

## **Children's Centre Programme of Change Proposals on the Operating Model for 2014/15**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This proposal is based on the assumption that Children's Centres will report through to the Commissioner for Early Help.
- 1.2 Somerset has established 41 Children's Centres since 2001 which provide a range of integrated early childhood and family services including early education, family support, health, employment and training. Children's Centre services are delivered and accessed at approximately 151 locations across Somerset including sites such as schools and community venues. This service is undergoing a Programme of Change in order to improve the quality and efficiency of the service.
- 1.3 This document outlines the proposed changes to the structure of Somerset's Children's Centres.
- 1.4 On 28<sup>th</sup> November the Cabinet Member for Children and Families made a Key Member Decision, this decision has:
  1. Authorised officers to develop a new area based organisational structure for Children's Centres that:
    - (a) places greater emphasis on supporting families with the greatest need
    - (b) improves outcomes for children and families
    - (c) provides better value for money by ensuring a greater proportion of funding is spent on front line services
    - (d) supports the Early Help Strategy
    - (e) provides a cluster of Children's Centres in each of five areas, grouping together management and administration in each area to align with the Early Help Strategy
    - (f) increases the number of front line staff.
  2. In respect of officers taking forward the above, authorised officers to extend existing contracts where necessary and to continue detailed discussions with providers, buildings owners, schools and local communities in order to draft a series of proposals for individual centres, which will be subject to specific local consultation as appropriate to the significance of any proposed changes.
  3. Authorised officers to reorganise the management and administration of Children's Centres Services into a five area model.

4. Confirmed that the future of individual Children's Centres will be subject to further decisions in due course after appropriate consultation.

For clarification, no decision has been taken on the future of individual Children's Centres.

- 1.5 The proposed new operating model will be based on the following key principles:

- Increase the number of families in most need accessing Children's Centre services.
- Increase the flexibility of centre opening hours to make services more accessible to families.
- Join-up early help services, maintaining at least 151 "community access points".
- Improve school readiness of children.
- Reduce management overhead costs by managing the services in 5 district areas.
- Re-design services so that as much resource as possible goes on frontline service delivery.
- Increase the flexibility of the Children's Centres staff structure to meet the needs of the community.

- 1.6 It will also share the following principles with the Children's Services – Children's Social Care New Functional Operating Model for Safeguarding, Care and Quality Assurance, and Families (August 2013):

- Ensuring that the structure and ways of working support Improved Outcomes for Children.
- Ensuring the way we are organised and the way we work imbeds Quality Assurance and Performance Management throughout the Service to drive improvement.
- Ensuring staff are appraised against and supported in achieving the 9 Management Behaviours and Competencies, the 4 C's and Professional Standards and Capabilities.
- The Services we deliver are affordable now and into the future.

- 1.7 It is proposed to restructure the activities of the current 41 designated Children's Centres into a new District based area model centred around Children's Centre Early Help hubs, targeted in areas of greatest need. Although staff will be based in centres it is still expected that the outreach service will meet the needs of all families and children aged 0–4 years wherever they live in Somerset. Overtime the service will support families with children and young people 0 – 18yrs. This model will

enhance access to integrated services and will develop as part of the Early Help Strategy and Delivery Plan 2013 to 2015, and in line with the Sure Start Children's Centre Statutory Guidance (April 2013) and Childcare Act (2006).

- 1.8 The proposed structure would see all Family Support Workers within Early Help Services working together to a common job description and accountabilities. This would include those currently working in Children Centre Services and Early Intervention Pods.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The background to the development of the existing network of Somerset County Council's 41 Children's Centres and current arrangements are well documented in the Children's Centre Service Review Report undertaken by Helen Kew (April 2012).
- 2.2 The most recent management restructure took place in 2011 when the 41 Centres each with a manager were reorganised into 14 Clusters. Each Cluster has developed its own way of working and delivery model. The budget was reduced at that time from £7.63m to £7m.
- 2.3 This management arrangement has continued since then although in 2013/14 there was a further reduction in the budget. Much of this saving was achieved through the cut in Children's Centre Teachers and an outreach contract with Barnardo's and Action for Children.
- 2.4 The Kew Report highlighted that the series of organisational changes within Somerset County Council in 2011 had an impact upon the development of Children's Centre Services in Somerset. It highlighted that performance management was not well established and the capacity limited.
- 2.5 Targets have been in place for increasing the number of 0-4 year olds registered to Somerset Children's Centres and has resulted in an increase to an average of 65.5% throughout the county. The Ofsted Inspection Framework (April 2013) states that a Centre "needs to demonstrate that *most* families with young children in the reach area are known" to achieve a "good" grading. '*Most*' is defined as 80-96%.
- 2.6 Somerset's performance management data confirms that the current cluster arrangements for managing the 41 designated Children's Centre buildings and services are not effective in reaching outstanding judgements using the new grading for self evaluation and within the new Ofsted Children's Centre Inspection Framework (April 2013).

### 3. The Current Structure

- 3.1 The current structure of Children's Centre Services in Somerset is complex. There are 41 Children's Centre buildings in 14 Children's Centre Clusters; however there is a variety of ways in which centres are designated with the DfE and Ofsted, some are in groups others are designated as individual centres. There is also a lack of consistency in the way staff and centres are run and managed.
- 3.2 Premises - SCC owns 37 of the 41 Centres. The capital cost of these 37 (excluding costs financed through Sure Start Local Programmes) was £15.7m, funded by: DfE £11m; SCC £3.1m and other £1.6m. Children's Centres also deliver outreach services from approximately 151 key community delivery points across the county such as Libraries, church halls and schools.
- 3.3 Employees – In October 2013, SCC employed 112.86 FTE staff in the Centres. There were a further 40.43 FTE employed in SCC managed childcare within Centres totalling 211 SCC employed staff members. A non key member decision was made in July 2012 that SCC should no longer be the provider of childcare. Since then a number of SCC run nurseries have transferred to schools. At present there are 5 remaining SCC nurseries. Plans are in place for 2 of these to transfer across to schools by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. One nursery is likely to close as it is no longer sustainable and plans are in place to explore the possibility of the remaining 2 transferring across to the relevant school/academy by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014.
- 3.4 The PVI-managed Centres employ approximately 30.54 FTE staff, 47 members of staff. At 3 of the Centres, staff are employed by SCC but managed by the PVI. This arrangement has led to confusion and a lack of robust performance management. Contracts with the PVI are in the main phase 3 Children's Centres and are generally in the more affluent areas. At present of the 30.54 FTE, 12.31 FTE are direct family support type posts, the remaining posts are management type roles or administrative posts.
- 3.5 Existing contracts with 4 of the 5 external providers of Children's Centres will expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. The other contract is due to expire in July 2014.
- 3.6 32 of the 34 Staff within the 4 external providers will TUPE across to Somerset County Council. This transfer is likely to take place on 1<sup>st</sup> March although the contract will still run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. Staff continue to take referrals and plan the summer term programme as normal until they are advised otherwise.

### 3.7 The current structure consists of the following:

- 1 FTE Strategic Manager who is on assignment to Children Centres but also works across a number of other service areas. This assignment will come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and is not included in this restructuring.
- 2 FTE Service Managers (Grade 7) who are responsible for the performance management of centres. These roles are split across the county; east and west.
- 8.6 FTE (10 staff) Children's Centre Cluster Managers (Grade 9) who manage the Somerset County Council managed centres.
- 3 FTE Early Learning Area Co-ordinators (Soulbury grade and Teacher Pay), these posts at present report through to the Strategic Manager.
- 13 FTE (18 staff) Lead Centre Officers (Grade 11, although a number are currently on a protected Grade 9 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014); who deputise for the Cluster Managers and manage the Family Support Workers.
- 6.9 FTE (9 staff) Family Support Co-ordinators.
- 33.4 FTE (50 staff) Family Support Workers.
- 2.5 FTE (3 staff) Play Workers.
- 7.7 FTE (11 staff) Senior Administrators.
- 23.8 FTE (31 staff) Administrative Assistants and Clerical staff.
- 2.58 FTE (8 staff) Premises staff.
- 5.8 FTE (6 staff) Apprentices.\*
- 1 FTE Children's Centre Operations Officer who is centrally based.

\*These posts are on a fixed term contract for one year.

In addition to the above posts there are a large number of vacancies.

3.8 There are a further 30.5 FTE within the contracted out services. Of these 3.4 FTE (4 staff) Cluster Managers, 4.9 FTE (7 staff) Lead Centre Officers, 12.3 FTE (20 staff) family support workers, 3.4 FTE (6 staff) Senior Administrators, 6.6 FTE (10 staff) are administrative staff.

3.9 The above administrative posts are currently being managed through the Children Centre management structure and not through Business Support.

3.10 In addition to above there are 2 Senior Admin Officers and a Data Officer who currently provide support to the Children's Centre service. These posts are currently line managed centrally through Business Support and Customer and Communities respectively. These posts are not part of the Children's Centre restructuring.

- 3.11 There are a further 4 Early Intervention Pod Team Leaders (Grade 9) and 12 Targeted Family Support Workers who work within these Pods.

#### **4. The Proposed Restructure**

- 4.1 Subject to a minimum 45 day staff consultation, the proposed structure for 2014/15 intends to focus on the needs of families in Somerset. Ensuring that improved performance and flexibility to meet need, demand and value for money is central to the composition of the proposed structure.
- 4.2 Following consultation feedback from staff we propose to replace the proposal for apprentices on the structure with a number of clerical assistant posts. However we would still propose to keep a commitment to appointing apprentices as supernumerary posts within the service. Furthermore the role and job description for the Volunteer and Community Co-ordinator post has also been reviewed in light of feedback that there is less need for this post. It is therefore proposed to delete these management posts from the structure. Staff have also raised concerns about the number of Early Help Officer posts. It is therefore proposed to increase the number of these roles into the structure.
- 4.3 The larger proportion of Early Help Officers is to meet the identified need for more senior staff at this level as recognised through consultation. However feedback has suggested that there is less need for the Deputy Early Help Officer and therefore some of these roles have been removed.
- 4.4 The proposed changes will affect the compositions and numbers of roles, however under the proposals frontline services will not only be retained but increased.
- 4.5 As a decision on the budget for Children's Centres for 2014/15 financial year has not yet been made this paper will review the structure based on current level of funding, however any additional front line family support type posts will not be appointed until a decision is made with regard to funding for 2014/2015.
- 4.6 The proposed structure will be area based in 5 district areas:
- Mendip
  - Sedgemoor
  - South Somerset
  - Taunton
  - Taunton Deane and West Somerset

- 4.7 The exact detail of the above will follow further consultation on the 18 centres which could potentially be de-designated. Proposals for each of these centres will be drawn up and consultations as appropriate will take place. These consultations are likely to begin towards the end of February.
- 4.8 The District based model for Children's Centre services is central to the Early Help Strategy and to developing an inclusive 'family focused approach' to a range of Early Help services for children 0-19 and their families. The following principles will contribute to and be informed by the new evolving Early Help Strategy and Delivery Plan 2013 to 2015 and future Troubled Families project.
- 4.9 The proposed model will be based upon establishing one Children's Centre Cluster in each District and outreach services to support families in greatest need.
- A Children's Centre District structure will aim to have one Self Evaluation Form and one Ofsted Inspection report.
  - Children's Centres will open flexibly to meet the needs of the community which may include occasional evenings and weekends.
  - Somerset County Council will set corporate outcomes and measures.
  - Children's Centre governance arrangements will be linked to the Children's Trust and Health and Wellbeing Board providing a line of accountability and a means of critical support and challenge for Children's Centres and Early Help Services.
  - Highly effective leadership and a support structure with local data management resources will help measure progress and develop outstanding performance.
  - Key functions such as finance, data analysis and partnership agreements will be undertaken across the county by an effective central improvement team.
  - Strong collaborative working, clear partnership agreements and information sharing between Children's Centres, Children Social Care/Early Intervention Pods, Early Years Providers, Schools and Health to identify families in greatest need and improve outcomes.
  - The ability to deploy resources according to need. It is proposed that the 5 Early Help Service Manager posts will work together to deploy resources across Somerset to ensure resources are meeting local need and strategic priorities.
  - Working more closely with the Library Service, schools and District Councils should ensure maximum use is made of SCC resources and assets but should also enhance provision particularly in areas of greatest need.



## 5. Staffing

5.1 It is proposed that the following posts are to be deleted from the structure:

- Service Manager – East
- Service Manager – West
- Children Centre Cluster Managers
- Early Intervention Team Leaders
- Lead Centre Officers
- Family Support Co-ordinators
- Senior Administrators
- Children's Centre Operations Officer

The job roles which are also affected are the following roles:

- Children's Services Manager
- Support Worker L 4
- Project Worker 2
- Outreach worker
- Business Support Officer L2
- Service Administrator

The above are staff that will TUPE across to SCC from the PVI sector.. The likely transfer date is 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014. SCC has issued a measures statement which outlines these changes.

5.2 It is proposed that the following new posts will be within the new structure:-:

- Service Manager – Early Help Services
- Early Help Officer
- Deputy Early Help Officer – Children's Centres
- Business and Data Manager
- Finance and Data Officer

5.3 The review of consultation feedback has led to the decision to remove the proposed Volunteer and Community Co-ordinator post. This has enabled us to increase other management responsibility. These roles with management responsibility will increase from 27.3FTE in the original proposal to 28.5 FTE. This enables there to be greater presence and more senior staff on the ground.

5.4 It is proposed that the 5 district areas will be managed by 5 Service Managers – Early Help Services who will manage service delivery on a



day-to-day basis. This is aligned to the New Operating Model for Children's Social Care.

- 5.5 The Service Managers – Early Help Services will be allocated a District Area as well as areas of specialism. They will be flexibly deployed across the whole of the county to monitor performance and hold responsibility for ensuring that quality of service, policies and procedures for their area of specialism are upheld. The areas are:
- Safeguarding and links with Children's Social Care
  - Health and Midwifery Services
  - Schools and FE Colleges
  - Job Centre Plus, Partnership agreements with St Loyes, Family Focus (Troubled Families) and the Careers Service
  - Children's Centres and Early Years providers
- 5.6 The Service Managers – Early Help Services, managed by the Strategic Manager, will link with the Business and Data Managers. They will also manage the Early Help Officers, Deputy Early Help Officer and Family Support Workers.
- 5.7 It is proposed that reporting to each of the Service Managers – Early Help Services will be 5 Early Help Officers. These posts will deputise for the Service Managers, take a key lead on Children Centres and Ofsted readiness. These posts will also line manage a number of the Family Support Workers.
- 5.8 It is proposed that there will be a number of Deputy Early Help Officer posts. The number of posts per area will be dependent on the number of children in a particular district area and a further decision once the Service Managers are appointed. This role will manage a number of Early Years Play workers and may manage some Family Support Workers.
- 5.9 Family Support Workers are key frontline staff and under the new structure it is proposed that the number of Family Support Workers will increase. As will the number of Early Years Play Workers.
- 5.10 To support the skills, recruitment and retention of Family Support Workers and Early Years Play Workers an accredited qualification has been developed to help ensure all staff are trained and supported.
- 5.11 The Central Team will comprise of 2 Business and Data Managers who will report to the Service Manager- Early Help, 3.5 FTE Finance and Data Officers – Early Help Services, this slight reduction reflects feedback from the consultation. The exact number of Administrative

Assistants – Early Help Services cannot be confirmed until proposals are drawn up for the 18 potentially de designated centres and consultation carried out as appropriate. It is proposed that the service will also comprise of a number of Clerical Assistants.

- 5.12 Although the administration team will be managed centrally the Administrative Assistants will be based in each of the areas.
- 5.13 At present it is unconfirmed if the 2.58 FTE Premises staff will be slotted in to the new structure, further discussions will be held regarding these staff.
- 5.14 There will be an expectation that staff are deployed flexibly across the county to meet changing demand for services.
- 5.15 The current and proposed structure chart is contained within the appendices of this report. Details of the area structure cannot be confirmed until proposals are drawn up for the 18 potentially de-designated centres and consultation carried out as appropriate. In addition to this the area structure and number of job roles may change depending on the 45 day staff consultation.

## 6. Summary of Proposal

6.1 To summarise the proposed changes will involve:

- The 8.6 FTE Cluster Manager posts 2FTE, Service Manager posts and 2.73FTE Children Services Managers will be deleted. It is proposed there will be 5 FTE Service Managers – Early Help Services that will manage the 5 district areas.
- The 13 FTE Lead Centre Officer posts and 3.83FTE Support Worker L3 and Project Worker 2 post will be deleted. 14 FTE new posts of Early Help Officers will be in the new structure.
- 55.58 FTE Family Support Workers will increase the exact extent of the increase is unknown at this stage.
- There will be 4 Deputy Early Help Officers. The current 6.88 FTE Family Support Co-ordinators will be deleted from the draft structure.
- After consideration of feedback from the consultation the proposed structure will no longer have the Volunteer and Community Co-ordinator posts.
- 2.5 FTE Early Years Play Workers will increase, but the exact extent of the increase is unknown at this stage.
- There will be 2FTE Business and Data Managers

- 9.9 FTE locally managed Senior Administrator posts will be deleted from the structure. There will 3.5 FTE centrally managed Finance and Data Officers – Early Help Services.
- It is proposed that there will be a number of Administrative Assistants – Early Help Services. The exact number is unknown at this stage.
- 4 FTE locally managed Apprentices will continue until their contracts finish in the Summer 2014.
- It is proposed that there will be a number of centrally managed Clerical Assistants – Early Help Services (awaiting JE).

All of the above posts have Job Descriptions drafted which have been through job evaluation.

## **7. Changes to Childcare**

- 7.1 A key member decision was taken in 2012 for childcare to be moved across to be managed ideally by schools. Plans are in place for two nurseries to transfer across to schools by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. One childcare setting is likely to close. We anticipate that the remaining two childcare settings will transfer by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014. Until the two childcare settings transfer it is likely that the 2 childcare managers will report through to the relevant Service Manager – Early Help Services. This has still to be considered.

## **8. Proposed change timeline**

- 8.1 Staff Awareness Sessions on the Children's Centre Programme of Change took place with SCC staff during week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> November 2013.
- 8.2 Contract discussions with external providers took place on 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> November and three of the providers on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.
- 8.3 A Key Cabinet Member decision was made on 28<sup>th</sup> November as outlined in 1.4 above.

### **8.4 Phase 1**

45 days staff and unions consultation began at the beginning of December and it was proposed to carry on until the first week in February. However when the staff from the contracted out services TUPE into SCC a formal staff consultation will need to begin with these staff. It is therefore proposed to extend the consultation for all employees.

The Service Managers, Children's Centre Cluster Managers and the Early Intervention Pod Team Leaders will be placed at risk of redundancy. It is anticipated that recruitment to the Service Manager – Early Help Services post will take place once the PVI staff have TUPEd across to SCC and consultation has taken place.

## Phase 2

The Children's Centre Operations Officer and Lead Centre Officers will be placed at risk of redundancy. It is anticipated that recruitment to the Business and Data Manager posts and the Early Help Officer Posts will take place once staff have TUPE across to SCC and consultation has taken place

Phase 3 – Remaining staff (except for Family Support Workers and Play Workers) will be placed at risk. The remaining posts within the new structure will be recruited.

- 8.5 A formal consultation period of 45 days commenced on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and was due to run until the first week of February 2014. This consultation will now be extended until some time in April 2014. The consultation will cover, amongst other things, the proposed new staffing structure, job descriptions and ring fencing arrangements. Staff were asked to express their views on these 3 specific areas by Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December although ongoing consultation will continue beyond this date.
- 8.6 Staff were invited to express an interest in voluntary redundancy, early retirement or redeployment by Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

## 9. Recommendations regarding recruitment process

9.1 It is proposed that:

- The new Service Managers report through to Commissioning Manager – Early Help
- The Service Manager – Early Help Services (Grade 8) posts are initially ring fenced to existing Service Managers (currently Grade 7) These post holders will be guaranteed an interview for the Service Manager – Early Help Services. A decision will then be taken following interview regarding appointment to the Service Manager posts in the new structure. This proposal is subject to consultation on

the proposed ring fence arrangements and feedback from the staff consultation. Children Centre Cluster Managers (Grade 9), Early Intervention Team Leaders (Grade 9) and Children Service Managers will then be able to apply for the remaining Service Manager – Early Help Services posts. Short listing will take place and interviews will take place as appropriate.

- Early Help Officer (Grade 10) are ring fenced to Children Centre Cluster Managers (Grade 9), Lead Centre Officers (Grade 11), Children Services Manager, Support Worker L4, Project Worker 2 and Outreach worker.
- Deputy Early Help Officers posts (Grade 12) are ring fenced to Lead Centre Officers (Grade 11), Family Support Co-ordinators (Grade 12), Support Worker L4, Project Worker 2 and Outreach worker.
- Children's Services Manager
- Support Worker L 4
- Project Worker 2
- Outreach worker
- Business Support Officer L2
- Service Administrator
- Administrative Assistants – Early help Services (Grade 14) are ring fenced to Senior Administrators (Grade 13), Administration Assistants (Grade 14), Business Support Officer L2 and Service Administrator.
- Business and Data Manager posts (Grade 10) are ring fenced to Children's Centre Operations Officer (Grade 10) in the first instance.
- Finance and Data Officer posts (Grade 12) are ring fenced to the Lead Centre Officers (Grade 11) Senior Admin Staff (Grade 13), and Service Administrator.
- Current Family Support Workers, Early Years Play Workers and admin staff on fixed term contracts will be offered to extend their contracts until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

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