

Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Children's Integrated Services: Implementation of agreed Budget Savings
Meeting Date	9 th June 2022

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children's Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
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Summary of issues:

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority and a priority for Nottingham City Council.

The Council has set its medium term financial plan and this was signed off at Full Council on 7th March 2022. Included within this are savings commitments within Children's Services. Appendix A sets out the final savings committed.

A major programme of transformation in Children's Services was agreed at Executive Board in February 2022 (attached as Appendix B). This is part of the Medium Term Financial Plan which includes £2.4m for CIS and £6.5m funding to support delivery. This report provides an update on developments to date.

This report provides information on the implementation of the agreed budget savings and summary of progress on each Play and Youth and Children's Centre's budget savings heading.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee consider the summary of progress on the budget savings relating to Children's Integrated Services.
2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considers the development of transformation of Children's Centres and Play & Youth Services.

1. Background

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority. The Strategic Council Plan sets this out as a priority reflected in outcome 5: Child Friendly City. The plan sets out the vision that:

“Every child in Nottingham will get the best start in life, regardless of their circumstances. We will support local children to thrive academically, emotionally and physically, ensuring equality of opportunity for all.”

The plan notes that the Council will “continue to provide the vital statutory services that support and protect vulnerable children, including safeguarding, children in care, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable groups” and that the Council will “Work hard to improve our children’s services, to ensure we provide the quality of service local children and families deserve.”

On 25th November 2021 a paper was presented to Children’s and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee which set out Children’s Integrated Services current financial position and budget savings proposals which at the time were part of a public consultation (attached as Appendix C. This report will provide a summary of progress under each budget saving heading.

On 31st March 2022 a paper was presented to Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee (attached as Appendix D) providing an introduction to the Children’s Transformation programme. This report provides an update against this programme.

2. Medium Term Financial Plan (Children’s Integrated Services)

The Council has set its medium term financial plan and this was signed off at Full Council on 7th March 2022. Included within this are savings commitments within Children’s Services. Appendix A sets out the final savings committed.

Consultation on these proposals ran from 16th November 2021 to 10th January 2022.

3. Current position of Children’s Integrated Services Budget Savings

- **Play and Youth**

The public consultation closed 10 January 2022. They were well attended by children, young people and their families. Following feedback from the initial consultation additional funding was agreed for 3 workers.

Play and youth workers have been accepted for VR and most will leave at the beginning of July.

Internal recruitment has started and waiting to conclude following sickness absence. This has been done with partners organisations to support with the shaping of the future.

External vacancies are out with the view to interview in the first week of June.

There are delivery plans in place for the transformation of Youth Service which includes work associated with the restructure, new service design and exiting from buildings.

The new design will focus on induction of colleagues, delivery of direct targeted work at Bulwell Riverside, linking this to the future development of Family Hubs , i.e sexual health sessions & mental health support. Re-instating & supporting partnership delivery and designing support packages for voluntary groups to ensure Children and Young people access safe quality sessions and they are able to have a voice.

The youth service is providing a reduced service over the coming weeks. They are ensuring that they are working with the most vulnerable, through group work session, 1:1 support from existing play and youth sites. They have supported families with signposting to other voluntary services delivering play sessions and sports activities in the local area, as play services have ceased following the Easter holidays. Joint exit plans have been done with families and social care colleagues for those Children and young people who attend sessions and are on plan.

The five Play and Youth Centres proposed for closure are presently being offered to lease to Voluntary organisations via a robust Expression of Interest process which is weighted around the financial sustainability of those organisations interested. Additionally, information about services to be offered, how services link to our corporate plans along with any risk and support required is being sought as part of the process.

Additional consideration was to include the budget for Hyson Green Youth Club. The service is paying lease arrangements until 2nd June. This was the only lease arrangement in place for voluntary ran building that the service used.

The savings from the reduction in staffing Youth Services will mean that budget saving are met and the savings for the buildings are on track to be met for next financially year.

- **Children's Centres**

Further to the consultation in November, the Council undertook a further consultation process to determine which Children's Centres would remain open and which would close.

Following feedback from the initial consultation, additional funding was agreed to increase the number of increase the number of Children's Centres retained (now 4 Children's Centres will be retained) and increase the Early Help Business Support retained to ensure reception cover at the additional centre.

Phase 2 of the Children's Centre consultation took place between 24 February 2022 and 22 April 2022. This included:

- Public consultation, via face-face consultation events and the online consultation.
- Colleague consultation, including Voluntary Redundancy applications
- Partner consultation regarding future use of Children's Centre buildings proposed for closure.

There are delivery plans in place for the transformation of Children's Centres which includes work associated with the restructure, new service design and exiting from buildings. The outcome of the consultation was that a fourth Children Centre (Hyson Green) will also remain open. There were no further alternative viable proposals submitted to change the original proposal.

The five Children's Centres proposed for closure are presently being offered to lease to organisations via a robust Expression of Interest process which is weighted around the financial sustainability of those organisations interested. Additionally, information about services to be offered, how services link to our corporate plans along with any risk and support required is being sought as part of the process.

Budget savings within the Early Help staffing is anticipated to be achieved through Voluntary Redundancy. The Early Help service manager is working with HR to review applications, with application figures achieving required savings in 3 out of the 4 pools. We will potentially have to commence an assessment process in one pool of colleagues to achieve the savings required.

The redesign of the service brings opportunities to integrate revenue funding yet to be agreed from Family Hubs to create a 0 to 19 service (25 for disabled children/young people).

Children's Centres have now agreed an interim service offer for Children up to the summer whilst recruitment/induction for Level 3 Family Support Workers takes place and those exiting the service taking Voluntary Redundancy vacant their positions.

- **NGY Grant Funding**

Budget saving of £200k was met by ending the grant funding of the youth services and NGY base provided to Base 51.

Ongoing discussions are being held between NGY and NCC on how to access other funding sources. Violence Reduction Unit are currently supporting NGY and are delivering youth provisions at the Centre.

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

£215k Savings are on track to be achieved.

There has been no impact on the service with NCC funding being removed. NCC has worked with the CCG and Public health to transform CAMHS and additional funding for CAMHS to mitigate the removal of NCC funding has been agreed with Public Health in line with the Section 75 agreement.

- **Business Support**

Early Help Business Support budget reductions have been achieved through removing vacancies and Voluntary Redundancy applications. A revised Business Support structure has been agreed across Early Help and Youth services.

- **Targeted Support to Children and Families**

Savings are on track to be achieved.

- **Strategy and Improvement**

Restructure of the service has been carried out and now completed. A management post was deleted following a staff member leaving the Authority meaning that a reduction in management capacity has been achieved.

- **Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for Adoption and Fostering**

The ADM work has been brought back into the service as opposed to paying for the work to be completed by an external person. The adoption ADM is now the Director of Children’s Integrated Services and the fostering ADM is the Head of Service for Children in Care. The new arrangements commenced on 1st April 2022 meaning that the saving has been achieved.

4. Children’s Transformation Programme

A major programme of transformation in Children’s Services was agreed at Executive Board in February 2022 (attached as Appendix B). This is part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan which includes £2.4m for CIS and £6.5m funding to support delivery.

The Children’s Transformation specification for procurement is completed and timescales for planning and implementation have been finalised. It is anticipated that the Transformation Delivery Partner start delivery onsite in July 2022 this is slightly later than anticipated as we have spent time working with a case study council (Leicestershire) to ensure we have all the governance, resourcing and funding requirements in place before finalising requirements for the supplier and subsequent contract., The table below outlines key dates and milestones for the next steps.

Stage	Date
Invitation to Submit Initial Bid issue date	14/03/2022
Deadline for tenderer clarification requests	24/03/2022
ITSIB tender return date	28/03/2022
Negotiation round <i>Please ensure your availability during this period</i>	04/04/2022
Invitation to Submit Final Bid (ITSFB) issue date	11/04/2022
ITSFB tender return date	25/05/2022
Contractor outcome notification by	01/06/2022
Contract start date	July 2022