

DECISION-MAKER:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
SUBJECT:	BUDGET PROPOSALS – CHILDREN’S SERVICES
DATE OF DECISION:	13 DECEMBER 2012
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN’S SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES AND LEARNING
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	

BRIEF SUMMARY

This paper outlines five budget proposals: CS1, 3 and 7 – redesigned Children’s Centres and Families Centres; CS17 – reduction of contracted services and CS18 - cessation of the Play and Youth Provision, along with current identified mitigation action.

This Administration recognises that the Council and its partners need to rethink how to provide services to our children and families as a result of ever-rising demands and complex needs coupled with an immediate significant reduction in local government finance resources available to deliver what we do.

It is generally agreed that the right approach is to focus services where possible on improving early intervention and prevention of problems escalating into expensive and 'crisis-management' situations. What is not so clear is how to achieve this at a time of short term cuts in budgets, that tend to focus on holding on to the statutory services (often the ones at the 'crisis' end) at the expense of non-statutory functions, some of which can provide that early intervention so needed. The other policy approach that needs balancing is how much of our services should be universal or targeted. Targeted approaches like the work to reduce young people who are NEET has been proven to work well, but universal services like Childrens Centres are often gateways for people to engage with other services.

The budget proposals now under consideration do involve service reductions as well as changes to services that over time could well lead to greater support for our most vulnerable families. Enhancing the range of services provided out of the Children's Centres in the most deprived parts of the city is one example of taking savings but also bringing together professionals in one place to focus relentlessly on those most in need.

Mitigation and support from other partners across the city is being sought in areas where the loss of the service could impact on long term prevention of problems and this is particularly the case with the proposal of the removal of the youth service.

We are working with all our partners across the many agencies and sectors to identify alternative ways of supporting our young people where there is greatest need.

At a time when the financial situation continues to look bleak for local government, we aim to harness the creativity of staff and partners in the city to protect our most vulnerable and identify ways of enhancing the resilience of our communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Overview Scrutiny Management Committee consider the report and note the:

- I. Progress made in redesigning service provision to maintain preventative services in local communities, CS1, 3 and 7.
- II. Current work with the third sector to reduce contract services, CS17.
- III. Current developments for mitigating the cessation of Play and Youth Provision. CS 18.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Children's Services and Learning have made budget proposals totalling £6.9m spanning the two budget periods: July 2012 and February 2013. Proposals include a reduction in a range of preventative services, which are designed to achieve positive population outcomes. In early 2012 Children's Services and Learning developed, in partnership with the Children's Trust partners, a Prevention Strategy. The strategy provides direction for delivery of services that offer early intervention to children, young people and families in need. The Prevention Strategy is attached as Appendix 1. The budget proposals, CS1, 3, 7, 17 and 18 cover specific prevention services: Children's Centres, contracted services – prevention and reaction, and Play and Youth provision.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

2. CS1, 3, 7 Children and Families Centres

Southampton has a reputation for delivering high quality prevention and specialist services, based on strong interagency partnerships, which are focussed on improving population outcomes. For example, Prevention Services include:

- 14 Children's Centres. Five have been externally inspected during 2012. Resulting in four judged 'Outstanding' and one 'Good'.
- Funded Early Years provision for a limited number of 2 year olds, 3 and 4 year olds, growing to include 40% of 2 year olds from September 2014.
- A Parenting and Family Support Team delivering holistic whole family interventions.

And specialist service:

- Family Centre Services providing high quality targeted specialist assessment and intervention to families with child protection concerns.

The current model of service configuration, of Children's Centres, Early Years, Parenting and Family Support and Family Centres, has worked well for many children and families. Changes in resource availability plus recommendations from recent reviews have acted as a catalyst to develop a fresh approach to service provision in the city.

In the current delivery model the four strands of services are linked but not integrated. The Children's Centres, Early Years provision and Parenting and Family Support are integrated under the umbrella of Prevention Services. The family centre services are integrated into Social Care specialist services.

Currently consultation is underway to explore options for drawing together the four strands of service provision and deliver the services from seven new Children and

Families Centres.

The proposal has been developed following a number of informal consultations and discussions with practitioners and managers and the Sure Start Children's Centres Transformation Group, established in early 2012 to develop alternative proposals for service provision. Further consultation is taking place with staff and user groups over the next two months.

The proposal aims to deliver all statutory requirements through:

- Delivering all preventative and some specialist services to families from a base located in communities.
- Implementing holistic family focussed approaches.
- Creating synergies between intensive specialist intervention services for families where there are child protection concerns and preventative services.
- Improving the experience families have in moving between universal, targeted and specialist focussed services, including those families receiving support through the Families Matter agenda.
- Optimising partnerships with parents, communities, services and partner agencies.
- Facilitating further improvements in population outcomes.
- Achieving financial savings through optimise use of all resources.

The main features of the proposal are:

- Creation of Children and Families Centres that cover the whole city. The new centres will formed through grouping the existing 14 children centres, into eight groups. In the main the existing full core offer Children Centres will be the base of the new centre. Seven out of the 14 Children's Centres offering a full core offer. The centres are based in areas of highest deprivation in the City, see table 1: Children and families centre current catchment area.
- The new centres will draw into locally based centres the work undertaken by Children's Centres, Family Centres, Family Support Services and the newly development Family Matters programme.
- A revised management structure overseeing the work of the new Children and Families Centres, the non-full core offer Children's Centres and the Early Years and Childcare team.
- Revised roles for Children's Centres and Early Years staff to reflect national guidance, priorities and funding pressures.
- Closure of two Family Centres and the relocation of activities with children and their families into the Children and Families Centres. The staff transferring from the two Families Centres will be supervised by newly designated case-holding Senior Practitioners.

Table 1: Children and families centre current catchment area, see appendix 2a

Group	Children and Families Centre	Address	Current under 5 population served	IDACI No. of under 5s resident in SOAs that are in 30% most deprived nationally
1	Bassett & Lordswood	Bassett Green Primary School, Honeysuckle Road SO16 3BZ	832	81
	Lordshill, Coxford & Shirley Warren	Warren Centre, Chestnut Road SO16 6AY	1288	902
2	MRM	Pickles Coppice 65 Windermere Ave, SO16 9QX	1677	1662
3	North Shirley	The Ashby Centre, Stratton Road SO15 5QZ	1510	379
	Freemantle / South Shirley	The Fryatt Centre, Freemantle School, Paynes Road SO15 3BY	1221	422
4	Central	60-68 Clovelly Road, SO14 0AU	1722	1592
5	Swaythling	Bassett Green Primary School, Honeysuckle Road, SO16 3BZ	908	623
	Portswood	The Avenue Centre, Alma Road SO17 1XQ	944	278
6	Bitterne Park	Cutbush Children's Centre, Cutbush Lane, Townhill Park SO18 2GF	1219	74
	Townhill Park & Harefield		987	522
7	Thornhill	Byron Road, Thornhill SO19 6FH	961	818
	Sholing	Start Point Sholing, Wood Close SO19 0SG	1088	374
8	Weston	60 Foxcott Close SO19 9JQ	735	533
	Woolston	Woolston Clinic, Woodley Road SO19 9DW	1230	426

Full details of the model is attached in Appendix 2.

3. CS17 – Contracted services

Currently Children's Services and Learning contract with 29 organisations, of which 26 are third sector organisations. The total number of contracted arrangements equal 50, of which 44 are third sector organisations. The total resource committed in 2021/13 was £2.8m. The services provide are varied, see table 2: contracted services. Table 2 groups contracts under three categories: those being fully or mostly retained; those

offered significant reduction but partial retention or mitigation and those provided with no or minimal financial mitigation.

The services retained or partially being retained post April 2013 are statutory services such as: respite/short breaks care for disabled children and young people and children in care nurse; specialist services targeting vulnerable groups, for instance: young people at risk of becoming teenage parents and teenage parents – in line with the city’s teenage pregnancy strategy; young people at risk of mental health; and parent support services.

Table 2: Contracted services

Category	Contracted services
Be fully or mostly retained	<p>Statutory: Family nurse partnership, respite care for disabled children young people, secure accommodation transport and specialist offending fostering and looked after children’s nurse.</p> <p>Specialist work: support for young people in refugees, health drop in services in schools and colleges, sex and relationship education, parent partnership, targeted counselling for young people with mental health needs - CAMHS, family support services, and family group conferencing.</p>
Offered significant reduction but partial retention or mitigation	Sexually exploitation, specialist CAHMS grant, substance misuse, outdoor education.
Provide with no or minimal financial mitigation	Targeted youth support , advocacy, teenage pregnancy coordination, person centred reviews, foster care breaks, family workers for families with disabled children, support for young carers, street pastors.

Consultation is currently taking place with contractors on future funding levels. In summary the contracted budget in 2012/13 totals £2.8m; proposed savings equal £1.4m, retained contracts post April 2013 will equate to £1.4m.

4. CS18- direct provision of Play and Youth services

Play and Youth provision is not a statutory function of the Council. Rather local Authorities have a responsibility to perform a strategic role to ‘secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, equality of access for all young people to the positive, preventative and early help they need to improve their wellbeing’ (*Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People’s Wellbeing, June 2012*).

This proposal includes the removal of the direct delivery by the Council of a universal Play and Youth provision and targeted work with children and young people, which includes:

Universal provision:

- 13 open access youth sessions delivered in seven centres across the City. Reaches around 500 young people involved in positive activities. **Mitigation – inviting a wide range of community groups to take over the provision.**
- Supervised play sessions delivered at three Adventure Playgrounds in three priority neighbourhoods. Sessions delivered after school, Saturdays and school holidays. Reaches around 20 children per session, with 5 sessions per week at each playground. **Mitigation- sites will be open for outdoor play supervised by parents, although at Zoe Braithwaite the outside play area is limited. To accommodate this conversations are scheduled with third parties to consider options for the service to be subsumed into the third parties current work.**

Note: open access provision provides a number of opportunities for informal social education with young people on a range of topics including: sexual health, substance misuse, debt, housing, educational attainment, training and employment.

Mitigation: retaining an officer with responsibility for strategic development of universal and targeted children and youth provision in the city.

Targeted provision:

- Work within school settings for identified groups of young people. Reaches around 30 young people. **Mitigation— schools will be required to resource this provision from pupil premium or alternative resource.**
- Work in groups and one to one with young people with additional needs such as poor school attendance, low self esteem. Reaches roughly 60 young people at any one time. **Mitigation – schools will be asked to resource these targeted programmes.**
- Sessions for vulnerable young people transitioning from primary to secondary school. This service supports children during Easter and summer holidays to ensure successful transition. Reaches around 20 young people **Mitigation- schools will need to consider alternative options for securing these targeted sessions.**
- Support for young people accessing Alternative Learning Provision giving information, advice, guidance and intensive support to enable progression back into education. Reaches roughly 75 young people at any one time. **Mitigation – seek to transfer funding, to maintain the service, for the provision to the High Needs block of the DSG.**
- Delivering group work with young people at risk of anti social behaviour, with Community Safety, to reduce anti social behaviour. Reaches around 50 young people. **Mitigation- none identified.**
- Coordinating the Duke of Edinburgh Award for the City. Reaches around 200 young people per year, many in Independent Schools in City. **Mitigation – schools deliver and co-ordinate their own provision.**
- Advice on sexual health for young people. Condoms issued -500 per year. **Mitigation -partnership between Health and schools to deliver sexual health advice in place. In addition contracted work through the Family nurse**

Partnership will be requested to target specific groups of vulnerable young people and deliver information sessions.

Specialist provision:

- Intensive casework with individual young people, supporting them into training and employment. This includes an element of tracking. Reaches 400 young people at an average time throughout the year. **Mitigation – retain an officer to hold strategic responsibility for linking the providers with the young people. Casework will be provided from City Limits, Wheatsheaf and other third sector partners in receipt of government funding.**
- Casework with young people already identified through Common Assessment or as part of Families Matter. Reach around 60 young people. **Mitigation – some case work will continue with the high need families. Those that fall within the Families Matter Criteria will be case managed via Family Matters Workers.**
- Support for Young Inspectors who audit provision in the City. 20 young people involved. **Mitigation - no mitigation currently identified.**
- Support to Children in Care Council to enable children in care to be heard and influence services. 16 young people involved in the programme. **Mitigation – currently exploring options including: allocating the task to social work practitioners/team managers; a voluntary provider – redirecting existing resource from social care; retaining a youth worker to maintain an independent service.**
- Group work with three teenage parent groups to move towards employment, education or training, currently delivered in Children’s Centres. **Mitigation – currently exploring opportunities for the Family Nurse Partnership and or Children’s Centres to take responsibility for the three parent groups.**

Further details on the impact of the proposed changes and potential succession plans are set out in the Equality Impact Assessment and the Play and Youth report, see Appendices 3 and 4.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5. As part of the budget process all services have been scrutinised to identify opportunities for reducing financial investment whilst maintaining population outcomes.

Options considered include:

- Maintaining provision at current level – Not viable with reduced resources.
- Maintaining 50% of Play and Youth provision - Not viable with reduced resources.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

6. There are capital implications as a result of the savings CS1 and 18. These are being considered currently; see section 8 Property/Other and Appendix 5.

The revenue cost for individual savings proposals are shown in table 3: CSL net revenue

Table 3: CSL net revenue

Saving ref	Net budget spend	Proposed saving (part year effect)	Net budget 2013
CS 1	£4,462,700	£935,000	£3,527,700
CS 3	£546,200	£188,000	£358,200
CS 7	£844,800	£83,000	£761,800
CS 17	£2,851,800	£1,400,000	£1,451,800
CS 18	£834,600	£651,000	£183,600

Net budgets for 2013/14 are based on implementation of savings post April 2013 resulting in a part year effect. CS 18 will have a zero budget in April 2014.

Property/Other

7. The services, referred to in saving proposals CS1 and CS18 use a range of buildings:

CS1 – 14 delivery sites. Seven full core offer Children’s Centres and seven non-full core offer. All these buildings will remain. From April 2013 the services delivered from the sites will change. In addition, there are three family centres. One delivering statutory contact services and two delivering family centre activity. The latter will be transferred into Children’s Centres and two buildings will be vacated. Currently alternative usage is being considered for these two sites. For instance, one will house the Children and Young People Development Service, currently in rented accommodation and the other either be disposed of or used for Social Care teams currently in Marland House. See Appendix 5.

CS18 – using 12 buildings. Nine buildings are owed by the City Council and three are owned by a mixture of the church, school or neighbourhood. Services delivered from these buildings are:

Play

- Two dedicated to delivery of play provision.
- One has play provision with usage by the school at other times.
- Delivery by City Council at Coxford Adventure Playground has ceased, but the building is used by a local boxing club.

Youth

- Two dedicated to Youth provision, Newtown and Millbrook.
- One building owned by the City Council used one night a week for youth provision, Townhill Park Children’s Centre.
- One building owned by a school, Woodlands – where youth and school activities are delivered. This will transfer back to the school.
- One building owned by the church, St Mark’s Woolston – youth provision is

delivered from one floor.

- Two buildings owned by the City Council within the housing portfolio, 'The Link - Millbrook' and Sholing. Provision at Link recently relocated to children's centre.
- One building owned by the City Council where one night a week youth provision is delivered, Swaythling youth provision.
- One building owned by the community centre, Northam youth provision.

More detail is provided in Appendix 5.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory Power to undertake the proposals in the report

8. The Local Authority has the power to implement these proposals because there is no specified level of service provision required for Children's Centres, Family Centres and Youth provision.

Other Legal Implications

9. The Local Authority is required to:

Provide access to Children's Centres according to levels of deprivation within walking distance. The Childcare Act 2006 created statutory duties on the Local Authority and its partners to provide integrated early childhood services. The Apprenticeship, Skills Children and Learning Act 2009 made amendments to the Childcare Act by defining Children's Centres in law, placing duties on:

- Local authorities to establish and ensure the operation of centres.
- The Primary Care Trust and Job Centre Plus to review how they deliver childhood services via Children's Centres.
- The Children Trust Board to understand, plan and review early childhood services as they plan and consult on the Children and Young People's Plan.
- Ofsted to inspect Children's Centres and on the LA to act on the inspection findings.

Local authorities have duties under the Childcare Act 2006 to consult before opening, closing or significantly changing Children's Centres, and to secure sufficient provision to meet local need so far as is reasonably practicable. Statutory guidance, published in March 2010, accompanies these duties, which outlines how the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 provisions relate to Children's Centres. The statutory guidance advises local authorities, primary care trusts and Jobcentre Plus on the action they should take to comply with their duties. Although the delivery context has changed, these duties remain current. Sections 5A and D are particularly relevant:

Section 5A - the duty to make sufficient provision of Children's Centres to meet local need, so far as is reasonably practicable, which emphasises that local authorities should ensure universal access to children's centres is achieved and all children and families can be **reached effectively**, especially the most deprived.

Section 5D - the duty to consult before establishing, significantly changing or closing a Children's Centre, which emphasises that local authorities should allow adequate time

for responses, actively encourage parents from disadvantaged groups to participate, and demonstrate in their decision how they have taken consultation responses into account.

Retain a strategic lead for youth – ‘to secure, so far as is reasonable practicable, equality of access for all young people to the positive, preventative and early help they need to improve their wellbeing’ Statutory guidance for local authorities on services and activities to improve young people’s wellbeing – June 2012.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

10. None.

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1.	Prevention Strategy May 2012
2.	Proposed model of service delivery for Children and Families Centres based services and Early Years and Childcare and eight appendices
3.	Equality Impact Assessment CS18, Summary section, page 1
4.	Youth and Play Support report October 2012
5.	CSL buildings – affected by the saving proposals CS1 and CS18

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject/recommendations in the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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