

**Meeting:** EXECUTIVE

**Date:** 10 January 2012

**Subject:** Review of services to disabled children, young people and their families.

**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services

**Summary:** The report provides the outcome of the review of Children's Services to disabled children, young people and their families living in Central Bedfordshire. It makes recommendations about the future delivery of services.

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**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services

**Contact Officer:** Catherine Parry, Assistant Director, Children Services, Operations (Acting)

**Public/Exempt:** Public

**Wards Affected:** All

**Function of:** Council

**Key Decision** No

**Reason for urgency/  
exemption from call-in  
(if appropriate)** N/A

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

This report supports Priority 2 of Central Bedfordshire's Strategic Plan 2009-2011, Educating, Protecting and Providing Opportunities for Children and Young People. The information also supports the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan priorities, Priority 2 Protecting Children and keeping them safe and Priority 1 increased educational achievement.

### **Financial:**

1. This review has been undertaken to ensure increased efficiency and value for money in the existing expenditure. If efficiencies can be made when the staffing changes have been implemented, this may release Early Intervention Grant to be reallocated in the 2013/14 budget rounds. Budget proposals currently subject to consultation for 2012/2013 include elements of proposed efficiencies for commissioning and the more efficient use of administrative staff in all teams that will use the new case management system. The disability team will be reviewed alongside all other teams to identify opportunity for such efficiencies. The total budget for this area is £3,332,380 and any monies released from the element of Early Intervention Grant, which is £908k in 2012/13, will be reinvested to provide improved outcomes for children and young people.

**Legal:**

2. The legal framework is laid out in The Children Act 1989, Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and new Care Planning and Regulations implemented nationally in April 2011 (“Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers”). The Break for Carers for Disabled Children regulations 2011 also came into force on the 1 April 2011. The Council has published a statement for carers, which is now available on the website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/Short\\_Breaks\\_Statement\\_tcm6-24408.pdf](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/Short_Breaks_Statement_tcm6-24408.pdf)
3. This review has taken into account the requirement, announced in March 2011 by the Department for Education (DfE) for each Council to prepare for all young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) to have a single assessment and single plan across health, education and social care by 2013, (SEND Green Paper March 2011). This will ensure the services are delivered in the most effective and efficient way, provide value for money and put services on a sustainable long term footing.

**Risk Management:**

4. Regulatory risk: these are statutory services.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

5. There are staffing and Trade Union implications contained within these proposals.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

6. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council has undertaken a detailed Equality Impact assessment as part of the review process and will keep the Statement under review during the implementation process.

**Community Safety:**

7. There are no implications from these proposals.

**Sustainability:**

8. The proposals outlined in the review will ensure that services to disabled children, young people and their families are fit for purpose and will meet the requirements of current legislation.

**Procurement:**

9. Any tendering processes required as a result of the proposals will be subject to procurement regulations and guidance.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

10. This matter was considered by Overview and Scrutiny on the 15 December 2011 and the Committee agreed that the delivery of services to disabled children via the "hub and spoke" model, to include closure of the "Poppies" facility by March 2013 at the latest, be endorsed for consideration by the Executive at its meeting on 10 January 2012.

The Children's Overview and Scrutiny Task Force chaired by Cllr Angela Barker, referenced in Section 19 refers to work done by Cllrs Costin, Goodchild, Dodwell, Mackilligan and Pepworth. Also part of the group was Mrs Copley, governor representative.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:****The Executive is asked to:**

1. **approve the implementation of the proposals to deliver services to disabled children as set out in the report by:**
  - a) **agreeing that a "hub and spoke" model be adopted for the delivery of services**
  - b) **agreeing the closure of the "Poppies" by March 2013 at the latest and that the support to families arising from individual assessments be delivered within the proposed revised model as part of the "hub and spoke" delivery.**

*Reason for Recommendations:*

1. *To ensure the Council is compliant with Statutory Guidance and Legislation.*
2. *To ensure services are delivered in the most effective and efficient way, provide Value for Money and put services on a long term sustainable footing.*

**Executive Summary**

11. The Council has a duty to provide services to disabled children, young people and their families, under present legislation.

12. The review findings identify the current provision of services to disabled children and young people can be better coordinated, delivered to improve efficiency and effectiveness and provide better value for money.
13. The recommendations and proposals outlined in the review will ensure that the Council will meet the requirements of the development of the service to meet the requirements of current and emergent legislation outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Green Paper 2011.

## **Background**

14. An review of services for children and young people with disabilities was commissioned in July 2011 to:
  - a) Look at services provided to disabled children, young people and their families, to include the social work support, residential services and all short break provision.
  - b) Examine the interface between the Council's Children's Services, NHS Bedfordshire services and the work of the voluntary sector.
  - c) Take into account any future developments regarding the national and local policy changes for children's centres.
  - d) Make recommendations, with options, about how services to children, young people and their families, excluding but taking into account school provision, can be delivered in the future.
  - e) Take into account the outcomes of the review of special schools and future delivery of special educational needs services in Central Bedfordshire.
  - f) Take into account any decisions regarding the proposal to create an Area Special School in the south of the area.

The review of services to disabled children was set within a national and local context. The key national policy drivers underpinning the review include:

- a) Special Educational Needs and Disability Green Paper 2011 – Support and Aspiration: A new approach to SEND.
  - b) Short break guidance and Legislation Transforming Community Services for Children, Young People and Families (Department of Health 2009): emphasis on integration and single point of access for services for children with disability or illness.
  - c) Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures – the Strategy for Children and Young People’s Health (Depart for Education [then Department for Children, Schools and Families] and Department of Health, 2009): emphasis on multi-agency working and short breaks for children with disabilities.
  - d) Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC): launched in May 2007 This provided the transformation programme for disabled children's services.
  - e) Revised Operating Framework for NHS in England 2010 (Department of Health) and the White Paper; Liberating the NHS July 2010. This signalled substantial changes in future years as to how the NHS will function, with a clear direction to phase out PCT’s and devolve responsibility for commissioning services to GP’s and practice teams working in consortia.
  - f) Better Care: Better Lives – improving outcomes and experiences for children, young people and their families living with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions – Department of Health.
16. The key local policy drivers underpinning the review include:
- a) Future Delivery of Special Education Needs (SEN) Services in Central Bedfordshire agreed by Executive in May 2011
  - b) Short break consultation with parents leading to the publication of the Central Bedfordshire Short Breaks Statement which is at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/Short\\_Breaks\\_Statement\\_tcm6-24408.pdf](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/Short_Breaks_Statement_tcm6-24408.pdf)
  - c) The establishment of the Shadow Health and Well Being Board agreed by Executive in October 2011.

## **The Review**

17. There are a range of social work services delivered by Central Bedfordshire Council which have been considered within the scope of the review. The scope of the review includes:
  - a) The Disabled Children Social Work Fieldwork Team.
  - b) Residential provision.
  - c) Community short breaks services.
  - d) Out of county placements.
  - e) The functioning of the children with disabilities register
  - f) Parental involvement and consultation
  - g) The work done by staff to help families plan for transition to adulthood
  
18. The review was supported by an external Consultant with experience in the area, who advised the Director of the national and regional policy, context and compliance with emergent legislation. Appendix A provides data that sets this review in a national context. **In this appendix, the Central Bedfordshire numbers in each category per 10,000 will be added when the Executive report is finalised.**
  
19. In addition, a Task and Finish Scrutiny Group, comprising of representative members of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, has been involved in monitoring the outcomes of the reviews as it was on going in order to provide a broader perspective. Their contributions have been taken into account in the formation of these proposals. In particular, the group visited resources, met with staff and took an overview of the evidence of the review proposals as they were being developed.

## **Outcomes**

20. The outcome of the review is that some changes are required as set out below to ensure that services are delivered to:
  - a) Improve outcomes for disabled children and young people by the delivery of coordinated and integrated services across health, education, social care and the voluntary sector.
  - b) Embed prevention and early intervention by the implementation of the single assessment and single plan.
  - c) Use existing funding and resources more effectively.
  - d) Improve access for families to universal provision.
  - e) Promote choice and independence by increasing the range of short break options.
  - f) Provide improved information about what services are available and how they can be accessed.
  - g) Improve plans to secure transition to adulthood and therefore improve services for children and young people who have special needs.

21. The main findings of the review relate to two areas of work. The first is the way social care staff are deployed and proposes a “hub and spoke” model. The second relates to the provision from “Poppies”, the Community Support Team.
  
22. Proposal 1 – Hub and Spoke Model  

All children’s services should be delivered through a ‘hub and spoke model of service delivery to ensure maximum impact. This is a re-organisation of staff which will take place under officer delegations to provide a service closer to communities and families and where possible, save on travel costs. Staff numbers increase and decrease in teams according to need and where possible efficiencies will be made to ensure the most effective deployment of staff. Base budget savings were not built into the proposals as usage can go down and up. Currently, the Children with Disability services are supported by an allocation from the Early Intervention Grant. When the review proposals are implemented operationally, any capacity that can be driven out due to efficiencies will reduce the claim on this grant in 2013/14.
  
23. The proposed model of service delivery identifies 2 sites in the County, one in the east, Biggleswade, on the site of the Ivel Valley School and one in the west, Houghton Regis, on the site of the Hillcrest School and nearby Glenwood School. It is proposed that each site provides and develops similar functions which build on and link to the developments outlined in the Special School proposals.
  
24. It is proposed to develop the newly refurbished site in Biggleswade and the residential and school sites at Houghton Regis as the ‘Hub’ elements of Hub and Spoke model. It is proposed that existing services continue to be delivered from the sites and in addition, develop and coordinate other services from both bases.

25. The proposed function of the hubs is to coordinate services on the site and develop networks with the spoke elements of services and to:
- Provide a multi disciplinary team service from the site which includes social work, health (including occupational therapy) and, where relevant, education professionals, with formal links with the Ivel Valley School in the east and Glenwood and Hillcrest Schools in the west. This will facilitate the development of an integrated single assessment, single plan and named lead 'professional/key worker' to support families.
  - Provide a social work outreach to schools, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Child Development Centre (CDC) to ensure the development of an early intervention approach and coordinated pathways for those young people with more complex needs.
  - Develop and coordinate the family support services (previously the team) from the site, although the service may be based and delivered in other locations across the geographical area when needed.
  - Develop activities for after school and weekends for young people aged 0 -25 years either 'on site' or within the local area.
  - Provide a 'one stop shop' for parents, carers, young people and professionals for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) about services and how they can be accessed.
  - Act as a focal point and venue for networks of parent/carers, disabled children and young people and those organisations supporting them.
  - To ensure the information element includes the statutory Parent Partnership and the disability register information function together with information networks of Parent Carer Involvement Board (PCIB).
  - Begin the formal involvement of young people so that the 'Voice of the Child' informs all policy and decision making.
  - Develop links with range of universal and community services in the east and west of the County
  - Coordination of transition services to support transition to adulthood.
26. The spoke element of the model is to encourage and support the use of mainstream/universal provision where appropriate whilst ensuring specialist provision is available where necessary. The accessibility of universal services is seen as key to the transformation of services for disabled children and young people.
27. Appendices B1 & B2 show diagrammatically the existing (B1) and proposed (B2) models.



28. Proposal 2 – Reallocation of the services currently provided by the Children with Disabilities Community Support Team based at Poppies due to the current high cost of the delivery of the service and the isolation of the staff teams. See Appendix C1 for the existing configuration of Disabled Children’s services and how Poppies fits into this. See Appendix C2 for the proposed configuration of Disabled Children’s Services and how Poppies would fit into this.
29. Proposal 2 “Poppies” provides a home care service as part of the provision of the council. Appendix D shows the analysis of the different provision with usage and costings. “Poppies” is identified as high cost with isolated staff. The remainder of the provisions, for the short to medium term, will become more cost effective as the proposals for the review are implemented. This will include the increased usage of Central Bedfordshire short break residential provision by children and young people currently accessing this in Bedford Borough Council residential homes.
30. Alternative proposals for “Poppies” provision were analysed and are set out below with Option 1 being the preferred option.
31. The four options for delivery are set out below, with option 1 being the preferred option.
32. Option 1 – Close existing service and relocate to the east and west hubs.

Advantages:

- Opportunity to redefine/refocus service to meet changing priorities and support the proposed functions of the hub and spoke.
- Opportunity to achieve better value for money.
- Opportunity to develop flexible staff group to meet service specific skill set.
- Opportunities for coordination of complex packages of support across health education and social care.
- Opportunity to link services with health and education services.
- 24 hour back up from residential services.
- Reduction in building costs

Disadvantages:

- Loss of building and opportunities for specialised building and centred packages of support.
- May be associated redundancy costs

33. Option 2 – Keep existing level of provision but deliver the service from each hub in a “hub and spoke” model

Advantages:

- Service linked into core social care services to support the implementation of the hub and spoke model of service delivery.
- Services linked with other health and education services.
- Economies of scale in relation to the management of coordinated service.
- 24 hour back up from residential service.
- Reduction in building costs

Disadvantages

- Loss of building and opportunities for specialised building centre packages of support
- Staff complement who will not have skill set required for change in service and roles.

34. Option 3 – No Change

Advantages:

- Building provides opportunity for developing individual packages of support to young people with severe challenging behaviour.
- Building provides base for staff.

Disadvantages:

- Services remains physically and professionally isolated and separate from proposed “hub” services
- No economies of scale in management
- Little opportunity for change

35. Option 4 - Keep existing service and attach as outreach to each residential unit

**Advantages:**

- Opportunity to redefine/refocus service to meet changing priorities and support the proposed functions of the hub and spoke
- Opportunity to achieve better value for money
- Opportunity to reconfigure staff establishment
- 24 hour back up from residential service
- Reduction in building costs

**Disadvantages:**

- Loss of building and opportunity for specialised building centre packages of support
- Staff complement who will not have skill set required for change in service and roles.

35. Option 1 is the preferred option as it provides the greater focus on improved provision for children, young people and their families by keeping facilities closer to families, reducing travel and management costs and allowing for flexibility in operation.

**Conclusion**

36. Timescales for change:

December 11 – February 2012 – Develop the change programme including consultation with staff and a communication plan with parents.

April 2012 – March 2013 – Implementation of the change programme.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Disabled children and young people in Central Bedfordshire Needs Analysis

Appendices B1 & B2 - Existing (B1) and proposed (B2) models

Appendices C1 & C2– Existing Configuration and proposed new configuration of Disabled Children's Services (social care chart)

Appendix D – Analysis of provision – usage and costings

**Background Papers:** None.