivation affecting children, 35 (out of 166) of Lewisham's super output areas are in the 10% most deprived in the country, and 85, (over half) are in the 20% most deprived in the country. It is estimated that 20,355 children (ages 0 – 18) live in poverty in Lewisham.

#### **3.2 Childrens Centres and Ward profiles:**

There are 17 designated Children's Centres in Lewisham. Each Centre broadly delivers services to a particular ward

##### Clyde Early Childhood and Children's Centre : Area 1

Evelyn Children's Centre - Evelyn Ward  
Besson Street Gardens Children's Centre - Telegraph Hill Ward  
Hatcham Oak Children's Centre - Telegraph Hill Ward  
Amersham Children's Centre - Brockley Ward

##### Pre-School Learning Alliance: Area 2

Ladywell Children's Centre - Ladywell Ward  
Manor House Children's Centre - Lee Green Ward  
St Swithun's Children's Centre - Lewisham Central Ward  
Heathside and Lethbridge Children's Centre\* - Blackheath Ward

##### Pre-School Learning Alliance : Areas 3 and 4

Torridon Children's Centre - Catford South and Whitefoot Wards  
Bellingham Children's Centre - Bellingham Ward

##### School Based Children's Centres

Clyde Children's Centre (Area 1) – Evelyn Ward  
Beecroft Garden Children's Centre (Area 2) – Crofton Park Ward  
Downderry Children's Centre (Area 3) – Downham Ward  
Marvel's Lane Children's Centre (Area 3) – Grove Park Ward  
Eliot Bank and Kelvin Grove Children's Centre (Area 4) – Sydenham and Forest Hill Wards  
Kilmorie Children's Centre (Area 4) – Perry Vale Ward

\*Currently closed awaiting demolition as part of the regeneration of the estate.

Children’s centres provide services and support to children under 5 and their older siblings. This is focused on adopting a ‘whole-family’ approach through pulling together appropriate teams of practitioners around families to ensure all children and young people’s needs are met through multi-agency support. CC Services are currently delivered by the voluntary sector and schools across the borough at 16 designated Children’s Centres (excluding Heathside and Lethbridge) (Appendix A).

Children’s Centres are expected to secure improvements against the following overarching outcomes for children, young people and families in Lewisham:

- Improved parenting and attachment.
- Improved school readiness.
- Prevention of escalation.

### **Age**

Children’s Centres primarily provide a universal service for all children aged 0-5 years accompanied by an adult carer. The closure of any services will therefore have the greatest impact on provision to this group.

### **Disability**

Data collected from users in 2014-15 shows the following percentage of contacts were with those identifying as having a disability:

<b>Ward</b>	<b>% of 0-4 Children using Children’s Centres in 2014-15 that have a disability</b>	<b>% of adults using Children’s Centres in 2014-15 that have a disability</b>
Bellingham	1.9%	0.9%
Blackheath	1.2%	1.0%
Brockley	1.8%	0.4%
Catford South	3.2%	1.0%
Crofton Park	0.2%	0.2%
Downham	0.9%	0.7%
Evelyn	3.9%	1.5%
Forest Hill	0.5%	1.7%
Grove Park	1.4%	1.6%
Ladywell	2.2%	0.5%
Lee Green	0.3%	0.2%
Lewisham Central	1.4%	1.4%
New Cross	1.5%	0.6%
Perry Vale	1.0%	0.6%
Rushey Green	3.1%	1.3%
Sydenham	1.4%	2.0%
Telegraph Hill	2.7%	0.9%
Whitefoot	4.2%	1.1%

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Children’s Centres are heavily used by pregnant women and new mothers as the Centres offer a range of services for young families e.g. Breast Feeding Support, parenting courses and support, support for immunisations, health checks and development etc. The closure of any services will therefore have a significant impact on provision to this group.

### **Race**

The Census data from 2011 indicates that the locations where Children’s Centres are based have some of the highest proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) residents in the borough.

The ethnicity profile of Children (0-4) using Children’s Centres is as follows:

Ward	BME Population (2011 Census)	% of 0-4 Children using Children’s Centres in 2014-15 that are BME	% of adults using Children’s Centres in 2014-15 that are BME
Bellingham	51.3%	66.6%	67%
Blackheath	30.2%	39.2%	54%
Brockley	43.1%	62.7%	69%
Catford South	56.2%	57.8%	63%
Crofton Park	39.6%	43.6%	51%
Downham	41.7%	54.7%	65%
Evelyn	60.9%	72.4%	77%
Forest Hill	38.2%	56.5%	61%
Grove Park	37.5%	58.3%	58%
Ladywell	45.4%	46.3%	55%
Lee Green	33.7%	48.1%	58%
Lewisham Central	51.6%	58.4%	70%
New Cross	59.7%	71.4%	75%
Perry Vale	42.5%	49.4%	54%
Rushey Green	59.1%	65.7%	70%
Sydenham	41.8%	57.6%	63%
Telegraph Hill	49.4%	58.4%	67%
Whitefoot	50.5%	62.3%	64%

The highlighted wards are where the Centres are located for which re-designation is proposed.

The data suggests that Children’s Centres are more heavily used by BME groups than the ward profiles would suggest and therefore any reduction in service would have a greater effect on BME families.

**Gender**

The majority of adult carers who attend the Children’s Centres are female, and so the impact of the proposal will be felt most by this group.

**There is no anticipated impact relating to religion and belief, gender reassignment, or sexual orientation.**

**4: Consultation**

A public consultation exercise has been carried out in terms of changes that the Borough provides via its network of Children’s Centres in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010.

This is also a requirement set out in the DfE Statutory Guidance for Children’s Centres under the Heading “Significant changes to children’s centre provision and the duty to consult” (see page 10).

**5: Impact Assessment**

The Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that in the case of implementation of the saving proposal to fundamentally change the delivery of services currently provided by Children’s Centres, the Council has met its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, specifically:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups.

- To foster good relations between people from different groups.

The assessment of the potential impact on the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership) has been based on an analysis of service information, including available data relating to service users, and will be considered further in the light of equalities data collected during consultation.

### **5.1 Impact on Service Users:**

As the proposal is to reduce the amount of designated Sure Start Children's Centres, it is anticipated that proposals will yield a negative impact for the service user. However, many of the negative impacts that may arise from changes to the service can be mitigated through other services and actions. In addition, the Early Intervention Service, will encourage and support the private, voluntary and independent sector to run their own activities in order to supplement the core service.

#### **Age:**

The proposed will have the greatest impact upon children aged between 0 and 5 years. There is a range of provision similar to stay and play available across the borough from providers other than the Council. In addition there are existing parks and playgrounds, carer and toddler groups, childminder drop-ins, stay and play sessions, dads' stay and play, play and learn for under 5s, and many others. Existing services that will continue to be offered include signposting to other services, the two year early education offer, the universal 3 and 4 year old entitlement to the 15 hours free early education as well as the universal health visiting service.

#### **Disability:**

Several of the categories for identification of targeted families concern families where disability is an issue (Children of parents with mental health issues, Children of parents who have disabilities, Children with disabilities). Therefore any reduction in the service provided will have a greater impact on these families.

#### **Gender:**

Women are the main user group of the service, and the proposal is therefore likely to impact most on this group. It is also noted that the service is also used by fathers, who may find it harder to access alternative services.

#### **Ethnicity:**

Many of the residents of the borough do not speak English as a first language. Children's Centres are a useful service for these parents and carers. The Council will need to ensure that interpreting and translation services are available in order to communicate with these families/CYP to ensure that they get the support that they need.

The EAA has not identified any disproportionate effects relating to Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity, or Gender reassignment.

### **5.2 Impact on Staff:**

The proposal would most likely see the service provision in Children's Centres reduced. Children's Centre providers may decide to reduce the number of posts available within their Centres with a reduction in funding from October 2015.

There may be re-deployment opportunities available, but it is recognised that the economic climate has had an impact on the number of positions available.

The majority of staff employed by commissioned Children's Centre providers are female. There will therefore be a disproportionate effect on women if the proposal is taken.

**6: Decision/ Result**

Following an analysis of the available research and data it is recommended to continue with the proposal but with actions to mitigate negative impact on equality and diversity. The contract specifications for the Children's Centres will stipulate the outcomes Centres need to meet to ensure they are delivering high quality services to the communities they serve. This is monitored on a quarterly basis as part of the council's performance monitoring framework.

**Sign Off**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_