

## Options for Change to Slough Children’s Centres

### ‘Centre by Centre’ Implications

#### Purpose of paper

To set out the potential implications of the identified options for change for each of the 10 Children’s Centres in Slough.

#### 1. Background and context

1.1 Work has been progressed over the past year to explore the feasibility of modifying existing arrangements for the provision of Children’s Centres. Key drivers for this work include the need to make changes to how services across the partnership support children and families, particularly those most in need of early help and where feasible, enabling Slough Borough Council (SBC) to deliver financial savings as part of its budget setting process and medium-term financial strategy.

1.2 SBC has 10 Children’s Centres across the Borough. Each centre includes the provision of directly delivered early education and childcare. This provision has been subject to review, the outcomes of which has informed a number of options for change. The findings of this review work are summarised as follows:

#### Summary of key review findings

<b>Children’s Centres component</b>	<b>Early Learning and Childcare component</b>
Capacity to provide key children functions has diminished overtime with resource reassigned to address other areas of need	Directly delivered offer via Children’s Centres appears to be being provided at cost to the Council
The model has evolved to be primarily concerned with the provision of early learning and childcare, resulting in capacity to deliver key core children’s centre functions being compromised	Directly delivered offer via Children’s centres appears to be being provided in areas where data and intelligence suggests there is surplus capacity
Core functions and offer have been maintained but spread thinly and unevenly across the range of centres and associated localities	Directly delivered offer appears to be being provided in areas where data and intelligence suggests there is sufficient capacity to meet requirements and need in its absence
Capacity to identify and target those most in need of support is limited	Operational management required to provide management and coordination for both early learning and childcare offer and management and leadership of Children’s Centres. This present a significant challenge to enabling both needs to be adequately met

1.3 The case for change arising from review findings are summarised below:

### Summary of the case for change

<b>Children's Centres component</b>	<b>Early Learning and Childcare component</b>
The need to consolidate limited resources to enable children's centre sufficiency	The need to ensure Council resources are not deployed for the provision of early education and childcare unless there is a clear and agreed business case for doing so
The need to enable key children's centre functions to be fulfilled and focused on core Children's Centre requirements	The need to ensure that the sufficiency of early education and childcare offer is maintained without the Council necessarily providing the service itself
The recognition that resources and associated approach needs to enable and ensure the coordination and targeting of early childhood services at the most vulnerable	The need to continue to enable the provider market to maintain the offer so it may meet need and address gaps

1.4 Consideration has been given to the best way of responding review findings and the identified drivers for change. The following table outlines the options that have been shaped for consideration.

### Summary of headline options for change

<b>Children's Centres component</b>	<b>Early Learning and Childcare component</b>
Reduce the current number of centres to consolidate the offer and enable an increase in identification and targeting of support for those most in need	Discontinue the provision of directly delivered early years provision where data and local intelligence indicates sufficiency levels can be maintained without it and / or;
Apply a 'centre without walls' approach by reducing the number of physical centres and developing a more flexible, peripatetic approach to fulfilling the functions of the service	Enable the wider economy of providers to take up provision in areas of need
Align revised model to the developing prevention and early help strategy to enhance preventative work with families across the borough	Work towards ensuring any continuation of directly delivered provision is cost neutral and / or transferred to the market to provide

1.5 These options for change have been refined in order to produce the more details options for consideration and consultation. They are summarised below together with commentary regarding the headline potential benefits and constraints of each option.

<b>Children's Centre Options</b>	<b>Potential benefits</b>	<b>Potential constraints</b>
<b>*Denotes maintenance of directly delivered early education and childcare</b>		
<p>1. To create a new 3 centre model by closing 7 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish a new model of delivery serviced by the existing Centres at Penn Road, Chalvey Grove* and Romsey Close*. Yew Tree Road maintained as provider of childcare only.</p> <p>(Recommended)</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	<p>70% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated loss of contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p> <p>Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.</p>
<p>2. To create a new 2 centre model by closing 8 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish model serviced by the existing Centres at Penn Road and Chalvey Grove* respectively.</p> <p>Tree Road maintained as provider of childcare only.</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	<p>80% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated loss contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p> <p>Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.</p>
<p>3. To create a new 1 centre model by closing 9 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish a boroughwide model at Chalvey Grove</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	<p>90% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated major loss of contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p>

		Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.
4. To continue with the current provision of 10 centres or to have less of a reduction of centres than proposed above.	No centre would be closed.	The current model is not targeted at those most in need and therefore does not fulfil the requirements of the statutory guidance. The current model would not meet the savings target and if savings are to be made, the reduction in hours and staffing would be extreme leaving buildings that are not meeting the core functions of a children's centre. Unnecessary revenue would be spent on maintaining buildings instead of investing in non-building based services such as outreach.

1.6 The information below sets out the implications for each centre, depending on which, if any option is pursued following consultation.

1.7 The following information provides further detail as to the potential implications for each centre should any of the options be agreed following consultation. Should any of the options be agreed for implementation following consultation, a phased approach would be applied to the process to mitigate the impact of the change on centre users.

## Centre by centre implications overview

Centre	Summary of potential implications in relation to each option
<p>1.Monksfield Way Children’s Centre, Monksfield Way, Slough, SL2 1QX</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation with no other viable option identified following consultation, Monksfield Way would close for both Children’s Centre and early education and childcare provision purposes.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children’s Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>2.Chalvey Grove Children’s Centre, Chalvey Grove, Slough, SL1 2TE</p>	<p>All options would see Chalvey Grove retained as a Children’s Centre.</p> <p>Options one, two and four would see Chalvey Grove maintained as both a Children’s Centre and as a provider of early education and childcare its early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Option three would see Chalvey Grove maintained as a Children’s Centre but discontinued as a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Should the discontinuation of childcare option be agreed to pursue with no other viable option identified following consultation, work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>

<p>3. Penn Road, Penn Road, SL2 1PG</p>	<p>Options one and two would see Penn Road maintained as a Children's Centre only.</p> <p>Should option three be agreed for implementation, Penn Road would close for both Children's Centre and Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare provision purposes.</p> <p>Options four would result in Penn road being maintained as both a Children's Centre and a provider of early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision. Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>4. Romsey Close Children's Centre, Romsey Close, SL3 8PE</p>	<p>Option one and four would see the maintenance of Romsey Close as both a Children's Centre and a provider of early education and childcare.</p> <p>Options two and three would see Romsey Close, close as both a Children's Centre and Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Should closure options be pursued, work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private,</p>

	<p>voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>5. Yew Tree Road Children's Centre, Yew Tree Road, Slough SL1 2AR</p>	<p>Option one and two would result in the closure of Yew Tree Road as a Children's Centre but maintained for directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Option three would result in Yew Tree Road being closed as a Children's Centre and discontinued as a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Options four would see the maintenance of Yew Tree Road as both a Children's Centre and a provider of early education and childcare.</p> <p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation following consultation, a phased approach would be applied to the process to mitigate the impact of the change on centre users.</p> <p>If necessary, work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>6. St Andrews Way Children's Centre, St Andrews Way, Slough SL1 5NL</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option four, with no other viable option identified following consultation, St Andrews Way would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p>

	<p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision. Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>
<p>7. Orchard Avenue Children's Centre, Orchard Avenue, Slough, SL1 6HE</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option 4, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Orchard Avenue would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>8. Elliman Avenue Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5BA</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option four, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Elliman Avenue would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p>

	<p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision. Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>
<p>9.Wexham Road Children’s Centre, Slough, SL2 5JW</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option 4, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Wexham Road would close as both a Children’s Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children’s Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>
<p>10.Vicarage Way Children’s Centre, Slough, SL3 0JY</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option four, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Vicarage Way would close as both a Children’s Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children’s Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>