

**Subject:** Phase 3 Children's Centres  
**Date of Meeting:** 8 September 2008  
**Report of:** Director of Children's Services  
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**Key Decision:** Yes Forward Plan No. CYPTB: 2678  
**Wards Affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has asked Brighton and Hove to agree the number and location of the third and final phase of Children's Centres to open by March 2010
- 1.2 In Phase 3 local authorities will be working towards the national target of 3,500 Children's Centres to offer universal access to Children's Centre services. All Phase 3 centres will be located outside the most disadvantaged areas and will offer a less intensive level of support than Phase 1 and 2 centres. Local authorities have greater flexibility in deciding what level of service to offer based on local needs. They do not have to include childcare. The DCSF expectation is that Children's Centres should build on existing private, voluntary, independent or statutory services for children and families for example schools, childcare providers and health centres.
- 1.3 Brighton and Hove already has a citywide integrated service for children under 5 and their families. Sure Start Community Under 5s Teams offer services to all children and families in the city, including those families without a local Children's Centre, with extra support for families who need it. The teams deliver services from a network of Children's Centres and in families' homes.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To agree to use £300,000 of the capital funding to ensure that the existing Children's Centres are fully functional by funding both maintenance and improvements to the existing buildings and outside spaces where needed.
- 2.2 To agree to develop three gateway Children's Centres in the following areas:
- Preston Park

- Westdene
  - Rottingdean/Saltdean
- 2.3 To agree to review whether an additional Children's Centre is needed in Hove if a decision is made to develop a new school here as part of the Primary Strategy.
- 2.4 To agree that CYPT officers ask, in accordance with Children's Centre Phase 3 Planning and Delivery Guidance, existing private, voluntary, independent or statutory services for children and families in these areas to express an interest in developing a Children's Centre based on an agreed specification.
- 2.5 To consult local families about the final location of the Children's Centre in each of these areas.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 Services for children in the city were reorganised in October 2006 to create an area based, multi-disciplinary service for children and young people provided by the Children and Young People's Trust . This service includes integrated Sure Start Under 5s teams, including health visitors who support all children under five and their families across the city. The aim is to ensure that all children will receive the services they need wherever they live in the city. These services are delivered from Children's Centres and in families' homes.
- 3.2 Brighton & Hove has developed a citywide network of sixteen Children's Centres over the last four years. There are six full offer Children's Centres which offer a full range of services including childcare in the most disadvantaged areas. A further ten, smaller gateway centres offer a graduated range of services based on local needs.

Proposals for Capital Improvements to Existing Children's Centres

- 3.3 The first priority is to ensure that the sixteen existing Children's Centre are fully fit for purpose and sustainable. They were developed quickly and with limited budgets. The new funding will cover buggy parks (£15,000), planned maintenance and minor adaptations (£70,000) and creating and equipping outside play areas (£215,000).

Proposals for new Children's Centres

- 3.4 Annex 1 includes a map showing existing Children's Centre areas and the location of the existing Children's Centres. The proposal is to create three small Children's Centres to ensure citywide coverage.
- 3.5 The only area which does not have a Children's Centre is the Preston Park area. The area is covered by the Preston Park Sure Start Under 5s team based in Clyde Road. This is an area with a low level of need but with 1500 children under 5 (10% of whom are targeted). The area does include a Super Output Area in the worst 30% at Preston Circus. This Centre would need to be

accessible to families from the area between the London and Lewes Roads.

- 3.6 The Westdene area is covered by the Patcham Sure Start Under 5s Team with the Children's Centre based at Carden Primary School (1,100 children in the whole area, 13% targeted). Levels of deprivation are low in the Westdene area but families cannot easily access a Children's Centre. The proposal is to develop a small outreach centre in the Westdene area. This could also be used by families from the north of the Stanford ward who are some distance from their Children's Centre at Goldstone Primary School.
- 3.7 The Ovingdean, Rottingdean and Saltdean areas are covered by the Deans Sure Start Under 5s Team with a Children's Centre in Rudyard Kipling School. There are low levels of children and needs (500 children, 9% targeted). However this area is geographically isolated and families cannot easily access the Deans Children's Centre. The intention would be to locate the Children's Centre in Saltdean as this area is furthest away from Woodingdean.
- 3.8 There are large numbers of children in the Hove area of the city with 1,200 in the full offer Conway Court area (20% targeted) and 1,600 for West Hove Gateway Centre (12.5% targeted). However West Hove is one of the largest gateway Centres and families in these areas can also access neighbouring Children's Centres in South Portslade, Goldstone and Brunswick. Therefore it is not proposed to develop another Children's Centre in Hove at this stage. However if a new school were to be developed in Hove in the future this decision would be reviewed. It is likely that a new school would be developed after the DCSF deadline of March 2010 so a new Children's Centre here may not be able to access the 2008/2010 capital funding.

#### Phase 3 Children's Centres Specification

- 3.9 The DCSF guidance is clear that the intensity of services offered by Children's Centres should vary according to the level of disadvantage in the local area. All Children's Centres must provide a universal range of services including:
- Outreach for isolated parents and children at risk of social exclusion; information and advice on services for families including parenting and childcare,
  - Support to childminders including a quality assured network, training, and a toy library
  - Activities for children and parents eg. parenting support and advice groups, early years childcare – this can be an existing service;
  - Links with Job Centre Plus
  - Access to community health services for example child health clinics
- 3.10 The Phase 2 Children's Centres were all based on existing buildings and services. Experience of operating these buildings shows that Children's Centres work best when they include:
- A shared reception area with the existing service
  - A group room which is large enough to hold a parenting group and small group based activities

- A small one-one room with a wash hand basin for individual appointments;
- Access to a disabled toilet with nappy changing facilities.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The DCSF will not designate new Phase 3 Children's Centres until a full consultation with parents and rigorous analysis of local services has taken place.
- 4.2 Existing private, voluntary, independent or statutory services for children and families will be asked to express an interest in hosting the Children's Centres and families will be consulted after the CYPT Board has agreed to the proposed areas.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The Department for Children, Schools and Families has allocated Brighton & Hove capital funding of £1,882,000 over three years to fund both new Children's Centres and maintenance for existing Children's Centres. The revenue funding for Children's Centres will increase from £3.69 million in 2008/9 to £5.23 million in 2010/2011. This increase is to fund the new Centres and to increase funding for outreach workers and parenting support in existing Children's Centres. The capital cost of the recommendations in this report will be met from within the capital grant allocation. Any ongoing revenue costs will be met from within the revenue grant allocation for children's centres. Although grant allocations have only been announced as far as 2010/11 it is anticipated that this funding will be ongoing.

Finance officer consulted: Jeff Coates and John Timson      Date: 31/07/08

##### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The local authority has a statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to improve early years outcomes and to narrow the gap for the most disadvantaged children by providing integrated early years services. The authority's partners in health also have a statutory duty to work with the authority to make such arrangements. The report sets out how Brighton and Hove has initially focussed on disadvantaged areas, in accordance with national guidance. It also sets the proposals for creating universal access to Children's Centres, in accordance with assessed need, utilising funding allocated by DCSF.

Lawyer consulted: Hilary Priestley      Date: 30/07/08

##### Health Implications:

- 5.3 Children's Centres promote the Being Healthy outcome for young children by providing access to health services including antenatal services and the Child Health Promotion Programme.

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 Children’s Centres must focus on children and families at risk of social inclusion, fathers, teenage parents and children and families from minority ethnic groups.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 Provision of early years services in local communities supports the sustainable communities goal. Capital developments will take place in accordance with sustainable consumption and production, as well as natural resource protection and environmental impact assessment.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 Research shows access to integrated early years services and good quality childcare supports children and young people’s learning and achievement in life.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 “I DO RM” tool will be used for any new projects.

Corporate/Citywide Implications:

The relevant corporate and CYPP objectives is:

- Reduce inequality by increasing opportunity

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

Map of Brighton and Hove CC Areas

### **Background Documents**

Sure Start Children’s Centres Phase 3 Planning Guidance

