

Department of Cabinet
Report to:

Date: 5th December 2016

Report of: John Daly, Director of People

Report No:

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Report Title: **Review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres and Family Support Services (2016)**

Confidential

(Confidential Not for Publication)

This report is exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Purpose:

This report sets out the results of the consultation on proposals to review, re-design and restructure Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services and takes into account a reduction in funding from 2017 onwards.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- Approve the final proposals; and
- Subject to the approval of the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Leader, delegate implementation of the new structure, including details of voluntary redundancy arrangements and if required, consequential redundancy selection, to the Chief Executive and the Director of People.

Background
Doc(s):

[Consultation Report](#)

Summary:

An Executive Summary is set out within the report below which includes the following appendices:

Appendix 1: Final Matrix Management Structure

Appendix 2a: Union Response - Unison

Appendix 2b: Union Response - GMB

Appendix 3a: Consultation: Summary of Staff/Union Consultation Responses

Appendix 3b: Consultation: Summary of Public Consultation responses

Appendix 3c: Consultation: Petitions

Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Please note that relevant Job Descriptions and Person Specifications are available on request.

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres and Family Support Services has been aligned to the principles within the Greater Manchester Devolution Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the Public Service Reform early years programme and proposes an integrated approach, as well as changes in the way that services are delivered. This embeds the principles of Greater Manchester's Start Well: Early Years Delivery Model and builds on the learning from the early adopter programme that was tested in Bolton during 2014-16.
- 1.2 The proposals recommend the integration of services through the establishment of a new Start Well Service, managed within the Education and Learning Division, Department of People (Appendix 1). The new service will be responsible for delivering the Council's statutory duties for Early Years and Childcare and Children's Centres through a needs led approach, and by ensuring that the provision remains responsive to Bolton families in three statutory Children's Centre Reach Areas.
- 1.3 This report also sets out the results of the formal consultation process to achieve £1.472m of savings and efficiencies and contains the final proposals in response.
- 1.4 The proposals indicate a potential overall reduction in staffing establishment by 31.2 FTE posts from the current 121.56 FTE posts.
- 1.5 The staffing reductions contained within the proposals will be achieved mainly through the deletion of vacant posts within the structure, voluntary early retirement and voluntary severance requests. During the consultation period 12 applications for Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) or Voluntary Redundancy (VR) were received from staff within the service. Tables 1 – 7 provide details of the impact on posts.
- 1.6 As a large element of the budget is staffing, it was inevitable that the number of posts within the service would need to be reduced in order to meet the required savings target. Staff savings have been identified in a manner which seeks to minimise the impact of reduced staffing on front line delivery. Due to the number of vacant posts in the service, the number of provisional VER/VS requests, and subject to the staffing implementation plan, it is not anticipated that any compulsory redundancies will be required.
- 1.7 Children's Centres business support and administration has been the subject of a separate review.
- 1.8 There are no proposals to close any buildings and some buildings will transfer to schools. The buildings that are transferred to schools will not be designated as Children's Centres. The new Start Well service will be delivered through designated Start Well integrated hubs and linked sites, and the schools will provide some early years services as part of the schools programme of activities.

- 1.9 Bromley Cross, Horwich, and Blackrod Libraries will continue to deliver some child and family services, and other services will be developed with partners.
- 1.10 It is proposed that the Harvey Centre be retained as a central assessment and contact centre.
- 1.11 A copy of the unions' responses is provided at Appendix 2a and 2b.
- 1.12 It is anticipated that the proposals will be implemented by 31st March 2017.

2.0 Background to the Review

- 2.1 Bolton's proposed Start Well Service reflects the GM life course approach, which includes a systematic, whole family, whole system approach within the GM Start Well, Early Years Strategy and Delivery Model, in order to improve outcomes for children from pregnancy to age five. This builds on the successful integration and implementation of Children's Centres, Family Support, Early Years Services and the early adopter site of the new delivery model within the Oxford Grove Children's Centre Reach Area.
- 2.2 The service aims to achieve an overall increase in the number of children who are school ready, supported by highly evidenced pathways, sequenced assessments and interventions, and a place based approach to the redesign of children's services.
- 2.3 The review has been aligned with the principles within the Greater Manchester Devolution Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and proposes an integrated approach, as well as changes in the way that services are delivered.
- 2.4 Following approval by the Council in February 2015 of the strategic budget options to address the £43m savings target for the 2015-17 period, on 4th July 2016, the Cabinet approved a report setting out proposals for the review and re-design of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services. The report included draft proposals for the integration of service structures and operations, for consultation with trade unions, staff, service users, partners and other stakeholders.
- 2.5 This report sets out the results of the formal consultation process to review and redesign current Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services, whilst also achieving £1.472m of savings and efficiencies.
- 2.6 The proposals recommend the integration of Children's Centres, Family Support, and Early Years and Childcare Services into a new Start Well Service.
- 2.7 Additional fixed term posts that were created within the Early Years and Childcare Team as part of the early adoption of the GM Early Years New Delivery Model (Public Sector Reforms programme) have been included in this review and some remodelled posts have been included within the proposed Start Well Service to enable boroughwide implementation of the Early Years Delivery Model.
- 2.8 The service will be managed within the Education and Learning Division, Department of People, and will maintain strong links with the Department of People, Staying Safe Division and Bolton NHS Foundation Trust Families Division.

- 2.9 The Start Well Service will continue to deliver the Council's statutory duties and be needs led, to ensure that provision remains responsive to Bolton families, with the retention of three statutory Children's Centre Reach Areas.
- 2.10 Currently significant system changes are underway nationally across children's services and the early years sector, and these changes have been taken into account as part of these proposals.
- 2.11 Following the significant budget reductions already made by the council, further savings are very challenging and will result in a reduction in staffing and resources across the service.
- 2.12 Following the formal consultation period, this report now addresses the key issues arising and puts forward the revised proposals for final approval.
- 2.13 The financial tables also detail the Public Sector Reform (PSR) Team expenditure currently being funded by reserves. These PSR Early Years programme roles were integrated into the Early Years and Childcare Team and have been reviewed as part of the overall service. Some of the functions of these PSR posts have been included in the proposed Start Well service to enable Boroughwide roll out of the new early years delivery model.

3.0 Consultation process

- 3.1 Coinciding with approval of the report on 4th July 2016, which triggered the start of consultation on the proposals for the review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services, "at risk" letters were issued to affected staff.
- 3.2 The report was initially available for 60 days' consultation with trade unions, staff, service users, partners and other stakeholders. During consultation it was agreed to extend this period to 90 days. Formal consultation expired on 3rd October 2016.
- 3.3 A summary of consultation responses to the proposals is set out in full at Appendix 3b. Key elements of the formal consultation have included:

3.3.1 Staff:

- A formal briefing session and presentation for all staff affected by the proposals on the 18th August 2016
- A staff consultation pack, including access to all Job Descriptions and Person Specifications on Teamsites
- Holding individual meetings for staff with HR and Trade Union representatives where requested
- Requesting expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy and voluntary early retirement.

3.3.2 Trade Unions:

- Fortnightly meetings with a Consultation Log of questions and responses updated and circulated prior to the meeting.
- Responding to specific requests for information from the trade unions
- Access to all Job Descriptions and Person Specifications on Teamsites.

3.3.3 Partners:

- Formal briefing sessions and presentations for all partners/providers during July and August 2016
- Attendance at provider meetings on request
- Online questionnaire designed by the Council's corporate Consultation team.

3.3.4 Service users:

- Over 270 parents/carers had the opportunity to meet with members of the consultation team during visits to a range of children's centre groups and activities (Appendix 3a)
- 188 responses were received to a questionnaire designed by the Council's Corporate Consultation team, including 120 from parents.

3.4 Trade Unions' Responses

3.4.1 Formal trade unions' responses to the proposals were received from Unison and GMB and are set out in full in Appendix 2a and 2b.

3.4.2 No formal trade union response was received from the Teaching Unions.

3.4.3 Although the trade unions have raised some issues in their response, these were raised during the consultation period and responded to in full through the consultation log. A copy of the consultation log is available on request.

3.5 Consultation with Service Users

A summary of submitted consultation questionnaires organised into key themes is provided at Appendix 3a. The key points to note are:

3.5.1 A Consultation Proforma was developed to gather views on the proposals. The form summarised the proposals and then asked for impacts, support and alternative solutions.

3.5.2 It was recognised that forms were not suitable for everyone, and so visits were made to each of the centres (prioritising the most vulnerable groups) to talk through the proposals face-to-face with parents and grandparents.

3.5.3 A total of 188 completed survey forms were received and around 279 people had the opportunity to respond face-to-face at the visits to Children's Centres.

3.5.4 All the comments have been categorised into key themes, and a summary of the main findings is provided at Appendix 4. A more detailed table of comments is available on request.

3.5.5 The main points arising from the consultation were as follows:

- Travel issues: difficult for those without regular access to a car to travel to other centres;
- Children's Centres provide a lot of parental support;
- The centres allow children to interact with each other / get children ready for school;
- Staff at Children's Centres were praised;
- Childminders use centres for drop-ins;
- Health; concern regarding where health services would be provided;
- Children's Centres provide safe places for contacts;
- Some parents offered to contribute towards sessions;
- Concern that remaining centres might be too busy.

3.5.6 Further engagement with service users and schools will be undertaken as proposals for the offer at each building centre is developed.

3.6 **Petitions:**

During the consultation period a number of petitions were received. Details are attached as part of the summary of consultation responses at Appendix 3b. In summary, the petitions requested that the Council:

3.6.1 Withdraw the plans immediately, and for the Conservative Member of Parliament for Bolton West to lobby the Government for additional funds for Children's Centres.

3.6.2 Remove named Children's Centres from the Review until a clear plan is available, and to recommence the consultation when the position is clear.

3.6.3 Stop the closure of Children's Centres across Bolton (online petition).

4.0 **Proposed Changes**

4.1 The final proposals include some changes in response to the consultation responses. These changes include:

4.2 **Staffing:**

A revised version of the organisational structure to clarify lines of accountability and professional supervision (Appendix 1).

Changes to staffing include:

4.2.1 Retention of the existing title of Start Well Children and Family Support Team Leader (Grade 8)

4.2.2 Slot in arrangements in line with HR policy, to the posts of:

EXISTING POST	NEW POST
Early Education Lead Consultant (Soulbury 10-13)	Start Well: Communication and Language Senior Consultant (Soulbury 9-12)
Head of Centre (Fixed Term)(Grade 10)	Start Well: Head of Centre (Grade 10)

4.2.3 Amendments to job descriptions and person specifications as requested by the trade unions to the following posts:

- Start Well: Commercial and Strategy Manager (Grade 11)
- Start Well: Centre Assistant (Grade 3)

4.3 The name of the proposed service (Start Well), to be included in all proposed job titles

4.4 **Buildings**

The new Service model will operate as integrated hubs and linked sites:

HUBS AND LINKED SITES
Great Lever Children's Centre
Oxford Grove Children's Centre
Tonge Children's Centre
Alexandra Children's Centre
Oldhams Children's Centre
King St Young People's Centre
Winifred Kettle House

4.5 During consultation schools submitted proposals to take over the facilities management of the current buildings. Details are provided in the table below. If there are potential TUPE implications for staff associated with the buildings (potential maximum of 3 staff), 30 days' consultation will be undertaken with staff and trade unions.

CENTRE	PARTNER
Bright Meadows	Bolton St Catherine's Academy
Crompton	The Valley Community Primary School
Heaton	LifeBridge, Rumworth School
Hulton	St Mary's CE Primary School
Little Lever	Mytham Primary School
Lord Street & Grosvenor	Grosvenor Nursery School - Day Care Centre
The Orchards	The Orchards Federation
Westhoughton	Washacre Primary School

- 4.6 Kearsley Children's Centre will be retained during the refurbishment of King Street, Farnworth. After this period it will be transferred to a partner organisation. Potential options are currently being explored.
- 4.7 Seven Start Well integrated hubs and linked sites have been designated to enable accessible delivery of services across the Borough. Children's Centre activity will cease at the Washacre and New Bury Family Centres.
- 4.8 The remaining nine centres will be transferred to partner organisations, including schools, and will be used to deliver services for children and families as part of the schools programme of activities. Approval of formal lease arrangements between the Council and each proposed partner organisation will be sought from the Executive Cabinet Member through the Department of Place. The lease arrangements Head of Terms will include the details of the proposed programme for each school.
- 4.9 Some services and group activities will continue to be delivered at Bromley Cross, Leverhulme, Horwich Library and Blackrod Library sites, including those provided by Community, Voluntary and Parents' groups.
- 4.10 Discussions are ongoing with the 5 -19 Service, Bolton at Home, Library Services and The Tonge Moor URC Church to develop future opportunities for partnership working.
- 4.11 The Start Well Senior Leadership team will monitor the implementation via 1:1s and team meetings, to support the transition to the new service, and to ensure that this is successfully embedded.
- 4.12 These post consultation changes have a net long term effect of being cost neutral and are reflected in the finance tables in the original report. The total savings to be achieved by implementation of the revised proposals is £1.472m.

5.0 Staffing Implications

- 5.1 The proposed new staffing structure is provided at Appendix 1.

- 5.2 Under the terms of these final proposals Staffing Tables 1 to 7 below set out the detail of the changes proposed to the current structure. Subject to approval of the proposals, staff in a redundancy situation will be managed and supported in line with the Council's Restructure, Redundancy and Redeployment policy framework. All new posts have been evaluated through the Council's pay and grading process in line with HR policy. The main areas that are being realigned and have implications for the staffing structure are highlighted below.
- 5.3 During consultation, 12 applications for VER/VS were received from staff within the service. It will not be possible to approve all requests as some posts are required for future service delivery. Management has considered the applications against future demands on the service, and will now determine which applications can be approved, declined, and which are pending the outcome of ring-fence situations.

Table 1: The following posts (currently held vacant) would be disestablished:

FTE	Existing Job Title
1.0	Children and Family Support Team Manager (Grade 11)
1.0	Early Education Lead Consultant (Soulbury 10-13)
1.0	Head of Centre (Grade 10)
1.0	2 Year Old Project Coordinator (Grade 9)
0.57	Children and Family Support Team Leader (Grade 8)
7.88	Children and Family Support Worker - Level 3 (Grade 7)
5.1	Children and Family Support Worker - Level 2 (Grade 6)
2.07	Centre Assistant (Grade 3)
19.62	TOTAL

Table 2: The following posts will be deleted from the current structure. Post holders who have not requested VS or VER will be eligible to apply for alternative posts in the proposed service (see table 7) in line with Council policy.

FTE	Existing Job Title
2.0	Children and Family Support Team Manager (Grade 11)
2.0	Early Education Lead Consultant (Soulbury 10-13)
1.0	Team Manager Children and Family Support Services (Transition Lead) (Grade 11)
1.0	Early Support Manager (Grade 10)
6.0	TOTAL

Table 3: The following posts are directly comparable and will be slotted in:

FTE	Proposed Job Title	FTE	Existing Job Title
1.0	Start Well: Strategic Lead for Early Years (Soulbury 19 – 22)	1.0	Early Years Strategic Lead (Soulbury 19 – 22)
2.0	Start Well: Early Years and Childcare Adviser (Soulbury 13 - 16)	2.0	Early Years and Childcare Adviser (Soulbury 13 – 16)
0.8	Start Well: Early Years Communication and Language Senior Consultant (Soulbury 9 -12)	0.6	Early Education Lead Consultant (Soulbury 10-13)
1.0	Start Well: Early Years Communication and Language Consultant (Soulbury 5 – 8)	1.0	Communication Co-ordinator (Soulbury 5 – 8)
3.0	Start Well: Head of Centre (Grade 10)	3.0	Head of Centre (Grade 10)
1.8	Start Well: Practitioner (Grade 7)	1.8	Early Years Practitioner (Grade 7)
20.0	Start Well: Children and Family Support Worker - Level 3 (Grade 7)	19.62	Children and Family Support Worker - Level 3 (Grade 7)
31.0	Start Well: Children and Family Support Worker - Level 2 (Grade 6)	28.65	Children and Family Support Worker - Level 2 (Grade 6)
60.6	TOTAL	57.6	TOTAL

Table 4: There are potentially more people than comparable posts in the following roles. These individuals may be subject to a redundancy selection exercise for a post in the new structure following consideration of VER/VS requests

FTE	Proposed Job Title	FTE	Ring-fence of Existing Jobs Title
2.0	Start Well: Early Years Consultant (Soulbury 5 – 8)	2.3	Early Years and Childcare Consultant (Soulbury 5 – 8) (Permanent)
5.0	Start Well: Children and Family Support Team Leader (Grade 8)	7.93	Children and Family Support Team Leader (Grade 8)
1.0	Start Well: Childcare Partnership Officer (Grade 7)	2.0	Childcare Professional (Grade 7)
12.0	Start Well: Centre Assistant (Grade 3)	14.43	Centre Assistant (Grade 3)
0.88	Start Well: Cook (Grade 3)	2.76	Cook (Grade 3)
20.88	TOTAL	29.42	TOTAL

Table 5: The following post is broadly comparable but at one grade higher therefore will be slotted in subject to a short assessment:

FTE	Proposed Job Title	FTE	Existing Job Title
1.0	Start Well: Early Years Strategy and Commercial Manager (Grade 11)	1.0	Starting Together Manager (Grade 10)

Table 6: The following fixed term contract posts will be redundant with effect from the implementation date, and staff will be supported in line with HR policies.

FTE	Job Title
1.0	Early Education Quality and Outcomes Consultant (Soulbury 7 – 10)
2.7	Early Years and Childcare Consultant (Soulbury 5 – 8)
1.0	Centre Assistant (Grade 3)
4.7	TOTAL

Table 7: The following posts are either vacant or are newly created posts. It is proposed to fill these posts with priority to displaced and “at risk” staff within the service in line with HR procedures.

FTE	Proposed Job Title
1.0	Start Well: Early Years and Childcare Adviser (Soulbury 13 – 16)
1.0	Start Well: Children’s Centres Early Intervention Lead (Grade 12)
2.0	Start Well: Quality and Outcomes Senior Consultant (Soulbury 9 – 12)
1.0	Start Well: SEND Manager (Soulbury 5 – 8)
1.0	Start Well: Assessment and Contact Service Manager (Grade 10)
2.0	Start Well: Project Officer (Grade 7) (Fixed Term)
0.38	Start Well: Children and Family Support Worker Level 3 (Grade 7)
2.35	Start Well: Children and Family Support Worker Level 2 (Grade 6)
10.73	TOTAL

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The table below summarises the financial impact of the proposals and shows the detail of the proposed budget for the new service.

	Latest 16/17 budget	Proposal	Proposed Budget
Employee	4,642,500	-1,147,500	3,495,000
Employee Other	4,400		4,400
Premises	941,500	-309,500	632,000
Transport	151,500	-27,900	123,600
Supplies & Services	131,700	135,300	267,000
Third Party	411,200	-52,100	359,100
Central Support	69,400		69,400
Income	-1,022,300	-70,000	-1,092,300
Total	5,329,900	-1,471,700	3,858,200

7.0 Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the council must have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- 7.2 It is therefore important to consider how the proposals contained within this report may positively or negatively affect this work. To support this analysis, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on the proposals outlined in this report (Appendix 4).

- 7.3 The EIA looks at the anticipated (positive and/or negative) impacts of the proposal on people from Bolton's diverse communities, and whether any group (or groups) is likely to be directly or indirectly differentially affected. This EIA builds on the equality screening which was completed on the initial review options, and summarises the stakeholder consultation which has been completed as part of this review.

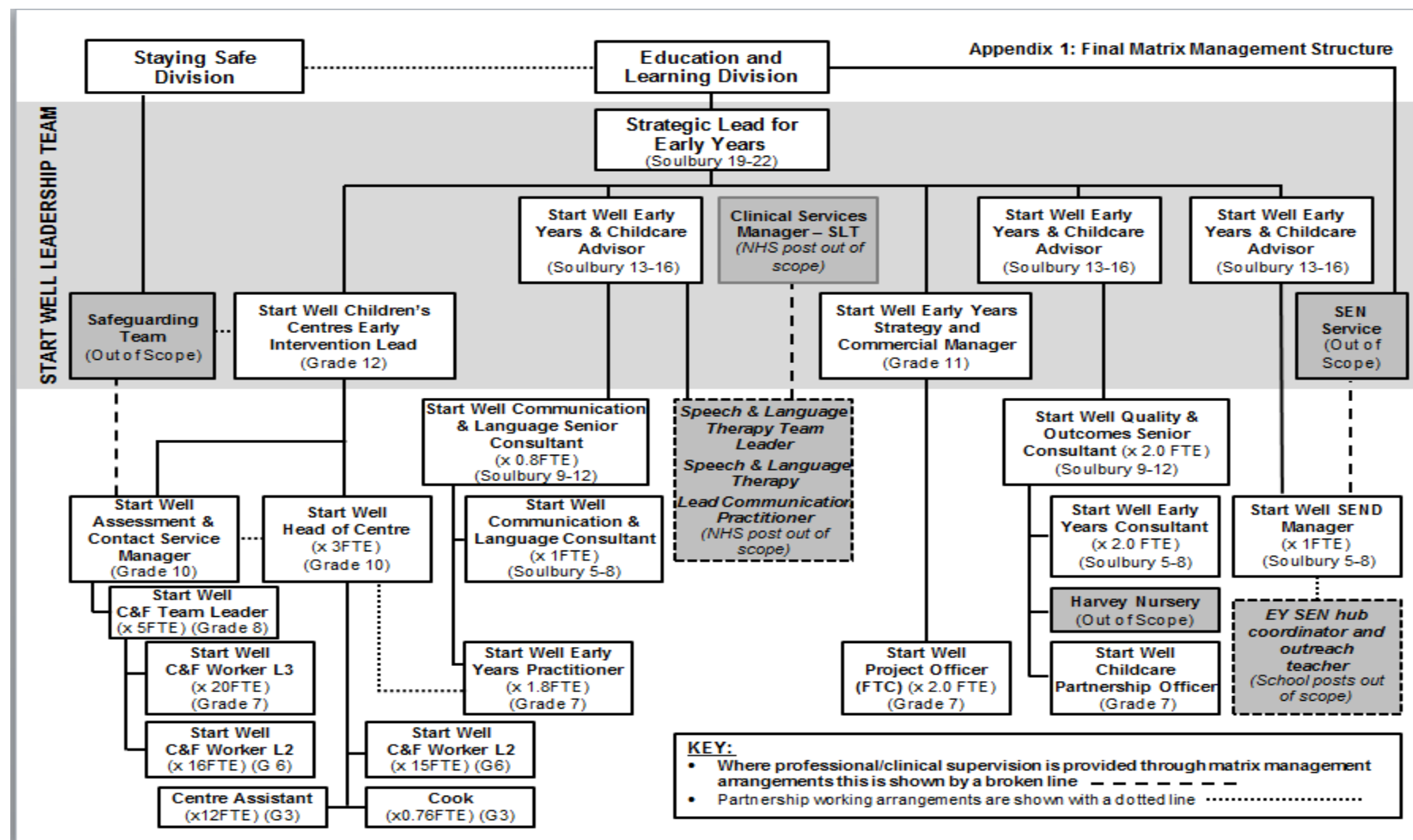
- 7.4 The equality considerations are set out in more detail in the EIA. Should the proposals be approved by the Executive Cabinet Member, they will be kept under review as part of the overall budget process.

8.0 Proposed Timeline

- 8.1 Following approval of the final proposals, implementation of the new service, including any recruitment and selection processes, will be completed by 31st March 2017.

9.0 Recommendations

- 9.1 The Cabinet is recommended to:
- (i) Approve the final proposals; and
 - (ii) Subject to the approval of the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Leader, delegate implementation of the new structure, including details of voluntary redundancy arrangements and consequential redundancy selection, to the Chief Executive and the Director of People.





**UNISON response to the report
to Cabinet, 4th July 2016**

**Review of Early Years and Childcare,
Children's Centres, and Family Support Services**

Unison Bolton Branch 6540

Convenor: Suzi Boardman

UNISON response to the report to Cabinet, 4th July 2016

Review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services

Unison welcome the extended period of consultation but feel the consultation is flawed as the proposals for other providers/organisations taking on the running of the centres are still not clear. Certainly, in terms of Centre Assistants, Business Admin/Receptionists and Cleaners working in those centres, it is unclear if there are TUPE implications for staff currently undertaking those roles.

Once again it appears the proposed service is largely been designed around vacant posts or where people want to go rather than need.

We have been disappointed with the Public Consultation. It has been implied in the literature that the purpose of the review is to 'improve outcomes for children and families'. We believe the Council should be honest about the reasons for the review; they are due to cuts made to the Local Authority's budget by the Government. We also feel the council need to accept that cuts to this service will not improve outcomes, that they cannot continue to offer the same service and that it is likely there will be a negative effect on families and communities in Bolton as a result.

We do not feel that enough consideration has been made in the report for the recent GMCA Start Well: Early Years Strategy (30th June 2016) or the All Party Parliamentary Group on Children's Centre Report (Family Hubs: The Future of Children's Centres July 2016). The government have yet to make any decisions on the APPG report; which in the long term could result in changes to the funding of centres.

We feel the council should put changes to the Children's Centres on hold until the impact of this report is clear. Reserves can be used to do this.

Reduction in service

Reduced service provision at Children's Centres will have long terms impact on families and therefore not a sound economic proposition. Significantly reducing support for families and services which can provide early intervention for families experiencing challenges or difficulties at the key Early Years stages will have a direct impact on other services as those children get older (including Social Workers and Schools).

We are disappointed that the proposals indicate 31 job losses which includes 25 front line posts. Although many of these are currently 'vacant', a significant proportion are filled by agency staff. In real terms, there will be a massive reduction in capacity if the proposals are implemented. Even though the Children's Centres are available for use, the team will not be able to deliver the same services from those centres.

Unison believe strongly that the Children's Centres should be protected but we feel it is positive the council working with other organisations to keep the centres available to the Family Support Team.

However it is not clear which centres will still run sessions open to the general public (universal services such as Play Groups). It is also unclear when those organisations will make the centres available for use. The initial indications are that those organisations (mainly schools), will use the centres during school hours, meaning that the centres will only be available for use for public sessions after 3pm. This is not ideal for families with children under 2 or 3 years who use the Play Groups. These groups are key to Early Years development, being a place where parents can bring their children to socialise, with both children of their own age and other adults, at a key point in their child's development.

Due to the reduction of staff and the need to prioritise contact and other services ordered by the court, Children & Families Workers will not be able to deliver the same number of universal services at all the centres. This will, again, limit parents' ability to access provision and reduce provision specifically to 0-5 year old children (an area both the GMCA Start Well: Early Years Strategy and the Troubled Families Programme ask Public Services to focus on).

The Assessment & Contact element of this service has always been needs-based and we know that need in this area cannot be decreased in line with the cuts.

TUPE/SLA considerations

We are disappointed that the cleaners were not brought into this review but that a separate review has been started in response to the proposals. The cleaners are therefore excluded from input into a review which directly impacts them.

The fact that other organisations are taking over the running of many of the Children's Centres could have implications for staff currently providing support for the centres. The council currently employs Centre Assistants who set up rooms, ensure health & safety requirements are met, open and lock up the buildings, maintain equipment, do basic repairs, etc...

The council also employs Business Admin/Receptionist in the centres. A centre open to the public needs a member of staff who can signpost service users and provide basic advice both for the new organisation and for the Family Support Services using the building.

The organisations taking on the running of the centres will still need someone to undertake these roles. This could have TUPE implications but equally the council could offer those organisations an SLA. We feel this aspect has not been considered in the proposals.

Early Years

UNISON are disappointed that the council are creating new Soulbury posts in this review thus prolonging a parallel pay structure. The council undertook an Equal Pay review and implemented

the single status agreement in 2009 with a view to phasing out Soulbury and JNC Youth Worker scales.

We would also like noted that although the Children's Centres and Family Support Services are being cut significantly, the Early Years section is not being cut. Some of the funding for the current service has come from reserves and most of this will cease with only a small amount being added to the overall budget.

We also have concerns regarding the Start Well Quality & Outcomes Senior Consultant role. The new role requires a QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) with Early Years Specialism qualification. As this qualification only focuses on ages 3+, we feel there is a gap in qualifications and expertise in the management structure of the service with most Senior Managers being qualified teachers with no 0-3 yo focused qualifications.

The Start Well: Early Years Strategy identifies age 2 as one of the key transition points in regards to School Readiness and recent research has shown that ages 0-3 are a Critical Development period with the first 1001 days being an extremely sensitive period in brain development. A focus on this time of development and strategies for early intervention during this time will help to prevent issues in later life.

Management have indicated that the QTS is needed for the challenge role in school settings, however currently the Early Years Advisors undertake this duty. The cease and diminish list has not identified that this will change or that the duty will pass to the Senior Consultants.

We believe that an Early Years Qualification focusing on 0-5 year olds should also be added to the Senior Consultants Job Specification (such as EYPS or EYT – Early Years Professional Status / Early years Teacher both degree level qualifications). This would mean that current staff with either a QTS or EYPS/EYT would be qualified to step up and progress and ensure overall 0-5 focus to the team. EYPS/EYT staff are highly qualified but due to a lack of career progression we risk losing this expertise to other authorities/organisations.

In addition to this Children & Families Workers based in Children's Centres work are focused on 0-5 year olds and the reduction in these workers will impact the 0-5 agenda.

Conclusion

UNISON have fully engaged with management in a redundancy consultation however management have been unable to provide a complete picture of how the Children's Centres will be used. Negotiations with schools and other interested parties have not been concluded and we are unsure of how the remaining service will use the outsourced centres.

The result is ultimately that the consultation process is flawed. We believe that cuts to Children's Centres should be put on hold until all the details are available and full and meaningful consultation with the unions can be undertaken.

Should the cuts identified in the report be implemented, we believe a significant number of 0-5 sessions run from Children's Centres will cease as the number of Children & Family Workers who run them will decrease (not just due to alternative uses of the centres). The number of Children & Family Workers working with vulnerable families from the Harvey Centre will also have to decrease, putting additional strain on our Social Workers who are already near or at capacity. There is a concern that removing services which offer early intervention to families in need will, in the long run, impact on Social Services leading to more complex cases.

Unison Bolton Branch 6540

Convenor: Suzi Boardman

GMB response to proposed review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres & Family Support Services 2016



Consultation with Trades Unions commenced on Tuesday 5th July 2016 and ended on Monday 3rd October 2016 after a request from both unions for consultation to be extended was agreed.

This response is based on comments and feedback from our membership who were included in the consultation process and attended member meetings or 1:1 meetings.

This review prompted a large number of questions from members that were raised in line with the consultation process and answers have been provided through the Review Log process. Management have worked to provide information and responses in a timely manner and GMB are grateful for this.

The previous review of Children's Centres and Family Support Services that concluded in July 2013 pooled the existing buildings into six merged Children's Centres and further built upon the existing Social Care District Model (North, South & West) however this review has included a review of where services will be delivered from and also has reduced the number of frontline posts that work directly with families.

Whilst GMB acknowledges that the majority of the posts that have been deleted are on the whole vacant posts that have been filled by agency staff to date, and not permanent employees, this will still reflect and reduce capacity within the service as a whole. In addition a number of permanent employees whose job families are being reduced in number, have applied for severance and VER which will potentially result in a regrettable loss of experience within the service.

The current review has concentrated on the services and support streams that will continue to be delivered to families within Bolton and GMB welcomes the move to provide additional support and a focus on School Readiness to families with young children. This review also seeks to further integrate Early Years and Childcare within the same service as Children's Centres and Family Support to create a 'Start Well' service.

GMB recognises and regrets that these cuts to a much needed service have been forced due to major cuts in funding to local government from central government.

GMB would like to request that as standard in the case of service reviews, a six month post consultation review is undertaken and as is usual GMB will encourage members to bring forward any concerns or issues relating to implementation to be addressed through the JOG arena.

Summary of Staff/Trade Union Consultation Log – Review of Early Years and Childcare, Start Well and Family Support Services

Issue		Response
Staffing Issues		
1.	Queries around agency staff and temporary arrangements within the service	Information was provided.
2.	Involvement of admin and business support staff in the consultation.	Staff within the administration and business support review have been subject to a separate review, however they were also welcome to be involved in union meetings, and admin managers were also actively consulted.
3.	Clarification sought regarding ringfencing, slotting in, recruitment and selection processes, and location.	Clarification was provided. Staff in the service do not have a specific work location specified in the job descriptions, and could be deployed to any location as determined by the needs of the service. All recruitment and selection will be carried out in line with HR policy.
4.	Queries around line management arrangements and the management matrix, and the balance between management and frontline posts.	The management matrix was amended to provide more clarity on how the integrated service will function. Overall numbers of managers have been reduced across the service, and unfortunately it has been necessary to reduce the number of frontline staff, however the reconfigured service has been designed with the new delivery model in mind, and is therefore based on business need. Where issues were raised around the new service structure and line management arrangements further explanation was provided around the need for a fully integrated, flexible service which recognises particular specialisms and expertise, but avoids silo working. The service structure was amended to reflect professional supervision arrangements for social care staff.
5.	Queries around job descriptions, person specifications, job evaluations, and qualifications, particularly posts requiring Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)..	<p>Further information and clarity was provided across a range of job descriptions and person specifications, including qualification requirements. It was agreed that where appropriate job descriptions would be amended to reflect requirements. Staff will always have access to a manager regardless of location, with regular support and supervisions as currently. In some cases there is a need for a focus and impact on specific priorities rather than particular detail around delivery. Management were satisfied that the Council's job evaluation process was robust. It was agreed that all posts should have "Start Well" in the title. Careful consideration was given, when designing new and amended posts, taking into account service need and Government policy, around the qualification requirements.</p> <p>Clarification was provided around specific qualification requirements for some posts, particularly those requiring QTS, and the aspects of specific roles that require QTS, including responsibilities carried out as part of the Council's statutory duties.</p>
6.	Request for clarification around continuous professional development.	All staff will be supported in their continuous professional development, including some role/sector specific development opportunities, and some which are more generic and offered as part of the core competencies

		for the early years workforce. This will continue to be identified and evaluated through professional supervision for all staff. Speech and Language therapy training is provided by the NHS as part of mandatory training for relevant staff in the NHS only.
7.	Concerns around workload, including the rollout of the new delivery model.	<p>Management are committed to supporting staff across the service to deliver effectively with the available resources. Assessments have been made of current work practices and workloads, and efficiencies have been identified, alongside more flexible approaches to covering for absence across the whole service rather than by district. Managers will continue to ensure that appropriate training is available to support this. There is a strong expectation that staff will continue to work as an integrated service which avoids silos. Management will continue to monitor workloads.</p> <p>The early adopter model has been used to provide an evidence base to roll out the service across the borough, with some service providers (NHS, schools) already using the assessment and interventions developed and will be supported by the Start Well Practitioners.</p>
8.	Queries were raised around Voluntary Early Retirement and Voluntary Severance.	Management provided information as far as possible, with information on the cap not yet being available from central government.
9.	Working pattern queries.	Management agreed that relevant job descriptions should be amended to reflect a 9pm finish.
Building Issues		
10.	A number of queries were raised around options for the buildings, including refurbishment costs and specifications, and any impact on co-located services. .	Extensive consultation has taken place with members of the public, potential partners, and other stakeholders, and expressions of interest to take over the some of the buildings have been received. Management has agreed to meet with the unions once consultation has been completed, as there will be clearer information available then about the number of buildings that the Council will need to manage, as well as contingency plans.
Finance Issues		
11.	Various queries were raised around the budget information in the report.	Further detail was provided and one amendment made.
Impact on other services		
12.	Concerns were raised about the potential impact on other services, including social workers and cleaners.	A detailed explanation was given on the links to social care, and opportunities to work more closely together and remove duplication as well as more tailored approaches, for example around parenting assessments. In addition, the other key pressure, contact, continues to be a priority area with capacity in place to manage it. Cleaning staff have been made aware of the proposals via their own department management.
Operational Issues		
A number of operational issues were raised during consultation, which are normally outside the scope of consultation relating to a review. Nevertheless these issues have been addressed as far as possible during consultation.		

REVIEW OF EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE, CHILDREN'S CENTRES & FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES 2016

Summary of Public Consultation Responses

Methodology

A consultation form was developed to gather views on the proposals. The form summarised the proposals and then asked the following questions:

- What, if any, impact (positive or negative) is the proposal likely to have on you, your family, or the organisation you are representing?
- If the proposals are accepted, how can we support you through the changes?
- Do you have any other comments or can you think of any alternative solutions to address the issues faced by these services?

A series of demographic questions were also asked, to see if there were any differences between the views of different respondents.

A paper version of the form was made available in every children's centre, with a display board explaining the proposals and a box to put completed forms into.

The same form was made available on the council's web-site and advertised via the Bolton News and Bolton Scene.

It was recognised that forms were not suitable for everyone and so visits were made to each of the centres (prioritising the most vulnerable groups) to talk through the proposals face-to-face with parents and grandparents. Face-to-face meetings with a large number of stakeholders also took place during the consultation period to discuss issues.

Responses

A total of **188** completed survey forms were received and around **279** people had the opportunity to respond face-to-face at the visits to children's centres.

The completed survey forms can be broken down into the following **types** of respondent:

- 120 are from parents
- 12 are from council staff members
- 10 are from a community / voluntary group
- 9 are from grandparents
- 8 are from health professionals
- 7 are from childminders
- 7 are from private nurseries
- 3 from schools

- 3 from expectant mothers
- 2 are from crèche's
- 9 others (including: carers, residents, playgroups)

The on-line survey asked which **children's centre** people currently use:

- 69 currently use Tonge (including Bright Meadows and Bromley Cross)
- 68 currently use Lord Street & Grosvenor (including Little Lever and Kearsley)
- 50 currently use Crompton (including Oldhams and Leverhulme)
- 22 currently use Harvey's (including Great Lever and The Orchards)
- 28 currently use Oxford Grove (including Heaton and Lostock, Horwich and Blackrod)
- 13 currently use Alexandra (including Westthoughton and Hulton)
- 19 don't currently use any

157 survey forms are from **females** and 21 are from **males**

The **ethnicity** of respondents was as follows:

- 151 are White British
- 7 are Other White
- 6 are Asian / Asian British
- 5 are Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group
- 2 are Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- 1 other

The **age** of respondents:

- Under 20 years of age = 4
- Between 21 and 30 = 61
- Between 31 and 40 = 54
- Between 41 and 50 = 21
- Over 50 years of age = 29

Respondents were asked how many **pre-school children** they had:

- No children = 39 respondents (Grandparents, organisations)
- 1 child = 77 respondents
- 2 children = 30 respondents
- 3 children = 7 respondents
- 6 children = 1 respondent (crèche)
- 9 children = 1 respondent (childminder)
- 24/25 children = 2 respondents (nurseries)

Each children's centre was visited during the consultation period so that service users could provide comments face to face. Over **270** people had the opportunity to respond to the consultation face-to-face at the visits to children's centres.

Groups visited included parents with English as a second language, those with children who have disabilities, dad's groups and vulnerable young mums.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION SITE VISITS TO CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Children's Centre/ Venue	Identified Group	Day	Time	Date	Numbers
Alexandra	Stay and Play	Thursday	10.00-12.30pm	4 th August	20
Blackrod	Baby Clinic	Tuesday	9.15 -10.45am	2 nd August	28
Bright Meadows	Play and Stay with Baby Clinic	Thursday	10.00 - 11.30am	11 th August	15 *
Bromley Cross	Stay and Play	Tuesday	9.30-10.45am	9 th August	15
Crompton	Early Year's Fun	Tuesday	1:00 – 2:30pm	2 nd August	9
Great Lever	ESOL Stay and Play	Tuesday	1:30 – 3.00pm	12 th July	27
Harvey	ESOL Stay and Play	Friday	1.00 - 2:30pm	14 th July	11
Harvey	ESOL Stay and Play	Friday	1.00 - 2:30pm	23 rd September	10
Heaton	Active Minds	Friday	1.00 – 3.00pm	12 th August	13
Kearsley	Stay and Play	Monday	1:30 – 3.00pm	18 th July	41
Oldhams	Incredible Years	Thursday	10.00am – 12.00	21 st July	11
Leverhulme	Happy Hands Sensory Play	Thursday	1.00 - 2.30pm	22 nd September	8
Little Lever	Stay and Play	Monday	09:30 -11.00am	26 th September	23
Lord Street	Baby Clinic	Monday	1:30 – 3:00pm	18 th July	31
Orchards	Fun for Babies	Friday	10.00 – 11.00am	5 th August	6
Oxford Grove	Dad's Stay and Play	Friday	1.30 – 3.00pm	22 nd July	1
Tonge	Birth to Birthdays	Tuesday	1.00 – 3.00pm	9 th August	1
Westhoughton	Rock 'n' Roll Tots	Wednesday	10.30 - 11.15am	10 th August	9 *
					279

* - plus parents collecting lunches

LIST OF CONSULTEES:

Advisory Board Members and Information and Planning Board

- Members For All 6 Children's Centres - Includes:
- Bolton At Home, Bolton College, Bolton Under 5s, Bolton Wise, Bolton Impact Group, Child-Minders, Childcare Providers, Children's Opportunities Group, Community Members, Councillors, Illume, Excel to Learn, Food and Health, Head-Teachers, Health Visitors And Midwives, United Reform Church, Bolton Impact Trust, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Libraries, Neighbourhood Managers, Nurseries, Parents, PCSOs, Representative of Local Mosques, Residents Associations, Safeguarding, Serco, SNUFF, Speech And Language, UCAN Manager)
- Service Users (Via Paper Copies Of Questionnaire In Each Centre, Via On-Line Survey Form And Via Face-To-Face Visits)
- Residents of Bolton (Via Website / Press-Release)
- PVI Nurseries
- Child Minders
- Schools
- Health (Foundation Trust, CCG)
- Other Council Departments

Summary of public consultation

When asked to explain what children's centres mean to parents, phrases such as '*life-saver*', '*god-send*' and '*life-line*' have been used. Parents are clear in their view that children's centres have helped their child's development; both in terms of educational advancement and social interaction, and have helped them as parents in terms of the support, advice and friendship from other parents and professionals.

On the whole parents have been generally accepting of the proposals, understanding that savings have to be made, but also sad that some of the centres were changing and that things wouldn't be the same for themselves and for future parents. They raised concerns that mothers may experience isolation and depression if they didn't have the same level of support that they had received.

Concern was also raised around getting to the remaining centres, especially for those who didn't have access to a car, and the inconvenience and cost of this. Some felt that the remaining centres would be too busy, explaining that some sessions were already full and people were sometimes turned away. Parents offered to contribute a minimal amount (around £1) to keep sessions open.

Uncertainty around the proposals was causing concern amongst parents and providers; information was requested once decisions had been made. They asked the council to make the most of the centres that were left with a well-publicised, full timetable containing different sessions for different ages, and some sessions that would allow children of all ages. Staff at all levels were praised by parents; from the receptionist who “*remembers the children’s names - however complicated and difficult to pronounce*” to various health professionals; words such as ‘amazing’ ‘friendly’ ‘helpful’ and ‘welcoming’ were used when talking about staff.

The main themes arising from the consultation (with the service response) are detailed below:

Issue	Service Response
Travel issues: Difficult for parents without cars to travel to other centres; too far to walk, difficult to use public transport with more than one child, too expensive	Other locations will be used to deliver services in the local area – a ‘what’s in the area’ programme will be developed in partnership with the voluntary sector and schools Work with TFGM to make public transport information available and the most vulnerable will be given travel expenses to access targeted services at other centres
Parental support: Being a new parent can be stressful and isolating, some mothers suffer from Post Natal Depression. Children’s centres help by getting parents out of the house and meeting others in a similar position to offer advice and support.	It is not envisaged that there won’t be anything in particular locations. The Children and Family support service will continue to provide support to parents and will continue to work with Health Visitors and Midwives to identify issues. Improved maternal health is a priority within the Start Well Programme.
Child interaction / development: Young children benefit from mixing with other children; social skills, communication skills, practical skills – helps them to be school ready.	The overall aim of the proposed Start Well Service is to ensure that all Bolton Children are prepared to start school and ready to learn and achieve. Children’s centres are a critical component in the Start Well Service as they provide access and support to some of the most vulnerable children and their families by bringing together services and co-ordinating support.
Staff: Parents praised the quality of staff working at children’s centres; friendly, helpful, know the children’s names.	The proposals are designed to take the savings from buildings rather than the service (as much as possible) and have tried to ensure a minimal number of redundancies. Any reductions in posts will be managed in accordance with the council policy and may be offset by a number of positive measures. Staff will continue to be valued and developed.
Childminders: Centres are used for drop-in sessions for childminders.	Work will continue to identify suitable premises for childminders. The new childcare partnership officer post will work with partner-organisations to

	improve the quality of provision for 0-5 year olds (this will include childminders).
Health: Concerns were raised regarding how / where health services will be provided; antenatal classes, baby clinic.	We will continue to work with the Foundation Trust and the NHS to ensure parents can access health services. In some cases this will be in the same buildings which will be retained as community assets.
Contacts: Children's centres provide a safe environment for children to have contact with their family.	Children's Centre Hubs and linked sites will continue to be used (in addition to Harvey) for contacts. These buildings will be fully resourced for contact sessions. Families will be able to use the most convenient.
Charging: Some parents offered to contribute a minimal amount to keep the groups going.	Nominal charges have been piloted across some children's centres and parental contribution will be further explored to see if they can be used to extend services whilst still remaining affordable but it will also be important to retain a number of free sessions.
Remaining centres: Parents were concerned that the remaining centres might be too busy. There were requests to be kept informed about where and when you can access different groups.	There will be a comprehensive programme of activities at the remaining children's centres. The number of attendees at sessions will be monitored

Further engagement with service users and schools will be undertaken as proposals for the offer at each centre is developed.

Council's Petition Scheme – Petitions

Bolton Borough Council Petition Scheme - The petitions process allows members of the public to have direct influence on the political process and to raise concerns that are important to them.

Members of the public can submit petitions on the following:-

- Issues relating to the Borough Council's responsibilities
- Issues which affect the Borough or communities in Bolton, as long as the Council is in a position to exercise some degree of influence
- Anything relating to an improvement in the economic, social or environmental
- Wellbeing of the Borough to which any of the Council's partners could contribute.

During the consultation period, a number of petitions have been received, as detailed below;

A petition requesting the following:

Bolton Council to withdraw its plans immediately and The Conservative MP for Bolton West, Chris Green to lobby the Government for additional funds for Children's Centres
327 signatures

A number of petitions requesting that:

Bolton Council to remove the following Children's Centres from the review until a clear plan is available for the centres and to recommence the consultation when the position is clear

	Leverhulme	44 signatures
-	Westhoughton / Washacre	26 signatures
-	Little Lever	35 signatures
-	Bright Meadows	122 signatures
-	Orchards	29 signatures
-	Kearsley	25 signatures
-	Crompton	33 signatures
-	Lord Street and Grosvenor	28 signatures
-	Bromley Cross Children's Centre	27 signatures

An online petition requesting the following:

- Withdraw the plans immediately, and for the Conservative Member of Parliament for Bolton West to lobby the Government for additional funds for Children's Centres.

- Remove named Children's Centres from the Review until a clear plan is available, and to recommence the consultation when the position is clear.
- Stop the closure of Children's Centres across Bolton (online petition).

Stop the closure of essential Children's Centres for all families across Bolton

23 signatures

Total number of signatures received: 719 signatures

Following analysis of the petitions submitted during consultation please see information below:

- After duplicates were removed there were 569 different signatories across all the petitions
- 35% of signatories were registered with Children's Centres (202), and 65% weren't registered (367)
- 33% of signatories have attended/ been engaged in Children's Centre Activities (189), and 67% hadn't (380)

**Equality Impact Assessment
Part 1: Screening Form**



Title of report or proposal:

Review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services

Department:	Children's and Adult Services
Division/ Service Plan Unit:	Education & Learning, Staying Safe
Date:	20th May 2016 (updated 24th October 2016)

This report is for decision and is therefore subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. The following questions have been completed to ensure that this proposal, procedure or working practice does not discriminate against any particular social group. Details of the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment have also been included in the main body of the report.

Equality Impact Assessment Questions

- 1) Describe in summary the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes:

The proposal is set within a very challenging financial context for Bolton Council. On 10th November 2014, the Cabinet approved a consultation report that set out the options for securing savings of £43m over a two year period (2015-17). On 16th February 2015 the Council's Executive approved a report setting out proposals for savings to be delivered in Children's and Adult Services. These proposals aimed to save an overall target of between £2.5m and £3m in Children's Services.

The report outlines a review of three existing services – Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services - and a proposal to re-design and re-structure these services into a new integrated Start Well service. This proposed service would continue to meet all of the Local Authority's statutory duties in these areas and would also support the implementation of the GM Start Well: Early Years Delivery Model, and continue to support the Healthy Child Programme in partnership with commissioned public health services.

The proposals recommend the integration of these services to facilitate streamlined leadership and management; remove duplication; delete vacant posts; manage a reduction in posts through reforming service delivery (including trading some services with early years settings, schools and academies); and maximising the use of the Council's estate.

2) Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the proposal?

- Children and Families in Children Centre Reach Areas
- Children and families receiving family support services and accessing looked after children contact services.
- Children's Centre Advisory Boards
- Information and Planning Groups
- Health Services
- Schools, including Academies
- Libraries
- Childcare Providers
- Faith Groups
- Community and Voluntary Sector
- Early Years Providers and Childminders
- Staff and their Trades Unions

3) In summary, what are the anticipated (positive or negative) impacts of the proposal?

Positive Impacts

The overall aim of the re-design and re-structure of the three existing services is to provide a holistic surveillance and monitoring service that aids early intervention and so prevents escalation of difficulties in later years. The proposed methods of working across and between agencies will provide a more seamless interface with families from pre-birth to school reception and will act as a gateway between early help and statutory social care services.

Although the quality of early years providers in Bolton is very good, this has not as yet translated into good levels of development for most children in Bolton at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is anticipated that the change of focus for the new Start Well service will improve children's outcomes at an early age; thus building a solid foundation for future life.

It is also anticipated that the proposals will further develop our partnership working with schools, academies and health services.

Assuming all property savings are achieved, the financial saving resulting from the entire proposal amounts to £1.472 million.

Negative Impacts

Some families will see a reduction in universal services and some may have to travel further to access specialist support.

These proposals would result in a reduction of the total establishment by 31.2 FTEs from the current 121.56 FTEs. Front line posts and services to children and families have been protected as far as possible within this reduction.

This equality impact assessment is set within the context of the council's duties under the Equality Act 2010. Under this act, the council is required to have due regard to:

- i. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- ii. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- iii. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

It is not anticipated that these proposals will have an impact on the Council's ability to meet this duty.

4. With regard to the stakeholders identified above and the diversity groups set out below:

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact
IMPACT ON CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS			
<p>General Impact</p> <p>The proposals recommend establishment of a new Start Well Service, which will continue to deliver the Council's statutory duties and be needs led, to ensure that provision remains responsive to Bolton families, with the retention of three statutory Children's Centre Reach Areas. In addition, the number of designated venues will decrease although plans are in place to ensure the continuation of venues providing for 0-5 year olds managed by alternative providers. Family Support and Contact services will be delivered as part of the Start Well service through a centralised team, and while families will still be able to access locality venues, the majority of provision will be centrally located. Partnerships with health services, LA maintained schools and academies will be strengthened under the proposals. Volunteers and community groups will be encouraged and supported to offer services for 0-5 year olds and this will include support with grant applications, including Community Empowerment Fund applications and business planning. Over recent years Bolton's early years education providers have been supported and challenged to improve the quality of their provision by the Early Years and Childcare Service. This has proved very successful and currently 88% of providers are judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding. This, combined with a reduction in childminders in recent years, has necessitated a shift in focus from support for quality of provision to support for improving outcomes for children. The integration of these services will provide more seamless experiences for children and families and an increase in co-delivered preventative work using evidence-based training and assessment tools. This will be firmly in line with the GM New Delivery Model which will also offer economies of scale in the purchase of training and assessment tools.</p>			
Race	<p>We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact on the grounds of race.</p> <p>Families are assured that activity provided or funded by the local authority will be culturally sensitive and relevant to the needs of Bolton's diverse communities.</p>	<p>With regard to all the groups identified in this assessment, it should be noted that this proposal is driven by the corporate and departmental need to significantly reduce spend in line with national budget reductions and the need to set a balanced budget.</p> <p>We have followed these overarching strategic principles to formulate proposals for savings and efficiencies:</p>	<p>This EIA has been updated to incorporate the issues raised during the consultation with staff, stakeholders and trade unions.</p> <p>The principle that developmental and educational learning opportunities are provided by a balance of Council and external providers is well established in Bolton and it is our intention to</p>

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact
	In consultation, a concern was raised that changes to services could mean that some parents and children from deprived minorities may not have support available in their own community, and in addition that some parents who have English as their second language could find it harder to integrate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the most vulnerable children and young people • Targeting those children, young people and families most in need. • Targeting areas of greatest deprivation. • Keeping children, young people and the organisation safe. 	<p>continue providing a balanced offer. The Council has always promoted, and will continue to promote, activity provided by partners as well as the Council itself.</p> <p>Support for parents and children from minority communities will be available through groups in local venues and at other centres to meet culturally diverse needs families.</p>
Religion	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact on the grounds of religion.	As described under 'Race'.	As described under 'Race'.
Disability	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for negative differential impact on the grounds of disability but we have identified potential positive impacts for this group. The proposals involve the creation of a new Start Well SEND Manager post, who will oversee the commissioning and quality assurance of the new sector led hub and spoke model, and outreach support for children with Special Educational needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). It is anticipated that this will improve provision for preschool age children with SEND. In addition, The Early Years Communication and Language Development Service (EYCLDS) is a new collaborative service working with the	As described under 'Race'.	As described under 'Race'.

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact
	early years workforce, parents, and professionals to support children at risk of speech and language delay as early as possible, or as soon as the difficulty becomes apparent.		
Gender (including gender reassignment)	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact on the grounds of gender.	As described under 'Race'.	As described under 'Race'.
Age	The service will continue to deliver the 0-5 years Children's Centre Core Purpose to meet the Council's statutory duties, whilst retaining elements of the enhanced Bolton 0–19 years offer. The scale of savings required means, however, that there will inevitably be a reduction in the delivery of universal services across these age ranges. Services will be targeted to those in greatest need. The aim is to improve outcomes for young children – especially school readiness – where currently Bolton is below England and Greater Manchester average.	In line with the Council's aim of protecting those most vulnerable, services will be more clearly targeted to those in need.	The Council will work with other agencies and help build their capacity to provide some of the universal services that may be lost under this proposal.
Sexuality	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact on the grounds of sexuality.	As described under 'Race'.	As described under 'Race'.
Caring status (including pregnancy & maternity)	Co-location of health visiting and midwifery services will remain and be extended to enable a holistic offer to children and families locally, and an effective integrated provision of service although, because of the reduction in Children's Centres and extension of Centre reach areas, some parents may have to travel further to access more specialised services. A new Assessment and Contact Services Manager post is	As described under 'Race'.	

	<p>Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact?</p> <p>Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?</p>	<p>Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?</p>	<p>Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact</p>
	<p>proposed to supervise and support the management of a centralised assessment and contact service designed to ensure effective case management of outreach support for families above Level 3 in the Framework for Action, and of contact and assessment services.</p> <p>In addition, a proposed new Start Well Children's Centres Early Intervention Lead post will continue to ensure that there are effective 'step up' and 'step down' procedures between preventative and safeguarding interventions including the management of referral and allocation into the service at all levels and the effective use of existing family rooms within Children's Centres. Both of these proposals are anticipated to have a positive impact on our most vulnerable and complex families.</p> <p>Effective parenting programmes will continue to be delivered using evidence based interventions delivered either by the Start Well Team and/ or co-delivered with Health Visitors. This will now include the use of nationally recognised tools and the use of tracking mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of interventions; all aimed at improving the development and outcomes of pre-school children. Early Years and Childcare places will continue to be provided in some centres through local childcare providers. In addition, some of the options being explored for the transfer of buildings would involve an increase in the provision of early education provision for 0-5 year olds via</p>	<p>The GM model of delivery provides economies of scale in the purchase of tried and tested assessment and intervention tools that would otherwise be financially unviable.</p>	<p>The voluntary, community and faith sector and/or groups of parents will be encouraged to take responsibility for Community Cafes with support and advice from the Council.</p> <p>Children's Centre Hubs and linked sites will continue to be used (in addition to Harvey) for contacts. These buildings will be fully resourced for contact sessions. Families will be able to use the most convenient.</p>

	<p>Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact?</p> <p>Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?</p>	<p>Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?</p>	<p>Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact</p>
	<p>schools and could result in an increase of provision of places for 2 year olds in localities where there are currently a shortage of places.</p> <p>Community cafes will not necessarily be delivered in all centres where they are currently delivered. These have proved popular with parents and have enabled new parents to feel less isolated.</p> <p>In consultation, the issue of support for new parents was raised, as this can be stressful and isolating time, and some mothers suffer from Post Natal Depression. Children's centres help by getting parents out of the house and meeting others in a similar position to offer advice and support.</p> <p>A concern was raised in consultation about the important role children's centres can play in reducing isolation for single parents.</p> <p>The importance of child interaction / development was raised: young children benefit from mixing with other children; social skills, communication skills, practical skills – helps them to be school ready.</p>		<p>The Children and Family support service will continue to provide support to parents and will continue to work with Health Visitors and Midwives to identify issues. Improved maternal health is a priority within the Start Well Programme.</p> <p>A range of services will still be available through locality venues and outreach, which will help to prevent/reduce isolation for parents (including single parents).</p> <p>The overall aim of the proposed Start Well Service is to ensure that all Bolton Children are prepared to start school and ready to learn and achieve.</p>

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact
	<p>Responses to the consultation raised the issue of how the Centres are needed for drop-in sessions for childminders.</p> <p>Concerns were raised regarding how / where health services will be provided; antenatal classes, baby clinic.</p>		<p>Work will continue to identify suitable premises for childminders. The new childcare partnership officer post will work with partner-organisations to improve the quality of provision for 0-5 year olds (this will include childminders).</p> <p>Work will continue with the NHS to ensure parents can access health services. In some cases this will be in the same buildings which will be retained as community assets.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact on the grounds of marital or civil partnership status.</p> <p>A concern was raised in consultation about the important role children's centres can play in reducing isolation for single parents.</p>	As described under 'Race'.	<p>As described under 'Race'.</p> <p>As referred to under the 'Caring Status' heading, a range of services will still be available through locality venues and outreach, which will help to prevent/reduce isolation for parents (including single parents).</p>

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact
Socio-economic	<p>In the consultation, concerns were raised about difficulty for parents without cars to travel to other centres; these may be too far away too far to walk, plus it is difficult to use public transport with more than one child, and can be too expensive.</p> <p>Some parents were concerned that the remaining centres might be too busy. There were requests to be kept informed about where and when you can access different groups.</p> <p>Some parents offered to contribute a minimal amount to keep the groups going.</p>	As described under 'Race'.	<p>Other locations will be used to deliver services in the local area. There will be a comprehensive programme of activities at the remaining children's centres. The Council will work with TfGM to make public transport information available and the most vulnerable will be given travel expenses to access targeted services at other centres. The number of attendees at sessions will be monitored.</p> <p>Nominal charges have been piloted across some children's centres and parental contribution will be further explored to see if they can be used to extend services whilst still remaining affordable but it will also be important to retain a number of free sessions.</p>

IMPACT ON STAFF

General Impact

In developing the proposal we have attempted, as far as possible, to maintain the number of posts that are working face to face with children and families to improve their outcomes. There has been an effort to minimise the impact on front line staff, resulting in reductions at team leader and management level. We are aware of the adverse impact this proposal will have on all Council staff that may be subject to these proposals.

Any potential redundancies that may result from the proposed restructure will comply with the Council's Human Resources procedures which are designed to treat all staff equally and do not discriminate against any group of people. If a redundancy situation is identified the Council endeavours to address this by workforce planning procedures, including staff redeployment, consideration of voluntary redundancy or VER and all other reasonably practical measures.

We have sought to reduce the impact of these proposals on staff by deleting posts which are already vacant wherever possible. This proposal also includes potential for those currently holding posts proposed for deletion to apply for a number of vacant or new posts.

In the event of compulsory redundancy, our policy is based on: - work performance; skills and competencies; disciplinary record; and attendance record. Any reduction in the workforce will lead to a potential reduction in its diversification, however this will be through following the appropriate procedures and not the discrimination of particular members of staff based on any other criterion except that stated in our redundancy policy.

Due to the low numbers of staff on specific grades or in individual named positions affected by this specific proposal, it is not appropriate to discuss the demographic breakdown of the staff team in detail in this assessment as these risk identifying individuals. However, the demographic breakdown of the staff concerned has been obtained and places where this breakdown is significantly different from that of the Council as a whole are noted below.

In the public consultation, parents praised the quality of staff working at children's centres; how they were friendly, helpful and know the children's names. The proposals are designed to take the savings from buildings rather than the service (as much as possible) and have tried to ensure a minimal number of redundancies. Any reductions in posts will be managed in accordance with the council policy and may be offset by a number of positive measures. Staff will continue to be valued and developed.

Race	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	With regard to all the groups identified in this assessment, it should be noted that this proposal is driven by the corporate and departmental needs to significantly reduce spend in line with national budget reductions and the need to set a balanced budget.	This EIA has been updated to incorporate the issues raised during the consultation with staff, stakeholders and trade unions.
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		<p>We have followed these overarching strategic principles to formulate proposals for savings and efficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protecting the most vulnerable children and young people •Targeting those children, young people and families most in need. •Targeting areas of greatest deprivation. •Keeping children, young people and the organisation safe. 	
Religion	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	As described under 'Race'.	As described under 'Race'.
Disability	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	As described under 'Race'.	As described under 'Race'.
Gender (including gender reassignment)	The services involved in this review are predominantly, although not exclusively, staffed by women. Any impacts of the reorganisation could therefore have a negative effect on women because they form the greatest proportion of the workforce.	This is a result of wider social pressures and historic issues relating to the gender balance within the social care sector. As Cameron and Moss's research for the University of London makes clear, this problem is not unique to Bolton – or even to the UK.	As described under 'Race'.
Age	The impact of these proposals will be felt mostly by staff aged between 40 and 60.	<p>This is largely as a result of the nature of the posts proposed for deletion or change. The posts affected are largely at management level where staffs have progressed through a career path over a number of years.</p> <p>Some measure of protection has been afforded to posts involving face to face delivery with parents and children.</p>	<p>Vacancies have been managed over a period of time to enable vacant posts to be deleted where possible.</p> <p>The restructure provides some opportunities for those displaced to apply for vacant or newly</p>

			created posts in the proposed new service and the usual Council workforce planning procedures including staff redeployment, consideration of voluntary severance or voluntary early retirement will apply.
Sexuality	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	As described under 'Race'.	
Caring status (including pregnancy & maternity)	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	As described under 'Race'.	
Marriage and civil partnership	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	As described under 'Race'.	
Socio-economic	We do not anticipate that there will be a potential for differential impact.	As described under 'Race'.	
Other comments or issues	<i>E.g. relevant issues around health, environmental or geographical considerations</i>		

Please provide a list of the evidence used to inform this EIA, such as the results of consultation, service take-up, service monitoring, surveys, stakeholder comments and complaints where appropriate.

If you have undertaken consultation as part of the proposal, the consultation manager will upload it on to the corporate database.

Research References:
Nutbrown (2012): Foundations for Quality: The independent review of early education and childcare qualifications: DfE
Cameron, C., Moss, P and Owen, C. (1999) Men in the Nursery: Gender and Caring Work. London: Paul Chapman Publishing
 Local Workforce data.

5a Are there any gaps in your evidence or conclusions that make it difficult for you to quantify the potential adverse impact?

The Council consulted with staff and appropriate stakeholders to seek views on any potential impacts – both positive and negative. These views have been used to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment before final proposals are put forward.

5b If so, please explain how you will explore the proposal in greater depth or please explain why no further action is required at this time.

See above.

This EIA form and report has been checked and countersigned by the Departmental Equalities Officer before proceeding to Executive Cabinet Member(s)

Please confirm the outcome of this EIA:

No major impact identified, therefore no major changes required – proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjustments to remove barriers / promote equality (mitigate impact) have been identified – proceed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact/missed opportunities for promoting equality – this requires a strong justification	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop and rethink - the EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>

Report Officer

Name:

Signature:

Date and Contact No: 25th May 2016

Departmental Equalities Lead Officer

Name: Alison Unsworth

Signature:

Date and Contact No: 20th May 2016 (updated 24th October 2016)

Equality Impact Assessment

Part 2: Consultation Form

(To be completed where consultation has been undertaken)

This report is for decision and is therefore subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. The proposal was also subject to consultation and this Equality Impact Assessment (Consultation Form) provides details of the consultation results.

The following questions have been completed to ensure that this proposal, procedure or working practice does not discriminate against any particular social group. This has been ensured by undertaking consultation. Details of the outcome of the consultation have also been included in the main body of the report.

This form asks you to provide details of all the consultation undertaken specific to the proposal you are making, either prior to the EIA or as part of it and the results of this.

1. Consultation with staff

1a. Please summarise the consultation undertaken with staff and their Trades Unions regarding this proposal.

Consultation undertaken with staff and their Trades Union comprised of:

Staff:

- A formal briefing session and presentation for all staff affected by the proposals on 18th August 2016;
- A staff consultation pack including access to all Job Descriptions and Person Specifications on Teamsites;
- Holding individual meetings for staff with HR and Trade Union representatives where requested;
- Requesting expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy and voluntary early retirement.

Trades Unions:

- Fortnightly meetings with a log of questions and responses updated and circulated prior to the meeting.
- Responding to specific request for information from the Trade Unions.
- Access to all Job Descriptions and Person Specifications on Teamsites.

1b. Please summarise the results of this consultation, including key issues arising and any changes being made to the proposal as a result of the consultation

The report sets out the results of the formal consultation process to achieve £1.472m of savings and efficiencies through a review of Early Years and Childcare, Children's Centres, and Family Support Services and contains the final proposals in response. The proposals indicate a potential overall reduction in staff establishment by 31.2FTE posts from the current 121.76FTE posts; the current staffing structure can be found at Appendix 1.

As a result of the new service delivery model, business re-engineering, the number of vacant posts, the number of provisional VER/VS requests, and subject to the staffing implementation plan, it is not anticipated that any compulsory redundancies will be required.

2. Consultation with customers and other stakeholders

2a. Please summarise the consultation undertaken with customers and other stakeholders regarding this proposal (refer back to the stakeholders identified in your screening form)

Partners:

- Formal briefing sessions and presentations for all partners/providers during July and August 2016.
- Attendance at provider meetings on request.
- Online questionnaire designed by the Council's Corporate Consultation department

Service users:

- Briefing sessions and presentations for all providers during July and August 2016.
- Over 290 parents had the opportunity to meet with members of the consultation team during visits to a range of children's centre groups and activities.
- 188 responses were received to a questionnaire designed by the Council's Corporate Consultation department, including 120 from parents.

2b. Please summarise the results of this consultation, including key issues arising and any changes being made to the proposal as a result of the consultation

Full details of the results of the consultation can be found in Appendix 3.

Parents were very positive about how children's centres had helped their children's development; both in terms of educational advancement and social interaction, and have helped them as parents in terms of the support, advice and friendship from other parents and professionals.

On the whole parents understood that savings have to be made, but raised concerns that mothers may experience isolation and depression if they didn't have the same level of support that they had received. Specific concerns included:

- Access and transport to get to remaining centres and activities, especially for without a car, and the inconvenience and cost of this.
- Concerns that some centres would be too busy, and sessions full.
- Parents offered to contribute a minimal amount (around £1) to keep sessions open.
- The need to provide full and varied timetable containing different sessions for different ages, and some sessions that would allow children of all ages.
- Lots of praise for staff, including the welcome from receptionists and the dedication of health professionals.
- Support needed by local childminders and the children they provide care for.

- The importance of centre availability for Contact meetings for Looked After Children.

The final proposals in response to the formal consultation process set out new service delivery model to integrate Children's Centres, Family Support, and Early Years and Childcare Services into a single Start Well Service. The Start Well Service will continue to provide its statutory duties and ensure that services continue to be needs led to ensure that provision remains responsive to Bolton families with the retention of three statutory children's centre reach areas.

The report sets out the buildings proposed as Integrated Start Well Children's Centre hubs and linked sites, and in addition services provided by voluntary, community organisations and parents groups will continue to be delivered at a number of library sites, plus the Harvey Centre be retained as a central assessment and contact centre.

As the report states, there are also proposals to transfer nine of the current children's centre buildings to partner organisations following a formal process of negotiation, and these will continue to provide services for children and families in line with the Sure Start Children's Centre Core Purpose and Capital Grant. It is also proposed to designate two additional delivery sites to enable accessible delivery of services in the most disadvantaged areas.

This EIA form and report has been checked and countersigned by the Departmental Equalities Officer before proceeding to Executive Cabinet Member(s)

Please confirm the outcome of this EIA:

No major impact identified, therefore no major changes required – proceed	
Adjustments to remove barriers / promote equality (mitigate impact) have been identified – proceed	X
Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact/missed opportunities for promoting equality – this requires a strong justification	
Stop and rethink - the EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination	

Report Officer

Name:

Signature:

Date and Contact No:

Departmental Equalities Lead Officer

Name: Kevin Durkin

Signature:

Date and Contact No: 31st October 2016