

Report to: Children and Young People's Panel Cabinet

Date: 11th September 2008 18th September 2008

Subject: Children's Centres Phase 3

Report of: Director of Children and Young People's Services

Contact officer: Sue Astbury Tel 01942 486003 email sue.astbury@wigan.gov.uk / Karen Pigott Tel 01942 828895 email k.pigott@wigan.gov.uk

Purpose / summary: To advise members as to where the next round of Children Centres are to be developed as part of Phase 3 (2008-2010) of the Children Centre Strategy

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: Alternatives options are discussed within the report.

Recommendation / decision: That the spending plan for the Early Years Capital Grant is implemented.

That the Phase 3 Children's Centres be located as follows:

- Standish location as hub, with provision in Aspull as 'spoke'
- Lowton
- Orrell

The Community Consultants are commissioned for the public consultation as to the kind of services or activities they feel the need in each area.

Key Decision This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 1 & 6

The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **five working days** have elapsed after that (**making a total of seven working days after the meeting**) i.e. before 19.09.08

This item is included in the Forward Plan.

Risks / Implications:

Financial: None - funding fully budgeted within Children's Centre Grant and Early Years Capital Grant
Staffing: None
Policy: None
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted? Yes
Wards affected: Standish, Orrell, Aspull and Lowton

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

No

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

No

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes**

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No ***

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :


Categorisation of the report:	x
Discussion leading to a decision	
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

Discussion	
Decision	x
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
	Events on 25th February and 27th June 2008	Events on 25th February and 27th June 2008	Events on 25th February and 27th June 2008
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
11 09 08		18 09 08	

Proper Officer



Date

22nd August 2008

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 Local Authorities, together with their delivery partners within children's trusts, are responsible for planning and delivering 3,500 children centres by 2010, one for every community. The development of Sure Start Children's Centres has progressed through several phases. In Phase 1 (2004-06) they were developed to serve families living in the 20% most disadvantaged wards. In Phase 2 (2006-08) it has been the intention that all families in the 30% most disadvantaged areas will have access to children's centre services. Phase 3 centres will complete the national roll-out by providing improved access to services for families living in less disadvantaged and more affluent areas within which, there may be pockets of disadvantage. These centres need to be in place by March 2010.
- 1.2 Together for Children on behalf of the DCFS have developed a Children's Centre Portfolio Framework to support Local Authority Children's Centre Teams to review Phase 1 and 2 centres and services to date and to support the plans of Phase 3 within the Framework. The DCFS is concerned nationally that the roll out of Children Centre's is not impacting enough on better outcomes for the most deprived families. The portfolio process provides a framework to ensure we are providing appropriate resources to our most deprived communities.
- 1.3 The local authority has 8 Phase 1 Children's Centres and 10 Children Centres in Phase 2. The four areas identified for Phase 3 centres are in the less disadvantaged areas of Aspull, Standish, Orrell and Lowton.
- 1.4 The DCFS Phase 3 planning and Delivery Guidance makes it clear that this Phase of Children Centres is very different from Phase 1 & 2 and this is reflected in the grant available which is significantly less than Phase 1 and Phase 2. It is expected that Phase 3 will build on to existing services for children and families, e.g. schools, health centres, libraries etc. Also that the Capital Projects will be more concerned with extensions and refurbishments rather than completely new buildings. There is also potential to use the capital within reach of the Phase 2 centres which are in the 30% category and where there are geographic pockets which are hard to reach. Clearly the underlying principle is best value and best use of resources.
- 1.5 Children's Centres serving less disadvantaged families are not required to provide early years provision (integrated early learning and full day care) within the centre, but may do so where there is sufficient demand. Our childcare sufficiency audit indicates that there is no demand in our Phase 3 areas. There is however additional capital funding for three years, known as the Early Years Capital Grant - Quality and Access for all Young Children.
- 1.6 All centres must provide a universal range of services, including outreach sessions, information and advice, support to childminders, activities for children/parent(s)/carers, provide access to community health services and links with Jobcentre Plus. The intensity of sessions offered by children centres will vary accordingly to the level of disadvantage in the area.
- 1.7 Local authorities were advised that children centres in the first two phases

should serve on average 800 children under 5. Phase 3 centres in rural or less densely populated areas may serve smaller numbers; say 600, while in more affluent areas with less intensive need, numbers may be larger, say 1,200.

1.8 The reach for our Phase 3 centres are as follows:

Breakdown of Reach by Children Centres

PCT Births Data

SSCC	U5's in Area	Under 5's in top 30% IMD2007	% Deprived	Deprived Area IMD2007
Aspull/Haigh	321	108	34	N
Standish	646	68	11	N
Orrell/Billinge	580	0	0	N

Proposals:

2.0 Consultation Phase 3

2.1 Two consultation events were held with stakeholders on 25th February and 27th June 2008. The purpose of the events was to share data with regards to postcodes identifying the location of the current under 5 population; pockets of high deprivation; and other potential needs of these communities. This leads onto the evidence that might identify the potential of where a Phase 3 Children's Centre may be located and what the provision might look like.

2.2 The stakeholders were provided with mapped evidence via the Acorn system which detailed areas of deprivation where appropriate, where current under 5 population live, whether any of these access our current centres and buildings/facilities within the vicinity.

2.3 Members will be aware from a previous report presented to panel on 17th January 2008 and cabinet on 24th January 2008 regarding Phase 3 Centres that the new building at Orrell Lamberhead Green Primary School was designated early as a Phase 3. This was to maximise the investment that had already taken place and the consultation process identified that some outreach provision would be necessary.

- 2.4 Following the consultation the preferred model was that Standish and Aspull should join together so that Standish would be the Children's Centre hub with Aspull being the spoke. While the reach in Lowton is only 379 it was not felt practical for a hub and spoke model with Golborne Children Centre because of the distance involved. The under 5's identified are centred around the area of St Mary's. It was felt by the stakeholders therefore that there should be a designated centre in Lowton.
- 2.5 The initial ideas have been shared with Together 4 Children who acknowledge that these are in line with the Phase 3 guidance and would be appropriate to the number of under 5's across the 4 areas.

3.0 Early Years Capital Grant Quality and Access for all Young Children

- 3.1 Further significant investment for early year's provision has been made available via the early year's capital grant quality and access for all young children, the grant has three broad aims:
- To improve the quality of the learning environment in early year's settings to support delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage, with a particular emphasis on improving play and physical activities: and ICT resources.
 - To ensure all children, including disabled children, are able to access provision.
 - To enable PVI providers to deliver the extension to the free offer for 3 and 4 year also and to do so flexibly.

The DCSF expects that the majority of the grant will be used to improve the quality of provision in the in the private, voluntary and independent sector early years and childcare settings, to support higher quality experiences for young children although spending in the maintained sector is not precluded.

3.2 Quality

Research shows that children will only benefit fully from early education and care if it is of high quality. Alongside adopting the best of professional practice a high quality setting also needs to have the right environment and adequate and appropriate resources. Space which can be used flexibly and up to date facilities and equipment to support children's learning and development is essential.

3.3 Access

The Local Authority's role in facilitating the childcare market is supported mainly by revenue funding from within the Sure Start, Extended Schools and Childcare grant, but capital funding is necessary too especially now that the sufficiency duty came into effect from the 1st April 08. Local Authorities need to ensure that so far as reasonably practical all children of working parents are able to access provision.

It is vitally important that all children are able to access early year's services however ensuring full access particularly for children with disabilities, providing facilities and equipment to meet need can often require capital investment to ensure that services are flexible to meet the needs of individual children. This grant will allow the investment to provide key facilities where required to ensure that PVI sector settings are welcoming and inclusive.

3.4 Delivering the free entitlement

The comprehensive spending review period sees significant investment to extend free nursery education entitlement by offering all 3 and 4 year olds an additional 2.5 hours of free entitlement. From September 2010 the free entitlement will be 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year and the expectation is that it will be delivered more flexibly.

Feedback from the pathfinder local authorities suggests that the move to flexibility is more challenging for PVI than maintained settings. The availability and appropriateness of outdoor play space, equipment and indoor play space for rest areas are also concerns when moving to a more flexible model.

This grant will allow the local authority to support the maintained and voluntary sector to invest in the necessary facilities and equipment required to deliver the extended free entitlement.

4.0 Recommendations Capital Grant

4.1 The spending plan for the Early Years Capital Grant is implemented as follows:

- Resource packs for all identified settings, including out of school childcare settings and childminders based on Foundation Stage Outcomes.
- Support for the flexible delivery pilot- in both the Maintained and PVI sector
- Toy Library resource for phase 1, 2 & 3 Children's Centre childminder drop in services to support childminders with delivery of EYFS.
- Support to enable Access and Improvement to the environment, indoors and outdoors.

5.0 Recommendations - Phase 3 delivery.

- 5.1 That the Phase 3 Children's Centres be located as follows:
- Standish location as hub, with provision in Aspull as 'spoke'
 - Lowton
 - Orrell

The location of the centres within the areas will take into account the data collected, and availability of suitable premises.

- 5.2 The Community Consultants are commissioned for the public consultation as to the kind of services or activities they feel the need in each area.

Conclusions:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and endorse the recommendations for both Phase 3 Children's Centres and the recommendations in relation to the Early Years Capital Grant to support the local authority in fulfilling the section 6 duty (Childcare Act 2006) to secure sufficient childcare.

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section: Children and Young Peoples Service

Policy/Service Area: Extended Learning Team

Person Completing Form: Dawn Leigh

Date: 29th July
08

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race			Disability	✓	
Ethnicity			Gender		
Age	✓		Religion		
Class	✓		Sexual Orientation		

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

Phase 3 Children's Centres completes the national roll out providing improved access to services for families living in less disadvantaged areas within which there may be pockets of disadvantage. Data at 1.8 shows the breakdown of reach and % of deprivation of the areas identified for Phase 3.

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

The government has a target of a Children's Centre in every community. The three Children's Centres will be based in Orrell, Lowton and Standish as they do not currently have one. The Standish Children Centre will be the hub with Aspull being the spoke as described in the report.

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

The 2007 IMD, PCT births data and the Acorn system has been used to illustrate the number of under 5's in an area of particular disadvantage.

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

Yes.

Timescale	31 st March 2010.
Responsibility	Extended Learning Team
Comments	

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	Yes
Section/Team Plan	Yes
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review