

Cabinet – 16 September 2009

Phase 3 Children's Centres – Capital Developments

Portfolio:	Councillor Walker, Children's Services
Service:	All Children's Service Areas - working in partnership
Wards:	Pelsall, Paddock, St Matthews, Streetly
Key decision:	Yes
Forward plan:	Yes

1. Summary of report

In July 2008, Cabinet agreed the development of 3 new Children's Centres to provide services for children under the age of five and their families in the communities of Chuckery / Paddock, Pelsall and Streetly.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet approves the schemes and budgets set out in **Appendix B** of this report including permission to seek tenders and appoint contractors to undertake the work identified.

3 Background information

The Phase 3 Children's Centre Cabinet report agreed in April 2008 detailed the vision, services and achievements achieved across Phase 1 and 2.

3.1 Children's Centre Vision

The vision for children's centres in Walsall is to establish a universal entitlement so that every child in Walsall has the best start in life, provided through the ready access to provision that meets their learning, health and family support needs. Our aim is to provide better outcomes for all children through a truly inclusive service.

All communities in Walsall will have access to children's centre services to meet their needs, requiring differing levels of support according to families' social and economic backgrounds and the existing services that are currently available. The development of children's centres nationally, and within Walsall, was based on a

three phase approach. The first phase was based on providing support services for the most disadvantaged areas and then widening this to cover the 30% most disadvantaged areas in Phase 2. The third and final phase is to ensure that all communities in Walsall have access to children's centre services.

3.2 Achievements

Walsall has successfully developed and opened 15 Children's Centres, meeting the Government's target for March 2008. Please see **Appendix C** for details of existing Centres. The Government has commissioned Together for Children to support and challenge Local Authorities in the development of Children's Centres. To date all the centres visited and sampled by Together for Children have been confirmed as meeting the full core offer of services.

3.3 Phase 3

To achieve universal coverage of Children's Centre services, Walsall has agreed a target of 3 further centres under the third and final phase of development. This will enable access to services for a further 2,528 children under the age of 5.

Cabinet has previously approved the consultation process, which was that the local Children's Area Partnerships (CAPs) would guide and help shape the development of children's centre services in the three new areas proposed. Development through the CAPs has also enabled key stakeholders to be consulted.

3.3.1 Pelsall

In July 2009 Cabinet approved the joint development of a flagship project for a Health, Library and Children's Centre at Pelsall (**Appendix A**). An allocation of £600,000 from the Sure Start Early Years Childcare Grant (SSEYCG) Children's Centre Phase 3 Capital was agreed to cover the costs of the Children's Centre part of the scheme. This leaves a balance of £296,869 for the remaining Children's Centres within the Phase 3 Capital. The available resources across the Sure Start Early Years Childcare Grant have been reviewed and funding identified to enable developments in Chuckery / Paddock and Streetly.

3.3.2 Chuckery / Paddock

The reach area for the new children's centre covers two Children Area Partnerships (CAPs). The sub group of the CAP considered the location of the Children's Centre facilities in the light of recent consultation events and parental surveys. The clear recommendation, approved by the CAP, was for the Action for Children building at Pool Street to be the information and administration base for the Children's Centre and for additional facilities to be developed at Chuckery Primary School and the Playgroup at Park Hall Community Association.

The recommendation for Chuckery is to complement the investment made last year in the new extended services building and provide an additional investment of £150,000 from the Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Grant (SSEYCG) Children's Centre Capital allocation. This would enable the new building to be extended and modified to make it suitable for the delivery of integrated Children's Centre and Extended Services.

It is recommended that the playgroup facility at Park Hall Community Association is replaced and enhanced with a new modular building. The existing building is in poor condition and in need of replacement. The Government has allocated capital funding to Local Authorities to improve the learning environments for children in the Early Years via the Childcare Quality and Access Capital Grant . This funding is targeted at the private, voluntary and independent sector, therefore, utilising this funding for a facility that is used by Park Hal Community Association would meet the aims of the grant and at the same time provide new facilities for the delivery of Children's Centre services to the Paddock community. A budget of £400,000 is recommended, which will be funded from the SSEYCG Childcare Quality Capital Grant to make the new facilities suitable for the delivery of Children's Centre services.

3.3.3 Streetly

The Streetly CAP has established a working group for the development of the children's centre in Streetly. The CAP has recommended enhancement of facilities at Streetly Community Centre to act as the main site for the children's centre, with enhanced resources at the schools within the reach area to deliver services. It is recommended that a budget of £290,000 from the SSEYCG Children's Centre Capital and Children's Centre maintenance allocation is assigned to extend and enhance the existing facilities at the Streetly Community Centre.

4. Resource considerations

4.1 Financial:

- 4.1.1 As previously reported, Walsall has been advised of capital allocations for the three-year period from 2008/09 to 2010/11. Further schemes for the Early Years Childcare Quality and Access Capital Grant funding will be brought forward for consideration by Cabinet when details are finalised.

The Capital Grant funding available to Walsall is as follows:

Sure Start Early Years Childcare Capital Grant	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	Total
Children's Centres Phase 3	£208,574	£ 446,945	£241,350	£896,869

Children's Centre Maintenance	£57,907	£100,021	£105,248	£263,176
Childcare Quality & Access	£ 1,015,217	£1,015,217	£1,015,217	£3,045,651
Total	£1,281,698	£1,562,183	£1,361,815	4,205,696

4.1.2 The DCSF has confirmed that we will be able to carry-forward of unspent capital both from 2008-09 into 2009-10 and from 2009-10 into 2010-2011. However, we are unable to approve carry-forward of unspent amounts beyond 2010-11. Local authorities will be expected to utilise all their capital funding by the financial year 2010-11.

4.1.3 The schemes detailed in this report are to be managed by Walsall Council Property Services who will ensure compliance with all Walsall Council Finance and Contract Rules.

4.2 **Legal:**

All schemes identified in this report will be managed through Walsall Council Property Services who will ensure that all statutory obligations in relation to the schemes are adhered to. These issues include building regulations, planning approvals, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM). This is in addition to ensuring compliance with Walsall Council Financial and Contract Rules and compliance with the European regime and regulations covering the procurement of goods, services and contracts of work.

All Children's Centres will be accountable to Walsall Council and will require Legal Agreements to ensure the delivery of services in line the DCSF requirements and performance management requirements specific to Walsall.

4.3 **Staffing:**

Staffing costs within the Children's Centres will be provided through the individual budget allocations. Staffing levels are subject to continued funding from the DCSF; allocations announced show a significant increase in funding for Walsall Local Authority across the financial years 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.

5. **Citizen impact**

The development of Children's Centre services as set out in this report will impact on the learning, health and social care of children, young people and their families in Pelsall, Chuckery / Paddock and Streetly areas of the Borough.

Children's Centres will support the key improvements set out in the Children and Young People's plan.

6. Community safety

The development of Children's Centre services will impact on the safety of children, young people and their families in the communities of Walsall. Parents are provided with support and information and provided with access to maternity and health advice through close working with health visiting colleagues. Specific support to families in need and hard to reach families is provided through targeted individual support and group activities e.g. baby massage, behaviour management and parenting skills groups.

7. Environmental impact

All schemes will incorporate the use of sustainable resources wherever possible and designs would incorporate developments to reduce the impact on the environment.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk There are specific criteria established by the DCSF for the development of children's centres that must be met by 31st March 2010.

8.2.1 Performance management:: There are specific criteria established by the DCSF for the project management of schemes funded by the Capital Programme within the designated timeframe.

9. Equality implications

This is the final phase of Children's Centres and will ensure that all communities in Walsall have access to children's centre services through universal provision which will impact on the learning, health and social care of children and their families in Walsall.

10. Consultation

In July 2008, Cabinet agreed that Children's Area Partnerships would guide and shape the delivery of Children's Centres. The recommendations of the respective CAPs have been incorporated in the recommendations, based on independently commissioned consultations with their communities, parents and providers.

Walsall Council: Property Services, Transforming Learning and Children's Services Finance.

Background papers

Report to Cabinet 12th May 2004: Strategic Approach to the development of Children's Centres and Extended Schools

Report to Cabinet 20th October 2004: Developing Children's Centres

Report to Cabinet 8th February 2006: Developing Children's Centres

Report to Cabinet 12th April 2006: Children's Centre Capital

Report to Cabinet 12th July 2006: Phase 2 Children's Centre Programme

Report to Cabinet 29th November 2006: Children's Centre Capital Programme

Report to Cabinet 16th April 2008: Phase 3 Children's Centre programme 2008 to 2010

Report to Cabinet 16th July 2008: Phase 3 Children's Centres

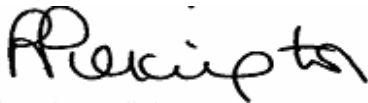
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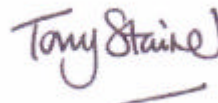
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Signed:

Executive Director

Date: 24 August 2009



Signed:

Managing Director

Date: 24 August 2009



Signed:

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rachel Walker

Date: 3 September 2009

Previously Approved Schemes

Appendix A

Children's Centre Phase 3 - Previously Approved Schemes			2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Centre	Project	Project Cost	2008/09 Allocation	2009/10 Allocation	2010/11 Allocation
Pelsall Children's Centre	Provision of new Children's Centre	600,000	208,574	391,426	
Total			208,574	391,426	0

Proposed Schemes

Appendix B

Early Years Capital - Childcare, Quality and Access			2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Allocation			£1,015,217	£1,015,217	£1,015,217
Commitments			£781,900	£0	£0
Remaining Balance			£233,317	£1,015,217	£1,015,217
Centre	Project	Project Cost	2008/09 Allocation	2009/10 Allocation	2010/11 Allocation
Park Hall Community Association	Replacement of Playgroup facility	400,000	233,317	166,683	
Total			233,317	166,683	0
Balance Available			0	848,534	1,015,217

Children's Centre Phase 3			2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Allocation			£208,574	£446,945	£241,350
Commitments			£208,574	£391,426	£0
Remaining Balance			£0	£55,519	£241,350
Centre	Project	Project Cost	2008/09 Allocation	2009/10 Allocation	2010/11 Allocation
Chuckery Primary School	Children's Centre Facilities - extension of new Extended Services building	150,000		55,519	94,481
Streetly Community Centre	Extension and enhancement of Community Centre building at Streetly	290,000			146,869
Total			0	55,519	241,350
Balance Available			0	0	0

Children's Centre Maintenance			2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Allocation			£57,907	£100,021	£105,248
Commitments			£47,000	£0	£0
Remaining Balance			£10,907	£100,021	£105,248
Centre	Project	Project Cost	2008/09 Allocation	2009/10 Allocation	2010/11 Allocation
Streetly Community Centre	Extension and enhancement of Community Centre building at Streetly	290,000	10,907	100,021	32,203
Total			10,907	100,021	32,203
Balance Available			0	0	73,045

Existing Centres

Appendix C

Children's Centre	Date Services Commenced	Date Building was Operational
Alumwell / Pleck	August 2004	August 2004
Bentley West	April 2005	April 2005
Birchills and North Walsall	November 2002	April 2005
Blakenall	February 2001	May 2004
Bloxwich West	September 2006	March 2007
Mossley site		Sept 2006
Busill Jones site		
Brownhills	March 2008	April 2008
Darlaston	September 2003	December 2006
Edgar Stammers	January 2007	December 2007
Fibbersley Park	October 2007	September 2007
Greenfield	September 2006	October 2006
Hatherton	March 2008	May 2009
Leighswood	July 2006	Sept 2006
Lighthouse (Beacon)	March 2008	June 2008
Palfrey	July 2002	November 2005
Pheasey Park Farm	February 2007	January 2007