

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

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PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

CHILDREN'S CENTRES TASK AND FINISH GROUP – FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel regarding the recommendations contained in the Children's Centres Task and Finish Group report 7th February 2019.

2. Recommendations/Proposed Action

- 2.1 Following the review of Slough's network of children's centres, the below recommendations were adopted and approved at the February 2019 Panel, namely:

- 1) Maintain the standard of buildings with regular checking of facilities.
- 2) Ensure the relationship with Heathrow is developed to support Children's Centres in the surrounding area.
- 3) Investigate the cost of extending the offer to children and families across higher phases in Slough.
- 4) Build on the excellent relationships with delivery partners to extend and consolidate the offer.
- 5) Explore further the opportunities for other agencies to operate out of children's centres (e.g. libraries) to deliver satellite services.
- 6) Establish more formal opportunities for children's centres to generate additional income by letting out parts of the building in a manner which does not impact on service delivery or compromise safeguarding arrangements.

Members are requested to note the current status of these recommendations, as laid out in section 4 of this report.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3.1 Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy priorities

The network of children's centres supports the following priorities of the strategy:

1. Protecting vulnerable children
2. Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities.

3.2 Five Year Plan Outcomes

This report considers education for children which impacts on the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Outcome 1, Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

The financial implications of the report's recommendations are outlined at the end of Appendix A. The actions are to be monitored by the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel as part of the ongoing work to deliver these recommendations. Reports will be tabled every 2 years.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Current status
Maintain the standard of buildings with regular checking of facilities.	The service has secured additional capital to maintain the assets.	Servicing plans in place. Pre-planned maintenance schedule in place.	2 - Economic/ financial-risk negligible probability-very low, H&S-risk-marginal, probability-low Legal/regulatory- risk negligible probability very low.	General Fund is being used for asset management and legislative PPM (Pre-Planned Maintenance). The budget is secure to 2023.
Ensure the relationship with Heathrow is developed to support Children's Centres in the surrounding area.	Any contact will need to align with wider strategic discussions with colleagues across SBC/Heathrow	Nothing at present.	1 -Political - risk negligible, probability-almost impossible	The children's centres operations team have made contact with the collaborative Heathrow working group.

<p>Investigate the cost of extending the offer to children and families across higher phases in Slough.</p>	<p>There is no control over uptake of childcare or extending the offer- preference maybe to remain in a school setting.</p> <p>Opportunities- demand for childcare places remains high and current interest in use of / repurposing rooms i.e. room at Chalvey Grove CC has now become a satellite library and the service is in discussions with colleagues across the council in relation to wider use opportunities in terms of localities.</p>	<p>Working group set up to review current fee structure offer and sustainability and reviewing and repurposing rooms within the Children’s Centres. There is a requirement to undertake extensive community consultation.</p>	<p>6 -political- risk- marginal probability- low</p>	<p>Property Services have calculated the additional costs and a submission has been made to the Capital Monitoring Board for approval.</p>
<p>Build on the excellent relationships with delivery partners to extend and consolidate the offer</p>	<p>Risks - recruitment of sufficient high quality staff to meet the broader age range. Update of new offer.</p> <p>Opportunities - enhance the reach of the children and families.</p> <p>Opportunities to link with other departments and partners to deliver across the spectrum of ages,</p>	<p>Strong partnership links already in place with SBC, SCST and other external agencies inc. Health, schools and young people service.</p>	<p>2 Political - risk - negligible probability - very low</p>	<p>Options are being considered for the phase 3 delivery of early help.</p> <p>Additional staffing costs and associated building costs to configure areas of the children’s centres have been confirmed.</p>

Explore further the opportunities for other agencies to operate out of children's centres (e.g. libraries) to deliver satellite services.	Risks- other agencies not wanting to engage in service delivery in a Children's Centre. Opportunities- use of / repurposing rooms i.e. room at Chalvey Grove to become a satellite library, room at Vicarage Way to become a diabetic clinic for the wider population.	Working group to identify additional income generation including room bookings, service delivery and suitability of accommodation.	2 Economic/ financial- risk negligible probability- very low	A management information system is in place which enables agencies to book children's centre rooms as appropriate. The fee structure is being finalised and a prospectus will be available to market these services in order to generate additional income from September 2019.
Establish more formal opportunities for children's centres to generate additional income by letting out parts of the building in a manner which does not impact on service delivery or compromise safeguarding arrangements.	Risks- closure of sites- no further opportunities to earn income. Risks associated with lettings- non payment of room hire etc. Safeguarding, H&S. Opportunities- room hire, selling of staff skills to internal and external agencies.	Working group already in place. Currently testing the market- offering rooms for specialist services i.e. Training courses for parents.	2 Economic/ financial Risk- negligible probability- very low Managem ent inc contractual - risk- negligible probability- very low	

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications. The provision of Early Education is a statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006 (Sections 6 – 11).

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix B.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 The Task and Finish Group concluded their review in January 2019 and formed the six recommendations which were adopted and agreed at the February Panel.
- 5.2 The site visits enabled Members to review services, meet with staff and partners and draw up the associated recommendations. As a result, Members were impressed with the offer for local children and the use of the recent investment. As a result, the recommendations do not focus on changing provision for current service users, but rather extending the services offered at centres across a wider age range.
- 5.3 The report was tabled on 7th February 2019 and recommendations adopted and agreed. The panel requested an update in relation to the agreed recommendations and to table a schedule of reviews every two years.

6. **Conclusion**

6.1 This report is intended to update members of the Panel in relation to the progress of these recommendations

6.2 Any significant proposals in relation to the change of use will require extensive consultation and Cabinet approval.

7. **Comments of other Committees**

This report reflects the outcomes of the Task and Finish Group's work.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - Financial options in relation to long term maintenance and room bookings

'B' - Equalities Impact Assessment

9. **Background Papers**

1. Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance, For local authorities, commissioners of local health services and Jobcentre Plus, April 2013