

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019

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**WARDS:** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

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

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 For the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel to comment on the work and recommendations of the Children's Centres Task and Finish Group.

##### **2. Recommendations/Proposed Action**

2.1 That the Panel approve and adopt the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, 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.

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

###### **3.1 Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy priorities**

The work of Slough 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:

- 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 in the Action Plan section at the end of Appendix A. Should the recommendations be adopted and approved by the Panel, these will be monitored as part of the ongoing work to deliver these recommendations and reported back to the Panel as appropriate.

##### (b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
Maintain the standard of buildings with regular checking of facilities.	£2.5 m maintenance & refurbishment in a 5 year plan to 2023. Risk-reassignment of funding; continuing maintenance after this date.	Current servicing plans already in place. Monthly and annual pre-planned maintenance.	<b>2</b> - economic/ financial-risk negligible probability-very low, H&S-risk-marginal, probability-low Legal/regulatory - risk negligible probability very low.	Additional budgets to enable maintenance programme to continue after 2023, through GF or generated income.
Ensure the relationship with Heathrow is developed to support Children's Centres in the surrounding area.	One time bid-careful linking within SBC to ensure all parties needs are identified prior to this bid.	Nothing at present.	<b>1</b> -political -risk negligible, probability-almost impossible	Working group in place. Collaborative council working.
Investigate the cost of extending the offer to children and families across higher phases in Slough.	Risks- no control over uptake of childcare or extending the offer- preference may be to remain in a school setting. Threats- potential closure of sites in a budget cutting exercise. Opportunities- demand for childcare places remains high and current interest in use of / repurposing	Working group set up to review current fee structure offer and sustainability and reviewing and repurposing rooms within the Children's Centres	<b>6</b> -political- risk-marginal probability-low	Collaborative working across SBC including Young People's Service, Schools, PVIs. Parental consultation for any new proposals.

	rooms i.e. room at Chalvey Grove CC to become a satellite library, room at Vicarage Way to become a diabetic clinic for the wider population.			
Build on the excellent relationships with delivery partners to extend and consolidate the offer.	Risks- recruitment of sufficient high quality staff to meet the broader age range. Uptake of new offer. Opportunities- enhance the reach of the children and families. Opportunities to link with other departments and partners to deliver across the spectrum of ages.	Strong partnership links already in place with SBC, SCST and other external agencies.	<b>2</b> Political- risk - negligible probability-very low	Part of the Early Help offer pilot
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.	<b>2</b> Economic/ financial- risk negligible probability-very low	SLAs to formalise the offer within the centres
Establish more formal opportunities for children's centres to generate additional income by letting out parts of the building in a manner which does	Risks- closure of sites- no further opportunities to earn income. Risks associated with lettings- non	Working group already in place. Currently testing the market-offering rooms for specialist services i.e.	<b>2</b> Economic/ financial Risk-negligible probability-very low Management inc	WiFi being enabled in all the children's centres to allow public access of all SBC services i.e. paying rent,

not impact on service delivery or compromise safeguarding arrangements.	payment of room hire etc. Safeguarding, H&S. Opportunities- room hire, selling of staff skills to internal and external agencies.	Training courses for parents.	contractual- risk- negligible probability-very low	council tax etc.
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(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

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for the recommendations as appropriate should they be adopted.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 The Task and Finish Group was first raised by members at the meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Panel on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018; a decision to commission the review was made at the same event. The Task & Finish Group was then formed and proposed the terms of reference contained in Appendix A on 25<sup>th</sup> September; these were then agreed by the Panel via email.
- 5.2 The Task and Finish Group’s remit was to review the provision of services at Children’s Centres in Slough’. This involved a series of site visits as discussed in the report included as Appendix A. Overall, 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 their current users, but rather extending the services offered at centres across the 0 – 19 year old age range.
- 5.3 The Task and Finish Group held its meeting to conclude its work and form its recommendations on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018. It is the recommendations in this report that require the approval of the Panel, at which point they will be adopted by the Panel. It is also advised that the Panel set a date for an update on these recommendations to track their progress.

6. **Conclusion**

- 6.1 This report is intended to provide the Panel with the findings of the Task and Finish Group.

7. **Comments of other Committees**

This report reflects the outcomes of the Task and Finish Group’s work. No other Committees have considered this material as yet, although should the recommendations be adopted they will then be referred to Cabinet.

8. **Appendices Attached**

- ‘A’ - Final Report Children’s Centres Task & Finish Group (draft)  
Recommendations on page 5