

Meeting:	Education Consultative Forum
Date:	11 September 2008
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT - Phase 3 Children's Centres
Responsible Officer:	Director of Schools and Children's Development – Heather Clements
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Children's Services - Christine Bednell
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix A - Harrow Children's Centre Policy Appendix B - Harrow Children's Centre Strategy Appendix C - Map showing locations of Harrow Children's Centres

## Section 1 – Summary

This report summarises the work that Harrow has done to develop the nine phase 2 Children's Centres, the principles that have been applied to underpin the strategy for the phase three Children's Centres and the Harrow locations that would benefit from service development to ensure all 13,550 children aged birth to five and their families can access universally progressive early intervention and prevention services.

### **FOR INFORMATION**

## Section 2 – Report

### Introduction

Following notification by the Government in July 2005 of the Harrow target for developing 9 Children's Centres by 2008, a policy for Harrow's Children's Centres (appendix a) was developed and approved by Cabinet setting out:

- Guiding principles for Children's Centres
- Core Service Provision
- Management
- Principles of Accessibility, Education, Health and Equalities.

Harrow's Children's Centre Strategy (appendix b) supports the strategic aim of providing children and families with increased access to localised early intervention and prevention services.

This strategy also supports Harrow Council to deliver the following corporate priorities:

- Improve the well being of adults and children and the care of those who most need our help
- Extend community use of schools while making education in Harrow even better
- Improve the way we work for our residents

### Options considered

Over the past three years various options for the development of Children's Centres have been considered including:

Option	Result of option
Develop no Children's Centres in Harrow	Significant capital and revenue funding investment would have been lost  Negative impact on Council CPA, APA and Children's Services JAR rating  Reduced ability to bring in external funding for service development through partners.  A lack of early intervention, prevention and support services with subsequent impacts on learning and health.
Contract out the development of Harrow's children's centres	Harrow does not have sufficient stock of quality providers to maximise the potential of this approach  Development of services in Harrow target areas would have been adversely affected due to lack of quality providers in those areas  The possibility of partnering with schools to develop Children's Centres would have been minimised Innovative bespoke developments with partner agencies could be adversely affected.

Build on existing strategies and resources to develop the Harrow Children's Centre framework	<p>Maximum use made of buildings and resources</p> <p>Partnership working with schools is strengthened</p> <p>Future sustainability of services is enhanced</p>
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The 2008 Children's Plan sets out the Government's vision of Children's Centres being a key delivery vehicle working in partnership with all sectors to ensure fully integrated services are available and reaching the most vulnerable. Harrow was notified by Government of its intention to provide funding to establish a further seven children's centres. These seven are identified as Phase 3 Children's Centres.

Specific Phase 3 Children's Centre Guidance has been issued which changes the emphasis from services being "building located" to providing a range of accessible and responsive outreach, intervention and prevention services.

For the development of the phase 3 children's centres in Harrow the following principles set out in the policy statement will continue to be applied.

Updated demographic and vitality profile data has been used to inform the decision on the locations of the phase 3 Children's Centres together with updated information on Harrow's Super Output Areas, community consultation data and updated Health data and intelligence regarding specific areas of service delivery e.g. Community Midwifery Services. A map showing the locations of the Children's Centres is attached as Appendix 3

### **Current situation**

Harrow Council and its partners have already made significant progress in terms of joining up and increasing localised access to services for local communities. We have:

- A high performing Integrated Early Years and Community Service
- A strong Integrated Early Years and Community Services Partnership
- 5 Operational Children's Centres
- 1 Children's Centre rated by Ofsted as Outstanding
- 7 Extended School Clusters and the start of Community Clusters
- 56% of schools meeting the extended school core offer
- A strong private, voluntary and independent early years and childcare sector
- 4 Children's centres are due to open this year

We are starting from a position of strength where our work to develop the phase 2 Children's Centres and progress the integrated Children's Centre and Extended School framework is regarded nationally as best practice.

### **Health Visiting Strategy**

The Health Visiting Strategy has informed the Children's Centre Strategy. Health Visitors are linked to all five operational Children's Centres. At least 2 sessions of Child Health Promotion work are delivered from each of the five Children's Centres per week.

## **Vision for Education**

This vision includes:

- Framework for Managing the Over-Provision of School Places
- Change of age of transfer
- Amalgamation Policy
- BSF/Primary Capital Strategy

These are informing the rationale for the location of Children's Centres in Harrow.

## **Extended school developments**

The Government expects to see the integration of the extended schools and Children's Centres strategies. Harrow is well placed to deliver this expectation, as both areas of work are located within the same service within the Children's Services Directorate. Significant progress has been made in a to:

- Raise the profile of Extended Schools
- Provide clarity about roles and responsibilities
- Set out an integrated framework for future integration through Community Clusters.

## **Children's Services Workforce Strategy**

The Children's Services Workforce Strategy will support the development of all staff ensuring that Harrow continues to grow its own quality staff and in particular leaders for Children's Centres. Ensuring that all centres have a staff team that reflects the local community is essential and will be a priority.

## **Recommendation:**

To create 7 additional Children's Centres to complement the existing provision and meet the current unmet need identified through the consultations.

Parents, community representatives and professionals, together with analysis of data have identified the following services as being needed:-

- Access to quality early learning opportunities and for parents to have the opportunity to understand the science of learning and how they can support their child's learning within the home environment
- ESOL provision
- Ante natal services
- Breastfeeding Support particularly for women at the 6 week and 12 week point
- Parenting Support especially for Harrows identified groups including fathers, first time mothers and mothers with mental health issues
- Child Health Promotion including support with healthy eating, dental care, behaviour support and daily routines e.g. bedtime.
- Access to quality, safe, outdoor play and learning space

Based on demographic data, Vitality Profile information and general mapping of services the following locations have been identified as having the greatest need for additional services:

- Pinner
- West Harrow
- Central Harrow

- South Harrow

### **Financial Implications**

The Government has allocated funding which will support the Children's Centres until March 2011. All centres will be developed within the capital and revenue funding streams that are available.

The Harrow plan is to continue to minimise costs of service delivery through careful budget planning and monitoring – currently our costs are significantly below the minimum set out in the guidance. Harrow is also setting provision in existing structures and organisations such as schools, adult facilities and youth centres so the costs are shared and the space sustainable in the long term.

Beyond the scope of the current spending review Harrow, like all other local authorities can only speculate on funding particularly since this will almost certainly include a general election. However it has been the normal practice for services that have been funded through grant to then have funding delivered through the base budget to provide greater flexibility at local level. In the event of funding not being sufficient a contingency plan will be developed to include a number actions including:

- Reviewing services delivered through SLAs
- Reviewing the charging policy
- Making plans to reduce some service provision where it falls outside of the Core Harrow Offer requirements

### **Capital costs**

Wherever possible the capital funding will be used together with other funding available for the development and improvement of school sites and other shared provision such as youth centres.

All Children's Centres will have some capital investment.

### **Revenue Funding**

The Government have allocated to Harrow for the for the period 2008-2011 the following:

	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
Children's centres	<b>£1,929k</b>	<b>£2,680k</b>	<b>£3,326k</b>

The strategy has implications for staffing across all sixteen centres. Long term sustainability of all developed activity continues to be a high priority.

There is an expectation that across agencies revenue funding is maximised by pooling resources to deliver Children's Centre services. This provides the foundation for future proposals to re-locate services and staff which is the ultimate aim of future Children's Services

The Children's Centre Steering group will consider further details of costs of children's centres in more detail. This group will also consider the charging policy for wraparound childcare places across the nine centres in

light of the government's ten-year strategy for childcare published in December 2004.

### **Legal Implications**

None

### **Equalities Impact**

The purpose of the children's centre initiative is to address the inequalities in health, educational attainment and general well being evident in children growing up in less advantaged areas by the time they are five. The aim is to address the disadvantages associated with poverty and offer effective early intervention and prevention services which maximise every child's life opportunities and reduce the risks of educational failure, ill health, crime and antisocial behaviour.

The Children's Centre strategy will enable communities to have services tailored to their needs, which will include health, education and life-long learning outcomes.

All centres will be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act. The diversity of each local community will be celebrated and through partnership working with schools and other providers the Children's Centres will increase community capacity and enhance the workforce profile.

### **Performance Issues**

The delivery of this strategy impact on key performance data including the:

- LAA indicator for Breastfeeding
- Statutory Early Years Outcomes Duty Targets for improving the local authorities Foundation Stage Profile results.

### **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Name: <b>John Stansfield</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: <b>2 September 2008</b>		
Name: <b>Helen White</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: <b>1 September 2008</b>		

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

### Contact:

Wendy Beeton

Head of Integrated Early Years and Community Services

020 8416 8830

### Background Papers:

#### Appendices

Appendix A Harrow Children's Centre Policy

Appendix B Harrow Children's Centre Strategy

Appendix C Map showing locations of Harrow Children's Centres

### **For all reports**

List other background papers that are available on request (statutory requirement):

DfES Guidance – A Sure Start Children's Centre for Every Community –  
Phase 2

Planning Guidance 2006-2008

DCSF Guidance – A Sure Start Children's Centre for Every Community –  
Phase 3

Planning Guidance 2006-2008

10 Year Strategy for Childcare