

**Supporting Families and Communities – Children’s Services Business Case  
Update for Cabinet December 2017**

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## **Supporting Families and Communities – Children’s Services Business Case Update for Cabinet December 2017**

### **Introduction**

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> October Cabinet meeting an update on the Council’s Inclusive Growth and Reform Programme was provided which set out proposals to reduce spending by £5,062M in 2018/19.

A summary of the suite of proposals for Children’s Services was subsequently presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committees in November for consultation and engagement and proposals that will involve a reduction and / or redesign in services in 2018/19 have also been subject to further robust, inclusive and proportionate consultation. Consultation and engagement has taken place with people likely to be affected by the proposals, including staff, partners, residents and service users in order to assess both the positive and negative impact on stakeholders. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) have also been completed for these proposals.

A report providing a full summary of the feedback arising from the public consultation, staffing consultation and EIA process was submitted to the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> December as part of the consultation and engagement process.

The attached report for Cabinet provides: -

- APPENDIX 1 - An update on progress in relation to the development of each of the proposals. For each proposal subject to public consultation, the consultation report and EIA for is appended and the risks and mitigation sections of the proposal summaries have been updated to reflect issues arising.
- APPENDIX 2 - A summary of the longer term project / programme vision for the next phase of integration (presented to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October)

**Please refer to the full draft business case submitted to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October for the ‘case for change’ including the financial context and demand pressures. A**

## APPENDIX 1 - Proposal Updates

### PROPOSAL: - Participation and Education

The following proposal, included in the draft business case agreed by Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017, involves:

- 1) The closure of the Apprenticeships Store;
- 2) A review of the Apprenticeships Pool;
- 3) Service Redesign including staff review;

and has been subject to a combination of staffing, public and / or partner consultations and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

The full reports detailing the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA are appended.

The 'risks' and 'mitigation' section of the 'proposal summary' (below) has been updated to reflect the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA.

Staffing consultation with the Participation and Education Services closed on the 10<sup>th</sup> November. Feedback from staff indicated that staff strongly disagree with the proposal to close the Apprenticeship Store and change the method of recruiting apprentices. Mitigating actions and risks in this summary have been amended as appropriate.

Following the Staff and Public consultation exercises, alternative opportunities for delivering the savings, which would allow the Apprenticeships Store and its associated events to continue have been articulated.

Service Area	Current Budget £	Proposed Reduction £	Deadline Delivery
Education – Participation and Education (Apprenticeships)	852,438	185,622	1 <sup>st</sup> April 18
<b>Outline:</b> This proposal directly affects the current delivery model associated with Apprenticeships <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Close The Apprenticeships Store</li><li>• Change the delivery model for apprentice recruitment which will disestablish the current Apprenticeship Pool</li><li>• Reduce costs associated with current model of promotional activities including staff</li><li>• Protect Looked After Children apprentice budget area guaranteeing 14 Apprenticeship opportunities annually</li></ul>			
<b>Risks:</b> If the vacated premises are left unoccupied, this could impact on overall council savings not being realised as the Store is an SMBC owned building. If alternative premises were not secured, this would have reputational damage; may impact on support for employers; reduced access to job opportunities for residents of all ages and wards, including the vulnerable; and the loss of a strength of the borough. Income generating opportunities associated with The Apprenticeships Store may be lost.			

The proposal to cease maintaining the Participation and Education Apprenticeship Pool will move the responsibility to deliver the expected level of Apprenticeships to a council-wide commitment and concerted activity rather than the current central team. The risks is that if levels are not maintained or increased then this will impact on the achievement of the public sector apprentice target (207 per annum); the maximisation of the Apprenticeship Levy (0.8m); the lack of flexibility of apprentice being used for short periods by teams; and diversifying the workforce. If the commitment to apprentices reduces this will have a consequential loss of reputational strength as we are currently the leading local authority nationally for maximising the apprenticeship levy. The Council also has won in 2017: The Princess Royal Training Award; The Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce Skills for Business Award and the Gold Standard for Youth Employment Talent Match through the Council's Apprenticeships programmes run through Participation and Education Services small team.

The proposal to reduce non-staff costs associated with events and activities may impact on the promotion of opportunities for young people and parents at 16+ and to their becoming disengaged and potentially increase NEET figures or young people moving out of area. Any reduction in engagement figures will impact on the levels associated with the September Guarantee.

The removal of the Apprenticeships Store would result in the loss of face-to face interaction over apprenticeship opportunities. If this was not offset by alternative means of engaging with young people and providing impartial specialist information to them, the uptake of Apprenticeships and associated value to young people and society would be impacted.

**Mitigation:** The Store is located in the Stockport Exchange development (part of the Borough Plan) and may attract a commercial interest if available alternatively, vacant centrally located administrative bases for Council as well as partner organisations are of a premium which may support the release of satellite properties for sale or redevelopment in other areas. If the site was difficult to occupy, we propose that The Apprenticeships Store and its staffing remain on site until plans are secured. If an alternative use was found for the Apprenticeships Store, we would look for alternative accommodation to deliver Apprenticeship related activities; the financial implications of both these options are still under review.

Teams requiring apprentices within the council would continue to seek permission to appoint, but this will take time out of the day from already pressured teams as they will have to be involved in the advertisement, short listing and recruitment process and employ current council policies of probationary periods and capability if staff did not meet the necessary level of commitment and competence. The ability to return apprentices to a pool if the appointment was not successful would not be an option. Participation and Engagement Services would continue to support apprentices and managers to identify appropriate training providers and support managers to provide the necessary demonstrable evidence of experience to meet the requirements associated with the apprenticeship. The number of Apprenticeship posts in the pool (58), could be structurally re-established elsewhere in the council before the pool closes, so as to reduce the risk to the public sector targets and the maximisation of the levy. This would not make significant cash limit savings, unless a lesser number of apprentice posts was chosen, but would spread the costs across the council.

We propose to consider alternative methods of engaging with the target audiences in line with our developing approach to Inclusive Growth as well as increased use of digital media.

If the Apprenticeships Store and associated events ended/closed, SMBC would continue to support and offer Apprenticeships, but would do so by utilising more digital means of communication. To this end, work to update and refresh our website content has begun, and will be completing training with staff to ensure they are up to speed with webchat and the production of online materials. There are already active social media accounts and the service will continue to utilise these. Page visits, interactions and online forms will continue to be monitored to keep track of how and how often the service is accessed, and seek feedback from users of this refreshed system. This information will be tracked where possible against our current footfall on a quarterly basis in order to assess the full impact and usage of the service, reported to the Education Directorate and also to the Preparing for Adulthood – Education sub-group, which oversees the impact of post-16 transitions on SEND learners.

If these changes do occur, it will be supported with a strong communications campaign in partnership with key stakeholders'/partner services to ensure that current apprentices, schools, parents/carers and future apprentices are notified and given the information to how to access this support within the new model. This will include direct contact with our stakeholders wherever possible, including emails, printed materials (e.g. posters in public locations) and a social media campaign.

**Update on development of proposal: -**

- The consultation response included alternative proposals to allow the Council to retain the Apprenticeships Store. These options include a range of ideas including, singularly and in combination: income generation/savings from the service redesign; partnerships with other organisations within Stockport leading to income generation; and partnerships with other organisations within Greater Manchester leading to income generation.
- The alternative proposals have been calculated to ensure that in 2018/19 the service can be delivered within the financial envelope of £0.667m subject to transitional arrangements. There is grant funding to support where necessary.
- This will allow for the savings to be fully achieved subject to phasing. The value of saving achieved in 2018/19 will be £0.129m with a further £0.056m being delivered from April 2019.
- The phasing of £0.056m to April 2019 is as a result of positions which cannot be terminated until the end of the apprenticeship. This will be funded in 2018/19 using non recurrent reserves from the services grant account.
- The service is also aware that the longer term future of the Apprenticeships Store, its events and activities, may require further income generation. The service will work towards this and progress will be review in September 2018.

To be discussed at CLT.



## **Consultation Report Apprenticeships**

### **Executive Summary**

The proposal was:

- i) To close the Apprenticeships Store and all associated events and activities cease;
- ii) To change the methodology of recruiting apprentices, thereby closing the Apprenticeship Pool in the council and reducing the number of Apprenticeship posts (54 Apprenticeship posts are dis-established in Participation and Education Services and possibly re-established elsewhere, 4 posts are deleted)
- iii) Reduce staffing associated with the above work.

The key findings of the consultation were:

- 82% of respondents (195 respondents) disagreed with the closure of the Apprenticeships Store.
- 64% of respondents (14 respondents) disagreed with the closure of the Apprenticeships Pool.
- All the staff in the Participation and Education Services (excluding the apprentices who were not consulted on the human resources business case) strongly disagreed with the proposals, and therefore disagreed with the loss of associated staffing.

The most popular reason amongst young people and parents for not closing the Apprenticeships Store was the reduction in access to impartial specialist information, support and opportunities for accessing an Apprenticeship. Many respondents gave specific examples of the support they had received from the Apprenticeships Store. Concerns were expressed that young people may be forced into academic / unsuitable courses which they later left early, and that the Apprenticeships Store's closure would have an adverse effect on the young and vulnerable. Many stated that closing of the Apprenticeships Store would lead to increased costs later and fewer Apprenticeship opportunities. Some stated that the closure seemed short-sighted.

The majority of respondents and staff in the Participation and Education Service disagreed with changing the methodology of recruiting apprentices, thereby closing the Apprenticeship Pool, and deleting 4 apprentice posts. Several stated that the flexibility of the pool for pressure on workloads was useful. A minority stated that they would like to recruit and appoint their own apprentice. Staff in Participation and Education Services referred to the contribution the Apprenticeship's Pool is making to the Council's strong performance against public sector Apprenticeships targets to date and the Princess Royal Training Award.

### **1. Introduction/ Background**

The consultation covered the proposals set out in the Mid-Year Financial Plan, for Children and Families, Strengthening Families and Communities, Participation and Education – Apprenticeships, which was considered by the Council Executive at their meeting on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017.

The consultation covered the proposals associated with changes to the current delivery model of Apprenticeships:

- i) To close the Apprenticeships Store and all associated events and activities cease;
- ii) To change the methodology of recruiting apprentices, thereby closing the apprenticeship pool in the council and reducing the number of Apprenticeship posts (54 apprenticeship posts are dis-

established in Participation and Education Services and possibly re-established elsewhere, 4 posts are deleted)

- iii) Reduce staffing associated with the above work.

## 2. Methodology

The consultation approach included surveys, briefings, meetings and stakeholder groups.

The consultation was communicated by press releases, social media messages, and posters in various community locations. Paper copies were available on request.

Consultation Surveys			
Consultation	Method	Stakeholders	Number of Responses
<b>Closure of the Apprenticeships Store and its events</b>	Online questionnaire	Young People and Parents	237
	Online questionnaire	Employers	7 *
	Online questionnaire	Senior Partners	23
	Online questionnaire	Networks of Partners	3
<b>*Plus a letter from the National Federation of Small Businesses response</b>			
<b>Closure of the Apprenticeship Pool</b>	Online questionnaire	Managers in the Council	23
<b>Human Resources Business Case</b>	Meetings	Staff in Participation and Education Services and Unions	11

Of those who responded to the online survey, 46 (21%) identified as male, 169 (76%) identified as female and 8 (4%) preferred not to say.

There were 20 (9%) respondents who consider themselves to have a disability.

The average age of respondents was 38 years. The minimum age was 15 years and the maximum was 64 years.

When asked 'how would you define your ethnic group?', 199 (89%) respondents selected 'White', 3 (1%) selected 'Mixed', 8 (4%) selected 'Asian or Asian British', 2 (1%) selected 'Black or Black British' and 2 (1%) selected 'Other'. 10 (5%) respondents selected 'prefer not to answer'.

When asked 'how would you define your religion or belief?', 105 (47%) respondents selected 'Christian', 5 (2%) selected 'Muslim', 1 (1%) selected 'Buddhist', 1 (1%) selected 'Jewish', 3 (1%) selected 'Other', 94 (42%) selected 'no religion' and 13 (6%) selected 'prefer not to answer'.



### 3. Results

#### a) Closure of the Apprenticeships Store

There were 270 respondents to questionnaires and a letter from the Manchester and North Cheshire Region of the National Federation of Self- Employed and Small Businesses Limited. The majority of respondents strongly disagreed with the proposal.

81% of respondents (218 responses) strongly disagreed/tended to disagree with the proposals to close the Apprenticeships Store:

- 82% (195 respondents) of young people and their parents strongly disagreed/tended to disagree with the proposal to close the store;
- 57% (4 respondents) of employers strongly disagreed with the proposal to close the store with 29% neither agreeing or disagreeing. There was also a response letter on behalf of the Federation of Small Businesses stating the federation's opposition to the closure;
- 70 % of senior partners (16 respondents) strongly disagreed /tended to disagree with the proposal to close the store, with 22% neither agreeing or disagreeing;
- 100% (3 respondents) of the store's network of users strongly disagreed with the proposal to close the store.

There were 237 parents and young people responses. The majority stated the closure of the Apprenticeships Store would have a negative impact on them. Key themes were:

- the loss of face-to-face, specialist, impartial information about Apprenticeships would adversely impact on young people's ability to join the job market and contribute to society;
- securing an apprenticeship is difficult for young people, removing this service would make it harder still;
- there is no alternative to this specialist offer;
- the closure may result in higher costs to the public purse further down the line;
- concern that vulnerable, young people would not receive Apprenticeships support.

109 of the 237 parents and young people respondents had used the Apprenticeships Store, of which 85% disagreed with its closure. The majority said that it had been very useful in helping to secure employment. Of the 109, 15 % of respondents stated they were in receipt of benefit, 17% stated they had special educational needs, 24% were unemployed and 61% were not in education, employment or training.

128 of the 237 parents and young people respondents had not used the Apprenticeships Store, of which 81% disagreed with its closure. The majority of respondents stated they would use the store in the future. Of the 128 respondents, 24% were in receipt of benefits, 19% said they had special educational needs, 12% were unemployed, and 62% were not in education, employment or training. Many respondents stated that the closure of the Apprenticeships Store would be a loss of a service to the young, vulnerable, and those at the lower end of the social economic scale who most need the support of the council to succeed in life.

A minority of the parents and young people respondents stated that the closure of the Apprenticeships Store would have no direct impact on them, and then went on to state whom it would impact on. A minority also stated that there could be use made of schools, colleges and careers' advice in schools

instead of the Apprenticeships Store. However, in the senior leaders' responses, the loss of the Apprenticeships' Store's impact on schools is raised as a concern.

The employers who responded via questionnaires were small medium enterprises. 57% (4 respondents) were Apprenticeship Levy payers and 43% (3 respondents) were not. The majority were users of the store and stated:

- It would adversely affect their recruitment of apprentices;
- They did not know where they would go to recruit apprentices if the store was not available.

A minority of respondents stated they would seek Apprenticeships advice and recruitment from outside of the area instead. A minority said they found the internet very confusing.

There was also a letter to the Council from the Federation of Small Businesses (attached as an annex). This stated the Federation of Small Businesses opposition to the closure and stated that to 'rationalise the service by means of a slimmed down, on line website, with no face to face provision, is entirely ill-conceived, and comes at a time when the service it offers is needed most.'

The majority of senior partners and stakeholders were not in favour of the Apprenticeships Store closure, and repeated the points made above. Many referred to the negative impact the closure would have on:

- Increasing the number of young people not in education or employment either through a lack of Apprenticeship or choosing the wrong course and 'dropping out';
- Loss of spending power in the borough as young people do not secure employment, nor come to Stockport for the Apprenticeships Store as a resource;

A minority of senior partners stated that:

- closing the Apprenticeships Store would be at odds with government policy, Greater Manchester's policy, economic needs, local young people's needs, and the needs of schools.
- the borough's reputation for leading 'Apprenticeships' and skills in a co-ordinated way would be lost.
- the savings through the store's closure, seemed small compared the potential longer term savings.

Some respondents expressed concern that there was no detail as to how an alternative service or alternative location would be delivered.

Of all parent and young people respondents, 29% said they would be confident accessing the service on line, 45% disagreed that they would be confident accessing the service on line. 61% of senior leaders said they would not use this service if it was delivered online, adding a face-to-face element would be needed. Many respondents cited the importance of personal interaction, especially for young people, and the lack of access to computers as reasons for on-line not being a suitable substitute for this service. Frequent reference was made to the most vulnerable/underprivileged needing personal support from the Apprenticeships Store.

Of the respondents, a minority suggested ways in which the Apprenticeships Store might be funded in the future, including, not spending on other things in the Council. The Federation of Small Businesses suggested 'engaging with the GMCA, and other institutions in Greater Manchester' to try and seek

additional funding streams. The FSB believes the council, with support from other stakeholders, might look at ways of making the service more relevant to the wider needs of GM in terms of delivery and function.

**b) Closure of the Apprenticeship Pool**

There were 23 responses to the questionnaire. 83% (19 respondents) had used the Apprenticeships Pool before. 83% of respondents agreed that the Apprenticeship Pool had been useful to them, giving reasons such as, the Pool helped to secure successions, attracted new talent and provided flexible support at a time of work pressures.

The majority of respondents (64% - 14 respondents) disagreed with the proposals to close the Apprenticeships Pool and 23% (5 respondents) agreed with the closure. Frequently given reasons for not closing the pool were:

- Loss of flexibility to use apprentices for short periods of time
- Extra time in recruitment
- Contribution the Pool makes to public sector targets
- Specialist area doing the work
- Not sure would recruit an apprentice without the pool

30% (7 respondents) thought that departments should appoint their own apprentices, and 60% (14 respondents) disagreed. The most frequent reason for a department recruiting for themselves given was: understanding of the specialist needs of their department and the apprentice with the most appropriate skills being appointed. The most frequent reason for the department not doing this for themselves was: lack of time or skills to recruit at an apprentice level.

Staff in Participation and Education Services referred to the contribution the Apprenticeship's Pool is making to the Council's strong performance against public sector Apprenticeships targets to date and the Princess Royal Training Award, Nov 2017 statement:

*This is an example of a local authority delivering a well-established and highly effective Apprenticeship programme. Designed to support more young people into education, employment and training, the programme has diversified the Council as a workplace and has removed barriers to vulnerable young people undertaking training.*

## Consultation Report Non-Apprenticeships

### 1. Executive Summary

The proposal was to cut events and activities funded by Participation and Education Services that support successful 'transitions' into education and training at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 including two events (June and October) in the Town Hall for Years 10-13. It is at these 'transition' times, young people and their parents need clarity of information, support and guidance to make informed choices about their next steps, otherwise there is an increased risk that the young person will 'drop out' and become 'not in education and training', thus not meeting their statutory obligation to remain in some form of education and training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The events and activities 'at transition' are targeting all young people, including our most vulnerable, and their parents/guardians aged 14-19 (25 for SEND) and apply to all wards. Research says that parents have the greatest influence over young people's choices, and it is important that they understand the options open to them.

The proposed savings come from a combination of reducing funding for room hire, hospitality, postage and printing. The following key events were proposed to be cut:

- 2 Post 16 Education and Training Information events (June and October)
- 2 events to review the Supported Apprenticeships Scheme for Looked After Children
- 1 curriculum information sharing event between colleges, schools and council staff

The key findings of the consultation were:

- the majority of respondents strongly disagreed with cessation of the Post 16 Education and Training Information events in the Town Hall.

### 2. Methodology

The consultation was communicated by press releases, social media messages and posters in various community locations. Paper copies were available on request.

Consultation Surveys			
Consultation	Method	Stakeholders	Number of Responses
Cuts to Events	Online questionnaire	The Public	307
	Paper and Touch	The Public	71
	Screen Survey at Town		
	Hall Event – June 10 <sup>th</sup> 2017		

Of those who responded to the online survey, 78 (30%) identified as male, 177 (68%) identified as female and 7 (3%) preferred not to say.

There were 20 (8%) respondents who consider themselves to have a disability.

The average age of respondents was 35 years. The minimum age was 14 years and the maximum was 99 years.

When asked 'how would you define your ethnic group?', 238 (92%) respondents selected 'White', 4 (2%) selected 'Mixed', 7 (3%) selected 'Asian or Asian British', 3 (1%) selected 'Black or Black British' and 1 (0%) selected 'Other'. 7 (3%) respondents selected 'prefer not to answer'.

When asked 'how would you define your religion or belief?', 119 (46%) respondents selected 'Christian', 111 (43%) selected 'no religion' 5 (2%) selected 'Muslim', 2 (1%) selected 'Hindu', 6 (2%) selected 'Other' and 17 (7%) selected 'prefer not to answer'.

Of those who responded to the paper survey, 25 (39%) identified as male, 39 (61%) identified as female.

There were 3 (5%) respondents who consider themselves to have a disability.

The average age of respondents was 27 years. The minimum age was 14 years and the maximum was 54 years.

When asked 'how would you define your ethnic group?', 59 (92%) respondents selected 'White', 2 (3%) selected 'Mixed', 1 (2%) selected 'Asian or Asian British' and 1 (2%) selected 'Other'. 1 (2%) respondents selected 'prefer not to answer'.

When asked 'how would you define your religion or belief?', 20 (32%) selected 'No religion' 36 (57%) respondents selected 'Christian', 2 (3%) selected 'Muslim', 2 (3%) selected 'Other' and 3 (5%) selected 'prefer not to answer'.

### **3. Results**

There were 378 respondents: 41% (156 respondents) were parents, 35% (133 respondents) were aged 11-18, the remaining respondents were aged 19-24 (2%), training providers (4%), schools (4%), colleges (2%), employers (2%) support services (2%) or other (7%).

272 (77%) respondents disagreed with proposals to cease the events, of which 64% (227) strongly disagreed. Common themes were:

- The proposals would reduce the availability of face-to-face information, advice and guidance, resulting in difficulty for young people to make informed decisions on their future;
- Potential increase in those not in education, employment or training;
- There is nothing else like the Town Hall events available for young people and parents, and school budget cuts cannot re-create careers events like this;
- It's a shame to deprive young people of the help and support to make their choices;
- Organisations would have less opportunity for recruitment to their colleges/training which would impact on their business;
- Opportunities for special educational needs learners and their families would be reduced;
- Young people feel values because of these events, and employers may miss out because young people do not realise there are opportunities.

Many respondents used emotive language to describe the cuts, including: 'shameful', 'a great shame', 'a terrible shame', 'sad', 'devastated, a huge loss' and 'very bad'.

22 respondents (17%) agreed with the cuts and stated:

- The proposals would be a useful contribution to the council cuts;
- They would save on staff time, save money and resource.
- Schools should run their own events like this.

Not all respondents answered all the questions. 61% of respondents disagreed that they would use the service if it was on-line (74 respondents). 19% (23 respondents) said they would use an online service. Common themes by the majority were that personalisation and face-to-face contact are essential, and that not everyone has access to computers nor the time to research what they don't know. A minority said it would be easier for young people as they are used to digital services.

Some respondents suggested alternatives to the cuts including:

- Scaled down, smaller events or one event in the Town Hall rather than two;
- Schools carrying out these events instead.

### **Staff Consultation - Participation and Education**

Staffing consultation with the Participation and Education Services closed on the 10<sup>th</sup> November. Feedback from staff indicated that staff strongly disagree with the proposal to close the Apprenticeship Store and change the method of recruiting apprentices. Mitigating actions and risks in this summary have been amended as appropriate.

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Title:</b> <b>Participation and Education Services - Apprenticeships</b>	Date: 2/10/2017
	Stage: Consultation
	Lead Officer: Alison Cresswell

### Stage 1: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

This proposal covers a number of changes to the current offer from SMBC around Apprenticeships. For service users it could mean the closure of the Apprenticeships Store, which offers a number of services including supporting residents to apply for Apprenticeships and employers to create these posts. It also proposes changing the model for apprentice recruitment, disestablishing the current Apprenticeship Pool. There will also be a reduction of costs associated with current model of promotional activities and a reduction in staff costs. Therefore, an EIA is required alongside consultation to help establish the impact that this will have. However, because the service is very small, there will not be an EIA in relation to the human resource business case.

### Stage 2: What do you know?

#### Data Sources

The EIA draws on a number of data sources. To begin, the information on the number of visits to the Apprenticeships Store shall be reviewed for the year 16/17:

Target Title	Annual target	Current Total	% of target
Interactions - Potential Apprentices	2174	3139	137%
Apprenticeship outcomes from visitors	202	202	100%
Apprenticeship outcomes for Stockport residents	60	105	175%
Apprenticeship outcomes for young people from priority areas.	23	14	61%

#### Age

This table shows the utilisation of the Apprenticeships Store. From an equality perspective, of the 1081 that provided their age, the majority of these were in the 16-18 age bracket (59%) with 19-23 (25%) and 14-16 (9%) being the next most popular. People 24+ represented the smallest demographic (8%).

This service was designed to tackle the difficulties that many young people face in entering employment, education or training so these proposals could have a negative impact on this age group. Nationally, there are 11.1% of 16-24 year olds who are NEETs (Not in education, employment, training or skills) and this figure has been decreasing for a number of years. A concern of these proposals is that this cohort could increase or the current reduction rate could stagnate.

Similarly, the current unemployment rate in Stockport is 4.5%, slightly under the North West average of 5.1% and the national average of 4.7%. This is NOMIS data which can be accessed [here](#). Although the data on unemployment is not broken down by age, it is likely that a proportion of those unemployed will be in the 16-24 age range.

### **Gender**

Of the 1489 people who provided their gender when visiting the Apprenticeships Store for the year 16/17, there is a higher proportion of males at 61% compared to females at 39%. However, for gender split for those on an apprenticeship, it is more even, with 57% female and 43% male. Whilst the data for Stockport is not available, nationally men are more likely to be NEETs than women. It can therefore be assumed that this could have a negative impact on the percentage of male NEETs in Stockport. Similarly, nationally, women are more likely to be in low paying jobs. Having a secure apprenticeship could be a positive way to tackle this by setting them off with a fairly paid role at the start of their career. In 2014, 87% of those who started an apprenticeship are either still employed or in further education.

### **Race**

Of the 173 learners recorded 2014-2017, 72% identified themselves as either White British or Irish. Only 8% [14 learners] identified themselves as coming from a BAME background (selecting an Asian, Black, Indian, Mixed or Other background) whilst 10% [18 learners] did not specify their ethnicity. Overall, although these figures do not show a great degree of diversity, they are largely in line with 2001 census figures for both Stockport and Greater Manchester, which places the white population at 95.7% and 91.2% of the total for each area respectively.

Currently, rates of progression for BAME apprentices are 86% compared to 88% of white apprentices, showing a similar outcome. Nationally, unemployment rates for BAME people are lower than white people. Therefore, assessing whether the proposed changes impact this would be vital if they go ahead. Along with the mitigation relevant for all stakeholders in ensuring that the service and support remains accessible.

### **Disability**

During consultation, 9% of our responders recorded themselves as having a disability, with 6% preferring not to say. This translates to 21 and 14 individuals. It is worth noting that even in this small snapshot, disability here is self-identified and so may be underreported.

In the Local Authority, the most recent data demonstrates that 9.5% of pupils in Stockport secondary schools have Statements of SEN or Education Health Care Plans, (2.8%) or are working with the SEN team without a Plan or Statement (6.7%). This is expected to rise over the coming years, with 12.6% of students in Stockport primary schools identified by SEN support (2% with Statements/Plans and 10.6% without)– i.e. over 1/8 of primary school pupils in the local area are identified as having a Special Educational Need and/or Disability of some kind. Source: DfE Data Matrix via Knowledge Hub.

In terms of pupil numbers, as of May 2016, 4314 students identified as SEN in the borough, including 790 pupils with SEN in Stockport secondary schools, plus 529 in Special schools and 59 in PRUs. There are 2907 primary school students identified as Special Educational Needs. (Source: School Census reports: see [HERE](#))

This is a significant proportion of local residents with a disability who will be transitioning to post-16 education, employment or training in the coming years. This comes at a time when changes to Apprenticeship entry requirements are being made to better support Special Educational Needs and Disabilities learners, but the changes are not widely known and impact has not yet been felt. See:





### **What does the data tell you? Will the course of action being taken have any impacts for people with “protected characteristics”?**

Closure of the Apprenticeships Store would potentially see the service transformed from face to face to online/digital. This would have a disproportionate impact on young people/families who do not have the requisite online skills/knowledge, access to reliable (and possible, adapted) ICT and the networks/information to know who to contact in the first instance. It is likely, therefore, that the removal of the face to face, drop-in element of the Apprenticeships Store may then have an additional impact on those with the protected characteristic of disability, as well as at risk and vulnerable groups, including NEET students, Looked After Children, Care Leavers and young people/parents from disadvantaged/priority areas.

It is also evident from the data that this proposal will have a significant impact on young people – falling under the protected characteristic “age”. This group, particularly 16-18 year olds, would be disproportionately affected by the proposal compared to all other age groups and, in particular, the over 25s.

## **Stage 2a: Further data and consultation**

### **Gaps in information or evidence highlighting a potential differential impact**

Some comments in responses to the Apprenticeships Store proposed closure stated that the replacement model of delivery was not clear and that a digital service would not be a suitable alternative for young people, including for the more vulnerable learners. Further information/consultation may be required directly comparing the current service to detailed alternatives, in order to better assess the potential impact. This would be a follow up to some comments that have been made as part of the current consultation centred on the fact it was not clear what the alternative offering would be, making it harder to assess potential impact.

It would be particularly beneficial to seek further consultation as above with groups holding protected characteristics and/or identified as vulnerable/harder to access – including NEET, LAC & SEND young people (and parents), and young people/parents/employers from priority areas, whose access to and knowledge of online information/telephone services may be additionally limited. These barriers are not confined to young people alone, but also their support networks to include family, friends and carers.

## **Stage 3: Results and Measures**

### **Mitigating adverse differential impacts**

**Have you changed anything as a result of completing the EIA?**

If the Apprenticeships Store and associated events ended/closed, SMBC would continue to support and offer Apprenticeships, but would do so by utilising more digital means of communication. To this end, work to update and refresh our website content has begun, and will be completing training with staff to ensure they are up to speed with webchat and the production of online materials. There are already active social media accounts and the service will continue to utilise these. Page visits, interactions and online forms will continue to be monitored to keep track of how and how often the service is accessed, and seek feedback from users of this refreshed system. This information will be tracked where possible against our current footfall on a quarterly basis in order to assess the full impact and usage of the service, reported to the Education Directorate and also to the Preparing for Adulthood – Education sub-group, which oversees the impact of post-16 transitions on SEND learners.

If these changes do occur, it will be supported with a strong communications campaign in partnership with key stakeholders'/partner services to ensure that current apprentices, schools, parents/carers and future apprentices are notified and given the information to how to access this support within the new model. This will include direct contact with our stakeholders wherever possible, including emails, printed materials (e.g. posters in public locations) and a social media campaign.

Whilst some service users may be used to a face-to-face service, others may find it more convenient to discuss online or over the telephone so they do not have to travel into the town centre. When looking at the data of usage for the year 16-17, one target that has not been reached is supporting people from priority areas into apprenticeships, it could be that this is a new opportunity to explore how best to engage with these people, and involve them in the creation of a modified service.

## **Stage 4: Decision Stage**

The EIA is a live document and should accompany the decision at all points throughout the process.

The completed EIA form should be included as an appendix to documents for decision to highlight the key equality and diversity issues which ought to be considered as part of the decision.

## PROPOSAL: - Youth Offending Service

Service Area	Current Budget £	Proposed Reduction £	Deadline Delivery
<b>Stockport Family – Youth Offending Service</b>	569,452	50,322	1 <sup>st</sup> April 18
<b>Outline:</b> This proposal reduces the preventative offer from YOS by decreasing the YOS Support Worker Team by 2 FTE.			
<b>Risks:</b> Too harsh a reduction in prevention will lead to poorer outcomes for vulnerable families and future increased demand on already stretched statutory services. There is also a risk to the Stockport Family delivery model as preventative provision is reduced, leading to a negative impact on young people's outcomes, schools and communities.			
<b>Mitigation:</b> The posts in scope are vacant posts that will be disestablished so avoiding redundancy. The consolidation of the service and contribution to the All Age Strengthening Families and Communities strategy will enable more appropriate targeting of support to those most in need in order to realise greatest improvement in outcomes for the most vulnerable that may escalate into statutory provision.			
<b>Update on development of the proposal:</b> - Awaiting update from Jacqui Belfield Smith			

## PROPOSAL: - Stockport Family – School Age Plus

Service Area	Current Budget £	Proposed Reduction £	Deadline Delivery
<b>Stockport Family – School Aged Plus</b>	1,075,273	70,598	1 <sup>st</sup> April 18
<b>Outline:</b> This proposal reduces the number of School Age Plus workers. These link officers work directly with schools, with a key role in developing the Team around the School programme. They provide advice and support to both school staff as well as children and families, and identify and support issues as they emerge to stop escalation to statutory services.			
<b>Risks:</b> The Team Around the School model is fairly recently established and was commended by Ofsted as identifying and responding to the emerging needs of children. This is an important part of the Stockport Family model and early evidence of effective TAS provision in schools shows that it is reducing demand on the Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH). This decision carries a risk of destabilising the model and impacting on outcomes for vulnerable children and families and in turn increasing pressure on statutory services.			
<b>Mitigation:</b> This is not a direct cut in preventative provision as the proposal is to recruit an additional 2 Early Years Senior Officers, however it will reduce early help capacity over all in the school age provision. The School Age Plus Worker capacity will be reduced firstly through any vacancies and then ring-fenced to these 2 new posts as the skills and abilities required are very similar but the focus changes to 0-4yrs children and their families and supporting Early Years provider. We believe a strengthened Start Well offer will maximise preventative impact providing a focus on ensuring all vulnerable children get the best start in life and become school ready. The reduced school link capacity will be absorbed by the remaining team. The Start Well offer is detailed in the following section.			
<b>Update on the development of the proposal:</b> - See update for Children's Centres and Start Well Offer proposal below for further details			

## PROPOSAL: - Children's Centres and Start Well Offer

The following proposal, included in the draft business case agreed by Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017, will involve a reduction and / or redesign in services in 2018/19 and has been subject to a combination of staffing, public and / or partner consultations and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

The full report detailing the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA is appended.

The 'risks' and 'mitigation' section of the 'proposal summary' (below) has been updated to reflect the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA.

Please note that further updates will be made, as necessary, following the completion of the staffing consultation on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

Service Area	Current Budget	Proposed Reduction	
<b>Stockport Family – START WELL</b>	407,468	64,639	1st April 18
<p><b>Outline:</b> The Start Well offer (pre-birth to school age) will refocus support with families and prepare children for school using the 8-stage assessment model, evidence based interventions and strong collaborative working to produce significant improvement in school readiness for children in Priority areas, including those with special needs and disabilities. Early identification of need and intervention is paramount to this model to reduce the likely need for statutory provision and high cost placements.</p> <p>This proposal will remodel the locality management of the Children Centre and early years offer to focus on the leadership of the Start Well programme. This will involve the redesign and restructure of Children's Centres, Early Years and Childcare and Portage services. It will apply the learning from the Brinnington family pilot and Belmont and Lancashire Hill early adopter and will consolidate funds spent on existing Children's Centres to maximise the Start Well offer to vulnerable children and families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adswold and Brinnington will be maintained as registered Children's Centres but renamed Start Well Hubs.</li><li>• Stockport Central and Belmont/Lancashire Hill will be de-designated and re-modelled to become Start Well satellites</li><li>• Reddish Vale (already de-designated will also become a Start Well satellite)</li></ul> <p>Edgeley / Cheadle Heath and Bredbury/Romiley/Woodley – consultation needs to be undertaken about the feasibility of transferring these sites back to their hosts.</p> <p><b>Risks:</b> Public consultation was required for the de-designation for 2 of the 4 Children's Centres. The risk of not delivering a Start Well model would have a direct impact on the school readiness of our most vulnerable children in Priority areas. The proposed Start Well model has been designed with a reduced financial envelope of £150K to contribute to the 18/19 savings so the success of the model will rely on the ability to obtain alternative sources of funding that are not cash limit.</p> <p>Following the consultation, one of the schools (St Marks - Bredbury, Romiley and Woodley Stockport Family site) is not interested in taking back the site so we need to consider alternative plans for the future and in the meantime we need to retain £15k to cover the minimal running cost</p>			

The transfer of the site to Lark Hill will also incorporate a small one off transition fee of approximately £800

**Mitigation:** The All Age Strengthening Families and Communities Strategy will be underpinned by the Start Well offer (pre-birth to school age) which will refocus support with families and prepare children for school, bringing together early years services to ensure children get the best possible start in life. This is an opportunity to rethink the current offer and maximise the opportunities created through transformation. Start Well is an important Greater Manchester priority and it is the ambition of GMCA that all children are school ready. The Brinnington Family Pilot and Belmont Lancashire Hill GM Early Adopter have evidence of impact on school readiness and these foundations will be built on for the Start Well integrated approach. Whilst there will be changes to the way services are delivered, there will not be a reduction in capacity to deliver frontline services. More work is in progress to ensure that plans for Edgeley/Cheadle Heath and Bredbury/ Romiley/ Woodley are fully scoped.

The financial implications of retaining the Bredbury, Romiley and Woodley Stockport Family site are being considered and will be built into the Medium Term Financial Plan for 208/19; during this time options for alternative use of the site will be explored.

**Update on development of proposal: -**

- Consultation to test the feasibility of proposals to transfer children's centres back to their hosts and to assess the impact of de-designation of two centres has been completed;
- St Mark's primary school is not interested in taking back the Bredbury, Romiley and Woodley site;
- Alternative plans for this site will need to be considered and £15k will need to be retained to cover minimal running costs in the meantime. Consideration of how this will be addressed will now take place;
- The transfer of the Edgeley and Cheadle CC to Larkhill Primary School will require a one off transition fee of approx. £800.

## **Public Consultation Report - Children's Centres and Start Well Offer**

### **Executive Summary**

There was strong overall agreement with the proposals for Brinnington Children's Centre (73%) and Abacus Children's Centre (70%).

The proposal for Belmont & Lancashire Hill Children's Centre received a mixed response with 55% agreement.

There was disagreement for the proposals at Edgeley, Cheadle Heath and Stockport Central Children's Centre with 57% overall disagreement and the strongest level of disagreement at Bredbury, Romiley and Woodley Stockport Family Site (79% disagreement).

### **Background**

To achieve the ambition of Start Well, the Council is making the following proposals about Children's Centre and Stockport Family.

- Keep two of our Sure Start Children's Centres but rename them as 'Start Well Hubs' and continue to deliver integrated early years services.
- De-designate the other two Children's Centres and rename as, 'Start Well Satellites' and continue to deliver integrated early years services.
- Transfer the responsibility of some existing Children's Centre space and a Stockport Family site to one or more of our stakeholders.

Primarily the proposals would result in Stockport having fewer designated Sure Start Children's Centres, with some Children's Centres becoming Start Well Satellites.

Secondly, the proposals would result in the transfer of responsibility for identified Children's Centre space and a Stockport Family site to one or more of our stakeholders.

De-designating two of the four Children Centres will provide the freedom and flexibility to ensure a fit for purpose model. It would allow more staff time to focus on working with families rather than administrative requirements.

The transfer of other identified buildings to host sites would enable options to be considered for the use of the space for other early years provision.

In communities where there is no Hub or Satellite, access to Start Well services will be available through the integrated Stockport Family Service and in partnership with schools. Access to services and interventions at any Start Well Hub or Satellite in Stockport would continue where need has been identified. Teams would work within localities and would operate from Start Well Hubs, Satellites and Health Centres.

## Methodology

The consultation took place simultaneously online and via paper copies available in Children's Centres. The process was also informed by three focus groups; these were held with the ECH SC Advisory Board, the Abacus Advisory Board and All Saints CE Primary School.

There were a total of 202 responses to the online consultation. Of these, 161 (81%) were parents & carers. Of the remaining respondents: 5 (3%) were in Children's Social Care, 4 (2%) were health visitors, 4 (2%) were Early Years Providers, 3 (2%) were Third sector, 2 (1%) each were stakeholders or head teachers. There was one childminder and one adult education practitioner apiece, whilst the remaining 16 (8%) selected 'other'.

Of those who responded to the question, a total of 164 (92%) identified as female, whilst 11 (6%) identified as male. 4 (2%) of those who responded selected 'prefer not to answer'.

14 (8%) respondents reported having a disability or a limiting long-term illness.

The average age of the 202 respondents was 37. The youngest respondent was 19 years of age, with the eldest being 69.

In response to the question 'how would you define your ethnic group', 162 (91%) respondents selected 'White', 5 (3%) selected 'Asian or Asian British', 4 (2%) selected 'Mixed'. 6 (3%) respondents selected 'prefer not to answer'.

74 (41%) respondents defined their religion or belief as Christian, and 3 (2%) respondents defined their religion or belief as Hindu. 84 (47%) respondents selected 'no religion', 12 (7%) selected 'prefer not to answer' whilst 5 (3%) selected 'other'. Of those who selected 'other' and specified, one respondent defined their religion or belief as Pagan, one Roman Catholic and one Church of England.

There were a total of 20 responses to the paper consultation. Of these, 18 (90%) were parents & carers, and one was in Children's Social Care. The remaining respondent selected 'other'.

A total of 18 respondents identified as female, whilst 2 identified as male.

2 (10%) respondents reported having a disability or a limiting long-term illness.

The average age of the 20 respondents was 34. The youngest respondent was 23 years of age, with the eldest being 57.

In response to the question 'how would you define your ethnic group', 17 (85%) respondents selected 'White', one selected 'Mixed', one 'Asian or Asian British' and one 'Black or Black British'.

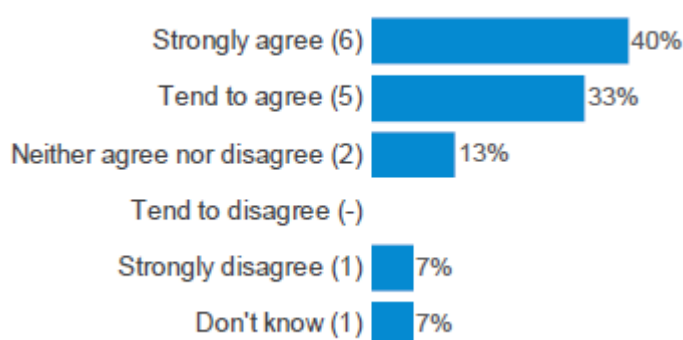
8 (40%) respondents defined their religion or belief as Christian, and one respondent defined their religion or belief as Muslim. The remaining 11 (55%) respondents selected 'no religion'.

## Results

The online and paper results have been combined as there is no difference to the trend in results between the two methods of survey. The following results therefore represent 222 complete responses to the public consultation.

### Proposal 1: “Brinnington Children’s Centre

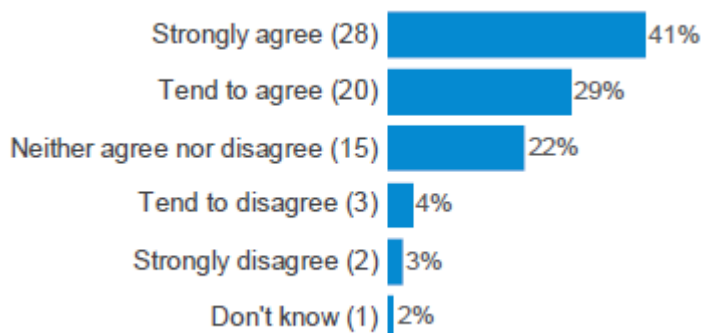
This centre would remain as a Sure Start Children’s Centre but renamed ‘Brinnington Start Well Hub’. The current offer and activity would be maintained. The Hub would support access to Start Well services, the co-location of staff and further coordination of integrated working.”



The chart shows that a total of 6 (40%) respondents to this proposal strongly agree, 5 (33%) tend to agree, 2 (13%) neither agree nor disagree, whilst one respondent each chose strongly disagree or don't know.

### Proposal 2: “Abacus Children’s Centre

This centre would remain as a Sure Start Children’s Centre but renamed ‘Abacus Start Well Hub’. The current offer and activity would be maintained. The Hub would support access to Start Well services, the co-location of staff and further coordination of integrated working. The responsibility for the Children’s Centre space at the Bridgehall site will remain with the Local Authority who will work with other council services and community groups to explore optimal use of space. The current activity at the site would be maintained within the geographical area and we will work with providers to find sustainable solutions to maintain early years’ provision.”

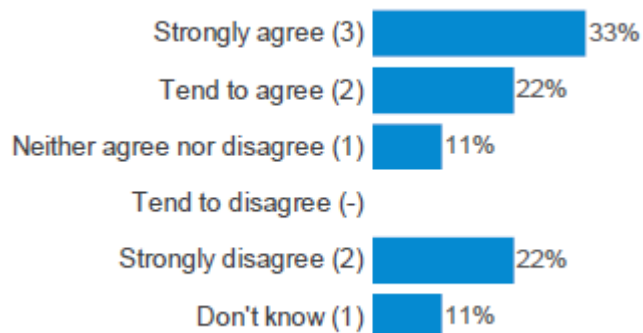




The chart shows that a total of 28 (41%) respondents strongly agree, 20 (29%) respondents tend to agree, 15 (22%) respondents neither agree nor disagree, 3 (4%) respondents tend to disagree, and 2 (3%) strongly disagree with the proposals. One respondent selected 'don't know'.

#### Proposal 3: "Belmont and Lancashire Hill Children's Centre

This centre would be de-designated and remodelled as a 'Belmont and Lancashire Hill Start Well Satellite'. The current offer and activity would be maintained and the Start Well offer developed."



The chart shows that a total of 3 (33%) respondents strongly agree, 2 (22%) respondents tend to agree, 2 (22%) respondents strongly disagree and one respondent each selected 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'don't know'.

#### Proposal 4: "Edgeley, Cheadle Heath and Stockport Central Children's Centre

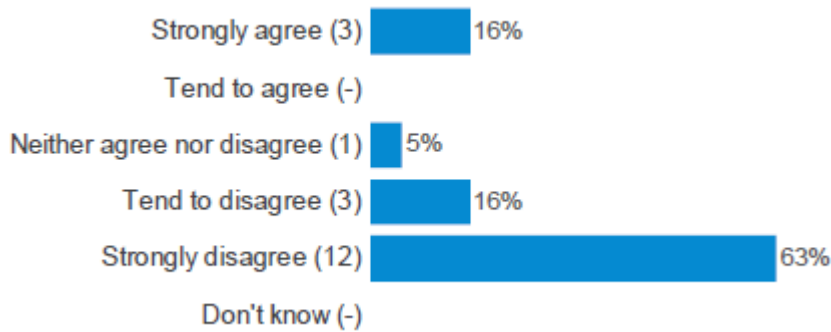
This centre would be de-designated and remodelled as 'Stockport Central Start Well Satellite'. The current offer and activity at the Stockport Central site will be maintained and the Start Well offer developed. The responsibility for the Edgeley and Cheadle Heath site will transfer to Lark Hill nursery or one of our other stakeholders. The current activity at this site will be maintained within the geographical area alongside the development of the Start Well offer."



The chart shows that a total of 11 (31%) respondents strongly disagree, 9 (26%) tend to disagree, 5 (14%) strongly agree, 5 tend to agree, 4 (11%) neither agree nor disagree with the proposal. One respondent selected 'don't know'.

#### Proposal 5: "Bredbury, Romiley and Woodley Stockport Family site

The responsibility for this site will transfer to St Marks Primary School or one of our other stakeholders for the use of other early years' provision. The current activity at this site will be maintained within the geographical area alongside the development of the Start Well offer."



The chart shows that a total of 12 (63%) respondents strongly disagree, 3 (16%) respondents strongly agree, 3 respondents tend to disagree and one respondent neither agrees nor disagrees with the proposal.

### Comments

Note that online and paper comments on the proposals have been combined, as the content does not differ significantly. For each proposal, the key themes arising are as follows:

*What impact will this proposal have on you and the local community?*

#### Proposal 1:

- Children will receive better early year's education if the proposals go ahead.
- The proposal is essentially just a name change.
- The proposal will improve the quality of and access to services.

#### Proposal 2:

- Good for the local community.
- Combining resource in Adswood and Bridgehall risks placing too great a strain on services.
- The proposals are vague, or are unlikely to have any significant effect.

#### Proposal 3:

- It's positive to have resources pooled in one place.
- The centre is well-used.
- The details of the proposal are too vague to work out any likely impact.

#### Proposal 4:

- Concerns that the weekly clinic at Edgeley will change, run a reduced service or cease.
- Continuity – including staff and location – is important, especially for children.
- It's important that this service is still centred around and still involves the local community.

#### Proposal 5:

- Concerns that community space may be lost; families may not be able to access vital services.
- The community centre is currently underused, and this might help to ensure the service is used properly.
- New breastfeeding mothers will lose out disproportionately if the facilities or service are changed.

*Do you have any other comments about this proposal?*

Proposal 1:

- Proposals are too vague to make a judgement as to the likely impact.
- Nothing is changing, new signs and a new logo are a waste of money.
- Concerns over the number of childrens' centre services already cut, and that staff may be left with an unmanageable workload.

Proposal 2:

- The Abacus centre is a very important space for new mums to socialise, and for children to develop. It is important that the pledge not to change the current activities or services is honoured.
- Changing the name is a waste of money/risks confusing the public.

Proposal 3:

- No reason to change the name if the service is remaining consistent.
- A waste of money.
- General support/services would be more tailored to the community.
- Insufficient information provided.

Proposal 4:

- Concerns over losing the space for community groups, more distant and so less accessible.
- The money put into developing the Childrens' Centre building has now been wasted.
- The proposals are good.

Proposal 5:

- Leave things as they are.
- Everything is based in Brinnington, not enough locally to help families in need.
- The site should continue to be funded as maintaining the Bredbury Family Centre as a contact point is important.

*Do you have any other comments about these proposals?*

- There isn't enough detail in these proposals.
- The Council would be better off making savings elsewhere, especially in management.
- The centres are an excellent community resource, and it's very important to make sure that low income families continue to have the same access to services.
- There is already a lack of childrens' centres. Cutting more will have a negative impact on those requiring help and support.
- Compared to neighbouring areas (Wilmslow and Manchester), the range of services offered in Stockport is already limited.

## **Focus Groups**

Focus Groups were held with the following stakeholders: -

- ECH SC Advisory Board
- Abacus Advisory Board
- All Saints CE Primary School

The key themes raised by these focus groups include: -

- The Children's Centre currently pays 5% of costs for use of the space so the proposal will impact on the host school financially.
- Support is needed to ensure children are 'school ready', with speech and language skills.
- Pleased that the number of Children's Centres are being reduced to a manageable number.
- It is important that scarce resources are targeted at the most needy and interventions and other methods of support are carried out where they are needed.
- There is still much work to be done to support vulnerable families and provide better opportunities for their children. "Start Well" is an apt name for what needs to be the focus.
- The focus needs to be on delivering sustained improvement in outcomes

### **Staff Consultation Report - Children's Centres and Start Well Offer**

Staff consultation closed on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Risks and mitigations have been updated as appropriate.

Equality Impact Assessment	
Title: <b>START WELL</b>	Date: 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2017
	Stage: draft
	Lead Officer: Heidi Shaw and Maura Appleby

## Stage 1: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

### About Equality Impact Assessments

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to certain things every time it makes a decision. Due regard means having information about the equality impacts of a proposed course of action when a decision is made. Where negative impacts (or likely impacts) have been identified, the Council is required to consider alternative or additional courses of action that mitigate the harmful impacts.

There are two aspects to this proposal: - (1) staffing business case and (2) Children's Centres, including the impact of proposed changes to access to services.

In relation to the staffing business case, as the proposals is for a small reduction in staff no further EIA will take place as the HR redundancy policies have had EIAs. Also, due to the small numbers of staff this will impact, any analysis of equality and diversity data would result in staff being identifiable.

An EIA for the changes to Children Centres is required as these proposals relate to services for children, including vulnerable children and those with developmental and special educational needs. Changes to the Parenting contract are closely linked to the Start Well business case and need to be considered within the same EIA because of the key care pathways that could be potentially affected if the service was reduced.

## Stage 2: What do you know?

A public consultation concerning the proposal to Children's Centres has been undertaken and full report is available. Meetings have been undertaken with Headteachers who are linked to the sites affected by the proposals. Meetings with the Portage Management Team, Educational Psychology colleagues and School Improvement colleagues and Stockport Family Locality Leaders have taken place.

Full details of feedback from the public consultation is included in the consultation report; however key feedback relating to the potential impact of the proposals is outlined below.

Proposal 1: "Brinnington Children's Centre

Overall agreement with the proposals

- Children will receive better early year's education if the proposals go ahead.
- The proposal will improve the quality of and access to services.

Proposal 2: "Abacus Children's Centre

Overall agreement with the proposals

- Good for the local community.
- Combining resource in Adswood and Bridgehall risks placing too great a strain on services.
- The Abacus centre is a very important space for new mums to socialise, and for children to develop. It is important that the pledge not to change the current activities or services is honoured.

Proposal 3: "Belmont and Lancashire Hill Children's Centre

Overall agreement with the proposals

- It's positive to have resources pooled in one place.
- The centre is well-used.
- General support/services would be more tailored to the community.

Proposal 4: "Edgeley, Cheadle Heath and Stockport Central Children's Centre

Overall Disagreement with the Proposals

- Concerns that the weekly clinic at Edgeley will change, run a reduced service or cease.
- Continuity – including staff and location – is important, especially for children.
- It's important that this service is still centred around and still involves the local community.
- Concerns over losing the space for community groups, more distant and so less accessible.

Proposal 5: "Bredbury, Romiley and Woodley Stockport Family site

Overall Disagreement with the Proposals

- Concerns that community space may be lost; families may not be able to access vital services.
- The community centre is currently underused, and this might help to ensure the service is used properly.
- New breastfeeding mothers will lose out disproportionately if the facilities or service are changed.

The Portage Service is a specialist team working directly with young children up to the age of 3 years with developmental needs and special educational needs. The aim of the Start Well proposal is to sustain and enhance the capacity of this service and develop an extended offer to children with these needs.

Consideration has been given to concerns raised that the proposal will reduce the practitioner time available for frontline work within the Portage Team if the Team Manager has a change in role or extension of duties included in the role.

The Parenting Team contract will be reduced by £20K within the current proposal and whilst some of the reduction is in administrative function, there will be a reduced budget for sessional staff who deliver the evening parenting courses. There are usually two per year, potentially this will reduce to 1 per year. This could impact of working parents who are unable to access the daytime courses.

See section below for action to mitigate this potential negative impact

## Stage 2a: Further data and consultation

### Gaps in information or evidence highlighting a potential differential impact

N/A

## Stage 3: Results and Measures

In relation to proposal 4 'Edgeley, Cheadle Heath and Stockport Central Children's Centre', initial discussion with the Headteacher at Larkhill School indicate that there is potential to maintain the Weekly clinic at Edgeley, there is willingness of Health partners to do so also. The Parenting Team are keen to continue to use the the venue to provide courses if the space is still available.

In relation to proposal 5 Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley Stockport Family Centre Site, there is potential to work with stakeholders to locate an early years provision on the site, this needs further scoping and analysis to assess the need and local market needs.

In relation to the Portage Service, the proposal has been amended during the consultation period to maintain the current Portage team core service as it is, the Start Well Team Leader will have an extended role however an extra resource will be deployed to provide the role of Start Well Coordinator in the Locality to support the development of the vision for the Start Well proposal.

A further change to the proposal is to increase the team resource by seconding two Early Years Workers into the team on a rolling basis to develop skills and increase the capacity of the team.

Monitoring of the Portage waiting list and the numbers of children receiving services will be undertaken and reported on.

In relation to the Parenting team contract, pilot online courses for parents who are unable to access evening courses will be available.

## Stage 4: Decision Stage

The EIA is a live document and should accompany the decision at all points throughout the process.

The completed EIA form should be included as an appendix to documents for decision to highlight the key equality and diversity issues which ought to be considered as part of the decision.

**PROPOSAL: - Stockport Family Parenting Service**

Service Area	Current Budget £	Proposed Reduction £	Deadline Delivery
<b>Stockport Family – Parenting Service</b>	178,422	20,000	1 <sup>st</sup> April 18
<p><b>Outline:</b> Children’s Services commission a Parenting Service from Stockport Foundation Trust which delivers intensive evidence based training programmes to parents of identified vulnerable families and provides training advice and guidance to frontline practitioners working with parents to improve whole family outcomes. The service also delivers Parents Support Clinics in Children’s Centres to offer one to one support for parents. This proposal is to reduce the contract value by £20K using new ways of working to accommodate this. The Parenting Service will also be an important part of the Start Well model described above.</p>			
<p><b>Risks:</b> There is a rising demand for support for parents with children of all ages – in 2016/17 there was an increase of 45% of referrals to the service. The Parenting Service is a small team who are highly trained and support the wider workforce to enable all practitioners to be highly effective and deliver good outcomes. The team has a track record of delivering effective parenting interventions (noted by Ofsted). The programmes are key to helping children with conduct disorders, ADHD and supporting families/ carers including adopters and kinship carers. The service supports vulnerable families with young children to be school ready. The Incredible Years/Webster Stratton courses delivered are one of the most effective interventions currently on offer in the UK and the team has developed skills and expertise in this programme over a 10 year period. There is a risk that reducing this budget may impact on the ability to develop community investment opportunities to compliment the parenting offer in Start Well.</p>			
<p><b>Mitigation:</b> The Parenting Service will be an important part of the Start Well approach as described above. The All Age Strengthening Families and Communities Strategy will be underpinned by the Start Well offer (pre-birth to school age) which will refocus support with families and prepare children for school, bringing together early years services to ensure children get the best possible start in life. Additional funding will be sought to strengthen and build the parenting work required to ensure vulnerable children have equal opportunities to reach their school readiness potential.</p>			
<p><b>Update on the development of the proposal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation not required</li> <li>• Proposed savings to be made by a reduction in administrative capacity and a reduction in one evening group per year;</li> <li>• Alternative online options for parents unable to attend daytime sessions will be piloted</li> </ul>			



## PROPOSAL: - KITE Mental Health Contract

The following proposal, included in the draft business case agreed by Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017, will involve a reduction and / or redesign in services in 2018/19 and has been subject to a combination of staffing, public and / or partner consultations and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

The full report detailing the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA is appended.

The 'risks' and 'mitigation' section of the 'proposal summary' (below) has been updated to reflect the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA.

Please note that further updates will be made, as necessary, following the completion of the staffing consultation on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Service Area	Current Budget	Proposed Reduction	
<b>Stockport Family – Mental Health spend including KITE contract (LAC Emotional and Mental Health)</b>	422,240	130,000	1st April 18
<b>Outline:</b> Children's Services jointly commission services from Health providers for targeted mental health support for vulnerable children. The Local Authority provides an enhanced service offer for LAC emotional and mental health to support the emotional and mental health needs of LAC and provides the statutory requirement of undertaking the strengths and difficulties questionnaire SDQs. This is a 55% proportion of the overall local authority funding spent in the mental health commissioned budget (£0.422m). It is proposed to reshape the KITE team specification and commission this provision differently alongside a saving on the current contract price and strengthening integration with health and education colleagues. This would enable continued statutory requirements to be delivered and more integrated assessment and support to prevent placement disruption, saving the LA increased costs.			
<b>Risks:</b> A reduction in this service may impact on the delivery of the local authority statutory requirement and LAC mental health needs will not be prioritised. This in turn would compromise stability of placements and ultimately result in placement moves, thus increasing placement costs for the authority. This is not cost effective ie. Supporting 1 child to remain in a sustainable foster placement, as opposed to the placement disrupting and the child needing a residential placement, avoids additional costs of £0.120m-£0.17m per annum per child.  Consultation highlighted risks relating to a reduction in service effectiveness as a result of replacing qualified staff with unqualified staff, increased pressure on the Looked After Children Psychologist and reduced mental health outcomes for Looked After Children.			
<b>Mitigation:</b> The service will be re-designed within a reduced financial envelope to be more efficient and there will be greater integration with key partners. Close collaborative commissioning conversations and negotiations will be required between SMBC, Education, Stockport Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS England to ensure our LAC population are considered as a priority and receive services they need in a timely manner. Further external funding opportunities will also be sought.  Following the consultation comments, an alternative proposal has been developed in partnership with key colleagues within the budget envelope and is being considered for further comments. This			

proposal reflects the view for retaining most specialist workers for our LAC and maintaining the clinical oversight from Healthy Young minds. This model consists of;

- 0.5 Clinical Psychologist (Stockport LAC)
- 3x SO2 Social Workers (Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead)

\*One of these SW posts will be funded from the locality SW establishment

These Social Worker posts will be caseholding with designated time for Emotional wellbeing and Mental Health lead functions focusing on; statutory responsibility for SDQ and holistic LAC health assessment, advice and consultancy, time-limited direct work & group work for parents/ carers.

**Update on the development of the proposal**

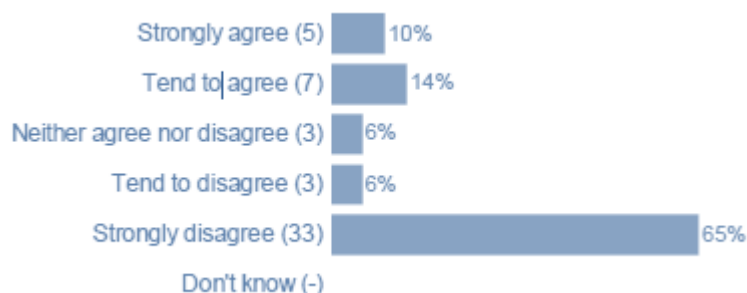
- Stakeholder and staffing consultation has been completed
- An alternative proposal has been developed within the financial envelope, which supports the preference to retain the most specialist workers for LAC

## Consultation Report - KITE

### Executive Summary

Of 51 respondents, 71% disagreed with the proposals. This figure includes 65% who selected 'strongly disagree' and 6% who selected 'tend to disagree'.

24% of respondents expressed support (10% 'strongly agree'; 14% 'tend to agree') whilst a total of 6% selected 'neither agree nor disagree'.



### Background

The Kite Team of 3.59 posts currently provide assessment and interventions for Looked After Children and Children in Need managed by Healthy Young Minds. The proposal is to cease the Kite Team and establish 2 new Health and Wellbeing practitioner posts re-focusing their work to deliver the local authority statutory duties to promote health and wellbeing for looked after children. The proposal is for the new posts to be managed by the Local Authority- Education Psychology Service making a saving of £130k. This proposal would strengthen integrated working with schools, school nurses and Stockport Family colleagues with clear agreed pathways into Healthy Young Minds for accessing specialist mental health services.

### Methodology

An online survey was live from 6<sup>th</sup> October with responses back on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

There were a total of 51 responses to the survey. Of these: 11 (22%) were foster carers or carers;; 11 (22%) were from the Healthy Young Minds service; 8 (16%) were social workers; 6 (12%) were parents & service users; 4 (8%) were School/SEN & Inclusion. There was one respondent from the KITE service and one CCG commissioner. 9 respondents (18%) selected 'other'.

### Results

In total, there were 51 respondents to the proposal. Of these, 71% disagreed with the proposals (65% 'strongly disagree'; 6% 'tend to disagree'), 24% expressed support (10% strongly agree; 14% 'tend to agree').

Respondents were then asked what impact, if any, they felt the proposals might have on them. There were 40 open-ended responses. The key themes arising from these responses included:

- Concerns over replacing qualified staff with unqualified staff, how this might reduce service effectiveness or simply push demand on to other services.
- Specific concerns about how replacing clinically-trained staff might increase pressure on the LAC psychologist and harm outcomes for young people.

- Specific concerns about how this might reduce service accessibility, particularly 1-to-1 sessions.

Respondents were next asked whether they had any other comments or suggestions relating to the proposals. There were 23 open-ended responses. The key themes arising from these responses were:

- That the Council might be failing to meet its obligations under the Equality Act if the proposals are implemented.
- That the proposals are undervaluing the KITE team.
- Appeals to work closely with the CCG and Healthy Young Minds to manage pressures in the system.
- General concerns expressed at the negative effects of cuts to the Mental Health Budget.

#### **Staff Consultation Report - KITE**

Staff consultation closed on 24<sup>th</sup> November. Risks and mitigations have been updated as appropriate.

Equality Impact Assessment	
Stockport Family – Mental Health spend including KITE contract (LAC Emotional and Mental Health)	Date: 20 <sup>th</sup> October
	Stage: Consultation  (delete as applicable)
	Lead Officer: Jeanette Warburton

## Stage 1: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

### About Equality Impact Assessments

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to certain things every time it makes a decision. Due regard means having information about the equality impacts of a proposed course of action when a decision is made. Where negative impacts (or likely impacts) have been identified, the Council is required to consider alternative or additional courses of action that mitigate the harmful impacts.

The proposal is to reshape the KITE team and integrate as part of the Educational Psychologist Team. There will be 2 new posts as part of the integrated team. The current KITE team is 3.6 (fte), but there is one vacant post. The reduction will therefore be 0.6 of a post. As this is a small reduction in staff no further EIA will take place as the HR redundancy policies have had EIAs. Also, due to the small numbers of staff this will impact, any analysis of equality and diversity data would result in staff being identifiable.

**PROPOSAL: - Education – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Support Team**

Service Area	Current Budget £	Proposed Reduction £	Deadline Delivery
<b>Education – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Support Team</b>	2,310,989	60,330	1 <sup>st</sup> April 18
<b>Outline:</b> This team receives referrals from parents and professionals for Education Health and Care Plans as well as managing the free school transport offer for children and young people that need support to get to school (Total budget includes all statutory SEND travel costs). There are currently 2 teams undertaking different aspects of the statutory SEND offer centred on the Education Health and Care Plan (needs assessment, plan writing, placement and transport assessment). The proposal is to integrate the roles to ensure that parents and carers are not required to repeat the description of their child's needs and are supported through a single named officer. This would ensure that the child and the family's requirements are assessed adequately and the offer is personalised to meet their needs.			
<b>Risks:</b> By reducing resources, the redesigned team may not be able to deliver a personalised approach to every referral due to increase numbers of children with SEND.			
<b>Mitigation:</b> The proposed redesigned team will improve and develop staff skill mix enabling further resilience of the service area. The Inclusion Services are currently being mapped to ensure their offer is appropriate and targeted at those most in need.			
<b>Update on development of proposal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing consultation has been completed, no comments were received in relation to the Staffing business Case therefore no amendments are proposed</li> <li>All three proposed roles have been taken through the job evaluation process and recommendations made in line with the business plan</li> <li>Should the plan be approved, arrangements are in place for recruitment and interviews in January</li> </ul> The new structure will be fully implemented by April 2018			

**PROPOSAL: - Free School Bus Passes**

The following proposal, included in the draft business case agreed by Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017, involves:

- 1) The C&YP division of Services to People Directorate is required to make £2.5m savings in 2018/19;
- 2) Free School Transport Scheme within this division is required to make £50k saving;
- 3) Policy alignment with the basic statutory eligibility criteria for Free School Transport is anticipated to yield £38k savings (redefining low income eligibility);

This has been subject to a combination of staffing, public and / or partner consultations and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

The full report detailing the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA is appended.

The 'risks' and 'mitigation' section of the 'proposal summary' (below) has been updated to reflect the outcomes of the public consultation and EIA.

Service Area	Current Budget £	Proposed Reduction £	Deadline Delivery
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<b>Education – Free School Bus Passes</b>	502,835	50,000	Part Year from 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept 18
<p><b>Outline:</b> The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made where necessary to facilitate a child's attendance at school based on receipt of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) benefits, age and safe walking distance to school. The proposal is that the current Free School Transport Policy is varied, reducing the current extended entitlement to the statutory minimum level i.e. low income being defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils who qualify for free school meals.</li> <li>• Pupils whose parents/guardians are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Risks:</b> Pupil attendance particularly from priority 1 areas could fall which would have an impact on the outcomes for children and also the wider economy. School attendance is an important priority and cutting transportation historically has impacted this and placed more pressure on other services such as Children's Services and School Improvement. This will also have a financial impact to families living in priority 1 areas who are not in receipt of passported benefits.</p> <p>The change proposed means that only those families on the maximum Working Tax Credit or equivalent Universal Credit would be eligible for a bus pass. Brinnington would be the most affected with 79 of the current 84 bus passes rescinded.</p> <p>Pupil numbers are expected to increase causing rise in statutory eligible applicants with no headroom left in the budget to cover these costs. As school capacity diminishes the number of unreasonable offers increases placing extra pressure on the transport budget as more children are travelling the longer distances that meet the statutory thresholds for free travel. The implementation of Universal Credit may distort benefit entitlement causing more students to be eligible.</p>			
<p><b>Mitigation:</b> Under the Statutory Guidance, Local Authorities are required to consult widely on any proposed changes to their local policies on school travel arrangements with all interested parties. Consultation took place (during term time) between 6<sup>th</sup> October and the 10<sup>th</sup> November. An online survey was available on the Councils Have Your Say page from 6<sup>th</sup> October until 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017.</p> <p>In response to the consultation and EIA results, it has been suggested that the measure proposed could be phased in over a period to allow families to consider their options as we reduce to the statutory minimum offer.</p> <p>The reduction or policy change could be introduced in a number of ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Universal approach with the immediate removal of free bus passes from all the target group;</li> <li>2) Apply to new applicants and at points of school change or circumstances change;</li> <li>3) Apply to new applicants but preserve the benefit for all those in receipt of it until they complete all (to age 19) compulsory schooling.</li> </ol> <p>Following the consultation it is clear that there is support for a phased removal of this additional benefit: implementing the change to all new applicants and to honour renewal applications under the existing policy providing the child remains eligible under the existing policy and their circumstances remain unchanged.</p> <p>Although some parts of Brinnington are within the 3 miles walking limit of local schools, to Reddish Vale, the only route is through Reddish Vale Country Park which is not designated as a safe route therefore these families <b>would not</b> be affected by the proposal.</p>			

Monitoring of attendance rates of pupils whose families are impacted by the changes to the provision of free school bus passes will take place.

In response to concerns raised in the public consultation around the difficulties that the proposed measure might have on families being able to send their children to a school which meets their needs, it has been highlighted that there exist the following alternative forms of provision for children who have a disability.

Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance June 2014 published by the Government states that children who have mobility problems through disability or through a temporary medical condition who are unable to walk, even short distances and who attend a qualifying school within the statutory distance may be eligible for Free School Transport if the Local Authority cannot make arrangements for the child to attend a closer qualifying school.

Children who are not eligible under the above criteria may be eligible for free or low cost transport through Transport for Greater Manchester's own scheme. Alongside this there is also a national review of transport eligibility that is likely to come into force in 2019 so this proposal is likely to be an interim measure prior to broader changes.

**Update on development of proposal: -**

- Stakeholder consultation has been completed
- High rate of rejection for the proposals, and some support for measures to be phased in
- Target is to save £50K, but £38K is likely to be more realistic, dependent on how many applications come forward
- Following a review of consultation responses and a consideration of implications of this proposal further exploration and consideration of the policy and options to mitigate impact of these changes will now be undertaken. A further update of this proposal will therefore be brought to Cabinet in February for consideration.



## **Consultation Report – Free School Transport**

### **Executive Summary**

There were a total of 540 respondents to the consultation. Of these: 358 (67%) strongly disagree with the proposal; 56 (10%) strongly agree; 49 (9%) tend to disagree; 41 (8%) tend to agree; 21 (4%) neither agree nor disagree; 11 (2%) selected 'don't know'.

On the options consultation question, a total of 412 (78%) respondents selected 'continue to award for the rest of their time in current school', 64 (12%) selected 'change to statutory minimum entitlement for all applications from 2018/19', 54 (10%) selected 'award for one year only 2018/19'.

### **Background**

The Council is reviewing all services that are provided above the statutory level and whether it is able financially to continue to provide services that are discretionary.

The additional cost to Stockport Council of providing these discretionary school bus passes is approximately £38,000 per annum. The removal of the discretionary element from Stockport's Free School Travel Policy would provide a significant saving for the Council.

The Council proposes to remove the discretionary provision it currently awards above the national requirement for free school travel. This means the Council would no longer provide free school travel to those applicants whose parents are in receipt WTC which has been reduced by their income.

### **Methodology**

An online survey was available on the Councils Have Your Say page from 6<sup>th</sup> October until 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017. There were a total of 540 responses to the consultation. An email was sent to various stakeholders alerting them to the online survey.

The consultation was communicated by press releases, social media messages, and posters in various community locations. Paper copies were available on request.

Of those who responded to the question, 372 (74%) identified as female whilst 103 (20%) identified as male. 31 (6%) of respondents preferred not to answer.

61 (12%) respondents consider themselves to have a disability or a limiting long-term illness.

The average age of respondents to the consultation was 42. The youngest respondent was 12 years of age, whilst the eldest was 72.

When asked 'how would you define your ethnic group?', 441 (87%) respondents selected 'White', 16 (3%) selected 'Mixed', 7 (1%) selected 'Asian or Asian British', 2 (>0%) selected 'Black or Black British' and 6 (1%) selected 'Other'. 38 (8%) respondents selected 'prefer not to answer'.

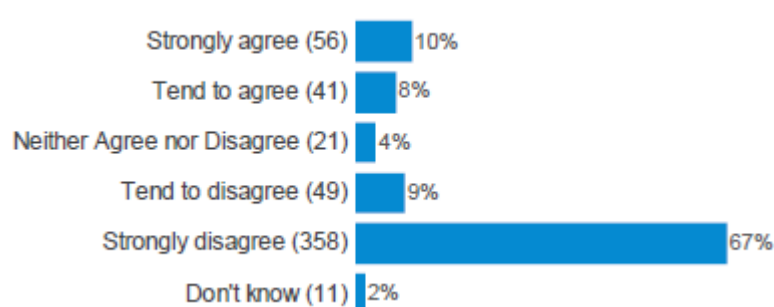
When asked 'how would you define your religion or belief?', 238 (47%) respondents selected 'Christian', 20 (4%) selected 'Other', 17 (3%) selected 'Jewish', 5 (1%) selected 'Muslim'. 170 (33%) respondents selected 'no religion', whilst 58 (11%) selected 'prefer not to answer'.

## Results

There were a total of 540 responses to the consultation. 296 (55%) respondents have a child who currently uses a free school travel pass provided by the Council, whilst 57 (11%) selected 'not applicable'.

452 (85%) respondents are parents/carers, 17 (3%) are pupils, 9 (2%) are school representatives and 3 (1%) are governors. 53 respondents (10%) selected 'other'.

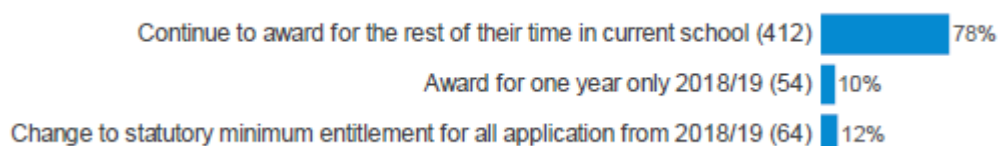
*"How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to review the current policy and remove the discretionary WTC element as part of the eligibility criteria (In line with the national required minimum)? This means the Council would no longer provide free school travel to those applicants whose parents are in receipt Working Tax Credit which has been reduced by their income."*



The chart above shows that, of these: 358 (67%) strongly disagree with the proposal; 56 (10%) strongly agree; 49 (9%) tend to disagree; 41 (8%) tend to agree; 21 (4%) neither agree nor disagree; 11 (2%) selected 'don't know'.

*"Given that parents in receipt of a discretionary free school travel pass for their children will have an expectation (subject to their financial circumstance not changing) that these would continue in subsequent years."*

*Which of the following options do you think the council should implement?"*



The chart above shows that, on the options consultation question, a total of 412 (78%) respondents selected 'continue to award for the rest of their time in current school', 64 (12%) selected 'change to statutory minimum entitlement for all applications from 2018/19', 54 (10%) selected 'award for one year only 2018/19'.

There were 288 open-ended responses to the consultation. The key themes arising from the comments include:

- It's wrong to take away free school transport from children who are already in receipt of this service/at all.

- The proposal would shift a heavy financial burden on to the parents of children currently in receipt of this service.
- Concern that this is a cost-cutting option in the first place.
- The proposed changes would make it difficult for families to continue sending their disabled children to their school of choice.
- Changes would make it particularly difficult for children attending a religious school to continue doing so.
- Traffic would increase if pooled transport is withdrawn.

## Local Authority Comment

- The proposal seeks to remove a discretionary extension of the statutory Free School Transport eligibility criteria. Alongside the main proposal the Local Authority has consulted as to how it should phase the discretionary extension out of its future policy including how it will treat those children who are currently eligible solely on the discretionary extension grounds.
- Within the statutory guidance Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance June 2014 the Government state their belief that it is reasonable to expect a child under the age of 8 to walk to school no greater than 2 miles from their home address and for a child over the age of 8, no greater than 3 miles from their home address. As such, the Government's understand is no such financial burden would be passed to the parents as these children should be walking to and from school.
- Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance June 2014 published by the Government states that children who have mobility problems through disability or through a temporary medical condition who are unable to walk, even short distances and who attend a qualifying school within the statutory distance may be eligible for Free School Transport if the Local Authority cannot make arrangements for the child to attend a closer qualifying school.
- Children who are not eligible under the above criteria may be eligible for free or low cost transport through Transport for Greater Manchester's own scheme.
- Children who follow faith and wish to attend a relevant denominational school are not disproportionately affected by the proposed change. Eligibility for Working Tax Credits does not feature faith as a criteria. Further Stockport provides for children who follow a relevant faith within its policy. To ascertain the qualifying school of a child baptised into the Catholic faith, Stockport only look to Catholic schools. Stockport is not compelled to do this and can look to any school regardless of faith. In this regard Stockport positively discriminates.
- The proposal does not seek to remove pooled transport. Parents can make a choice as to how their child gets to and from according to their own priorities.

## Concluding remarks on consultation findings

The Council is reviewing all services that are provided above the statutory level and whether it is able financially to continue to provide services that are discretionary.

The additional cost to Stockport Council of providing these discretionary school bus passes is approximately £38,000 per annum. The removal of the discretionary element from Stockport's Free School Travel Policy would provide a significant saving for the Council.

Remove the discretionary WTC element as part of the eligibility criteria (In line with the national required minimum)	The Local Authority advises supporting the proposal.
Should the above be approved, how should the LA implement the proposal	The Local Authority advises implementing the change to all new applicants and to

	honour renewal applications under the existing policy providing the child remains eligible under the existing policy and their circumstances remain unchanged.
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## Equality Impact Assessment – Free School Transport

<b>Title: Free School Transport</b>	<b>Date: 12 September 2017</b>
	<b>Stage: Decision</b>
	<b>Lead Officer: Stephen Bell</b>

### Stage 1: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

Yes, as decisions are being made regarding the future provision of Free School Transport in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit and possible changes to the existing eligibility criteria.

This EIA considers the potential change to the criteria within the existing Free School Transport policy to the minimum statutory duty for the above category of applicants.

The document will consider the potential impact of the proposal with regard to protected characteristics and ensure that the needs of individual groups within the customer base are met.

### Stage 2: What do you know?

Background already presented as part of this business case. Further to this:

#### Free School Travel Pass Uptake

The table below provides information on free school travel pass uptake in Stockport since 2011. It is evident from the figures provided that there has been a decrease year on year. The decrease ties in with pupil numbers in the secondary sector whereby they've plateaued; capacity has been added to the system in preparation for predicated increase in pupil numbers and as such competition for places has been eased. Pupil numbers are going to rise as these cohorts have been tracked through primary sector. Of the 1308 passes issued (2016/17) 169 are for families who are not in receipt of their maximum Working Tax Credit, equalling 12.9% of total applications in this period.

YEAR	TOTAL PASSES ISSUED
2011/12	1482
2012/13	1497
2013/14	1476
2014/15	1419
2015/16	1368
2016/17	1308

Breakdown of working tax credit from this students eligible in 2016/17

## Stage 2: What do you know?

	NUMBER	COST
MAXIMUM WORKING TAX CREDIT	12	£4,537
BELOW MAXIMUM WORKING TAX CREDIT	169	£63,989
TOTAL	181	£68,526

Extended entitlement implementation in other local authorities

AUTHORITY	CRITERIA
Bolton	Maximum level
Bury	Maximum level
Manchester	Maximum level
Oldham	Maximum level
Rochdale	Maximum level
Salford	Maximum level
Stockport	Any level of WTC
Tameside	Maximum level
Trafford	Maximum level
Wigan	Maximum level
Blackpool	Maximum level
Halton	Maximum level
Cheshire East	Maximum level
St. Helens	Maximum level

Breakdown of working tax credit by area in 2016/17

	MAX WTC	WTC	Total
Adswood		14	14
Bramhall		1	1
Bredbury		1	1
Brinnington	5	79	84
Cale Green	1	14	15
Cheadle		5	5
Cheadle Heath		4	4
Cheadle Hulme		3	3
Compstall		2	2
Davenport		1	1
Edgeley	3	3	6
Gatley		1	1
Hazel Grove		6	6
Heald Green		6	6
Heaton Chapel		1	1
Heaton Norris		1	1
High Lane		4	4
Marple		3	3

## Stage 2: What do you know?

Marple Bridge		1	1
Mellor		1	1
North Reddish		2	2
Offerton	2	5	7
Portwood		3	3
Romiley	1	4	5
South Reddish		1	1
Woodford		2	2

There is a potential negative impact on low income families who fall just below the threshold for maximum Working Tax Credits, who do not receive free school meals and live over 2 miles from a suitable school, which would entitle them to free school transport. This is the group that is most likely to be affected by the proposed change to eligibility criteria and would result in families either having to pay £378 per child (as at November 2012) for an annual travel pass or seeking alternative arrangements. For families with multiple siblings there is the potential for significant additional costs.

It is important to note that the majority of travel passes issued under the existing eligibility criteria are for pupils from areas of deprivation (priority 1) within the Borough and particularly in Brinnington. For example in 2016/17 46% of the total passes issued were to families who lived in Brinnington and of that 46% only 5.9% will be eligible should the proposals be implemented. Furthermore there is no alternative school provision in the Brinnington area for pupils to attend without the need for bus travel.

### **PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS**

**Race:** In the context of free school travel in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, consideration of this matter indicates it is unlikely that there will be any differential impact.

**Disability:** In the context of free school travel in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, consideration of this matter indicates it is unlikely that there will be any differential impact.

**Gender:** In the context of free school travel in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, consideration of this matter indicates it is unlikely that there will be any differential impact.

**Religion and Belief:** In the context of free school travel in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, consideration of this matter indicates it is unlikely that there will be any differential impact.

**Sexual Orientation:** In the context of free school travel in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, consideration of this matter indicates it is unlikely that there will be any differential impact.

**Age:** In the context of free school travel in respect to families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, consideration of this matter indicates it is unlikely that there will be any differential impact.

**Socio-economic:** Low income families are likely to be affected by the proposal.

## Stage 2: What do you know?

### Stage 2a: Further Data and Consultation

Through completion of the following:

- Benchmarking with other Local Authorities;
- Review of national and local context.

We have a comprehensive understanding of the particular issues pertinent to this Equality Impact Assessment. The latter will be further developed in consultation with members of the general public and schools later in the autumn term.

A public consultation will take place from 2 October 2017 and 30 October 2017. It will target and seek views from :

- Stockport residents and parents of children attending Stockport schools
- Admissions Forum
- All other Admissions Authorities
- All other Greater Manchester Local Authorities
- Diocesan Authorities
- Senior Management Partnership (membership includes Services to People Corporate/Service Directors and Head Teacher representatives from the various sectors)
- Teaching Unions

**A paper discussing the findings of the consultation will be published in early November 2017.**

### Stage 3: Results and Measures

### Stage 4: Decision Stage



## **APPENDIX 2 - Stockport All Age, Strengthening Families and Communities Strategy 2018-2022 Project / Programme Vision**

As a result of the Children's Services Star Chamber process which has been undertaken over the past 2 months, a number of cross cutting themes have been identified requiring the need to develop a system wide strategy. The details of this are outlined below:-

### **STOCKPORT "ALL AGE, STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGY 2018-2022"** **Developing individuals' resilience and independence promoting inclusion and reducing inequalities.**

The next phase of our whole system integration, which began with Stockport Family, is to integrate further, working together, this will:-

- Deliver whole system Public Sector Reform, supporting a business critical system that continues to respond to significant financial challenge and complex need
- Reducing inequalities, starting in the early years with the 8 stage model and working through the whole life course, closing the achievement gap and getting young people and parents in to work and maintaining independence
- Intervene early and reduce demand on statutory services and strengthens our families and communities
- Provide whole family working across our services
- Ensure successful transition at every stage of the life journey in particular preparation for independent adulthood through education, skills and training into employment
- Help us to understand our communities and what their needs are and as a consequence deliver interventions that are research informed and evidence based
- Improve outcomes in education, health, well-being and increase family and community resilience

### **Delivered by a workforce that is high performing and responsive to need, equipped with the right tools to deliver the best outcomes for our families and communities:**

- Proactive integrated leadership and accountability – strengthening leadership at all levels of the system
- Delivering shared outcomes
- A common induction for all staff
- High quality co-ordinated training offer which promotes culture change and continuous improvement
- Effective and reflective supervision to drive performance and deliver the best outcomes for our families and communities
- Uses data, information and technology as a lever to create more time to support the people we work with

### **Underpinned by shared values**

- **Respectful Practice** - Treat all participants fairly and without discrimination
- **Creating a safe inclusive culture** - Enable all participants to engage in restorative approaches
- **Effective communication** - Communicate and listen to all partners
- **Reflective Practice** - Commitment to an integrated reflective culture ensuring the family is at the centre

- **Building & maintaining relationships** - Developing a trusting restorative relationships with children, families and other agencies

**How we will further develop our services to meet demand:**

- All age collective commissioning across services with a shared outcomes focus
- Further development of sufficiency of local specialist provision including Council run children's homes (to reduce spend on expensive external placements) and SEND provision
- Pursue alternative funding strategies (income generation opportunities, Greater Manchester funding)
- Optimise the GM level offer
- Engage with communities and our workforces to co-produce new solutions
- Draw on capacity within schools and other anchor institutions such as GP practices and crucially communities
- Use data, information and technology to inform service delivery based on demands and to inform commissioning

We would expect a detailed strategy to be ready by December 2018. The first meeting towards achieving this has been planned for December.