

SUBJECT: 30 HOUR FREE CHILDCARE OFFER

MEETING: CYP SELECT COMMITTEE

DATE: 5TH SEPTEMBER 2018

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

To provide details of the 30 Hour Free Childcare Offer and the arrangements for implementation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To work in partnership with Newport City Council to deliver the 30 Hour Free Childcare Offer from January 2019.
- 2.2 To rollout the Childcare Offer in all areas of Monmouthshire simultaneously.
- 2.3 To agree the suggested changes to the staffing structure within the Early Years team in relation to the Childcare Offer.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The Welsh Government have committed to full implementation of the Childcare Offer by September 2020.
- 3.2 From September 2018 the Childcare Offer will be available in 14 local authorities; these are Anglesey, Gwynedd, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Flintshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, Cardiff, Ceredigion, Conwy, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Torfaen and Wrexham.
- 3.3 The Childcare Offer is 30 hours a week of free early education and childcare for eligible working parents of 3 and 4 year olds, for up to 48 weeks of the year. The 30 hours will consist of a combination of the existing Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) provision open to all 3 and 4 year olds and the additional funded childcare for eligible families.
- 3.4 Parents will become eligible for the Childcare Offer from the term following their child's 3rd birthday until they commence full time education. In order to be eligible, either parents or the sole parent in a lone parent family, must earn at least equivalent to 16 hours a week at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage, and no more than £100,000 per parent.

- 3.5 The childcare can be accessed in any setting that is registered with CIW (or Ofsted if the setting is in England). During term time, 10 hours are allocated for early education and this must be taken up at either an LA maintained nursery or an approved non-maintained provider of early education.
- 3.6 There are currently 12 LA maintained nurseries and 28 approved non-maintained providers of early education in Monmouthshire. Take up of places is at its highest in the summer term and it is usually between 76% and 80%, so there are currently surplus places in all areas of the county.
- 3.7 The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017-22 and the annual progress report (see appendix 5) suggested that there were sufficient childcare places to meet the current demand and highlighted any gaps in provision. Out of School Childcare Grant funding has been allocated to develop additional childcare provision in order to address these gaps.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 4.1 The option is not to consider whether or not the 30 hour free Childcare Offer will be available in Monmouthshire, as Welsh Government have already committed to offering this throughout Wales by September 2020.

The options are:

1. To become an Engagement Authority for the Childcare Offer and work closely with Newport City Council as the Delivery Authority to roll out the Childcare Offer throughout Monmouthshire from January 2019.
 2. To refuse to work in partnership with Newport City Council and go back to Welsh Government to request alternative arrangements.
 3. To delay implementation and wait for full roll out of the Childcare Offer in September 2020.
- 4.2 Most childcare providers are keen to move forward in relation to the Childcare Offer as the general consensus is that it will have a positive impact on their setting, particularly in relation to take up of places and sustainability.
 - 4.3 We have already had numerous enquiries from parents, particularly since April 2018, as the Childcare Offer will be available in all our neighbouring authorities, including England, from September 2018.
 - 4.4 If we choose to roll out the Childcare Offer gradually, this is not going to be popular with parents living in areas where it is not available. This will also increase the administrative burden in relation to checking post codes and explaining to parents why it is not yet available in their area.

- 4.5 There are approximately 900 children in each year group and not all of these would have working parents that are eligible for the Childcare Offer. Based on these relatively low numbers, it would not be helpful to roll out only in some areas of Monmouthshire as there wouldn't be sufficient take up of places to meet the Welsh Government's targets and to carry out meaningful evaluation.
- 4.6 If we wait until full roll out in September 2020, there is likely to be a reduction in the administration funding.
- 4.7 Taking all of this into consideration, option 1- to work in partnership with Newport City Council to deliver the Childcare Offer throughout Monmouthshire from January 2019, seems to be the preferable option.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

See appendix 1.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 The Welsh Government is keen for as many Local Authorities as possible to come on board over the next 12 months, prior to full rollout in September 2020.
- 6.2 Parents are eager for the Childcare Offer to be made available in Monmouthshire as the cost of childcare has been identified as a barrier for working parents.
- 6.3 Childcare providers are fully informed and most would welcome early implementation of the Childcare Offer as it is likely to improve take up of places.
- 6.4 The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment suggests that we have sufficient places to meet the increased demand for places.
- 6.5 Overall, it is felt that the Childcare Offer will have a positive impact on both parents and childcare providers. In addition, it is hoped that the wealth that this generates will have a positive impact on the economy as a whole.
- 6.6 There are no obvious negative impacts to mitigate against.
- 6.7 Although there are resource implications, the Childcare Offer will be fully funded by the Welsh Government.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The Childcare Offer will be funded at a rate of £4.50 per hour, in the first instance; there will also be additional funding to provide support for children with additional needs to enable them to access the childcare provision. This funding will be administered by Newport City Council as the Delivery Authority and reclaimed from Welsh Government; therefore there will not be any resource implications for Monmouthshire County Council.

In order to implement and deliver the Childcare Offer in Monmouthshire there will need to be an increase in staffing within the Early Years team. It is suggested that a role is created for a part time Childcare Engagement Officer. The purpose of this role will be to engage with childcare providers and parents, to advertise the Childcare Offer and to develop childcare provision to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet the demand. This role will combine elements of the Family Information Officer's and the Childcare Development Officer's roles, both of whom are currently only appointed on a part time basis.

The current structure is:

Post	Scale	Hours	Salary	On Costs	Total Cost
Early Years Manager	SCP 41	37	37,107	12,282	49,389
Childcare Development Officer	SCP 27	18.5	11,522	3,572	15,094
Family Information Officer	SCP 29	14.8	10,588	2,647	13,235
Early Years Officer	SCP 21	18.5	10,271	2,568	12,839
TOTAL			69,488	21,069	90,557

The proposed structure would be:

Post	Scale	Hours	Salary	On Costs	Total Cost
Early Years Manager	SCP 40	37	37,107	12,282	49,389
Childcare Engagement Officer	SCP 25	37	23,111	7,164	30,275
Childcare Development Officer	SCP 27	18.5	11,522	3,572	15,094
Family Information Officer	SCP 29	14.8	10,588	2,647	13,235
Early Years Officer	SCP 21	18.5	10,271	2,568	12,839
TOTAL			92,599	28,233	120,832

This is a possible increase of approximately £30,275 per annum.

Welsh Government have confirmed that they will be providing the Local Authority with a grant of £30,000 per annum to cover the cost of engagement but it is not yet clear for how many years this grant will be available.

8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

See appendix 2.

9. CONSULTEES:

The following have been consulted with in relation to implementation of the Childcare Offer:

- Approved Non-Maintained Providers of Early Education
- Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)
- Education Achievement Service (EAS)
- CYP DMT
- Newport City Council
- Welsh Government

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Childcare Offer Summary (appendix 3)

Childcare Engagement Officer (appendix 4)

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Progress Report March 2018 (appendix 5)

11. AUTHOR:

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12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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