

Report of Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 19 October 2017

Subject: Scrutiny Inquiry – Children’s Centres

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

- 1 At the meeting on the 16 of June 2016, the Scrutiny Board (Children’s Services) considered potential sources of work for the 2016/17 municipal year and resolved to undertake an inquiry which would consider the value of children’s centres and how they deliver the aspirations defined in the Children and Young Peoples Plan.
- 2 Terms of reference for the inquiry were agreed on the 15 of September 2016 when it was agreed that the inquiry would be undertaken with significant focus on how services provided through children’s centres:
 - a) impact on the lives of children, particularly in their early years (pre- school age),
 - b) improve the lives of their associated family,
 - c) deliver wider economic and social benefits.
- 3 The inquiry was conducted over three evidence gathering sessions which took place between October 2016 and February 2017. Visits were conducted to four children’s centres in January 2017 to speak to practitioners, parents and carers. The resulting draft scrutiny inquiry report is appended for the consideration of the Scrutiny Board.
- 4 Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 13.2 states that "where a Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to finalising its recommendations. The Director shall consult with the appropriate

Executive Member before providing any such advice. The detail of that advice shall be reported to the Scrutiny Board and considered before the Board's recommendations are finalised and published on the Council's website". The Director of Children's Services and the Director of Resources and Housing was invited to provide advice on or before the 10th of October 2017. The Director of Resources and Housing has advised that the Council's budget is agreed in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, therefore recommendation 6 has been updated to reflect this advice.

- 5 A further opportunity for the provision of advice is available at the meeting on the 19 October 2017 and the Scrutiny Board is recommended to consider this before agreeing its report.
- 6 Once the Board publishes its final report, the appropriate Director(s) will be asked to formally respond to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations within three months.

Recommendations

- 7 The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) is recommended to consider and agree the appended report following its inquiry into Children's Centres.

Background documents

- 8 None used¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.