

Adults, Children & Education(ACE) Scrutiny Commission



Report of: Adults Children and Education Directorate

Title: Children's Centres and Locality Integration

Ward: All

Officer Presenting Report: Dr Jacqui Jensen

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Recommendation

Note the report

The significant issues in the report are:

The three local areas are moving rapidly towards a 'Systemic Leadership' approach, working together to provide a seamless service to families and their children.

Children's Centres 'Sector Leads' are key systemic leaders, engaging with leaders in children's social care, Families in Focus (council targeted services), Health and police to prioritise resources and mitigate risk to children. Work is underway to engage Schools and voluntary sector colleagues in the approach.

The Systemic leadership approach and plans for increased 'Integrated Working' does not require a change of management or governance for Children's Centres from within Nursery schools or Schools. The Governance of the Children's Centre contract or Service level agreement has changed within the council.



Summary

- a) A new model of best practice governance has been adopted for the management of the Children’s Centre contract. (slide deck appendix 1 Future Governance & Engagement)
- b) The Strengthening Families Programme has provided funding and a programme / project approach to improving our offer to children and families. Using an evidenced based model services to children and families are changing.
- c) Families in Bristol have not always had a seamless journey through the child’s pathway to services. In some situations as need or risk increased the level of support to families decreased or there were delays to support as a new service / professional was engaged or allocated to the work. An integrated systemic model, engaging key service providers in each locality, has been evolving over this year, led by key leaders. It is embryonic but is showing benefit and partners views are positive. Children’s Centres are key to this integrated model.

2. Context

- a) Following the Bundred Report and its emphasis on good governance, it is incumbent on Directors to ensure that any contracts or service level agreements are ‘fit for purpose’. The model of contract management, commissioning, engagement with change and finance oversight was situated with a single officer, the Head of Early Years. (slide deck appendix 1 Current governance)

The responsibilities and accountabilities will now be shared within the directorate:

The Head of Early Years is still the professional lead for Nursery Schools and is responsible for:

- Standards
- Finance
- Improvement in attainment and development performance
- Leadership of Nursery Heads

The Children’s Commissioning Team will be accountable for the contract / service level agreement which commissions the delivery of the Children’s Centres. Accountability includes monitoring of performance data and ensuring value for money.

This also supports the specification of Public Health commissioned contracts to progress the integration of health visiting into Children’s Centres and the integrated model

The Director for Children and Families is the Strengthening Families lead for Integration and will progress the integration model across localities will all partners including Children’s Centres and Nursery Leads.

- b) Operationally Children’s Centres have been part of Locality Weekly Meetings since March 2018 which is enabling improved targeting of resources, step up and down and family engagement. All agree that this integration of our community intelligence, cultural understanding, knowledge of resources and need is producing high decision making for families and improved risk management. The intention is to provide a seamless services for families with need being met earlier at the right level of risk and need

The expectation is that Children’s Centre Leads are part of the locality ‘Systemic Leadership Teams’, working closely with other locality partners to deliver the strengthening families vision.

3. Policy

- Manifesto commitment to supporting children’s centre services
- Public Health Key Objective ‘ensuring the best start’

4. Consultation

a) Internal

Conversations within usual management meetings
Specific meeting in July 18

b) External

Meeting with children’s centre leads in June 18 and 25th September 18

5. Public Sector Equality Duties

Most of the children and families who will be affected positively by an integrated locality model must be considered within the context of “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

i) *Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.* The locality approach ensures that we situate our knowledge and resources within the context of our residents communities.

ii) *Advance equality of opportunity* we have due regard to reducing disadvantage within the context of the service provision and our decision making with regards to scarce resources. the Locality Meeting enables prioritisation of resources from a wider viewpoint than previously.

Children’s Centre leadership engagement in ‘systemic leadership approach / local meetings will be crucial to encourage participation and volunteering by their parents with other parents in need.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Children’s centres contract management; slide deck

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: None

Appendix 1

Current governance



Future Governance & engagement

