

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
16 September 2009

UPDATE: REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES AND EXTENDED SCHOOLS
(Director of Social Care & Learning)

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on progress with the development of extended schools in the light of the comments of the Executive regarding:

- Number of schools yet to achieve fully extended status.
- How ASGs prioritise matters.
- The present budgetary position.
- Funding for Area Steering Group (ASG) aspirations.

The paper also provides details of:

- A new Government funded extended services scheme that has become available since the work of the Scrutiny Review.
- The latest position with respect to the implementation of Children's Centres.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

2.1 To note.

3 REASONS FOR SUGGESTED ACTION

3.1 This paper is to inform the panel of progress.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None considered.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Number of schools yet to achieve fully extended status

5.1 The Council continues to work with schools to support them in achieving fully extended status. This means that they are providing services to an acceptable standard in all five areas of the core offer: childcare, more out of school activities for children, parenting support, swift and easy access to specialist services (for those children who need it) and wider out of school use of school sites and buildings. At the end of July 2009, 32 schools (87%) had reached this position. This percentage exceeds the national target. Officers are confident that all the remaining five schools will reach fully extended status by June 2010, the national expectation.

How ASGs prioritise matters

5.2 As described in the Review, local accountability is achieved through the six Area Steering Groups (ASGs) that contain a mix of school, community and partner representatives. All ASGs have an area plan, reviewed annually, which is based on

local engagement with children, parents, families and the community. The plans describe the local aspirations to be achieved. Specific actions underpin these aspirations. It is through this process that ASGs prioritise their actions and spending decisions. ASGs are supported by a Co-ordinator who is aware of Borough wide work and work in other ASG areas.

The present budgetary position

- 5.3 Funding is Government grant-based in the current three year cycle that finishes in March 2011. The implementation of extended schools has been recognised as a change programme since the outset, and in recent years there has been a structural shift in the funding source from the Area Based Grant to the Standards Fund, where funding has to be devolved to schools directly. Budgets for the development of extended services are summarised in the table below.

	<i>In £K</i>	<i>2008/09</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/11</i>
Standards Fund: Apr - Aug				
'Sustainability' – To be devolved		127	237	334
Area Based Grant: Apr - Mar				
'Start up' - To be devolved in line with LA Strategy. Funding for management and co-ordination comes from this budget. Excludes element for childcare previously included in Surestart budget.		404.3	412.1	169.6
Total for ES		531.3	649.1	503.6

Funding for Area Steering Group (ASG) aspirations

- 5.4 From the outset of the programme ASGs have had budgets delegated to them to fund local priorities. The size of the budget reflects the size of the area covered by the ASG. In 2009/10 financial year the allocations from the 'Start Up' budget are as follows:

Area Steering Group	Number of schools	Budget 2009/10 (£'000)
Great Hollands, Hanworth and Birch Hill	6 incl. Easthampstead Park	15
'South Bracknell' - Easthampstead, Wildridings, Harmans Water, Crown Wood, Forest Park	7 incl. Brakenhale	15
'North Bracknell' - Binfield, Priestwood, Garth, Bullbrook and Warfield	10 incl. Garth Hill, Ranelagh and Kennel Lane	22
Winkfield, Cranbourne and North Ascot	4	4
Sandhurst	7 incl. Sandhurst	15

Crowthorne	3 incl. Edgbarrow	7.5
TOTAL to ASGs		78.5

5.5 It is important to recognise that ASG actions are also supported by:

- £150K of the Council's 'Start Up' budget for extended services funds cross-Borough work from which all schools and communities may benefit. Examples include support to the Family Information Service, the provision of Pyramid clubs for both children and parents, providing a programme of parenting sessions across the Borough, summer activities for pupils with special educational needs, central advice and guidance to schools pursuing Quality in Study Support (QISS) accreditation, support for family learning activities, support to the Youth Service to provide further activities for older children and various after school clubs.
- Partners and the community which support with resources and contributions, both financial and in kind.

5.6 Additionally, school-focused funding through the Standards Fund also supports ASG aspirations.

- It has led to the appointment of school-based Family Support Advisers (FSA), who are proving to be very effective in their work with families and who support fulfilment of ASG actions. All except two schools are expected to have an FSA in post by the autumn.
- It will fund the appointment of school-based Extended Services Assistants from September to assist schools and the local community practically with ongoing work.

5.7 Developments such as those described in 5.4 and 5.5 will have an impact on the budget that is available for ASGs for 2010/11. Allocations to ASGs for this year will be considered by the Schools Forum in the autumn.

5.8 As with all grant-based work, Government funding intentions from April 2011 onwards are not known. However, it needs to be recognised that there is a continuing place for community based work with children, parents and families; that resources and contributions from continuing Council budgets, partners and the community can continue; and that ASGs will need to be more creative in identifying resources for their work. The Extended Services team is working with ASGs to help achieve these changes.

Activity bursary for children from disadvantaged families

- 5.9 Since the work of the Scrutiny Review a further Government funding source has become available. This new scheme offers children in full-time education from economically disadvantaged families a subsidy so that they can attend leisure and recreational activities that would otherwise be only available to children from better off families. The intention is that, through participation, their self esteem and confidence will rise, having a positive implication on their attainment, attendance and behaviour.
- 5.10 Provision for disadvantaged children and families is a feature in most ASG plans so it is appropriate that this new fund helps support ASG priorities.
- 5.11 The Council has £38,730 funding through the Standards Fund in 2009/10 (year 1) for a first phase involving about six schools. In 2010/11 there will be sufficient funding

for all schools in the Borough to participate in the period through to August 2011. At the current time it is not known if further funding will be available for the 2011/12 year.

- 5.12 Schools in the areas of the Borough with the highest proportion of free school meals, in Bracknell south of the town centre, were invited to be part of the pilot. Seven schools responded: Easthampstead Park and The Brakenhale secondary schools, and Great Hollands, Birch Hill, Fox Hill, St Michael's Easthampstead and The Pines primary schools. Work has progressed with all these schools. Individual tracking is being undertaken to monitor participation and identify the outcomes for children and young people over time and demonstrate the degree of success of the intervention.

Progress with implementation of children's centres

Change to Children's Centres areas

- 5.13 Due to the development of two further centres it was necessary to make some changes to the areas of the existing Children's Centres to ensure the level of reach does not go below or above government guidelines. See attached map at annex A.
- 5.14 The Alders, Chestnuts and Family Tree remain the same.
- 5.15 Birch Hill and Hanworth have moved from the The Oaks to the Rowans.
- 5.16 Harmans Water, Crown Wood, Martins Heron and Forest Park have moved from The Rowans to The Sycamores.
- 5.17 Binfield has moved from The Maples to The Hollies.
- 5.18 New Staff have been recruited to cover the additional areas.

Capital Works

- 5.19 The new Alders building at College Town School is now in place and should be in service by the end of September.
- 5.20 There are new buildings under consideration in Crown Wood and Warfield
- 5.21 Discussions continue around the development of space at the caretaker's cottage in Crowthorne C of E school and Broadmoor Hospital .

Marketing

- 5.22 An information sheet about Children's Centres is going out as an insert in the Health Visitors red book
- 5.23 There will be a slot on Community TV during this term

Monitoring and Evaluation

- 5.24 A new IT system for Children's Centres has been developed and will be operational from November. This will give staff the ability to monitor record and track all families going through the centres to ensure services developed are making a difference.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 The present budgetary provision is contained within the main body of the report.

Equality Impact Assessment

6.3 Available upon request.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4

Background Papers

Progress reports presented twice yearly to the Community Activity and Services Partnership. Paper on Disadvantage Subsidy approved by Children and Young People's Trust on 30 June 2009.

Contacts for further information

Graham Symonds, Extended Services Manager, Social Care & Learning

Graham.symonds@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Karen Frost, Early Years, Childcare and Play Manager, Social Care and Learning

Karen.Frost@bracknell-forest.gov.uk