

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Childcare Sufficiency Assessment</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> January 2019</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director for Families, Children &amp; Learning</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Vicky Jenkins</b>	<b>Tel: 01273 296110</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All Wards</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 Local authorities are required to report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare in accordance with Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 (as amended), and make this report available and accessible to parents. The report informs the committee about childcare sufficiency in Brighton & Hove, parents' views of childcare in the city and the national and local policy context.
- 1.2 The report contributes to the council's [Early Years Strategy](#), in particular to ensure that there are sufficient early years childcare places so that disadvantaged children can take up their early years free entitlement (EYFE) and parents can work.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the committee notes the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 That the CSA is published to parents and childcare providers, and that childcare providers are supported to offer tax free childcare.
- 2.3 That additional support and inclusion funding for children with SEND for 2019/20 onwards is reviewed, as well as information for parents, with a specific focus on SEND and children in more disadvantaged families.

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The childcare offer to parents has expanded significantly since the last CSA in 2016. From September 2017 three and four year olds of working parents have been eligible for the extended entitlement of 30 hours free childcare. Tax free childcare was introduced in April 2017 with parents now able to claim government support of up to £2,000 a year (£4,000 where a child is disabled) with their childcare costs. The amount of childcare support through Universal Credit (compared with that through Working Tax Credit) has also increased to up to 85 per cent of costs.
- 3.2 Administration of EYFE, particularly the extended entitlement, has resulted in additional work for the local authority, including providing information to parents and supporting childcare providers to adapt their provision to meet parents' needs.

- 3.3 The childcare market in Brighton & Hove continues to be reasonably buoyant. Although some childcare settings have closed, mainly because of low numbers of children, new ones have opened.
- 3.4 CSA did not find any significant gaps in childcare provision in the city; however parents responding to the survey tended to be less satisfied than those who responded in 2016, and concerns about childcare cost and flexibility were common themes.
- 3.5 There was no notable difficulty reported by parents accessing EYFE; however some reported that they had to pay for additional hours in order to access those which are funded.
- 3.6 A large proportion of those with school-age children who responded to the survey had a child with SEND. These parents were less satisfied with childcare than those with a child or children without SEND. This is despite the fact that support for children with SEND to access childcare in the city tends to be more comprehensive than in some other local authorities in the south east.
- 3.7 Childcare quality in the city is very high with a good range of types of provision. All two year olds and 97 per cent of three and four year olds attended a setting rated good or outstanding by Ofsted for their EYFE.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.8 While the number of places with childminders and in sessional care (including in maintained nursery classes) has reduced, there has been an increase in supply of full day care and after-school club places.
- 3.9 Compared with 2016 more full day care settings offer earlier morning opening; however only a very small number of childminders and at home childcarers offer care at weekends or overnight, meaning that options for parents who want or need to work non-traditional hours are very limited.
- 3.10 Childcare costs have increased since 2016. Average costs are
- Full day care £54.00 per day
  - Sessional care £5.57 per hour
  - Childminding £5.43 per hour
  - After-school club £12.18 per session
  - Holiday playscheme £29.56 per day
  - Breakfast club £2.70 per session
  - At home childcarer £9.92 per hour
- 3.11 Childcare costs in Brighton & Hove are higher than national and regional averages, with the exception of a childcare place for a child under two, which is lower than the south east average.
- 3.12 Childcare providers have been supported through a range of workshops, events and individual tailored support to examine their business model and adapt their offer to parents in order to ensure their sustainability. Early years and childcare

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<sup>1</sup> DfE Census January 2018

continues to support the recruitment of new childminders and encourage them to offer EYFE, particularly the extended entitlement.

- 3.13 The rate of funding from the DfE for EYFE, at £4.45 per hour for three and four year olds and £5.20 per hour for two year olds, is the lowest of any unitary authority in the south east, despite childcare costs being generally higher.<sup>2</sup> Representations by the city's elected members and MPs have not resulted in any change, and it is anticipated that there will be no change to this funding in 2019/20. As a result more early years childcare providers, particularly smaller settings, may struggle to remain open.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The recommendations follow statutory guidance which requires local authorities to report on how they are meeting their statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Parent survey data was collected online through Brighton & Hove City Council's consultation portal between 5<sup>th</sup> July and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017.
- 5.2 The survey was publicised through 13,000 postcards delivered to the city's maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools and was publicised on the schools' bulletin.
- 5.3 All the city's private, voluntary and independent childcare providers received postcards for distribution to parents, as did the city's children's centres. The city's libraries received postcards, with additional copies to the two main libraries.
- 5.4 Amaze<sup>3</sup> shared the survey through its Compass database.<sup>4</sup>
- 5.5 The survey was frequently shared through social media (Facebook and Twitter) including being regularly re-tweeted by the council.
- 5.6 Postcards were sent to a wide range of community organisations and groups with a focus on those located in more disadvantaged areas of the city, as well as those supporting black and minority ethnic women and families.
- 5.7 450 people completed the childcare survey, significantly fewer than the 805 in 2016. A high proportion of those who responded to the survey who had school-age children had a child or children with SEND.
- 5.8 As part of the PACE (EU funded Providing Access to Childcare and Employment) project, participating parents were consulted about childcare in a focus group in June 2018.
- 5.9 All Ofsted-registered childcare providers were contacted for childcare supply information, both through an online survey and directly by telephone.

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<sup>2</sup> These are gross rates, and in accordance with statutory guidance the early years funding formula passes on 95% of three and four year old and 100% of two year old funding to providers

<sup>3</sup> Amaze is a charity that gives information, advice and support to families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Brighton & Hove and Sussex

<sup>4</sup> The statutory disability register for Brighton & Hove City Council

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 High quality childcare should continue to be supported in Brighton & Hove as part of the council's early years strategy, and as outlined in the recommendations above.
- 6.2 CSA findings should be promoted to childcare providers so that where possible they can develop their provision to meet identified gaps.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Funding for the CSA came from a DfE 30 hour Delivery Support Fund grant awarded to early years and childcare for 2018/19 only.
- 7.2 Funding for the Early Years Free Entitlement for eligible two, three and four year olds is from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
- 7.3 Brighton & Hove has a low funding per pupil of £4.45 compared with the England average of £4.78. We also comply with the statutory requirement to pass through 95% of early years funding to providers. It is not anticipated that the funding amount will change in 2019/20.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore*

*Date: 22/11/18*

### Legal Implications:

- 7.1 Local authorities are required to report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare in accordance with Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 (as amended), and make this report available and accessible to parents.
- 7.2 *Lawyer Consulted*

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Serena Kynaston*

*Date: 04.12.2018*

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 An EIA for 30 hours free childcare was completed in May 2018. The CSA supports the council's Early Years Strategy which focusses on improving outcomes for all young children, reducing inequalities and ensure that there is sufficient, high-quality early years provision and childcare for parents locally.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

1. Appendices to Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

### **Background Documents**

1. None



