

Brighton & Hove City Council

Meeting: Children and Young People's Trust Board

Date: 17th March 2008

Report of: Director of Children's Services
Children and Young People's Trust

Subject: Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To make the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment available to the Children and Young People's Trust Board for consultation.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note that, in general, there is sufficient childcare in Brighton & Hove to enable parents to work or train.
- 2.2 To note that a childcare strategy for the city will be developed in order to narrow childcare gaps and address childcare affordability.

3. Information/background

- 3.1 In accordance with the Childcare Act 2006, City Early Years and Childcare (CEYC) has been carrying out a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA). This is the process of meeting the new duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare – as far as is reasonably practicable – in Brighton & Hove for parents to work or train, including sufficient childcare for disabled children. The importance of the CSA is that the local authority should be able to demonstrate that lack of childcare is not a barrier to people returning to work.
- 3.2 The CSA assesses the demand for childcare, maps the supply of childcare, compares demand with supply and then highlights any gaps in provision. The CSA will inform the childcare strategy for the city including both early years and childcare as part of the extended services offered by schools. The strategy will need to consider the balance between funding childcare to allow parents to work and childcare that is used by parents as respite.
- 3.3 An anti-poverty strategy is also being developed to support the Government's target to reduce the proportion of children living in non-working households. This will link with Brighton and Hove's Employment and Skills Plan and bring together a range of Council wide initiatives to lift children out of poverty.

- 3.4 The draft CSA is attached to this report. Statutory guidance states that the local authority must consult with its relevant partners under section 10(4) of the Children Act 2004, and presentation of the CSA to the CYPT board is a part of this process. The CSA is also being presented for consultation to the Local Safeguarding Children Board on 18th March, and there are also plans to consult the Learning and Skills Council and Job Centre Plus.
- 3.5 In addition a summary of the draft CSA has been made available to parents and carers, childcare providers, schools, universities and colleges, the City Employment and Skills group, the Learning and Skills Council, the Child Development and Disabilities Strategic Partnership Board, the Healthy and Extended Schools Strategy Group and other interested parties for their comments. Comments must be received by 20th March 2008.
- 3.6 The final CSA will be published by 31st March 2008 and will be placed on the Brighton & Hove website.

Appendices

Draft Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, March 2008

Draft Summary Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2008

Meeting Date	Children and Young People's Trust Board 17th March 2008
Report of	Interim Director, Children and Young People's Trust
Subject	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
Wards affected	All
<p>Financial implications The total cost of any actions taken to meet the sufficiency duty will have to be contained within existing revenue resources. It may be necessary to allocate existing funding in a different way in order to meet any gaps that may be identified by the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. The services referred to in this report are largely funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Sure Start Grant. The amount of funding available in these grants for future years will clearly influence the amount of resource available for initiatives aimed at narrowing childcare gaps as detailed in the report.</p> <p>Finance Officer Consulted: Jeff Coates Date 21 February 2008</p>	
<p>Legal implications The legal framework and requirements for the CSA are as set out in the body of the report.</p> <p>Lawyer consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 4th March 2008</p>	

<p>Corporate/citywide implications The CSA and associated work to ensure sufficient childcare supports the council in achieving all four corporate priorities. Good quality childcare helps children to have the best possible start in life. Ensuring that it is affordable will help tackle poverty in low-income households. Childcare supports the development of a prosperous and sustainable economy, and high quality provision, particularly for older children, promotes safety by providing an alternative to less constructive activities.</p>	<p>Risk assessment Consultation with a large number of parents, including those with disabled children, as well as consultation with all childcare providers, has ensured that the CSA takes a broad view. The draft CSA is now available for comment from interested parties and these comments will be included in the final report.</p> <p>The CSA will be published by 31st March 2008 ensuring that the council meets its statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006.</p>
<p>Sustainability implications The CSA considers the need for childcare on a geographical basis. Provision of childcare in the neighbourhoods in which people live reduces the need to travel and consequent carbon emissions.</p>	<p>Equalities implications The CSA considers childcare for all children, but has a particular focus on the needs of disadvantaged groups, including children living in single parent households and disabled children.</p>
<p>Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder Research shows access to good quality childcare supports children and young people's learning and achievement in life.</p>	

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