



**Report of the Director of Learning and Leisure**

**Inner North West Area Committee**

**Date: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**Subject: Implementing the Ten Year Strategy: New Statutory Duties and Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Children’s Centre Plan**

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Headingley**  
**Hyde Park & Woodhouse**  
**Kirkstall**  
**Weetwood**

**Specific Implications For:**

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for Call In

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

**Executive Summary**

In December 2004 the Chancellor published a pre-budget report “*Choice for parents; the best start for children. A ten year strategy for childcare*”. The report proposed the development of a children’s centre in every neighbourhood by 2010 as part of the universal welfare state offer. This will be a statutory responsibility for Local Authorities in the Childcare Bill.

Phase two children’s centre guidance requires Local Authorities to ensure all neighbourhoods in the 30% most disadvantaged areas, as defined by the ODPM Super Output Areas, will have a children’s centre by March 2008. In April 2005 Leeds received a capital allocation of £6.7 million and a revenue allocation of £7.5 million to deliver the programme. This will result in an additional 23 children’s centres across the city and be a key part of the Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP). The authority will be judged in Joint Area review and CPA on delivery of this strategy.

It is anticipated that funding will be provided to develop a children’s centre in the remaining 20 or so localities across the city reaching all children and families by 2010. The size and scope of the centres outside the localities of greatest disadvantage will be significantly reduced.

Working inclusively with all stakeholders, the Early Years Service proposes to plan the programme for all communities across the city at this time. Priority in 2006-08 will be to the localities of greatest disadvantage, but it should not inhibit quick wins in more affluent areas

that can be made as a result of innovative thinking at this time. The delivery of children's centre services will require a robust mixed economy model, where quality and the needs of children and families are the key drivers.

The capital allocation will allow some refurbishment and extending of existing sites and joining with other initiatives, such as Building Schools for the Future, and this action will represent in most cases the best option for investment.

The integration and refocusing of multi agency frontline services on school and children's centres sites as part of a new universal offer in the welfare state could assist with the effective use of surplus space in any school and surplus nursery class places.

Consultation on the children's centre programme is full, inclusive and on going.

## **1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

- 1.1 To Inform Area Committees of the consultation process which has been undertaken, the outcomes of the consultation in the area, and outline the next steps in the process of developing children's centres in Leeds.

## **2.0 Background Information**

The first phase of the Children's Centre programme in Leeds will be completed by September 2006. At that time Leeds will have 23 children's Centres covering all of the wards of greatest disadvantage and four pockets of significant disadvantage in more affluent wards. These centres will provide approximately 1400 integrated early education and childcare places; family support services, including health and social care to 3400 families and reach 6500 families with information and advice. The centres already open can demonstrate support to parents accessing training and employment and improved educational outcomes for children. They are also successful in encouraging vulnerable families to access services and reduce the risk of social exclusion.

## **3.0 Consultation on the location of Phase 2 and 3 Children's Centres**

- 3.1 A wide ranging and comprehensive consultation exercise has taken place across the city to allow schools, voluntary and private sector childcare providers and voluntary organisations, maintained sector agencies and individuals to have input into the planned locations for children's centres, and input into the activities and services which will be provided from centres and linked 'satellite' sites.

The aim is for children's centres to be located wherever possible on school sites. The selection process for the most appropriate school sites has included consultation with Education Leeds, LCC Departments including Neighbourhoods and Housing, Learning and Leisure, Planning Department.

- 3.2 Families have been consulted on the development of integrated services through the Children Leeds workstream, Sure Start local programmes, existing children's centres and Early Years Centres and a city wide event that brought parents and key professionals together in June 2005. The Sure Start local programme management boards are working to migrate to the new children's centre management committees. A key worker from one local programme has been seconded full time to the Early Years Service to support the active and meaningful development of community engagement on the ground in the planning and development of the centres.

3.3 Consultation with colleagues from Social Services and health services has resulted in a proposal to develop and implement a guarantee to ensure all children and families deemed to be vulnerable can access children's centre services. This will be co-ordinated across the five wedges by Social Services area managers and the Heads of larger children's centres. Each children's centre will have a named social worker and more detailed work will be carried out to identify the key gains from those Sure Start local programmes that directly employ social workers. The consultation has identified the key role of health visitors, CAMHS workers, speech and language therapists and dieticians in the new universal offer delivered through children's centres and extended schools. It is hoped that every centre will have a named health professional who will be a part of multi agency teams developing on site. All children's centres will have an identified health visitor and an agreement to joint planning and attendance at each other's staff meetings. Each centre will also have a Family Outreach Worker to assist with engaging families in home and centre based services.

3.4 Recommendations from Executive Board

On 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006 Executive Board recommended that children's centres be established in the following sites in this area:

Area to be served	Site of main 'hub(s)'	Designation round	To be achieved by
Headingley	St Michael's C of E Primary	Phase 2	March 06-March 08
Kirkstall	Beecroft and Sacred Heart R C Primary Schools	Phase 2	March 06-March 08

The new centres must deliver a core offer that includes:

- Integrated early education and childcare for 0 to 5 year olds
- Childcare to support working parents for 48 weeks a year from 8am till 6 pm
- Early identification of children with particular needs
- Links to local extended schools and out of school hours activities
- Outreach services
- Visits to all families in the catchment area within two months of a child's birth
- Information services to parents about the range of support services in the locality
- Support and advice on parenting including support at significant transition points
- Access to specialist, targeted services for those families that need them
- Activities which increase parents understanding and involvement in their child's development
- Specific strategies and activities that increase the involvement of fathers
- Ante natal advice and support for parents
- Child health promotion programme
- Information and guidance on breast feeding, nutrition and safety
- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing- including the identification and support for those suffering from maternal depression
- Speech and language and other specialist support

- Support for healthy lifestyles
- Help in stopping smoking
- Direct parental involvement in the development and improvement of services
- Links to job centre plus and other local job placement/ ready initiatives

#### **4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

4.1 The development of a children's centre in every community and a full service children's centre in every locality within the 30% most disadvantaged Super output Areas in the city. We anticipate there will be approximately 65 children's centres by 2010, 45 of these will be in SOA's in the 30% most disadvantaged localities.

#### **5.0 Legal And Resource Implications**

5.1 It is the Government's intention to make children's centres a sustainable part of the universal welfare state offer. A capital allocation of £6.7 million and a revenue implication of £7.5 million have been received to develop integrated children's centres for the period 2006/08. While substantial, this capital will mainly allow for refurbishment and extensions to existing buildings, enabling the effective use of surplus space in schools in many cases. This funding will facilitate the creation of 23 centres during the period 2006/08. The programme is ambitious. In Leeds the centres must provide in the region of 4000 full-time equivalent integrated places, support services for a further 3000 families and reach an additional 6000 families with information and advice. It is anticipated that between 2008 and 2010 funding will be provided to develop a children's centre in the remaining 20 or so localities across the city reaching all children and families. The size and scope of the centres outside the localities of greatest disadvantage will be significantly reduced.

#### **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 Executive Board approved the phase 2 and 3 children's centre plan on January 12th 2006. Work will now begin to ensure this programme is delivered

#### **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Inner North West Area Committee is recommended to receive and note the report of the Director of Learning and Leisure.