



Executive
17th July 2006

**Report from the Director of
Children & Families**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Children's Centres – Phase 2 Capital Programme

Forward Plan Ref: C&F06/07-001

Appendix 4 of this report is “Not for Publication”

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 On 13th March 2006 the Executive agreed to officers undertaking further work to develop proposals for the seven phase 2 Children's Centres it agreed in principle to be delivered between April 2006 and March 2008. The report also indicated that capital resources of £2.049m have been allocated to the Council by the DfES Sure Start Unit, as a block grant. At that stage, detailed studies had not been completed to provide evidence that the 7 recommended site options noted were deliverable.
- 1.2 This report builds on those decisions made by the Executive in March 2006 and reports on progress in respect of each of the 7 recommended site options. It now identifies the risk areas (see risk register - Appendix 1) attached to delivering the recommended site options indicated in the March report (Appendix 2); this report also makes recommendations and seeks decisions required to address the risk areas. Members are asked to note the steps taken to manage the risks.
- 1.3 The report therefore seeks Executive approval to recommendations set out in paragraphs 2.1. to 2.9 aimed at managing and reducing the risks of delivering the 7 centres agreed by the Executive in March 2006.

2.0 Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree to the Children's Centre Phase 2 Generic Development Brief (Appendix 3) to be adapted by officers for each individual Children's Centre (see paragraphs 3.8 – 3.10).
- 2.2 Approve the development of a Children's Centre (including crèche) at Wembley Primary School and agree to allocating the corresponding capital provision of up to £415,000 (£300,000 from the Children's Centre capital allocation and a further £115,000 from the General Sure Start Grant capital allocation for Extended Services in schools) (subject to Sure Start approval) (see paragraphs 3.11 – 3.15).
- 2.3 Approve the development of a new build Children's Centre on the site of Fryent Primary School and to agree to allocating a provisional capital sum of £400,000 from the Children's Centre capital budget (see paragraph 3.16).
- 2.4 Agree to the caretaker's house at Lyon Park Infant and Junior Schools (217 Mount Pleasant) being surplus to the school's requirements, to transfer the asset to the Children and Families Department service's requirements and thereafter to deploy it as a Children's Centre - noting that both schools will benefit from enhanced education and community provision with capital investment in the Children's Centre in the order of £365,000 and that the schools will receive no share of a notional or actual capital receipt (see paragraphs 3.17 – 3.19).
- 2.5 Agree in principle to the change of use of the St Raphaels Youth and Community Centre to become a combined Children's, Youth and Community Centre (see paragraphs 3.20 – 3.22 and timeline in Appendix 4).
- 2.6 Agree to the Council making representation at the PCT Board to ensure accommodation at Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care is made available to provide Children's Centres and in the event that agreements are not reached by 30th September 2006, to agree to officers developing proposals for alternative sites namely Sudbury Primary School for the Wembley area and Tree Tops nursery for the Willesden area (see paragraphs 3.23 – 3.24).
- 2.7 Agree in principle to the development of a combined Children's Centre and Primary Care Centre on the site of Queens Park Community School and to officers undertaking further work in order to confirm this option is deliverable as a phase 2 centre (see paragraphs 3.25 – 3.27).
- 2.8 Pending detailed cost estimates (subject to DfES Sure Start Unit approval) to agree to receive a report with proposals to reduce the number of Children's Centres delivered to a number below 7 that can be afforded within the capital budget should either the available Sure Start capital funding be insufficient or additional capital cannot be made available (see paragraph 3.28).

2.9 Agree to receive further reports seeking further commitment of capital resources from the Children's Centre capital allocation for all projects except Wembley and Fryent Primary Schools (see paragraph 3.29).

3.0 Detail

Programme Background

3.1 Much of the background to Children's Centres was detailed in the March 2006 Executive report. Children's Centres are part of a national DfES initiative and follow the development of Sure Start Local Programmes. Children's Centres are one of the key delivery mechanisms to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes. The Every Child Matters policy is aimed at improving outcomes for all children and in particular at closing the gap between the outcomes for the most disadvantaged children and others. The development of Sure Start Children's Centres is a mechanism by which the Council and its partners can deliver integrated services for children and their families. Children's Centres are identified in the Children and Young People's Plan as a building block for delivering a number of objectives under the plan's 6 strategic priorities including providing readily available and accessible parenting and healthcare support, increasing family support for children in need, including those with disabilities and ensuring there is strong inter-agency collaboration to improve all aspects of safeguarding for all children and young people. The capital programme will ultimately enable partners from different organisation to work more closely together to deliver key services for young children and their families. Further details on Sure Start Children's Centres and Every Child Matters are available at www.surestart.gov.uk.

3.2 In order to assist Local Authorities and partners to integrate service delivery a core offer of Children's Centre services has been outlined by the DfES. The Children's Centre Core Offer comprises the following services for children under 5 and their families (more details in Appendix 5):

- Early education integrated with day-care.
- Family support and parental outreach.
- Child and family health services.
- Links with schools and the Children's Information Service (CIS).
- Links with JobCentre Plus.
- Other links including training providers, benefits advice and basic skills.

The core offer is to be interpreted locally and does not have to take place on one site, although this is recommended. Unlike phase 1, it is not essential in phase 2 to create new full day-care places for children, although sessional childcare (crèche) may be provided to support activities (such as Extended Services) as required. Local Authorities are encouraged to support existing statutory and non-statutory provision. The emphasis is on co-location of services and outreach work with families and children under 5. This is reflected in the generic development brief (Appendix 3) and the capital project options being considered.

3.3 In Brent, five Children's Centres covering the 20% most disadvantaged areas were developed in phase 1 (2004-2006). The five phase 1 centres are located in the Stonebridge, Harlesden and South Kilburn areas. The Executive agreed

in principle in March 2006 to develop a further seven centres in the 30% most disadvantaged areas in phase 2 (2006-2008). Each centre has a catchment area covering approximately 1000 children under 5. By March 2008, 33% of the 0-5 year old population will have access to a full range of integrated children's centre services. The DfES aims to have a Children's Centre in every community by 2010.

- 3.4 In developing a capital programme for phase 2, officers have concentrated on properties owned by Brent Council and its partners in order to maximise existing assets. The Council's commitment to developing CFD infrastructure is underlined by the allocation of £70M over four years from 2005/2006. Identifying sites in the required locations has not been straightforward as a balance of service benefits and deliverability needs to be achieved. In addition, the requirements changed during this identification process as the DfES confirmed new childcare places were not required. Each site option has a number of factors that need to be addressed and this report reflects the complex nature of the site selection/development. A combination of school, community and PCT sites have been recommended as Children's Centres. All have advantages in best serving the community to meet the outcomes of the Children's Centre core offer. As indicated in the Sure Start Planning Guidance for Phase 2 (issued in July 2005) developing Children's Centres on school sites encourages the recommended strong links between the Extended Services agenda and Children's Centres. The DfES also acknowledge the value of working with other partner agencies and suggest that health centres can be suitable sites as they already provide a network of services and advice to a wide community. In addition the two PCT sites proposed have high quality facilities and will be able to offer specialist services to children and families in two easily accessible locations.
- 3.5 The cost estimates set out against each of the schemes are based on desk top work only. Executive approval of the recommendations set out in this report will enable officers to develop schemes to a sufficient level of detail that will then provide more accurate cost estimates which will be reported to a future Executive. At that juncture, proposals may be made for the re-allocation of resources across the schemes to ensure best value for the Council.
- 3.6 Since the Executive in March 2006 officers have, as indicated at that meeting, been in discussion with the Sure Start Unit to seek agreement to a reduction in the government target for phase 2 Children's Centres in Brent from 9 to 7. This has not yet been agreed. If this reduction is not agreed by the Sure Start Unit, funding may be clawed back. This will also be the subject of further reports.
- 3.7 A project management structure is in place to deliver the phase 2 Children's Centre capital programme. This is led by the Asset Management Service and taken through a reporting structure that flows across a Capital Steering Group (specifically focusing on phase 2 delivery and including partners), a Children's Centres Steering Group (which has a wider remit than simply capital projects) and the Director's Management Team. The vehicle for reporting on the project is a monthly Project Breakdown Structure and a higher level monthly progress report from the project manager. Further details of this process are available from the Director's office.

Phase 2 Children's Centres Generic Development Brief

- 3.8 The generic development brief (Appendix 3) for phase 2 Children's Centres has been developed with the support of an external design consultant with expertise in education (including Children's Centres). The 'Building for Sure Start' guidance issued by the DfES has also been referred to. A reference group including parents and a phase 1 centre manager were included in drafting the generic development brief.
- 3.9 The brief sets out the context for the capital programme and describes the way in which the centres will be used in order to determine the space required. The capital grant will be used primarily to ensure that the minimum of functional spaces required in order to deliver the core offer in each of the 7 centres is provided. The brief reflects a strong commitment to ensure the facilities provided are responsive to local needs and offer a quality environment for children and family services.
- 3.10 The brief is not intended to be prescriptive but instead is aimed at ensuring that each of the developments is able to deliver the core offer. The generic brief will be adapted to each of the 7 centres to reflect local need and opportunities and will be based on work with end users who will be involved in the development of the brief for each centre.

Individual Projects

Wembley Primary School Children's Centre (including crèche)

- 3.11 On 1st September 2006, Wembley Manor Infant and Junior Schools will amalgamate in existing buildings to become Wembley Primary School. The school will expand by 1FE to 4FE with extended services and Children's Centre facilities once the new building is complete in Spring 2008. The building project is currently in procurement and it is anticipated that the contract will be let in Autumn/Winter 2006.
- 3.12 In order to capitalise on the opportunity to create the first integrated Primary School and Children's Centre in the Borough, the Early Years Service provided the project team with a brief outlining the Children's Centre requirements in December 2005. Dedicated space has been designed in the school for a range of integrated Children's Centre services. A large training/meeting room and ICT facility have been provided for training and group activities along with two smaller consultation rooms, office accommodation and ancillary facilities. An additional room has also been included to provide crèche facilities to support the Children's Centre and the school's Extended Services.
- 3.13 Approval is sought from Members to commit £300,000 from the Children's Centre capital budget and £115,000 from the General Sure Start Grant capital allocation (subject to Sure Start Unit approval) to support the inclusion of a Children's Centre and crèche in the school. The sum indicated is affordable

within the overall capital budget and corresponds to the indicative allocations made to similar projects (see paragraph 4.1 – table 1).

- 3.14 Officers are satisfied that this project represents value for money as the estimated cost compares favourably to regional averages for this type of construction project. However, as indicated in March 2006, capital approval from the Sure Start Unit is required for each project. Pending Members' approval, officers will enter into detailed negotiations with the Sure Start Unit to ensure that the full amount of capital is approved.
- 3.15 The school is currently programmed for completion in Spring 2008. The potential risk of slippage past the agreed phase 2 period has been raised with the Sure Start Unit and confirmation has recently been received underlining that phase 2 centres should be delivering services by March 2008. This is highlighted as a risk area in appendix 1 but officers are confident that a temporary solution can be provided on the site to ensure continuation of services should slippage in the construction programme occur. Any additional costs incurred with this approach will be identified at an early stage and sourced from the Children's Centre capital allocation with no net impact on Council resources.

Fryent Primary School

- 3.16 Fryent Primary School could be expanded by 1FE (to 3FE) to accommodate the growing numbers of primary aged pupils in the borough. Initial feasibility work has indicated that this is the preferred location for Children's Centre service delivery. The Children's Centre will be the first part of a masterplan for the site to incorporate school expansion and will take place before a decision is reached on the possible expansion of the school. This decision will not affect the viability or cost of the Children's Centre on this site. Operational details and centre management models are to be developed in consultation with the headteacher. A new standalone building offering facilities to deliver the core offer will be provided (approximately 135m²). Based on the current cost estimates for Wembley Primary School, the Executive is asked to approve a provisional capital sum for this project of £400,000 from the Children's Centre capital allocation. In the event that detailed estimates for this project exceed this figure, a further report will be brought to the Executive.

Lyon Park Schools' Caretaker's House

- 3.17 A number of options for releasing the surplus caretaker's house and for using alternative sites as a Children's Centre have been considered. Other council priorities have also been considered for deploying the caretaker's house but these options preclude the development of a Children's Centre. Members will be asked to decide on the future of 3 former caretakers' houses in a future report. The caretaker's house at Lyon Park Infant and Junior Schools has been treated differently given the council's need for a Children's Centre in this location. The Local Authority cannot use Children's Centre capital to purchase Council assets, therefore arrangements such as the one recommended are the only way in which Children's Centres can be developed on a school site in this

way. The option recommended to the Executive is that which presents the best solution for delivering Children's Centre services to this community.

- 3.18 The headteachers of both Lyon Park Infant and Junior Schools are supportive of the Children's Centre on site. Pending Executive decision the Director of the Children and Families Department will present a report to the Governing Bodies of both schools outlining the Council's position and approach to reaching this decision. Under the Council's Disposals Guidance (which forms part of Corporate Standards) where there is an actual or notional capital receipt in respect of a school caretaker's house officers may recommend to the Executive that the Children and Families Service Area may retain up to 30% of the net receipt (after disposal costs are deducted) for spending on improvements to the fabric of the school or additions to it, the final arbiter of the percentage amount being the Executive (see paragraph 5.1 – 5.3 on legal implications).
- 3.19 The Executive may wish to note that each of the schools have been anticipating a share of an actual or notional capital receipt following the land being declared surplus and have developed plans for capital works accordingly (site security). Therefore it is likely that the school Governing Bodies will express some disappointment at not receiving a share of a capital receipt. In recognition of the schools need to improve site security in the absence of a residential caretaker, at the time of drafting the Director of CFD is looking at ways in which resources can be identified to enhance school security. In order to further maximise the benefits to the schools, initial proposals have been developed indicating a potential link between the caretaker's house and school nursery which would allow the nursery access to additional space in shared Children's Centre facilities. Operational details and centre management models are to be developed in consultation with the headteachers.

St Raphaels Youth and Community Centre

- 3.20 The Youth and Community Centre on the St Raphaels estate is the most suitable site to deliver Children's Centre services in this area (see appendix 2 for site options presented in March). The property is owned by Brent Council and currently has one lead tenant. The lead tenant delivers youth and community services from the building but there is significant scope to deliver enhanced community services from the centre.
- 3.21 Officers will develop a model for services to be run from this building (based on that used at Harmony Children's Centre) where Children's Centre and Youth and Community Services could co-exist with access, duties and responsibilities governed by a management and/or operational agreement. Developing a Children's Centre (with a wider youth and community remit) on this site would maximise the council asset and ensure that quality, sustainable services would be made available to the whole community.
- 3.22 The Executive are asked to agree in principle to change the use of the Youth and Community Centre in favour of a combined project and to officers undertaking further work as detailed in Appendix 4 (not for publication).

PCT Sites – Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care

- 3.23 Officers are currently undertaking work to develop a joint service delivery plan with the PCT to reflect our partnership working in Children's Centres. This will impact on the successful agreement over shared accommodation at the two PCT sites. It is anticipated that the centres will require modest, if any refurbishment works and that any capital allocation will be spent primarily on new equipment. The Children's Centres co-located in these Centres for Health and Care will fully exploit the benefits of co-locating services by allowing children and families greater access to a range of health and specialist services in one location. There are also enhanced opportunities for strategic partnership working with Brent PCT.
- 3.24 Should an agreement not be reached by 30th September 2006, alternative site proposals will be developed. This date allows time to achieve agreement with the PCT and to ensure that should those agreements fail to reach a satisfactory conclusion that sufficient time remains to develop alternatives. Members should be aware that alternative options are likely to require enabling/remedial works to existing council assets and this may not be funded by Children's Centre capital due to conditions of grant. Any alternative option is highly likely to cost more to develop than the PCT proposals. This will continue to remain a risk area until agreement is reached.

Queens Park Community School

- 3.25 A feasibility study has been undertaken for this combined Children's Centre and health centre. This is the preferred option for delivering integrated services in the area and is considered deliverable if a phased approach is taken. The viability of this project is dependent on approval by the PCT Board to commit revenue; without this revenue stream capital cannot be generated. Capital for this project will be funded from the Children's Centre capital allocation and by Brent PCT either through capital contribution or by providing revenue to support council's prudential borrowing.
- 3.26 There is a local childcare provider in premises owned by the Council in this catchment area. Their future location and operation within those premises is under discussion. Should QPCS be an option for them to be relocated to, cost estimates for this will be firmed up and funding options explored and reported to a later Executive at the same time as the report on the options for funding the combined Children's Centre and Primary Care Centre.
- 3.27 In the interim, the Executive is asked to note that there is no requirement in phase 2 for Local Authorities to provide early education integrated with daycare as part of Children's Centre developments.

Sufficiency of Capital

- 3.28 It is nationally acknowledged that the allocation of Sure Start capital is less than that which is required to deliver capital assets that meet service requirements. This is a particular problem for London boroughs due to higher building costs.

Local Authorities are encouraged to use existing provision where possible and to work with partners to maximise capital developments but there are fewer opportunities for partnering in phase 2 particularly in the timescales given by the Sure Start Unit. A request has been made to the Sure Start Unit for additional capital but confirmation has been received that no further funding is available.

Further Reporting

- 3.29 In March 2006 the Executive agreed to officers undertaking further work to develop project proposals and to receive further reports. This report is the first of those further reports; identifying the risks to delivering all 7 projects and seeking approval to decisions that will help officers manage those risks. Further reports will be submitted to the Executive primarily seeking approval to commit capital to those projects for which capital approval is not sought in this report.

4.0 Financial Implications

Capital

- 4.1 The total Children's Centres capital allocation for 06/07 and 07/08 (combined) is £2,094,714. In addition, an allocation of £300,000 has been made from the General Sure Start Grant (Extended Schools) capital funding to support the development of Children's Centres on school sites. The capital allocation is direct grant rather than supported borrowing and therefore in itself has no net impact on the Council Tax. The report (13.03.06) proposed an equal allocation to each of the 7 centres with some adjustment based on initial estimates of works required. These allocations have now been changed to reflect requirements (see table 1 below) and will continue to be changed as more detailed work is carried out on projects until such time as Members are asked to approve a capital sum for a project. Any subsequent amendments will be reported.

Table 1 – Summary of Capital Allocations

Project	Scope of Works	Revised CC Allocation (June 06)	Original CC Allocation (March 06)
Wembley Primary School	Facilities in new build primary school	300,000	312,000
Fryent Primary School	New build on former production kitchen site	400,000	342,000
Lyon Park Schools	Remodelling and possible extension of Caretaker's House	364,816	322,000
Heritage Family Centre with St Raphaels Community Centre	Refurbishment/remodelling of community centre	324,898	242,000
Willesden Centre for Health and Care	Use of existing accommodation, possible minor works/equipment purchase	50,000	100,000
Wembley Centre for Health and Care	Use of existing accommodation, possible minor works/equipment purchase	50,000	100,000
Queens Park Community School	New build Children's Centre and Primary Care Centre	560,000	332,000
Contingency		Included in each project	299,714
TOTAL		2,049,714	2,049,714

- 4.2 The Children's Centre capital and revenue funding must be spent in the financial year in which it was allocated. Unless carry forward is agreed with the Sure Start Unit, funding will be clawed back.
- 4.3 The overall Children and Families Department capital budget is insufficient to meet all its needs. The recent reduction of Asset Management Plan driven schemes by £7.5 million to make provision for the purchase of land for capital works leading to expansion of a secondary school and for the expansion of another secondary school under the Government's Successful and Popular Schools programme, has reduced flexibility in the budget further. However, if an overspending were to occur on the Phase 2 Children's Centres project then Council policy is that this should be funded from the overall Children and Families programme. This remains a major risk given the varied and complex nature of the proposed schemes.

Revenue

- 4.4 In addition to the capital allocation, a revenue allocation of £3,842,938 has also been made by the DfES to support both phase 1 and 2 centres during the period 2006-2008. Revenue must be spent in the financial year to which it was allocated (see below for split) otherwise any unspent funding will be lost. Many of the revenue implications were covered in the March report. Revenue funding to support Children's Centres is also available through other Sure Start grant streams including the General Sure Start Grant and Sure Start Local Programmes. As there is some flexibility to use this funding, an

allocation of £110,272 has been made from the General Sure Start Grant (Extended Schools) to support the development of Children's Centre services where co-located with school. Most of the remaining grant is committed elsewhere. Under the Local Area Agreement there is some flexibility to use Sure Start Local Programme revenue across all centres. Table 2 below summarises the grant funding streams for 06/07 and 07/08 that could be used to support centres developed in 04-06 (phase 1) and in 06-08 (phase 2):

Table 2 – Summary of Revenue Allocations

Grants	06/07 (£)	07/08 (£)
Children's Centres	1,921,469	1,921,469
Extended Schools	166,801	443,471
General Sure Start Grant	1,646,941	1,703,275
Sure Start Local Programme	2,100,516	1,690,534
TOTALS	5,835,727	5,758,749

4.5 Commitments have been made on central resources and ongoing phase 1 centre running costs from the Children's Centre revenue allocation as shown in table 3 below:

Table 3 – Summary of Revenue Commitments against Children's Centre Budget

Commitments	06/07 (£)	07/08 (£)
Budget Available	1,921,469	1,921,469
Central Resources		
Children's Centre Project Officer	50,592	52,110
Capital Project Officer	56,242	57,930
Finance Officer	33,251	34,250
Soc. Care Child Protection x2	96,000	98,880
Child advocacy worker	15,000	15,450
Advisory teachers (to supplement salaries)	53,706	55,317
External evaluation of Centres	20,000	20,000
Recruitment	20,000	20,600
Marketing	20,000	20,600
Phase 1 Centres		
Fawood – Running Costs	170,000	175,100
The Willow - Running Costs	283,000	291,490
The Willow - Specialist SEN teacher	10,000	10,500
Harmony – Running Costs (SSLP funded)	0	0
Harmony Health Visitor team	70,800	0
South Kilburn – Running Costs (SSLP funded)	0	0
South Kilburn – Deputy manager (secondment)	16,000	0
Curzon Crescent – Running Costs (SSLP funded)	0	0
Curzon Crescent – Deputy manager (secondment)	16,000	0
SUB-TOTAL OF COMMITMENTS	930,591	852,227
REMAINING IN CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUDGET	990,878	1,069,242

4.6 Phase 2 centre running costs will be funded by the remaining Children's Centre budget. Assuming that 7 centres are developed in phase 2, the forecast of running costs in table 4 below gives an indication as to how the Children's Centre revenue could be used to support the running costs of those centres:

Table 4 – Summary of Phase 2 Projected Running Costs

Phase 2 Centre Running Costs (based on projected completion dates)	06/07 (£)	07/08 (£)
Wembley Centre for Health & Care (Jan 07)	70,930	292,238
Willesden Centre for Health & Care (Jan 07)	54,810	225,818
Lyon Park Caretakers House (Sept 07)	0	112,909
Fryent Primary School (Sept 07)	0	112,909
St Raphael's Community Centre (Apr 08)	0	0
Queen's Park Community School (Apr 08)	0	0
Wembley Primary School (Apr 08)	0	0
SUB-TOTAL	125,740	743,874
TOTAL REMAINING IN CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUDGET	865,138	325,368

4.7 Revenue costs for running each centre have been estimated through a process of consultation with stakeholders to determine what the core offer should mean in practice in Brent, and by reviewing the current costs incurred by phase 1 centres. These estimated costs are based on the assumption that core offer services will be delivered from existing resources within the Local Authority, PCT and other partner organisations. This would mean that some existing resources and services are re-structured and a new service delivery model would be developed. It is anticipated that any remaining Children's Centre budget will be used to further support the delivery of core offer services. The following assumptions have been made for phase 2 centre projected staffing costs:

- Core centre staff structure would be a Head of Centre, Centre Manager, Community Development Worker, Senior Administrator and Junior Administrator
- Where centres are developed from school settings the headteacher will have the opportunity to be interviewed for the substantive post of Head of Centre. It is anticipated that where the appointment of a headteacher is made, a reduction in management costs would result.
- A Head of Centre would be appointed to work across both Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health & Care achieving a management saving.
- The Head of Centre at Harmony Children's Centre (to be recruited) would also have responsibility for the phase 2 Centre created in the St Raphael's area.

4.8 There are a number of potential risks for the Council to address in committing to a capital programme and the associated running costs:

- The DfES has made no commitment that Children's Centre grant funding

will be available after 31st March 2008. The projected total revenue cost for 08/09 (for centres developed in phases 1 and 2) is £2,573,714. Should grant funding not be made available by the DfES the Council would have to be fund these costs from it's own resources, identify alternative funding sources and/or review the future operation of the centres. Although the level of funding allocation for 08/09 is unknown, given the high priority in recent Comprehensive Spending Reviews and the DfES's stated aim for every community to have a Children's Centre by 2010, the continuation of some grant funding is highly likely. However, there is a maximum risk that £2.574m will need to be found each year to run the planned centres. The Council will be making representations to the DfES for capital support for the Children and Families Department services including the need for continuing capital grant support beyond 2008 to further expand the Children's Centres in the Local Authority area. Representation will also be made with the view to seeking assurances of continued revenue funding beyond 2008.

- The centres require ongoing maintenance costs which are currently being partly met by Children's Centre revenue. Should funding cease in the future the full cost of maintaining the centres will fall to the Council.
- Should the Executive decide not to commit capital to the phase 2 Children's Centres programme (or decide to commit capital to Children's Centres projects as requested in this report and subsequently decide not to commit capital to further projects), both capital and the majority of the revenue allocation made by the Sure Start Unit for 2006-08 may be clawed back. This would have the most significant impact on phase 1 centres, particularly, Fawood and Willow which were both developed without Sure Start local programme funding which is guaranteed until 2008. In addition, capital used to build both centres could be clawed back by the Sure Start unit if the building is not used for children and family services.
- Children's Centres are assessed as part of the CPA and JAR inspections. Failure to meet Children's Centre targets may have an adverse effect on the outcomes of these inspections.
- By developing phase 2 centres in the preferred locations indicated in these recommendations, capital funding will be used to refurbish existing Council assets. If the Executive does not proceed with phase 2, the Council may have to refurbish some of those assets in the future from its own sources.

4.9 A full revenue expenditure profile will be developed after further consultation with partners (on service delivery and staffing) and clarification of centre opening dates (based on capital programme). A further report will be submitted for Executive approval. At this stage Members are asked to note the revenue implications of agreeing to the recommendations made regarding the capital programme.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The Lyon Park Schools are Community Schools. The freehold interest in the caretaker's accommodation at the schools belongs to the Council. Day-to-day responsibility for managing school buildings is devolved to the governing

body under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 subject to any direction given by the local education authority under Schedule 13.

- 5.2 It is arguable that caretakers' houses are not school buildings but in any event if the premises are not being used for accommodation purposes or any other purpose associated with the school it would seem reasonable for the Council to make such directions as it needs in order to make appropriate alternative use.
- 5.3 Any change of use of the property would need to be considered by the Council as local planning authority and by way of formal application.
- 5.4 Works contracts in respect of the development of the Children's Centres will need to be procured in accordance with the requirements of the Council's standing orders and the EU Procurement Regulations where applicable.
- 5.5 Where the funding for projects is to come partly from third parties such as the Brent tPCT, funding agreements with partners will need to be drawn up clearly specifying who will be responsible for any capital project overspends, what measures will be in place to reduce the risk of overspends and specifying an appropriate apportionment of overspends and other costs between partners.
- 5.6 As these are grant funded works there will be outputs upon which the grant is dependent and there is the possibility of claw-back of grant monies should projects fail to meet their specified outputs.
- 5.7 The Council will need to enter into contracts and other arrangements with partners to commission services and make accommodation available to deliver the Children's Centre services. Any such contracts and arrangements will need to be monitored to ensure that targets are met and best value is achieved.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 Phase 2 Children's Centres cover the borough's 30% most disadvantaged super-output areas as measured by the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004). The IMD 2004 measures seven domains of deprivation: income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, living environment and crime.
- 6.2 Each Children's Centre has a unique catchment area and community profile. However these areas are characterised by their diversity of culture, ethnicity and faith. In some areas there are high levels of young adults and in some, particularly high levels of unemployment. Families living in all of these areas experience varying levels of disadvantage based on the indicators given above.
- 6.3 Consultation will take place in local communities to ensure the Children's Centre responds to local need whilst addressing national objectives. Local task groups will be established in each area including representatives of parents/grandparents/carers, children, key community groups as well as professionals from statutory and non-statutory services. This will ensure each community is well represented in decision making around the development of

each centre. The creation of Children's Centre relevant to local need is a target in the Children and Families' Department Equalities Action Plan 2005-2007.

- 6.4 Children's Centres will benefit the whole community including those families considered hardest to reach. All centres will be inclusive and compliant with the access requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- 6.5 Following the March report, an Equalities Impact Assessment is being carried out.

Background Papers

- i) Executive report (13.3.06)
- ii) Phase 2 Children's Centre files

Contact Officers

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