

CYP SELECT COMMITTEE		
Report Title	Children's Centres – Savings Update	Item No.
Ward	All	
Contributors	Interim Service Manager: Early Intervention Services	
Class	Part 1	Date: 12 January 2016

1. Summary

- 1.1 At the Children and Young People's Select Committee on 8th September 2015 an update was promised for 12th January 2016 meeting on the implementation of the agreed savings proposals in Children's Centres.

The purpose of this report is to update members on the implementation of savings proposals agreed at Mayor and Cabinet on 11/02/2015.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Select Committee is asked to note this update.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The following policy reviews have influenced our thinking in developing the specification for Children's Centre Contracts.
- *The Foundation Years: Preventing Poor Children Becoming Poor Adults* – the report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances by Frank Field (HM Government, December 2010); and,
 - *Grasping the Nettle: Early Intervention for Children, Families and Communities* (Centre for Excellence & Outcomes in Children & Young People's Services, October 2010)
 - *The 1001 Critical Days – The Importance of the Conception to Age 2 Period* (Cross Party Manifesto, January 2015)
 - *Five to Thrive* model (<http://www.fivetothrive.org.uk/resources/>) Five to Thrive is an attachment based model which helps local authorities, health trusts, schools and children's centres to deliver a consistent, effective message in working with parents, carers and young children themselves.
 - *Early Intervention: The Next Steps . An Independent Report to Her Majesty's Government* by Graham Allen MP (Department of Work and Pensions and Cabinet Office, January 2011)
- 3.2 The key messages arising from these reviews are as follows:
- Early Intervention can give young children the social and emotional bedrock they need to reach their full potential in life

- What parents do is more important than who they are
- Parenting is a bigger influence than wealth, class, education or any other common social factor
- Research highlights that the key factors affecting how well a child does when they start school are: parents, childcare, family background and income. Parents, above all, are the main influence on their children's outcomes in the early years
- Parenting and the home learning environment have the greatest influences on positive outcomes and good life chances
- Children's Centres have a key role to play – but they must work closely with Health Visitors in order to target the right families
- Early Intervention programmes/activities must be evidence based in order to achieve outcomes

4. Background

4.1 Children's Centres are part of the Council's Early Intervention offer. Children's Centres focus on supporting families with children aged 0-5 with a whole-family approach which includes siblings up to the age of 19. Children's Centre services are delivered by a commissioned provider from the voluntary sector, the Pre School Learning Alliance, and by schools across the borough.

4.2 At the Mayor and Cabinet Meeting on 11/02/2015 savings of £1,936,000 from the Early Intervention Services budget were agreed. This saving represented 35% of the total Early Intervention Services Budget.

4.3 It was also approved that the following children's centres would remain open but with a reduced level of service

- Evelyn Children's Centre
- Besson Street Children's Centre
- Amersham Children's Centre
- Hatcham Oak Children's Centre
- Beecroft Garden Children's Centre
- St Swithun's Children's Centre
- Manor House Children's Centre
- Torridon Children's Centre
- Marvels Lane Children's Centre
- Kilmorie Children's Centre

4.4 It was agreed that the remaining centres would remain as 'full offer' children's centres

- Clyde Children's Centre
- Bellingham Children's Centre

- Donderry Children's Centre
- Ladywell Children's Centre
- Eliot Bank and Kelvin Grove Children's Centre

4.5 Savings were also achieved through the deletion of eight Administrative Officer posts. These Officers staffed reception points in Children's Centres delivered from Council buildings. Providers have been expected to provide this service from within the contract.

4.6 Further savings were achieved from buildings, maintenance and supplies budgets and from a reduction of posts in the council's Early Intervention Services Team.

5. Update - Children's Centres - implementation of savings 2015/16

5.1 A total of £1.936m has been identified as savings from the Early Intervention Services Budget from 2015 to 2017. Savings from the commissioned providers budget were achieved through reductions in the unit costs and number of targeted families that Children's Centre providers are contracted to work with and by reducing the administrative burden of some data collections. The new, reduced funding schedule for providers was implemented on 1st October 2015. The new contract extension with the current providers will continue until March 2017.

5.2 The Children's Centres provider budget has reduced from £3.2m per annum to £1.8m per annum. All Children's Centres have remained open (except for Heathside and Lethbridge – which was always planned for closure as the building is being demolished).

5.3 With the extension of contracts, specifications have been updated to improve accountability and to include new aspects of provision introduced since the original contracts were agreed in 2012. Negotiations have been ongoing and the 5 school based contracts are now agreed.

5.4 The two area contracts still require the most work in agreeing duties in respect of buildings. This is being approached on a site by site basis to get a very clear picture of the duties required, the responsibilities and liability in each case.

6. Impact of Savings on Service Delivery

6.1 All providers will continue to be subject to robust performance monitoring and quality assurance as part of the Council's performance management framework. Each Children's Centre provider submits a performance report at the end of each quarter and a meeting is held to discuss performance and agree remedial action as necessary. All performance monitoring has been carried out for Quarter two.

6.2 The number of new targeted families Children’s Centre providers are expected to work with is set out below:-

Children’s Centre Provider	New Targeted Families per annum Prior to 01/10/2015	New Targeted Families per annum Post 01/10/2015
Clyde (Area 1)	1124	1066
PSLA (Area 2)	1408	744
Beecroft Garden	246	217
PSLA (Area 3)	986	381
Downderry	429	471
Marvels Lane	105	42
PSLA (Area 4)	285	477
Kilmorie	179	81
Eliot Bank and Kelvin Grove	341	327

6.3 Clyde, who provide services in Area 1 have experienced difficulties with input to the Tribal management system and it is, at present, difficult to measure the amount of families reached – so this is, as yet, untested. However, all other providers are performing well in terms of the amount of new, targeted families reached and outcomes achieved for them – which are the Payment by Results aspects of their contracts.

6.4 School based centres have retained the same opening hours as before however, opening hours have been reduced at some of the sites run by area providers which are no longer designated as Surestart Children’s Centres. This is because opening times now reflect the occasions when activities are taking place rather than reflecting when a member of administrative staff is present as was often the case before the savings were made.

6.5 It should be noted that some providers contribute funding from other services to supplement delivery and this increased at some Children’s Centres.

6.6 In terms of advertised activities, this has stayed the same at most centres. At some of the centres with a ‘reduced offer’ there are slightly fewer activities being run from October 2015. Activities being run include a variety of universal and targeted Stay and Play sessions to promote healthy child development, school readiness and parenting and attachment, drop-ins for advice and guidance, breastfeeding cafes, parenting courses, activities promoting healthy eating, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), activities targeted at children with Special Educational Needs and courses to improve the employability of parents.

6.7 Family support continues to be delivered at all centres. There has been no change in the delivery of Health Visitor Services and Midwifery in Children’s Centres where they were already in place. Evidence based parenting programmes, (programmes which have been evaluated and are proven to be effective) continue to be run. For Example:- Triple P Parenting Course – (Positive Parenting Programme which focuses on helping parents to cope with stress of parenthood and to set boundaries with their children) and The Incredible Years Programme which focuses on strengthening parent-child interactions and attachment to encourage positive behaviour. Additionally Children’s Centre Providers continue to build on

and strengthen new and existing partnerships to deliver services in Children's Centre settings. Further work on this will continue using local needs analysis to consider delivery options that include ever closer alignment with partner agencies

7. Finance

7.1 At this stage there are no specific financial implications to consider as a result of this update.

8. Legal

8.1 At this stage there are no specific legal implications to consider as a result of this update.

9. Crime and Disorder Implications

9.1 At this stage there are no specific crime and disorder implications to consider as a result of this update.

10. Equalities Implications

10.1 At this stage there are no specific equalities implications to consider as a result of this update.

11. Environmental Implications

11.1 At this stage there are no specific environmental implications to consider as a result of this update.

12. Background Documents

None