

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

CABINET – 9TH DECEMBER 2009

CHILDREN'S CENTRES DEVELOPING INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Executive Summary

1.0 This report seeks cabinet approval of:-

The roll out of the Phase 3 Children's Centre programme through the development of sites at Greasby Library, Pensby Park Primary, Back Horse Hill Infant School and Grove Street Primary School.

The continued consultation, feasibility and approval in respect of further capital development work with Private and Voluntary Independent settings (PVI's), including small grants.

Further consultation on the most effective way of supporting and enhancing the Early Year's provision by local Childminders through the use of capital monies.

1.2 This report also provides an update on Children's Centre development to date.

1.3 The recommendations will enable the continued roll out of services across Wirral, meeting the Government's national target of a Children's Centre serving every community and enhance provision in the PVI sector.

Background

2.0 Cabinet agreed the initial proposals to develop Phase 1 Children's Centres within the 20% disadvantaged wards based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) on 20th November 2003.

2.1 Phase 1 and 2 Children's Centres are complete and are successfully delivering a range of services.

Phase 1 Children's Centres

Ward	Site	Completion Date
Upton	Ganneys Meadow Early Years Centre	Oct. '04
Leasowe and Moreton East	Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre	Nov. '05
Bidston and St. James	St. James Centre	Sept. '05
Seacombe	Seacombe Family Centre	Sept. '06
Bromborough	Bromborough Family Centre	Oct. '05
Birkenhead & Tranmere	St. Werburghs Primary School	March '06
Rock Ferry	Rock Ferry Primary School	June '06
Claughton	Hillside Primary School	June '06
Liscard	Liscard Primary	Nov. '06
New Brighton	Mount Primary	June '06

- 2.2 It is the Government's intention that by 2010 all communities will have access to a Sure Start Children's Centre with each reaching around 800 children, aged 0-5, providing access to services within "pram pushing distance". It is therefore necessary to have more than one Children's Centre in some wards. The consultation period for Phase 2 ran from November 2005 until February 2006. The sites were identified through a range of stakeholder events including the community and voluntary sector. Cabinet agreed the sites in March 2006.
- 2.3 The Phase 2 (2006-2008) programme, approved by Cabinet on 26th July 2007, ensured that all of the most disadvantaged families have access to Children's Centre services i.e. families in the 30% most disadvantaged areas as defined by ODPM Super Output Areas (SOAs). SOAs are geographical units developed by the Office of National Statistics. Each SOA has approximately the same number of households and population. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has looked at the characteristics of the households living in each SOA and these characteristics make up the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) each SOA is then ranked on its level of deprivation. The IMD for 2004 is presented at an SOA level rather than a ward level as with previous Indices. There are 32,482 SOAs compared with 8,414 wards. This means that wards have been broken down into much smaller components and the pockets of deprivation contained within wards have been captured in the latest index. Wirral has 207 SOAs 94 of which are located within the lower 30%.
- 2.4 Phase 2 Children's Centre Developments

Ward	Site(s)
West Kirby & Thurstaston	Black Horse Hill Infant School
Eastham	Millfields Primary School in collaboration with the Delamere Centre
Rock Ferry/ Bromborough	Satellite provision at Grove Street Primary School
Pensby and Thingwall	Pensby Park Primary School
Hoylake and Meols	Hoylake Holy Trinity Primary School
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	Satellite provision at Eastway and Lingham Primary Schools
Bidston and St James	Manor Primary School as a satellite to current Children's Centre
Prenton	Prenton Primary School
Bebington	Town Lane Infant School

The Centres are becoming service hubs for their communities, providing co-ordination and support for local PVI organisations as well as leading the way in providing new and much needed services for families of children under the age of five. The Centres link with the Extended Schools agenda, Social Care and Health colleagues to ensure seamless provision to meet the needs of young children and their families. Each Centre has an innovative timetable of services and examples of good practice are emerging. Atkins, the Government agency monitoring the Children's Centre and PVI capital programme, has acknowledged the work done in Wirral as "exemplary" and has given double green rating to the development over a prolonged period.

In the 30% most disadvantaged areas where the need for support services is high and where there are few existing services, Children's Centres provide a strong focus for meeting the high demand for additional and intensive support. The Sure Start Guidance sets out what the 30% most disadvantaged areas would expect to see being delivered through Children's Centres: -

- Early Years provision
- A childminder network
- Parenting education and family support services
- Education, training and employment services
- Health services
- Access to wider services

3.0 Phase 3 Developments

In Phase 3, the remaining 70% more advantaged areas will have access to Centres developed from existing maintained, private and voluntary or community provision with additional services being added to meet local needs. The funding can also be used to extend the reach of current Children's Centres to more families.

- 3.1 This report seeks approval from Cabinet on the further development of the following sites:

An extension of Greasby Library to provide room for Children's Centre service delivery and community co-ordination:

The provision will include a multi-function room, a small meeting room and an adult learning room and will develop close working relationships with the library, the health clinic and the local community centre, working on a campus model to ensure a joined up approach from all services. The local primary schools will be able to access the services provided and the Centre will be part of the extended services offer to local families. The Children's Centre and library will share the office space and there will be a shared reception/welcome area, thereby ensuring effective co-location of the services offered. Consultation with the local community took place during the early summer of 2009 and there has been on-going feasibility work with the library. A scheme and estimate was approved on 5 November 2009.

Operational management for the Centre will come from Hoylake Children's Centre and a local management board for Greasby will be established, ensuring that local providers and services are able to become fully engaged and involved.

The library building is recommended for this development because of its central location, which will lend itself to the flexibility of out of hours and weekend working in line with the Government's Phase 3 Capital Guidance.

- 3.2 The further development of Pensby Park Children's Centre

Cabinet approved the development of the Pensby Park Primary School site on 26th July 2006, following the school closure. The Phase 2 Children's Centre has been developed and is fully operational; however, further work on the heating, windows and car parking is needed to enable the Centre to operate at full capacity. The Centre has already been warmly accepted by the local community and has been commended by other agencies for its work, particularly with victims of domestic violence and their families. This scheme will be further enhanced by the approved proposals to co-locate Area Teams and other workers, in the same building as set out in the co-location report to Cabinet on 5 November 2009.

3.3 Development and extension to West Kirby Children's Centre at Black Horse Infant School.

The Phase 2 West Kirby Children's Centre has proved to be a widely used facility, attracting families from a wide geographical reach and operating at a level well above that anticipated at the design stage. An extension to the current building will allow development of appropriate services (drug and alcohol counselling, domestic violence support, debt management etc) in an effective and co-ordinated manner. Staff based there will serve the wider geographical area, ensuring that all families can access appropriate services when needed.

3.4 Adaptation to the Rock Ferry satellite based at Grove Street Primary School

The current satellite from Rock Ferry Children's Centre and Grove Street Primary require some adaptation as a result of successful and well attended services and a review of how the building has worked in use. The current multi function room is well used and a further adaptation will enhance the services offered to children and families.

The recommendation is to roll out the Phase 3 Children's Centre programme through the development of sites at Greasby Library, Pensby Park Primary, Black Horse Hill Infant School and Grove Street Primary School.

4.0 **Continued consultation and feasibility of further capital development work with PVI settings**

4.1 Quality and access for all – Early Years Capital (PVI)

Cabinet was informed of a new DCSF Early Years Capital funding stream on 16 October 2008. The grant is primarily, but not exhaustively intended to support capital investment in the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. Cabinet approved that for 2008/9 and 2009/10 approximately 50% of the grant would be spent on accommodation renewal schemes PVI settings based on school sites and 50% open to all PVI groups to bid against, using DCSF criteria. The previously approved schemes are at Brackenwood Infants, Brookhurst, Stanton Road and Irby Primary. All schemes are progressing well and are providing replacement accommodation for groups previously housed in old mobiles at the end of their useful lives and where the long term future of the group was threatened. These groups help the LA meet the targets for numbers and distribution of available places. To date 98 PVI providers have been awarded grants of up to £10,000 to support IT, outdoor learning and the implementation of EYFS. There is a remaining 22 settings who have yet to apply for this grant.

Consultation is taking place to decide on the most appropriate next two sites to develop the third year enhanced early year's provision, building on the successful projects defined above. It is proposed that feasibility studies will be carried out at:

- Great Meols Primary School
- Somerville Primary School
- Gayton Primary School

with a view to developing a further two accommodation renewal projects.

The recommendation is further consultation and feasibility in respect of further capital development work with Private and Voluntary Independent settings (PVI) including small grants.

5.0 Consultation on the most effective way of supporting and enhancing the early year's provision by local childminders through the use of capital monies.

- 5.1 The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that childminders, as professional Early Year's Providers, are able to access the capital grant in order to enhance or develop their services. The Authority wishes to commence consultation as to the most effective and appropriate form that this should take.

The recommendation is further consultation on the most effective way of supporting and enhancing the Early Year's provision by local Childminders through the use of capital monies.

6.0 Financial and Staffing Implications

- 6.1 External grant will be provided subject to the acceptance of Implementation Plans by DCFS:

Total funding Children's Centre capital allocation 2008 – 2011	£1,506,668
Early Years Capital (PVI) 2008 – 2011	£3,716,880
Total number of under 5s LA to reach by 2010 -	17,404

7.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 7.1 Sure Start Children's Centres, PVI settings and childminders will be key delivery mechanisms to achieve the objectives set out in the Government's Every Child Matters programme. The aim is to improve outcomes for all young children, and in particular to close the gap between the outcome for the most disadvantaged children and others. Outcomes and options for children, families and their communities will be enhanced by increasing the availability of high quality integrated childcare and early learning, health and family support services; services brought together at neighbourhood level supporting parents/carers, both in their parenting and in their aspirations towards employment.

Consistent with the principles of the Every Child Matters, Change for Children Programme, universal services must include supporting those in most need, and should be tailored to meet particular needs of individual children, their families, and the communities in which they are based.

8.0 Human Rights Implications

- 8.1 Sure Start Children's Centres form a key part of the delivery of early years services by local authorities, increasingly as a major element in the planning and delivery of Children's Trusts arrangements. They are crucial to the implementation of the Government's Ten Year Childcare Strategy, *Choices for Parents, the Best Start for Children*, and contribute to improving the child outcomes set out in Every Child Matters: being safe; healthy; enjoying and achieving; economic wellbeing; and making a positive contribution. The Government is advocating a shift to more co-located, multi-disciplinary services that provide personalised support to children and their families. Children's Centres will be a key building block towards this goal.

9.0 Local Agenda 21 Implications

9.1 This plan will use existing sites and premises where suitable. Premises will be refurbished and extended with minimum impact on the environment. Poor quality temporary accommodation will be removed and replaced.

10.0 Community Safety Implications

10.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

11.0 Planning Implications

11.1 Relevant planning approvals will be sought from the Director of Technical Services as required.

12.0 Anti-poverty Implications

12.1 It is the Government's intention that Children's Centres will be the key mechanism for improving outcomes for young children, reducing inequalities in outcomes between the most disadvantaged and the rest, and helping bring an end to child poverty.

13.0 Local Member Support Implications

13.1 The Children's Centres', PVI and Childminder developments will directly effect all Wards.

14.0 Background Papers

14.1 Children Centre Plan 21st April 2004
DCSF Guidance and Allocation letters - Children's Centre and PVI capital

15.0 Recommendations

The recommendations will enable the continued roll out of services across Wirral, meeting the Government's national target of a Children's Centre in every community and enhance provision in the non-maintained sector.

This report invites Cabinet to approve:-

15.1 The recommendation to roll out the Phase 3 Children's Centre programme through the development of sites at Greasby Library, Pensby Park Primary and Black Horse Hill Infant School.

15.2 The recommendation for further consultation and feasibility studies in respect of further capital development work with Private and Voluntary Independent settings (PVI) and small grants.

15.3 The recommendation for further consultation on the most effective way of supporting and enhancing the Early Year's provision by local Childminders through the use of capital monies.

Howard Cooper
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