

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

27 JUNE 2017

REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) gap analysis (Appendix 1) and action plan (Appendix 2).

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report is prepared and takes into consideration the following Corporate Improvement Objectives as outlined in the Councils Corporate Plan: -

- Priority one – Supporting a successful economy
- Priority two – Helping people to be more self-reliant
- Priority three – Smarter use of resources

3. Background

- 3.1 The report provides information from Bridgend County Borough Council's CSA and fulfils the statutory duty that the local authority has, as outlined in Section 26 'Duty on local authorities to assess childcare provision' of the 2006 Childcare Act, supporting Section 22 of the 2006 Act whereby local authorities:

"Must secure, as far as reasonably practicable provision of childcare that is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area to enable them to:

- take up, or remain, in work; or
- undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work."

- 3.2 Section 26 of the 2006 Childcare Act requires local authorities to prepare assessments of the sufficiency of childcare provision in their area and to keep these under review.

- 3.3 The gap analysis (Appendix 1) summarises the results of the full CSA and identifies where there are gaps in provision across the county borough. This has allowed the Childcare Team to form an action plan (Appendix 2) in response to the identified gaps. This will also support targeted work in relation to Welsh Government's Childcare Offer.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 Bridgend County Borough Council is meeting its statutory duty of providing sufficient childcare to working families. However, the full CSA has highlighted some additional gaps to work upon, as detailed in the gap analysis (see Appendix 1).
- 4.2 As part of the statutory duty, an action plan must be developed from the information collated in the CSA. The work of the Childcare Team will be fully informed by this over the next five years at which point a new CSA will need to be completed. However, there is a requirement to refresh the full CSA annually where a review of the childcare supply is undertaken in line with the agreed gap analysis.
- 4.3 It is worth noting at this point that the Welsh Government Childcare Offer becomes a statutory requirement by 31 March 2020 and will naturally impact on the work of the Childcare Team in developing additional childcare to meet the pledge, where necessary.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no impact on the Council's policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no direct equality impact issues arising from this report.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The Childcare Team has a core budget, a proportion of which is allocated to grants in order to support new developments to meet the gaps identified and to sustain provisions already established to ensure we continue to meet the statutory duties outlined above. The Out-of-School Grant (OSG) will also be used to support provisions to remain sustainable and to support new provisions developing in areas of identified need:

- Core budget funding available to provisions: £17,540
- OSG funding available to provisions: £19,500

Total grants available to support provisions in 2017-2018 = £37,040. This is a reduction from £69,540 in 2016-17 as part of savings delivered in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017-18 - £30,000 reduction to Nursery Development Grant, and £2,500 reallocation of OSG to support increased staffing costs for 2017-18.

- 7.2 In addition, the core budget and the OSG fund the Childcare Team, without which the statutory duties would not be met.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment gap analysis (Appendix 1) and action plan (Appendix 2) for submission to Welsh Government.

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10 June 2016

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Background documents

Gap analysis – Appendix 1

Action plan – Appendix 2