This report summarises the progress to date of the establishment of children’s centres in the Royal Borough and makes recommendations for their future funding and development.

**FOR DECISION/ INFORMATION/ COMMENT**

### 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 On September 13th 2006, the Family and Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny committee (OSC) agreed to establish a sub-group to work with officers to produce recommendations on the policy issues involved in the development of a children’s centre strategy.

1.2 The Children’s Centre programme is designed to give the best start to life for every child by bringing together childcare, early education, health, employment and family support services for pre-school children and their families. This programme is predicated on the belief that providing a combination of services placed in a central location, or signposted from a single point, can improve the life chances of children, particularly if they are from deprived backgrounds or living within disadvantaged areas. The ease of access provided by children’s centres improves take up of services and provides the opportunity for a range of support to be offered through integrated services for the child and family.

1.3 The DCSF has funded local authorities for the children’s centre programme in each local area through the General Sure Start Grant (GSSG). The department issues guidance and holds authorities responsible for the achievement of the programme’s aims. Local authorities are responsible for managing the programme for their area and deciding whether to do so directly or to contract out to private or voluntary providers. Local authorities can decide where to locate
centres, whether to build or acquire premises for them and in most cases, to employ staff.

1.4 Children’s centres deliver services to children and families. Exactly what they do depends on local need but they are required to provide integrated early education and childcare, child and family health services, family support and outreach, support for childminders, help for parents and children with special needs and links with Jobcentre Plus.

1.5 Children’s centres are multi-purpose centres. In phase 1, (2004-2006) the Royal Borough was required to establish four centres to serve families living in the wards that fall within the 20% most disadvantaged wards in Golborne, Notting Barns and Cremorne. In 2005 further guidance was issued from the DfES on Phase 2. The Royal Borough is expected to ensure that all families and children within the 30% disadvantaged areas, and ultimately across the other 70% of wards, have access to children’s centre services. The Sure Start unit set a target for a further six centres to be created by March 2008.

1.6 In July 2007, the Together for Children organisation submitted a paper, on behalf of the Royal Borough, stating that this target of a further six centres did not respond to the level of need that was identified locally. The Royal Borough and Together for Children suggested that the required number across the borough should be eight centres in total. They passed this request to the DCSF and on the 15th October it was confirmed that the department agreed with the suggested number of centres.

1.7 Draft capital plans were submitted for the four extra centres in phase 2 of the programme in August 2007. In the first week of September 2007, the capital slippage for phase 2 children’s centres was agreed by the Minister for Children and Families. This allows time, until end of September 2008, to complete work on the four additional sites in the programme when the recommendations in this paper are accepted.

2. THE DEFINITION OF A CHILDREN’S CENTRE IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH

2.1 The opportunity to open and develop services within children’s centres provides the Royal Borough with the means to implement the objectives of Every Child Matters (ECM). Each
of the five outcomes of ECM can be effectively addressed through the services provided within a children’s centre.

2.2 The children’s centre programme brings all partners together to deliver personalised services through children’s trust arrangements. Health services and Job Centre Plus in particular have a strong role to play in working to improve health and well being and reduce disadvantage.

2.3 It is recognised that the boundaries of the council’s responsibility for ensuring the well being and success of all children are not defined by buildings and institutions. The reality of a children’s centre may be one integrated building that provides services directly, or may be defined by bringing together existing services that can be signposted from one venue to others, which work together through a set of management and governance arrangements.

2.4 Children’s centres in the Royal Borough will develop a distinctive character over time. As this character develops we will continue to ensure that the concerns and issues involved in the delivery of this service address the key aims of the borough.

2.5 Some of the many services which support improved outcomes for these children and their families include:

- Focusing on high quality learning environments for children
- Early intervention in speech and language development
- Early support for behaviour concerns
- Recognition of low birth weight and delay in achieving milestones
- Supporting the prevention of ante-natal and post natal depression
- Identifying and preventing mental health problems
- Recognising attachment concerns and the varied emotional response of mothers
- Attention and support for those with alcohol and drug use
- Parenting classes and the development of basic skills
- Advice on healthy eating
- Training and support to re-enter the job market

2.6 Children’s centres in the Royal Borough will be run as partnerships. With the local authority working together with health, employment services, voluntary, maintained and private providers, a range of services can be offered which will
suit children and families within the local context. Services are being built around the needs of children and their families.

3 PHASE 1 AND 2 CHILDREN’S CENTRES

3.1 The four Phase 1 children’s centres were established around three existing nursery schools and one family centre. These are:
- Chelsea Open Air Nursery School and Children’s Centre
- Maxilla Children’s Centre
- Golborne Children’s Centre
- Cheyne Children’s Centre

3.2 These centres are functioning well, and most are providing all the components of the core offer of children’s centres.

3.3 An initial evaluation of Phase 1, undertaken in March 2006, produced a number of key recommendations which have been used to inform the development of phase 2. These include:
- Demonstrating the commitment to include partners in developing the vision for children’s centres and the link with extended services
- Ensuring the provision of enhanced technical and specialist advice
- Developing avenues for local consultation and involvement of parents
- Improving communication and marketing the services on offer to each local community.

3.4 There are five family centres in the borough which have been long established as centres of good practice in the delivery of family support services. These family centres now need to be integrated into the children’s centre model and used as the core for new provision.

3.5 The sites for Phase 2 Children’s Centres are:
- Violet Melchett Children’s Centre
- Colville Children’s Centre (based at Clare Gardens Family Centre, working in partnership with Colville Primary School and Colville Nursery)
- Earl’s Court Children Centre (based at St Cuthbert with St Matthias Primary School)
- St Quintin Children’s Centre (incorporating the Centre for Children with Disabilities)

3.6 Children’s Centre Capital budget 2007-08
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of General Sure Start Capital funding</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2 capital programme (includes remaining underspend from 2006-07)</td>
<td>£ 906,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converting sessional provision to full-daycare (additional funding that can be utilised to develop phase 2 centres)</td>
<td>£ 490,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>£1,397,133</td>
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</table>

Capital funding plans 2007-08:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s Centre</th>
<th>Amount for Furniture and Outdoor Facilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violet Melchett CC</td>
<td>£45,000 for furniture and outdoor facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Quintin’s CC</td>
<td>£440,000 (including £40,000 for furniture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earl’s Court CC</td>
<td>£390,000 (including £30,000 for furniture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colville CC</td>
<td>£355,000 (including £40,000 for furniture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency fund</td>
<td>£167,133 available to meet any overspend in the four capital projects</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Violet Melchett Children’s Centre**

This centre already has the majority of the elements of the core offer for children’s centres and designation of the centre was achieved on 10 September 2007.

**St Quintin’s Children’s Centre**

This centre will be an example of best practice in inclusion in the borough, because it will be a centre integrating children and family services with the centre for children with disabilities. The centre has been designed for staff and children to benefit from the co-location of services. The capital project incorporates refurbishing and extending the current facilities at the family centre.

**Earl’s Court Children’s Centre**

This centre will be sited at St Cuthbert with St Matthias CE Primary School and will work in partnership with voluntary sector childcare and childminders in the local area. The intention is to build on to the side of the existing building to
provide community space, an office for health staff, a counselling room, toilets and a reception. The governing body of the school is considering the options represented to them for the capital work. The diocese will be involved in these decisions and the school and diocese have debated their roles in delivering the children’s centre in early September.

**Colville Children’s Centre**

This centre will be based on Clare Gardens Family Centre and will work in partnership with Colville Primary School and the Colville Nursery. There are plans to refurbish the family centre to improve facilities and create a community room and a re-organised childcare service.

3.7 **St Anne’s Nursery School** is the only maintained nursery school within the Royal Borough that will not be a children’s centre. The headteacher and governors are concerned that this places them in an anomalous position.

3.8 All the other nursery schools were included in the first phase of the children’s centre programme, but St Anne’s school felt it was not able to participate in the programme at that time. The second phase has worked to develop some of the family centres as children’s centres. There were also concerns about the proximity of other children’s centres to St Anne’s and the challenging nature of some of the listed accommodation on the site that needed development to extend facilities, which could not have been managed within the tight DCSF timescale. For these reasons, St Anne’s was not included in phase 2.

3.9 However, St Anne’s Nursery School is in a very strong position to make an excellent contribution to the children’s centre programme within the Royal Borough. The local authority is actively seeking to ensure that St Anne’s is enabled to become part of the Kensington and Chelsea children’s centre programme through supporting its contribution to the training and development of staff and the provision of family learning. The school has a proven record of providing popular, successful family learning, high quality early years training for teachers and other students. Discussions with the governing body will be arranged to develop these plans for the future.

3.10 The school has identified its concerns about the process of identifying children’s centres. There has been no deliberate attempt to exclude St Anne’s but strategic decisions were
necessary to enable progress to be made according to the DCSF timetable. Plans are in hand to develop a bespoke service which St Anne’s can provide to support and enhance the work of the borough with its youngest children and their families.

4. ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE PLACES / DEFINITION OF CHILDREN IN NEED

4.1 Agreements have been put in place to provide a range of childcare places at the family centres in the borough and these will continue when these centres become children’s centres. There are 200 full time equivalent childcare places in total across the five family centres. These places are subject to a Service Level Agreement with Family Services and are subject to regular review. Currently these have been allocated as follows:

- 90 places for ‘children in need’, for a minimum of three days a week. These are free places to parents (paid for by Family Services) and allocated according to the recommendations of local family support teams
- 60 flexible places, a minimum of 3 sessions a week, allocated to children according to needs identified through use of the common assessment framework (CAF) and the criteria agreed with Family Services. These are also free places
- 50 full- and part-time universal places at the rate of £205 per week for a full-time place.

4.2 Family Centre managers work closely with families in need to ensure that parents receive advice and guidance, helping them to develop effective relationships with their children. For this reason it is important that children in need do not always occupy full-time places at the centres, but are encouraged to attend for part of the week only. This would be subject to the working arrangements of the parents.

4.3 Universal places sold to a wide range of parents ensure that there is a good social mix of children. Studies have shown that this social mix improves the outcomes for all children, especially those from the most deprived backgrounds. The universal places have enabled many parents on low incomes to afford childcare at the centres because they are supported through the CAP (Childcare Affordability Programme) administered through the London Development Agency.
4.4 CAP funding is aimed at parents who receive childcare tax credits. Those receiving the highest levels of tax credits may have their fees reduced to as little as £35 to £40 pounds a week, through the combination of Inland Revenue tax credits and the £30 top up contribution from the LDA (which pays the initial cut from the £205 to £175 payment).

4.5 In general all the 200 places at children’s centres are occupied and some centres in the South of the borough have a waiting list. With the universal places spread across the children’s centres, there is a guaranteed income that can be ploughed back into the costs of each centre, making centres more sustainable in the future.

4.6 There has been no noticeable adverse affect on the private and voluntary childcare sector in relation to the promotion and delivery of the universal places as there is a limited number of full-daycare establishments in the borough. A large number of families have chosen to employ nannies to supervise their children because this form of childcare is a great deal more flexible for many parents. It is intended that some children’s centres will also provide training and support for nannies and other forms of childcare.

5. **PLANNING UNIVERSAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN’S CENTRES**

5.1 As part of their Ten Year Childcare Strategy 2004-2014 and consistent with the principles of the Every Child Matters and the Change for Children Programme, the Government believes that universal services must include supporting those in most need. These services should be tailored to meet the needs of individual children, their families, and the communities in which they are based.

5.2 Children’s Centres also play a key role in supporting lone and unemployed parents to develop skills and expertise to help them back into the labour market. This takes the form of providing opportunities for developing basic skills through lifelong learning programmes, access to advice about employment through Job Centre Plus representatives, and affordable childcare.

5.3 Children’s Centres provide access to health services that focus on the needs of both parents and children. These services work towards achieving the Government health targets
associated with increasing the percentage of parents who breastfeed, reducing ante-natal and post-natal depression, improving knowledge of nutrition and reducing obesity, improving speech and language for 0-5 year-old children and smoking cessation.

5.4 The aim is to mainstream the good practice developed in the original DfES Sure Start Local Programmes, which were initiated in 1997 in the 20% most deprived areas of the United Kingdom to combat poverty and empower local people to access preventative health, early education and social services. In Kensington and Chelsea it is proposed that we capitalise on the success of the services established through the Sure Start Local Programme in North Kensington.

5.5 The most effective element of services there is provided through a partnership approach to service delivery, utilising a range of multi-disciplinary teams to meet local need. Mainstreaming these health and family services across the eight children’s centres in the borough will ensure that each of the partners within the new delivery mechanism will be responsible for providing the service it offers and for employing the staff required for the implementation of the programme. This arrangement will safeguard the sustainability of the services. In effect there will be central commissioning of particular services which will ensure a consistency of service in all areas and will enable each service to focus on their area of expertise to achieve the best outcomes for children, families and communities.

5.6 The services that would be considered universal are:

- All aspects of child and family health care in association with NHS and Primary Care Trust
- Speech and language support
- Family learning and ESOL classes in association with Community Learning
- Bookstart in association with the Community Learning
- Home visiting service
- Support from Job Centre Plus and Citizens’ Advice Bureau
- Creche service
- Support through Early Years Advisory Team and Childcare Development Team
- Parenting programme and family support
- Performance Management – collection and evaluation of statistics
5.7 The intention is to finance these services with the children’s centre revenue so that all centres receive consistent and well-organised support. The budget has been planned to ensure that there is an economy of scale and this is a practical way of reducing duplication and waste. If each centre were to set up individual posts for each aspect of the core offer the costs overall would be significantly higher. Also as some centres are designated as 30% disadvantaged and others as 70% less disadvantaged, central organisation and delivery of services will ensure a fair distribution of resources according to need.

5.8 This new service will have a new remit across the whole borough and will continue to work in partnership with a number of agencies in health, family services, libraries and the voluntary sector, commissioning them to deliver at children’s centres in all areas. The outreach service to families will continue to support the most hard to reach communities and signpost them to activities, information and guidance at the centres. It will act as a catalyst for change within partner agencies alongside the development of the Children’s Trust.

5.9 There are many success stories from the work of the Sure Start Local Programme operating in the North of the borough that will be mainstreamed to all areas, ensuring at the same time that the most disadvantaged communities and hard to reach families continue to receive the highest possible level of support.

5.10 The Home Visiting service was named as an example of good practice and successful multi-agency working in the recent Joint Area Review (JAR) and by the 4Children organisation. This service also provides parenting support with the Parent Nurturing Programme, which has been evaluated favourably by London Metropolitan University, and is included in the DfES Good Practice Guidelines for parenting support. A particular feature of the Kensington and Chelsea programme is that it has recruited and trained bi-lingual staff to offer specialist support to Arabic speaking communities.

5.11 Health Services offered through SSLP have been recognised in the JAR 2006 as being excellent and innovative. The breastfeeding programme offered through cafe sessions at Cheyne, Violet Melchett, Golborne and Maxilla have received a good
practice award for the borough, and the rate of breastfeeding has exceeded national targets.

5.12 The targeted support for hard to reach families has ensured that these groups first receive additional support in their own home from health visitors and outreach workers and then they are encouraged to access the wide range of services at children’s centres. Specific support to engage the hard to reach has been supplemented successfully with bi-lingual workers. By mainsteaming these services across the children’s centres in the borough the quality and consistency of delivery can be sustained. Services will continue to be targeted to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children and families, and those needy families in the middle and south of the borough will be supported to access services closer to where they live.

5.13 Proposals for additional services are listed below:

- Job Centre Plus is becoming engaged in delivering support and training at children’s centres and intends to provide services that will improve the training and job opportunities for parents and their local communities.

- A universal contact service is being re-organised to deliver supervised contact for all children and families for whom it is required. This service will be delivered at children’s centres closest to where the families live.

- Family Learning and EAL classes will be delivered at children’s centres and supported with creche provision where it is required.

- The Citizen’s Advice Bureau has agreed to deliver help and advice to families at children’s centres about debt management, financial support systems and legal rights.

5.14 To pay for these universal services the Sure Start Children’s Centre funding will be top-sliced for the foreseeable future, and the proposals for the use of this Children’s Centre Funding in 2008-09 are identified later in this paper.

6. PHASE 1 CHILDREN’S CENTRES (2006)

The tables below describe those services that are currently being delivered in the existing phase 1 children’s centres, and those services which are being developed in phase 2 centres.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Early Learning and Childcare</th>
<th>Health Support</th>
<th>Family Support</th>
<th>Additional Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Cheyne Children's Centre</td>
<td>Supported through Ashburnham Primary School Children attend the day nursery in the family centre – open 8:00am to 6:00pm After school club</td>
<td>Home visiting universal across the borough Hospital play sessions Narcotics anonymous support group Speech and language services</td>
<td>Parenting support Creche Drop-ins Home safety project Contact sessions for parents and children Healthy eating support</td>
<td>Women’s trust Toy library CAB Literacy classes EAL Family Learning Portage Housing advice drop-in BookStart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Golborne Children’s Centre</td>
<td>Through nursery school on Childcare on site at Golborne Nursery School, Bevington Road site 8:00am to 6:00pm</td>
<td>Home visiting services Ante- and postnatal services Breastfeeding support SSLP services all from Homefield House and on outreach to hard to reach families Speech and language</td>
<td>Drop in crèche Stay and play Contact sessions Parenting support + classes</td>
<td>EAL classes Family learning Housing advice Job Centre Plus linked support Arabic Women’s group Toy library BookStart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Chelsea Open Air Nursery School and Children’s Centre</td>
<td>Through nursery school Extended day: Breakfast club, after-school and holiday club Local childminders with children meet at centre Younger children also access daycare via childminders Creche Stay and play</td>
<td>Universal home visiting service Speech and language service Health visitor fortnightly CAMHS workshops e.g. Managing children’s behaviour and drop ins. Dietician support for NNAG-Nursery Nutrition Advisory Group-Healthy School</td>
<td>Childminder s’ drop-in Parent support Inclusion group and workshops, special events and learning workshops. Access to Contact Service Stay and play for au pairs, nannies and parents. Healthy Eating /Living and</td>
<td>Family Learning and Share groups EAL dual language story sacks, science boxes, maths and music home loan resources. CIS outreach to parents BookStart Toy library Walking bus to/from Christ Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Early Learning and Childcare</td>
<td>Health Support</td>
<td>Family Support</td>
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<td>programme and International Cookery book. Ball skills classes with external trainer. Home safety equipment sales.</td>
<td>Well being/linked to NNAG Working Links to give benefits, tax and return to work/study advice</td>
<td>Massage group Drop and shop pilot to raise funds. CAB disability/be nefits advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Maxilla Children’s Centre</td>
<td>Through nursery school and local childminders with children meet weekly After-school and summer play-scheme (voluntary sector led)</td>
<td>Ant-natal Post-natal Breast-feeding café Home-visiting Speech and language support</td>
<td>Healthy eating programm e Outreach service IAG for fathers</td>
<td>Mother and baby yoga Stay and play Parenting programme Local childminding network Toy library CAB sessions Book Start project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Phase 2 Children’s Centres (by 2008)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Early Learning and Childcare</th>
<th>Health Support</th>
<th>Family support</th>
<th>Additional services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Colville Children’s Centre</td>
<td>Supported by Colville Primary School</td>
<td>Colville Health Centre Ant-natal Post-natal Home-visiting Speech and language support</td>
<td>Clare Gardens family intervention and support Contact Service access Family Learning Parenting support</td>
<td>Mother and baby yoga Stay and play Parenting programme Local childminding network Toy library CAB sessions Book Start Home safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Earls Court Children’s Centre</td>
<td>Through St Cuthbert with St Matthias Primary School After-school and summer</td>
<td>Home-visiting service Speech and language service</td>
<td>Contact Service access Family Learning and crèche</td>
<td>Parenting programme Local childminding network Toy library Job Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Early Learning and Childcare</td>
<td>Health Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>St Quintin’s Children’s Centre and the Centre for Children with Disabilities</td>
<td>Links with local schools (Oxford Gardens and Delgarno)</td>
<td>Home-visiting Speech and language service Ante-natal and post-natal support</td>
<td>Family intervention and support Contact Service access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Violet Melchett Children’s Centre</td>
<td>Link with COANS and local schools</td>
<td>Home-visiting Speech and language service Ante-natal and post-natal support Violet Melchett Health Clinic</td>
<td>Family intervention and support Contact Service access Health eating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 VALUE FOR MONEY – BREAKDOWN OF COSTS FOR NORTH KENSINGTON SURE START LOCAL PROGRAMME

7.1 The details of the Sure Start local programme funding is provided at the end of this paper.

7.2 At the end of the first full year of working with all eight Children’s Centres a full evaluation of unit costs and value for money implications will be undertaken.

8 EARLY YEARS OUTCOMES DUTY

8.1 The Early Years outcomes provisions in sections 1-4 of the Childcare Act 2006 place a duty on local authorities to improve the five Every Child Matters outcomes for all young children in their area aged between the date of their birth and
31 August following their fifth birthday, and to reduce inequalities between them through integrated early childhood services. The new duty will come into force on 1 April 2008. The new legislation aims to provide a framework that ensures early years are given the permanence and prominence they deserve into the future, while leaving room for local initiative and innovation.

8.2 Section 1 of the Act places a duty on the LA to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for all young children in their area and includes the power to set statutory early years targets.

8.3 Section 2 identifies the services which must be included in the arrangements to plan, commission and deliver integrated early childhood services.

8.4 Section 3 sets out the key aims and features of:

- how these services must be planned – pro-actively involving parents and other providers
- how they must be delivered – to maximise access and benefits to users
- what must be achieved – identifying and actively encouraging those who could most benefit from services, but who would otherwise be unlikely to use them

8.5 Section 4 identifies the essential local partners to work with the LA in the partnership to improve access to services and deliver ECM outcomes. It places the Primary Care Trust, the Strategic Health Authority and Job Centre Plus partners under reciprocal duties to work with the LA in making arrangements and aligning programmes to meet these new duties.

8.6 The Act highlights the importance of agencies working closely together and sharing information to maximise the effectiveness of delivering services. Using the children’s centres as points of access for these services will be crucial in the achievement of the Council’s targets and the success of the First Kensington and Chelsea Children and Young People’s Plan 2006.

9. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF CHILDREN’S CENTRES
9.1 Recent guidance (Governance Guidance for Sure Start Children’s Centres and Extended Schools 2007) does not offer a one size fits all model for management and governance arrangements for children’s centres, but does provide some clarity about decision making, roles and responsibilities and provides a range of models that centres can choose to adopt.

9.2 The local authority’s role is to:
- provide the strategic leadership of children’s centres
- manage budgets and ensure value for money
- performance manage children’s centres through the collection of information and data
- ensure clear workforce policies and practices
- train members of advisory boards and governing bodies
- ensure safeguarding processes
- encourage integrated working practices.

9.3 Children’s centres do not have a statutory basis for a governance system, but they need an advisory board to represent the views and detailed knowledge held by parents and the local community. This board, working with the governing body if the children’s centre arrangements include a maintained school, should identify priorities through effective consultation, agree objectives and development plans and monitor progress through performance management, ensuring that the services on offer meet local needs and contribute to improving outcomes for children.

9.4 Models of governance will be as varied as the nature of the centres is varied, but should be built on wide and representative participation, a shared strategic vision, commitment, responsiveness to need, clear accountability, effective and efficient delivery and a shared sense of purpose.

9.5 Heads of Centre or Centre managers will work closely with the local authority and the advisory board for the centre. Their central responsibilities will include responsibility for resources and budget, planning and commissioning of services, performance management, the workforce, and staff training.

9.6 The DCSF expects each centre to have an advisory board with representatives from all stakeholders including parents and the local community. The role of the advisory board is to provide support and challenge, to work with centre managers to identify priorities through effective consultation, to agree objectives and development plans, to monitor progress through performance management and ensure that services
offered meet local need and contribute to improving children’s outcomes. Because these boards do not have a legal status, they will not be responsible for the budget, which remains with the local authority.

9.7 It is good practice to have a centralised board so that representatives from the children’s centre advisory bodies can meet together with officers from the local authority and other representatives of the local community to act as a consultative group.

9.8 Performance management enables local authorities to monitor value for money and identify future areas of development. Partner agencies should also have an interest in the quality and effectiveness of services being delivered through children’s centres.

9.9 Using the framework and toolkit provided by the DCSF we shall be assessing the performance of children’s centres annually, to ensure that children’s centres are meeting objectives and contributing to the wider improvements of outcomes as described in the Children and Young People’s Plan.

10. EVALUATION OF CHILDREN’S CENTRES

10.1 There will be continual evaluation of the children’s centre programmes and each centre will present an annual written report to its governing body or local advisory board. The central advisory board at strategic level will collate the evidence both statistical and anecdotal to determine whether the local authority and PSA targets have been achieved and whether value for money has been demonstrated. This is particularly pertinent in respect of the investment of the proposed £200,000 of Council money requested in the coming financial year 2008-09 to supplement the Sure Start Grant.

10.2 There are currently Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for 2005-08 for local authorities, although these are due to be revised and the revised targets will be published shortly. Currently they include:

**PSA1**

*Improve children’s communication, social and emotional development so that by 2008 50% (provisional) of children reach a good level of development at the end of the*
Foundation Stage, reducing inequalities between the level of development achieved by children in the 20% most disadvantaged areas and the rest of England.

These are borough wide targets for achievement at the end of the foundation stage profile. They are statutory targets of the DCSF, working in partnership with the National Strategy advisers. Targets are aimed at reducing the achievement gap between those children who demonstrate high levels of success in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy, and those in the 20% lowest achieving group in these areas of learning.

In the Royal Borough, we intend to focus on the primary schools in the 30% most disadvantaged areas of the borough where the results at the end of the foundation stage indicate concern. We will provide intensive support and training for teachers and classroom assistants and initiate improved support to encourage parents as children’s first educators. We hope that this intervention together with continual moderation of teacher assessments of children’s progress will enable us to improve outcomes.

**PSA2**

As a contribution to reducing the proportion of children living in households where no one is working, by 2008:

- Increase the stock of Ofsted-registered childcare by 10%;
- Increase the take up of formal childcare by lower income working families by 50%; and
- Introduce, by April 2005, a successful light-touch childcare approval scheme.

These targets are about increasing the availability and affordability of childcare to working parents. In the Royal Borough, we have plans to recruit more childminders into childcare in the areas where there are shortages, such as Earl’s Court, and encourage childminders to offer more flexible childcare in the form of evening, overnight and weekend care.

We also intend to improve the childcare knowledge and expertise of nannies through general and certificated training. Parents who employ nannies who agree to be registered
under the new voluntary childcare register can access childcare tax credits and childcare vouchers.

10.3 Local Children’s Centre Targets
It will be essential for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to set its own targets for children’s centres. These will be determined by the Central Advisory Board in discussion with all the partner agencies and community representatives who deliver the services, and agreed at senior management level in the Council. There will be a performance management electronic system in place to help record attendance and evaluate the programmes and activities offered. Parent representatives will meet regularly as part of the local advisory boards to help shape services. This focus on the importance of local consultation will seek to address the weaknesses identified in the evaluation of the phase 1 children’s centre programme.

11. FINANCE

11.1 Local authorities are encouraged to devolve funding for children’s centres directly to centre managers and school governing bodies. This is a principle accepted in the Royal Borough and central funding will be devolved to individual centres. This will be in line with the objectives and a delivery plan developed by the centre managers and agreed with the advisory body, local authority and other partners.

11.2 The central retention of part of the children’s centre funds is allowed under the regulations, particularly to support collective procurement. This would be discussed with the advisory boards to ensure that all centres were aware of the economies of retaining central funds.

11.3 The distinction between maintained nursery education and non-statutory education provision is important and significant in terms of financial arrangements. Because a number of RBKC children’s centres are or will be based at existing schools, it is important to have clarity about the use of funding where a maintained school forms part of the children’s centre arrangements.

11.4 In considering the resources that are available locally for children’s centres, the local authority has to take into account all the services that are currently being provided and those which are planned across a further four centres and decide
whether existing funding is sufficient for the delivery and achievement of the improved outcomes.

11.5 The funding for children’s centres is complex. The services provided by children’s centres are a mix of provision, some funded from existing resources and some funded through a variety of new sources. Some are funded through government grant, some through charges made to users and some from the council’s budgets.

11.6 Childcare at children’s centres costs is currently supported by the Childcare Affordability Programme (CAP), which supplements the costs because of the London premium, but there is no guarantee that the CAP will continue beyond April 2009.

11.7 Weekly charges for childcare cannot exceed £205 when the full-time CAP funding is offered. This is why the rates at maintained day nurseries such as Cheyne Children’s Centre and Golborne Children’s Centres have been capped for now at this price. The costs for private day nurseries offering comparable full daycare in the borough reach £357 a week for under-2s. The median range is between £225 and £285 for that age range. This may indicate that the council should consider raising charges to £250/£265 in the future for the universal places at children’s centres. There would have to be a gentle increase to these rates over the next couple of years, as such an increase would be very difficult for most families accessing places in children’s centres.

11.8 These charges of £205 can stay as they are for the forthcoming year 2008-09.

12. SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS AS A RESULT OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING

12.1 It is recognised that to implement fully a successful programme for children’s centres, some additional funding is required. For the coming year 2008-09, this is in the region of £200,000 as indicated in the children’s centres budget funding detailed below.
## Children’s Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GSSG Budget for 2008-09</th>
<th>£1,662,833</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal services:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation funding for Home Visiting Team (South)</td>
<td>£200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some shortfall from 2007-08 SSLP allocation £130,00 and additional home visiting and outreach - 1 additional post required (Arabic speaking family support worker) at £40,000</td>
<td>£170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Play, learning and community involvement - 1 S and L therapist (£45k), 1 library staff (£20k), 2 bi-lingual staff (£40k),</td>
<td>£105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some shortfall from 2007/08 SSLP allocation (£22.5k) plus additional Health Services - 1 health visitors (£40k), 1 midwife attached to C and W hospital (£40k), 0.5 clinical psychiatrist nurse (£22.5k)</td>
<td>£125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstart services</td>
<td>£80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family learning (inc. ESOL) and crèches</td>
<td>£138,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance management system and IT system to record children’s centre achievements</td>
<td>£69,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Service and Children's centres manager</td>
<td>£155,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and SSLP additional admin/management costs - 1 p/t assistant (£20k), office accommodation and publicity costs (£30k)</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Children’s centres</td>
<td>£496,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare at Children’s Centres</td>
<td>£90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S and L Support for PVI settings (currently funded from TF - 2.8 fte at £148.5k) 3.5% increase</td>
<td>£153,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENCO area support and projects</td>
<td>£30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>£1,862,833</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REMAINING</strong></td>
<td><strong>-£200,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.2 Additional funding of £200,000 to the children’s centre programme would allow a range of services to be
systematically offered to those children and their families who need them most.

12.3 It has been identified that there is need for extra money to ensure that aspects of the core offer at children's centres are delivered, over and above the funding allocated through the Sure Start Grant, e.g. work associated with Family Learning, EAL classes and the roll out of the Book Start programme. The extra funding is essential to help ensure that the borough promotes effective support for parents to improve outcomes for children's learning.

12.4 Exploring the Possibilities of No Local Authority Funding to Top-Up the Sure Start Grant

The local authority contribution of £200,000 will ensure that the current levels of services already provided in the north of the borough to the most disadvantaged families are maintained at their current level, despite the reduction in the Sure Start Local Programme grant funding for 2008-09, as the budget indicates. Without this local authority funding cuts would need to be made in the proposed programme. These could come in a variety of ways by:

1. Reducing the number of speech therapists supporting private, voluntary and independent settings in the children's centre areas whose children feed into local primary schools in the borough. Previously the funding for this programme came from the Transformation Fund 2006-08. Improving speech and language and the skills of early years practitioners to support children who experience language delay has an effect on the performance of children at school. A saving of two speech therapists would give £100,000 of savings. However the outcomes at the end of the foundation stage could be affected adversely. The rest of the overspend could be found from a combination of cutting Family Learning by £50,000, cutting the BookStart contribution by £30,000 and reducing the funding allocated to the role of the children’s centre manager to make it a part-time post, with a saving of £20,000. Total saving: £200,000.

2. Cutting some of the services intended to be offered in the south of the borough such as the clinical psychiatric nurse who helps support parents suffering depression, with savings of £45,000. Withdrawing the speech and language programme across all private, voluntary and independent
providers, with a saving of £155,000. Total saving: £200,000

13. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are three decisions to be made.

**Decision 1:**

The OSC Group recommends that the council agrees to the eight children’s centres for the Phase 1 and 2 programme, as named and described in this report, and to the use of the capital and revenue money to implement the phase 2 programme.

**Decision 2:**

The OSC Group recommends that the council agrees to local authority funding of £200,000 to support the Children’s Centre delivery in 2008-09.

If the council agreed to contribute no additional funds, the local authority may not meet statutory requirements for improving Every Child Matters outcomes for all children and families.

If the council agreed to an additional £200k, the implications of that action include the following:

- Broader range of universal and targeted services offered
- Early intervention in health and mental health problems
- Improved parenting skills
- Improved basic skills of parents through family learning programmes enabling more support at home
- Support for parents to access information, training and employment.

Any additional funding would need to be reviewed after one full year of operation and again in 2010, after the full implementation of the children’s centre programme. It is difficult at the moment to predict the level of year on year funding required to make children’s centres successful in the long term.

The Comprehensive Spending Review has ensured a reasonable level of children’s centre funding for the next three years until March 2011. This shows the Government’s
commitment to the sustainability of the programme and to its long term influence on improving outcomes for children and families. In line with this central commitment, the Council should consider making year on year manageable contributions to the programme, to demonstrate its commitment to a Royal Borough children’s centre programme and ensure that services maintain the highest and most consistent standards across the borough.

**Decision 3:**

The OSC Group recommends that the required attempts to meet the PSA targets are made in the way described above and that the central advisory board for children’s centres identifies a range of local targets that will be specific to Kensington and Chelsea, and therefore impact on the lives of children and families in this borough.

The Cabinet is recommended to agree to all three decisions.

**FOR DECISION**

**Joint authors:**

OSC sub group: Cllr Coates, Cllr Atkinson, Cllr Condon-Simmonds, Cllr E Campbell

Officers: Rebecca Matthews, Director for Schools, Quality and Standards, Lena Engel, Head of the Early Years Service

Cabinet Members: Cllr Ritchie, Cllr Husband

Chairman of OSC: Cllr Cox.

Anne Marie Carrie

Executive Director of Family and Children’s Services

**Background Papers Use in the Preparation of this Report, Key documents:**

- Sure Start Children’s Centres
• National Audit Office
  December 2006
• Sure Start Children’s Centres: Planning and Performance Management Guidance. DfES 2006
• Governance Guidance for Sure Start Children’s Centres and extended schools

Contact Officer: Lena Engel, Head of Early Years Service, Family and Children’s Services on Tel: 020 7598 4780 or at Lena.engel@rbkc.gov.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sure Start Local programme Service</th>
<th>Children Centre or area covered</th>
<th>Staff required</th>
<th>Target number of adults/children reached/estimated to reach</th>
<th>Cost of Service (staff and other delivery costs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home visiting (North)</td>
<td>Currently covers Golborne, Notting Barns and St Charles (the Sure Start Local Programme area which includes two phase 1 centres – Maxilla and Golborne - and one phase 2 centre – St Quintins). In 2008/09 the service will roll out to the remaining wards (including Colville and Royal Hospital where two phase 2 centres – Colville and Violet Melchett – will be based) in conjunction with the team in the South.</td>
<td>1 lead officer, 5.6 fte multi-agency team covering family support, social work and health</td>
<td>Same staffing complement as 2007/08 plus two family support workers (1 Arabic speaking)</td>
<td>724 2000 £243,500 (SSLP budget) £283,500 (£113.5k from SSLP budget, £170k from CC budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visiting (South)</td>
<td>Currently only covering Cremorne (which includes two phase 1 centres – Cheyne and Chelsea Open Air ). Will expand to Earls Court from January 08 (the remaining phase 2 centre will be based at St Cuthbert’s)</td>
<td>1 coordinator, 2 family support workers and 1 health visitor</td>
<td></td>
<td>January - June 07 239 £200,000 (CC) £200,000 (from CC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-lingual support</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>5 p/t workers (2 working 16 hours per week, 3 working 21 hours per week)</td>
<td>Same staffing complement plus 2 fte workers</td>
<td>295 600 £52,500 (SSLP) £92,500 (£52.5k SSLP, £40k CC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP</td>
<td>1.6 fte in the</td>
<td>Same staffing</td>
<td>466 in the 1050 £60,000 £100,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure Start Local programme Service</td>
<td>Children Centre or area covered</td>
<td>Staff required</td>
<td>Target number of adults/children reached/estimated to reach</td>
<td>Cost of Service (staff and other delivery costs)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting</td>
<td>area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>North and 1 fte in the South</td>
<td>complement plus 1 additional fte</td>
<td>North. South - only in post since August 2007 so no figures available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwifery</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>1.8 fte</td>
<td>Same staffing complement plus 1 additional fte</td>
<td>534</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialist post natal support</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>1.8 fte (the current team has not worked to full capacity due to a vacancy and maternity leave)</td>
<td>Same staffing complement plus 0.5 additional fte</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech and Language</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>2 fte</td>
<td>Same staffing complement plus 1 additional fte</td>
<td>232</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP</td>
<td>0.8 fte</td>
<td>Same staffing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure Start Local programme Service</td>
<td>Children Centre or area covered</td>
<td>Staff required</td>
<td>Target number of adults/children reached/estimated to reach</td>
<td>Cost of Service (staff and other delivery costs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drop in provision</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>SLA agreed with voluntary organisations who staff the drop in sessions</td>
<td>No change. Voluntary funded organisations in South realigned with provision in North</td>
<td>1203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIDS – Services to CWD</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>SLA with voluntary organisation using 2 p/t workers</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support (including activities for fathers)</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>2 p/t workers</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play, learning and childcare</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>1 fte coordinator. 1 p/t senior crèche worker and sessional staff</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central management, administra tion and</td>
<td>Currently covering the SSLP area and management of the Home Visiting Team in the South. Borough wide from 2008/09</td>
<td>1 fte manager, 2.5 fte administration posts</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure Start Local programme Service</td>
<td>Children Centre or area covered</td>
<td>Staff required</td>
<td>Target number of adults/children reached/estimated to reach</td>
<td>Cost of Service (staff and other delivery costs)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2006/07 By 2008/09</td>
<td>2007/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>office costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL (SSLP)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£1,094,917</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL (CC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£200,000</td>
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