

AGENDA ITEM 11

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15th DECEMBER, 2015

UPDATE ON CHILDCARE MARKET IN RESPONSE TO CHANGES TO NURSERY EDUCATION FUNDING

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & LIFELONG
LEARNING (COUNCILLOR MRS E HANAGAN)

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the childcare market in Rhondda Cynon Taf in response to the changes to nursery education funding; and to provide an update on the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Action Plan 2015-16.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report;
- 2.2 Agree the update report;
and
- 2.3 Agree the continued implementation of the CSA Action Plan Update 2015-16.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable officers to continue to develop and support childcare provision in RCT, as identified in the key priorities listed in the CSA Action Plan Update 2015-16.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Cabinet report of 23rd July 2015 informed members of the Council's statutory duty to conduct a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment every 3 years, along with annual refresh reports. The action plan contained within this document (Appendix One) is an update of the 2014-17 plan and details ongoing priorities for 2015-16.
- 4.2 Members were also informed of the Council's duty to secure '*as far as is reasonably practicable*' sufficient childcare to meet the requirements of parents in its area who require childcare in order to enable them to take up, or remain in, work, or to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

5 UPDATE

- 5.1 The Cabinet decision to approve plans to amend funding for nursery education for 3 year olds from full time (30 hours) to part time (15 hours) has resulted in demand for 'wraparound' childcare in some parts of the County Borough (*'wraparound' childcare can be defined as childcare offered immediately before or after the part time nursery session in school, but during the hours of the normal school day*).
- 5.2 Thirty three schools are offering part time nursery education in line with the revised funding for the 2015-16 academic year.
- 5.3 Questionnaires were sent to all affected parents in these 33 schools to determine where there may be potential demand for wraparound care. 679 questionnaires were distributed. 167 were returned (25%) of which 94 (14%) stated that they did require wraparound childcare, whilst 15 (2%) were unsure if childcare was needed.
- 5.4 Parental responses from 3 of the 33 schools suggested that there was a high percentage of demand for wraparound childcare in these schools. In Gwauncelyn Primary School, 18 parents stated 'yes' or 'unsure' (37%), 19 parents in Pontyclun Primary School (33%) and 10 parents in Maesybryn Primary School (21%).
- 5.5 Officers have worked with the Headteacher and governors of Gwauncelyn Primary School to establish a new wraparound childcare facility on school site. CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) were extremely helpful in ensuring that this new provision was registered in time for the new academic year in September 2015. This new facility now offers two wraparound childcare sessions per day.
- 5.6 The response from parents in Maesybryn Primary School was not sufficient to explore the option of establishing a completely new provision. Therefore, parents were signposted to current childcare provision in the area. Feedback from some childcare providers suggests that they have been approached to provide a pickup/drop off

service. Officers have not received any further enquiries from parents. This may suggest that demand has been met.

- 5.7 The parental response in Pontyclun Primary School was reasonably high. There is currently no suitable space within the school site to develop a new wraparound childcare service. Possible solutions were explored in the community but no permanent solution could be offered to parents in time for September 2015. Parents were signposted to current childcare provision in the area. A childcare provider in a neighbouring ward also offered a pickup/drop off service to parents. However, at the current time, no parents have accessed this service. Officers have not received any further enquiries from parents. This may suggest that demand has been met. Work will continue in this ward to examine possible solutions to future demand.
- 5.8 For the other 30 schools, the responses from parents did not signify a high demand for wraparound care. All parents who did state 'yes' or 'unsure', and gave email contact details, were sent a list of current childcare providers in their immediate areas from the Family Information Service.
- 5.9 Individual parent enquiries were dealt with on a case by case basis. For example, although the questionnaire response from Cymmer Infants was low, one parent responded to the questionnaire and contacted officers regarding her childcare needs. Officers worked with a local childcare provider to develop a pickup service to support the childcare needs of this parent. A total of four parents now access this service.
- 5.10 Some childcare providers have been proactive in working directly with schools to offer a wraparound provision. Further details are available in Appendix One (priority 5).
- 5.11 It is the decision of each school governing body to determine whether to offer full time nursery education in future academic years, or to revert to part time provision in line with the funding formula. Officers will continue to offer advice and support to all schools who may wish to explore possible wraparound demand.
- 5.12 A six monthly update of the CSA Action Plan 2015-16 is attached at Appendix One.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation was not undertaken for the purposes of this report. However, questionnaires were sent to parents of children affected by the changes to nursery education funding (see point 5.3) to inform priorities for wraparound childcare development.

7.2 Consultation with parents, childcare providers and employers is also planned (November-December 2015), in order to inform the 2016 CSA Update Report and support officers to identify continuing priorities.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 Members should note that the current level of support offered to non Flying Start childcare settings is dependent on funding from the Welsh Government 'Out of School Childcare Grant'. Officers have not yet been informed if this grant will be awarded by Welsh Government for the 2016-17 financial year.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The Council has duties under section 22(1) of the Childcare Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act') to "secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare (whether or not by it) is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to enable them (a) to take up, or remain in work; or (b) to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work."

9.2 The Council also has a statutory duty, under section 26(1) of the 2006 Act to prepare assessments of the sufficiency of the provision of childcare in its area at prescribed intervals (currently every 3 years) and to review any such assessments prepared by it.

9.3 The CSA 2014-17 triennial plan was approved by Cabinet on 23rd June 2014. The 2015 CSA Update Report was agreed by Cabinet on 23rd July 2015.

10 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES / SIP

10.1 This report supports the priorities set out in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Single Integrated Plan by supporting people to access childcare provision so that they are able to enter employment, training or volunteer opportunities.

11 CONCLUSION

11.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf continues to be well placed with its existing childcare provision to meet the current needs of most working parents.

This will continue to be monitored for changes in demand, especially with regards to wraparound childcare.

- 11.2 It is considered that continued implementation of the CSA Action Plan Update 2015-16 will continue to address the challenges identified in the CSA 2015 Update Report, subject to available resources.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Children and Young People

Background Papers

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Action Plan Update 2015-16

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Appendix One

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Action Plan Update 2015-16 (Oct 2015)

SECTION 1 CSA summary document						
Priority	Actions	By Whom	Key Issues	Outcomes	Timescale	Progress against action
1	<p>CSA published every three years, with an annual update report, in accordance with Section 26 of the Childcare Act 2006</p> <p>Agree timescales and actions with relevant partners</p> <p>Agree submission dates to senior managers, RCT Cabinet and Welsh Government</p> <p>Final CSA and annual update reports published</p>	<p>Childcare Officer</p> <p>Early Years & Family Support Services (EYFSS)</p> <p>Family Information Service (FIS)</p>	<p>Lack of questionnaire returns by parents/carers, providers and employers</p> <p>Difficulties obtaining up to date data</p>	<p>CSA and annual update report completed and published within timescales</p>	<p>April 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA 2015 Update Report submitted to Welsh Government (Draft version April 2015; Cabinet approved version July 2015) • A working group established to oversee the action plan and the development of the 2016 CSA update (September 2015) • Representatives invited from EYFSS, Leisure, Education & Lifelong Learning, Children's Services and Planning, as well as external umbrella organisations and welsh language groups

SECTION 2 Factors affecting demand and ability to pay

Priority	Actions	By Whom	Key Issues	Outcomes	Timescale	Progress against action
2	<p>Increase parental awareness of financial support for childcare costs, particularly for those wishing to enter employment and/or training</p>	<p>Provide up to date information via the FIS website</p> <p>Establish links with Jobcentre Plus Lone Parent Advisors</p> <p>FIS Outreach Officers attend events to disseminate information to families</p> <p>Provide information to childcare providers to disseminate to families</p> <p>Promote the Assisted Places</p>	<p>Childcare Officer</p> <p>Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club (CPCKC) Development Officer</p> <p>Early Childcare and Play Partnership (ECAPP)</p> <p>EYFSS</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus / Lone Parent Advisors</p>	<p>Up to date information not uploaded onto FIS website or disseminated to childcare providers</p> <p>Criteria for Assisted Places scheme not met by families</p> <p>Links with Jobcentre Plus Lone Parent Advisors not maintained</p>	<p>Families aware of financial support available for childcare costs</p> <p>Parents/carers able to access work and/or training</p> <p>Increase in quantity and type of information held on FIS website</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FIS Outreach Officers continue to work with providers to ensure all information held on the FIS database is current and relevant FIS Officers attend Jobcentre Plus events to ensure that jobseekers are aware of childcare provision available and potential financial support for childcare costs Assisted Places scheme offers financial support to eligible families. To date, 35 children have been supported to attend 1622 childcare sessions (April-November 2015)

		scheme to low income families					
3	Increase the number of CSSIW registered out of school childcare clubs by 10% per year	<p>Offer support and guidance to non-registered settings to apply for CSSIW registration</p> <p>Deliver workshops and offer 1:1 support</p>	<p>Childcare Officer</p> <p>CPCKC Development Officer</p> <p>ECAPP</p> <p>Out of school childcare providers</p>	<p>Reluctance of non-registered settings to go through CSSIW registration process</p> <p>Lack of suitably qualified staff to satisfy registration requirements</p> <p>Premises unsuitable for registration requirements</p>	<p>Number of registered childcare places increased</p> <p>Parents/carers using registered clubs able to claim financial support</p> <p>Parents/carers confident that out of school childcare is high quality and operating at or above National Minimum Standards</p>	March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSA 2015 Update Report identified 15 unregistered out of school clubs in RCT (50% of total number) • Two clubs have submitted their applications to CSSIW; one has been approved, whilst the other is awaiting final confirmation (September 2015) • A series of CSSIW workshops has been commissioned to support clubs through the registration process; these are taking place in the Cynon area and six clubs are currently attending (July-November 2015) • Although this priority is on target to be achieved, another series of workshops may be offered

							in the Taf area early in 2016, if there is sufficient demand from unregistered clubs in this area
SECTION 3 Analysis of supply							
Priority	Actions	By Whom	Key Issues	Outcomes	Timescale	Progress against action	
4	Develop childcare provision in areas of identified need	Further analysis of actual demand in wards identified in 2015 update report Support current and new childcare providers to develop new provision where demand has been identified	Childcare Officer Childcare providers Childcare umbrella organisations ECAPP EYFSS	Not enough demand in areas of identified need to make new provision sustainable Lack of suitable childcare for minority and ethnic groups Lack of childcare catering for parents/carers working atypical hours	Childcare provision is available where and when families need it Existing childcare is sustainable New provision is only created in areas of identified need	March 2016 Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSA 2015 Update Report contained an analysis of childcare supply and demand in order to identify which wards required further investigation To support this, questionnaires are due to be distributed to parents, childcare providers and employers to help determine actual demand in these areas (November-December 2015)
5	Support the development of	Support schools to	Childcare Officer	Parents/carers unable to	Parents/carers will have a	March 2016	September 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wraparound provision

