

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 5th February 2018
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PORTFOLIO: Children, Learning and Skills, Cllr Shabnum Sadiq

PART I **NON-KEY DECISION**

ANNUAL EARLY YEARS CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY REPORT

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet about the outcomes of the annual Early Years Childcare Sufficiency Assessment completed in December 2017, with particular regard to the fulfilment of the Local Authority's statutory duty (contained in the Childcare Act 2006 and 2016) to secure sufficient funded early learning places for every eligible child in Slough.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- (a) That it be noted that current childcare sufficiency information indicates that there will be insufficient childcare places in some wards across Slough by the summer of 2018.
- (b) That the need to prioritise the development of early years and childcare provision in those wards where demand for places is projected to exceed supply be noted.
- (c) That the need for additional early years provision for children with SEND be noted.
- (d) That the intention to publish an Early Years Strategy by September 2018 be noted.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the Five Year Plan

This report makes direct reference to the protection of vulnerable children as detailed in priority 1 of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy. Key JSNA data forms an integral part of the sufficiency information on which the 2018 place predictions in this report are based and the entirety of the childcare sufficiency assessment report is concerned with the capacity of the early year's sector to work towards Outcome 1 of the Five Year Plan for all children in Slough. *"Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives."*

Without sufficient capacity for all children to receive their funded early learning place we limit our chance to achieve outcome 1 of the Five Year Plan in early years as well as potentially failing to meet our statutory sufficiency duty as outlined in the 2006 Childcare Act.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are financial implications arising from this information report. The Slough Early Years Service facilitates payments for providers of funded early learning places via the Dedicated Schools Grant and providers receive payments against confirmed headcount information.

The development of inclusive places for children with SEND is significantly higher than current funding levels and only currently applies to children accessing their universal entitlement to 15 hours. Children eligible for a place under the extended entitlement, 30 hours, do not currently receive any additional financial support to access this provision.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal Claims that the Council are in breach of their statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006 or the Childcare Act 2016	Actions to ensure that the statutory duties are being complied with	Actions taken pursuant to this report
Property	N/A	N/A
Human Rights	N/A	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A	N/A
Employment Issues	N/A	N/A
Equalities Issues	N/A	N/A
Community Support	N/A	N/A
Communications	N/A	N/A
Community Safety	N/A	N/A
Financial	Early learning places are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Slough Early Years Service will provide census information to draw down universal funding for additional places created. The funding is payable based on last years headcount which may result in a funding shortfall if places developed and taken up exceed previous years	N/A

	figures.	
Timetable for delivery	Work is already underway across the sector to explore expansion opportunities. Recruitment days and information sessions have been organised to promote career options.	N/A
Project Capacity	Place creation is dependent on partnership working with private, voluntary and independent sector providers.	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

Article 2 of the First Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms provides that no person shall be denied the right to education and this is given effect to in the United Kingdom by the Human Rights Act 1998. To the extent that early childcare provision can be considered to be provision of education, therefore, there is potential for the Human Rights Act to be engaged in relation to the Council's statutory duties referred to in this report.

It is the statutory duty of all English local authorities to secure sufficient childcare for local parents who need it, and to measure this sufficiency by conducting a comprehensive Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment.

(e) Workforce

The development of any additional early years and childcare provision will require additional staffing to maintain statutory ratios. The Early Years Service has developed a workforce strategy for the sector which details opportunities in relation to working with children and families.

(f) Property

There is scope to consider the use of community resources to accommodate new places. The council will work with the sector to explore expansion opportunities as appropriate.

5 Supporting Information

5.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty (contained in the Childcare Act 2006 and 2016) to secure sufficient funded early learning places for every eligible child in Slough. Achieving this duty has wider benefits, the Effective Pre-School, Primary and Secondary

Education Project (EPPSE) report of October 2015 clearly demonstrates the importance of early education. The report says that attending any pre-school, compared to none, predicts higher total GCSE scores, higher grades in GCSE English and maths, and increases the likelihood of achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A*-C. The more months children spend in pre-school, the greater the impact on their total GCSE scores and grades in English and Maths.

There are continuing effects of pre-school at age 17. EPPSE students who had attended a high quality pre-school were twice as likely as those who hadn't to take AS-levels.

Parents who can depend upon flexible, good quality childcare are able to take up paid employment.

The Slough Early Years Service – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) refresh is underpinned by key JSNA data. The service has also taken account of housing development information, in order to make realistic predictions about future levels of demand, to 2023, for funded early learning places.

- In 2014 Slough had the 3rd highest birth rate in the UK
- The under 19's population in Slough is expected to rise by 9% in the next 10 years
- 20% of households are families with dependant children
- 20% of households are overcrowded. Slough has much larger than average households (2nd highest in England) national 2.3 Slough 2.8

This snapshot indicates the need for a continued focus on place development for two, three and four 4 year olds. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment refresh highlights the areas of Slough where further place development is required to maintain the provision of sufficient early years places so that all children can receive funded early learning as soon as they become eligible.

Currently, early years place capacity in the Chalvey and Cippenham Meadow wards and Upton and Central wards is at significant risk of insufficiency. The town centre area within central ward is the area where demand for places is currently exceeding supply and future housing developments are expected to increase this demand considerably.

Without sufficient and maintained place development the percentage of children accessing funded early learning in Slough will fall. This could have an adverse impact on the ability of the service to deliver on the many initiatives that rely on partnership working with providers and for the council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

5.2 The Slough Early Years Service - Service Plan makes specific reference to ensuring the most effective use of the limited capital funding from the Department for Education to support either new providers or the expansion of existing provision. The very effective use of this resource has allowed the service to meet shortfalls in previous years. There is now a need to identify additional capital funding, including s106 contributions. As a result, the service is alerting Cabinet of the need to develop more early years places in specific locations across Slough and for specific groups of children in particular children with SEND.

Whilst the service has a strong track record in place creation and plans to address future need there is a need to formalise an early years strategy by September 2018 which will address the identified shortfall and outline plans for future developments.

Maintaining sufficient places for all children in early years provision enables the service to address issues such as poor dental health, high levels of obesity at age five, the percentage of young children overweight (which currently stands at twice the national average) and MMR uptake at 85% (with a 95% target) which are currently all significantly worse than national figures. Children's centres and early years providers can support the council and its partners to address issues, both directly whilst in a setting and through information sharing around health and development initiatives.

The Slough Early Years Service is a key member at each of the Local Area Collaboratives, supporting local working between schools, nursery providers, children's centres, childminders, health services, family support and other key partners to improve children's outcomes. Slough children's centres, early years providers and childminders are often amongst some of the first people to have meaningful contact with vulnerable children and families before a child reaches statutory school age. They therefore, not only provide early intervention but also garner invaluable information for the planning of support services. Operating as hub and spoke approach across Slough presents opportunities to work collaboratively across the sector.

In 2017 Slough's educational attainment at age five exceeded the national average for the first time, with 71.2 % of Slough children achieving a Good Level of Development compared with 70.7% of children nationally. Supporting regular attendance at good quality early years provision is a key component of maintaining and improving children's attainment at age five and beyond.

5.3 SEND

The JSNA summary does not currently offer figures for the number of children, especially young children, with SEND. However, our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment refresh draws details from the SEND database (as of 9th January 2018):

- There were 88 children aged 0 – 5 years resident in Slough with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a statement of special educational need(s)
- There were 1216 children and young people aged 5 – 25 years resident in Slough with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a statement of special educational need(s)
- There were 366 children aged 0 – 4 years resident in Slough in receipt of support from the Slough Early Years Service outreach and home visiting services for children with special needs, disabilities or complex medical needs
- In 2016 the number of children with complex needs not accessing a nursery placement due to the lack of suitable provision was 245.

The Slough Early Years Service has recently compiled a database providing information about young children with SEND which confirms there are insufficient places for families to access their universal entitlement to funded early learning. The recent extended entitlement for working families (30hrs) has increased demand for places but there continues to be insufficient supply for children with SEND especially where children have severe and complex needs or for children who require additional adult/carer support to access provision.

The Slough Early Years Service is acutely aware that continued place development, especially for children with SEND is a key factor in protecting vulnerable children. All registered providers are supported to apply safer recruitment procedures as well as have up to date knowledge of safeguarding and child protection, health and safety, paediatric first aid, food hygiene and the administration of medicine in accordance with Ofsted standards. Attending early years provision facilitates contact for vulnerable children and families with knowledgeable and supportive adults. It is therefore imperative that we continue to increase the number of places available to children with SEND. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment refresh clearly indicates that provision for children with SEND is insufficient.

The most recent data comparisons illustrate an increase of 150 children requiring a free early learning place compared with 2016.

The rapid increase in demand for suitable places for children with SEND is unmet. It also indicates an increasing future demand for SEND provision at statutory school age.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment confirms that:

- The Early Years Resource Bases are full and it is unlikely there will be available spaces until September 2018
- Current funding constraints have resulted in transport not being available for children and families trying to attend specialist playgroups.

The Slough Early Years Service supports Private, Voluntary and Independent sector providers (PVI's) and schools to provide inclusive practice and offer specialist provision to meet the needs of children.

The rapid increase in the number of young children receiving diagnoses of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), complex medical needs and significant conditions is placing additional pressure on the sector to meet the needs of our residents. We currently require further places for children in receipt of diagnoses to be able to access their funded early learning entitlement.

5.4 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Priority Areas

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment informs the service about the potential sufficiency or insufficiency of child care places in Children's Centre Areas (wards) across Slough, now and in the future.

In order to address immediate issues and compile increasingly detailed information for future planning, actions have been identified to drive forward work in specific wards in 2018, prior to a further refresh in autumn 2018.

The table below shows the number of places that will need to be developed in each of the children's centre areas/wards. The table is RAG rated in relation to areas of priority. The projected figures are based on as accurate data as could be obtained but demand is always the most difficult aspect to determine. The figures take into account increases due to population growth and housing developments but in some areas participation rates are historically lower than in others. Total projected requirements will be effected by fluctuations in demand.

Place Development 2017 - 2022

Children's Centre Areas / Wards	Funded 2 year olds	Funded 3 & 4 year olds	0 – 4 year old childcare places	Total number of places required 2017-18	Projected number of places required beyond 2018/19	Total Number of places required	Risks	Proposed Actions
Yew Tree Road (Central ward / Upton ward)	85	115	327	270	257	527	There is a significant risk of insufficient child care places in the summer term of 2018. Future housing developments in this area are expected to lead to a further increase in demand for child care places through 2018 and onto 2023.	Develop further two, three and four year old places by expanding a current nursery's capacity. Look for further opportunities for new providers in this area to create additional funded and childcare places including encouraging schools to extend their offer. Continue to seek capital funding opportunities to support providers with plans.
Chalvey Grove (Chalvey and Cippenham Meadow wards)	68	289	27	366	18	384	There is a significant risk of insufficient funded early learning places in the summer term of 2018 despite being an area of relatively low early years participation rates. Future housing developments in this	Increase numbers of two year olds accessing funded early learning by raising awareness with families and partners of the benefits for young children in participating in early learning. Monitor and support the development of funded three and four year old participation rates as a result of

							area are expected to lead to a small increase in demand for places through 2018 and onto 2023.	increased two year old numbers.
Monksfield Way (Britwell ward)	0	0	0	0	0	0	This is currently an area with an over supply of childcare places and little expectation of increasing demand due to future housing development.	To focus on the impact of changes to the benefits system (universal credit rollout April 2018) and changes to the criteria for funded two year old places in the 2018 autumn term refresh.
Orchard Avenue (Haymill ward)	0	83	17	83	17	100	This area is currently presenting as an area with a possible shortfall of early years and childcare places. Since completing the CSA several providers have notified the Slough Early Years Service of their intention to increase provision. A housing development scheduled for 2019/20 is likely to increase demand in this area.	Review and conduct further audits of provider capacity in this area to provide up to date information for the 2018 autumn term refresh.

St Andrew's Way (Cippenham Green ward)	5	84	10	99	0	99	There is a risk of insufficient early years and childcare places from the summer term 2018. The CSA identifies a lack of full time day care for three and four year olds in this area.	To support providers to work in partnership to understand and meet parental demand in this area. Consider opportunities for new providers in this area and / or support existing providers to review their current offer and consider developments.
Elliman Avenue (Farnham and Central wards)	52	8	15	52	8	60	This is an area currently with insufficient funded two year old places. Housing developments in 2017 / 18 is likely to only have a small impact on demand but there are many other changes likely to affect demand for early years and childcare in this area and further exploration of the factors at work and developing trends is essential before projections can be made with certainty.	To explore the impact of changes to the benefits system (universal credit rollout April 2018) and changes to the criteria for funded two year old places in the 2018 autumn term CSA refresh; Conduct further parental and provider consultations to ascertain specific issues regarding changing working patterns and their impact on demand.

Penn Road (Baylis and Stoke and Farnham wards)	33	112	2	146	1	147	This area is at risk of insufficient early years and childcare places from the summer term 2018. Housing developments scheduled for 2017 / 18 and 2019 / 20 will increase demand slightly and whilst historically this is an area of a relatively low percentage demand for places, participation rates in the PVI sector have increased in the autumn term.	Explore opportunities for providers in this area to create additional funded and childcare places.
Wexham Road (Central and Wexham Lea wards)	20	24	39	50	33	83	This area is at a slight risk of insufficient childcare places beyond 2018. Projections for this area are based on a steady increase in housing development and the probable impact of changes to the benefits system.	Explore opportunities for providers to create additional funded two year old places, extended entitlement places that meets the needs of working families. Facilitate partnership working to share providers' market knowledge and therefore determine local trends and the most effective ways to support working families.

Romsey Close (Foxborough, Kedermister and Langley St. Mary's wards)	0	0	0	0	0	0	This area currently has sufficient childcare and early learning places.	Explore in greater detail through partnership working the potential impact of Crossrail, Heathrow expansion, relocation from London and benefit changes in preparation for the CSA refresh in the autumn term 2018.
Vicarage Way (Colnbrook with Poyle ward)	17	99	8	118	2	120	There is a risk of insufficient childcare places from the summer term 2018 despite having relatively low participation rates. Recent evidence indicates that the area is undergoing significant reduction in demand for provision within the ward. More families are looking for full day care, outside of the locality.	Facilitate partnership working to share providers' knowledge and identify initiatives that will better support parents requirements and support provider sustainability.
Total	280	814	445	1184	336	1520		

Autumn term 2017 - Children living outside of the borough and accessing a funded place in Slough.

There are currently 2 children's centre areas which have sufficient spaces to offer places to parents in over subscribed areas.

Two year olds	9	Three year olds	122
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6 Comments of Other Committees

None

7 Conclusion

Members are asked to note the childcare sufficiency information contained in this report and the proposed actions to address any shortfall. Members are asked to note the need for the Early Years Service to be involved in future planning of developments that may influence or determine the supply and demand for early learning and childcare places in Slough.

8 Background Papers

1. Five Year Plan
2. JSNA Summary
3. Housing 5 year plan