

DRAFT Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

This document will be refined following the public consultation

Directorate and Service Area:

Children, Education & Families

- **Early Intervention Service**
- **Children's Social Care**

What is being assessed:

Future arrangements in Children's Services

Responsible owner / senior officer:

Jim Leivers, Director for Children, Education & Families

Date of assessment:

February 2016

Summary of judgement:

This assessment has been undertaken in order to understand the impact on different groups of people in Oxfordshire of the proposal to integrate the Early Intervention Service with Family Support Teams within Children's Social Care, while at the same time making budget savings of £8 million.

The impacts of three options for implementing this new model of provision were explored and subject to public consultation between October 2015 and January 2016. All options maintained a focus on preventing the needs of children, young people and families from escalating and ensuring that those who are most vulnerable receive targeted support. Feedback from the consultation and engagement with service users and partner organisations has informed the final proposal for implementation for decision at Cabinet in February 2016.

The Local Authority's preferred option was option one, which included the removal of all universal services. The final revised proposal has been informed by feedback from the public consultation and incorporates provision for a number of issues it raised.

The proposal will largely impact children, young people and families, as the revised proposed option for implementation includes fewer Children and Family Centres and limited open access services. There is also a risk that families accessing targeted support will be stigmatised. Significant analyses of local need, deprivation and accessibility have informed the proposed locations of Children and Family Centres and the outreach provision. Impacts will be mitigated by the creation of a Locality and Community Support Service to support and enhance universal service provision, and by working with partners to enable them to deliver services from the Centres. In addition, limited open access services will be provided from the Children and Family Centres.

The proposed staffing reductions are significant and likely to impact on staff morale. Staff will be kept informed and consulted as service changes are implemented and encouraged to access staff support service. A workforce development strategy will map the current skills base and identify opportunities for development.

Detail of Assessment:

Purpose of assessment:

This assessment has been undertaken in order to understand the impact on different groups of people in Oxfordshire of the proposal to integrate the Early Intervention Service with the Family Support Teams within children's social care, while at the same time making budget savings of £8 million.

The revised model focuses on targeting services to the most vulnerable children and families whilst continuing to work closely with our partner agencies. The new model will retain preventative work through the provision of support to professionals working with vulnerable children, and through targeted support to families with multiple needs who do not require statutory social care input.

The new model comprises a number of different elements:

- I. Locality and Community Support
- II. Family Support for children aged 0-19 and their families
- III. 8 Children and Family Centres and mobile bus
- IV. Outreach service

The assessment considers how the changes brought about by this option may affect the people of Oxfordshire – with particular emphasis on groups with the protected characteristics listed below – and how this can be mitigated.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the

need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person's disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- gender
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Context:

Ongoing cuts in central government funding mean Oxfordshire County Council has to make savings. The council is currently in the process of making approximately £290 million of savings. In February 2014 the budget agreed by Council included savings of £3m in Early Intervention to be achieved by 2017-18. Further savings of £3m were agreed by Council in February 2015, making a total of £6m to be achieved by 2017-18.

As a result of national austerity measures to reduce public sector spending and the level of national debt, further cuts are anticipated to the level of funding to be passed to local government in future years. Proposals to make additional savings of £50million by 2019/20 were put forward for consideration and public consultation in October 2015. However, the provisional local government finance settlement, announced in December 2015, indicates that Oxfordshire County Council will need to save closer to £70million by 2019/20.

There is an expectation that proposals for savings will come from all service areas. As a consequence, the new model of service being proposed for Early Intervention and Children's Social Care takes into account an additional saving of £2 million from the Early Intervention budget, giving a total saving of £8 million on the 2014/15 budget for the service.

Early Intervention currently comprises a range of services delivered through 44 Children's Centres and 7 Early Intervention Hubs. These include open access sessions such as stay and play and youth sessions, as well as targeted programmes and casework that address identified needs. In addition, the Youth Engagement and Opportunities team support education, employment and training opportunities for all 16-19 year olds, and 19-25 year olds who are vulnerable. Oxfordshire's Thriving Families programme is delivered through the Early Intervention Service, providing intensive support to families that have been identified as being in need through the national Troubled Families Programme.

The scale of the budget reductions mean that the current model for providing Early Intervention services is unsustainable. In order to deliver an effective service in the future, it is proposed to integrate the Early Intervention service with Children's Social Care.

Through this integration, the council will be able to achieve the level of savings required whilst providing an effective, safe and coordinated service that meets our statutory obligations. However, the range of support provided by the new service will be reduced, as will the number of locations from which it is delivered. This will have an impact on people across Oxfordshire.

Proposal:

In order to achieve the £8 million savings necessary, a new service will be created by integrating the Early Intervention Service and Family Support Teams. The new service builds on the county council's preferred option, and builds in a number of issues raised during the public consultation.

The new service will comprise of a number of different elements:

- 1) Locality and Community Support
- 2) Family Support for children aged 0-19 and their families
- 3) 8 Children and Family Centres and mobile bus
- 4) Outreach service

Locality and Community Support Service

The aim of the Locality and Community Support Service is:

- To provide advice and guidance to universal services, including schools, health services and voluntary and community groups to enable them to support vulnerable children, young people and families within their community
- To identify emerging needs and safeguarding concerns within the locality
- To be the first point of contact for universal services who have concerns about a child and are considering making a referral to statutory services
- To monitor and oversee the effective implementation of CAF/TACs within the locality
- To develop a good working knowledge of support services in the area and identification of appropriate resources

This new service will build on the work previously carried out by locality co-

ordinators and the current well respected model of locality support. The service will have identified workers who link with universal services, including schools, early years settings, health and other community based provision, to enable concerns to be shared and advice and guidance given in relation to children and young people where there may be child protection issues.

Workers from the service will offer support and advice to any professional who has concerns about a child and coordinate support for vulnerable families within the community. This will include supporting the completion of an early help/CAF assessment to identify the nature of concerns within the family. Where concerns cannot be managed within the community, workers from the service will take the lead in escalating concerns into the new Service.

The Locality and Community Support Service will be organised into three area teams (North, Central and South), with workers being based across the Children and Family Centres located in their areas. The Service will be managed by Team Manager, with Senior Practitioners and Locality Workers based within each of the three areas (North, Central and South). All staff will be experienced child protection and safeguarding professionals, with the Senior Practitioners being qualified social workers. The intention is to develop the Locality and Community Service into a multi-agency service. Discussions are on-going with partners regarding this.

The local authority believes that the creation of this service provides a significant preventative service, enabling vulnerable children to be identified, and support put in place, before concerns escalate. The development of this service increases investment in the support the county council currently provides to universal services.

Family Support Service

The new Family Support Service will integrate the existing Children's Social Care Family Support Teams with the family support functions currently undertaken in the Early Intervention Service, including those of the current Thriving Families and Youth Engagement and Opportunities Teams.

The aim of the service is:

- To provide timely support and interventions to vulnerable families to address safeguarding concerns and reduce risks to children and young people
- To provide case work to children, young people and families requiring statutory and targeted support, including responding to crises within families
- To offer a range of group programmes to children, young people and families who meet the threshold for the service
- To deliver and co-ordinate services within the designated Children and Family Centres
- To provide both casework and group programmes through outreach to venues other than the Children and Family Centres

The service will provide direct case work with both children and their families, taking a whole family approach to planning and support. This approach will

embed that of the current Thriving Families programme and will ensure plans for children are made within the context of their whole family, enabling appropriate support to be put in place for each individual.

In addition to case work, the service will offer a standardised evidence based range of group programmes. These will be designed to address the key risks and issues affecting families, including domestic abuse, parenting skills, school readiness and employment and training support. The service will only provide programmes where there is strong evidence of their positive impact for children and/or families.

The group programmes will be targeted at vulnerable families. However, the Family Support Service will also offer open access sessions within the new Children and Family Centres. This will include stay and play sessions for under 5s and their carers, and youth sessions for young people.

The Family Support Service will be based and operated from the Children and Family Centres. However, workers from the Service will provide an extensive outreach service, meeting children and families at other venues, including their home, school and other locations close to where the family live, to provide individual support. In addition, the group programmes will be offered from venues other than the Children and Family Centres in order to ensure families do not have to travel extensive distances to attend them.

Teams will develop strong links with the services in the local vicinity, in particular schools, health, and voluntary and community services. In addition, there are opportunities to further develop this service to broaden the range of professionals working within the teams. Discussions continue with partners regarding this.

The Family Support Service will be organised into three area teams, each managed and overseen by a senior manager reporting to a Deputy Director. Teams will consist of managers, practice managers, social workers, family workers and family support workers bringing a range of experience and expertise to work with children and families. Team Managers will have responsibility for a number of different teams, with the majority of workers supporting children and families where there is a statutory responsibility to do so. However, a number of workers will focus on the provision of targeted support to families identified through the early help/CAF assessment process. Practice Managers will have day to day responsibility for the management of case work with families, with the other team members providing direct support to children and families and delivering group programmes.

The development of the integrated service will increase capacity to support the most vulnerable children and focus resources on children in need to prevent a further escalation of their needs.

Children and Family Centres

Eight Children and Family Centres will be created providing a base for a service for 0-19 year olds and their families. These Centres will be based in the most deprived areas of Oxfordshire as follows: Oxford - Blackbird Leys, Oxford - Rose

Hill/ Littlemore, Oxford - Barton/Sandhills. Banbury, Didcot, Abingdon, Bicester and Witney. In addition to the eight Children and Family Centres, a mobile bus service will deliver services to rural communities and the traveller community, as they are less likely to attend the main Centres.

An outreach service will be provided to all parts of Oxfordshire which will help those families who most need intensive support. This will be provided in two ways. Firstly workers from the Family Support Service will travel to meet children and families at other venues, including their home, school and other locations close to where the family live to provide 1:1 support. In addition, targeted group programmes will be offered from alternative venues such as local community centres, which will include the more rural parts of the County, in order to ensure families do not have to travel extensive distances to attend them. This will ensure we offer support to vulnerable families and children on a county wide basis.

The local authority is committed to working with partners across universal services, including health, education and the voluntary and community sectors, to provide services to support families. The eight Children and Family Centres will provide a venue for partners to deliver services to children and families.

It is proposed to continue to support, until April 2017, the eleven centres across the county that provide child care with a view to them being financially self-sufficient from April 2017. Supporting these settings will provide a base for the outreach work that will be delivered in those communities. The local authority will also work with these settings to support the delivery of some universal services from the buildings, this could include health visiting services.

Evidence / Intelligence:

The proposal has drawn on evidence from a range of pilots, research and commissioned work both with Oxfordshire and elsewhere. This has included the work of Oxfordshire's Thriving Families team, the North Oxfordshire Neglect pilot, service-level data, research regarding how other Local Authorities have approached their savings pressures, and conversations with key stakeholders.

Further details of the evidence base can be found in the report to Cabinet on 15 September 2015, Future Arrangements in Children's Social Care. (available on the Oxfordshire County Council website).

An extensive engagement programme was carried out to ensure that all relevant stakeholders were represented and able to have input into the development of the proposal and options for implementation. The engagement work included a variety of different events with children and young people, parents/carers, council staff, schools, health professionals, the police, voluntary and community organisations, city and district council executives and local political leaders. The information gathered at these events helped to inform the development of the model and shape the consultation options.

For full details of engagement activity see the Engagement Report.

Service performance data, deprivation indices and demographic growth projections were also considered in the development of the proposed new service and the selection of proposed service locations.

The statutory purpose of Children Centres and the rationale for establishing Early Intervention Hubs were also considered alongside how subsequent government policy changes and their effect on current services. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for Early Intervention Hubs, guidance on Children's Centres was revised in April 2013 to clarify what local authorities and statutory partners must do when fulfilling their statutory responsibilities for early childhood services. This includes a duty to ensure there are sufficient Children's Centres to provide evidence-based interventions for families in greatest need of support and that the centres are accessible to all families with young children in Oxfordshire.

A copy of the statutory guidance for local authorities can be found in Annex 3 of the Report to Cabinet, 15 September 2015: Future Arrangements in Children's Social Care. (available on Oxfordshire County Council website).

Developing the new service

With a 50% reduction in the Early Intervention Service budget (from £16 million to £8 million) of which the single largest component is staffing, various models were tested to ensure that the optimum level of resource would be available within the new integrated service. Through this approach the council will be able to deliver the most comprehensive service provision possible, within a significantly reduced budget and without being dependent on the number or location of properties to run the service from.

Different staffing structures have been explored in order to develop a team capable of delivering county wide services with the best balance of skills, enhanced statutory provision and retention of preventative services, as well as support for providers.

The creation of a Locality & Community Support Service was felt to be key to supporting health, schools and other community services to support vulnerable children and families and prevent their needs escalating to the point where they require statutory social care. In addition, the Family Support Service will work with some children and their families who do not reach the threshold for statutory social care services. These children and families will be identified through an early help/CAF assessment and will include, for example, families affected by domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health concerns, including post-natal depression, children who are going missing from home and school, and families where there is criminal activity.

Selecting the locations for Children and Family Centres

The process for determining the proposed locations for the new Children and Family Centres was as follows:

- i) Define the total number of Children and Family Centres within Oxfordshire

- ii) Define the broad geographical spread by assigning a total number of Children and Family Centres to three broad areas within the county (three service areas - north, central, south)
- iii) Determine the 'ideal' locations of the proposed Children and Family Centres within each service area

The approach built on that undertaken by the Cabinet Advisory Group and used the following data sets:

- Index of Multiple Deprivation;
- Prior home locations of children who became looked after by Oxfordshire County Council between 31st March 2011 to 31st March 2015;
- Home locations of Children who were subject to child protection plans between 31st March 2011 to 31st March 2015;
- Home locations of families identified in the wider Phase 1 Thriving Families cohort;
- Oxfordshire County Council child population forecasts 2014-2019.

In order to determine the 'ideal' locations within each service area an assumption was made that the main settlements within the county were likely to be the most appropriate locations for the Centres because of their accessibility in terms of transport links, their geographical spread, and that localised deprivation tends to be concentrated in urban areas. This assumption was tested using an algorithm that considered the location of 'need' using the data sets described above. These indicators were weighted by population forecasts to give a better indication of where need is likely to be located in the coming years.

Potential locations were tested by the algorithm to determine whether each increased or decreased the distance between Centre and family 'in need'. Locations were finally chosen based on a mix of factors: settlement size, deprivation (IMD), and other indicators of need.

Since the previous report to Cabinet on 15 September 2015, updated Index of Multiple Deprivation data has been released. The methodology set out above has been re-run using this updated data and the 'ideal' locations identified were broadly similar.

Full details of the methodology used are available with the Report to Cabinet 23 February 2016.

Public Consultation

As part of the consultation process we encouraged communities to come forward and let us know about the impact of withdrawing or reducing Early Intervention services in their area. To shape the consultation we took advice from the Institute for Consultation. The consultation itself included public meetings, focus groups and other outreach work with other individuals and groups affected by the proposal. The results of the consultation helped to inform the detailed proposal for the future service, to be considered by Cabinet on 23 February 2016. Key issues highlighted by the public consultation have been incorporated in to the revised proposed model.

Alternatives considered / rejected

Alternative proposal	Decision
Locating a Children and Family Centre in each of the nine Council Localities	<p>It was suggested that in order to ensure good spread of services across the county we should consider locating at least one Children and Family Centre in each locality. The localities are made up of County Council divisions.</p> <p>This approach was discounted as none of the indicators used to investigate areas of greatest need support it. The localities only reflect administrative boundaries.</p>
Keeping Early Intervention and Social Care services separate	<p>Maintaining division between complementary services would likely result in multiple handover points for families and families having to repeat their information each time. Through a single management structure it would be possible to have a comprehensive view of the needs of people within each area, and services can be targeted most effectively as a result.</p> <p>Additionally, a multi-function team is more efficient financially. It is able to deliver both the preventative and social care services, and provide greater coverage than multiple separate teams that have to cover the same areas.</p> <p>Feedback from the engagement process demonstrates broad support for an integrated service.</p> <p>For the reasons outlined above this proposal was rejected.</p>
Childrens' Centres and Early Intervention Hubs remain separate	<p>This proposal was rejected on the same basis as above.</p>
No enhanced support for universal providers	<p>Feedback from engagement activities supports the view that maintaining strong links between universal providers and the local authority is crucial to the success of the model. All the options consulted on included the creation of a Locality and Community Support Service to work with universal service providers to identify families at risk and co-ordinate the provision of services that prevent needs from escalating.</p> <p>As such, this proposal was rejected.</p>
Retaining all current intervention and prevention programmes	<p>Current provision of programmes is not equitable across Oxfordshire, with some programmes only being available in specific Children's Centres where staff who are trained to deliver them are based. The programmes delivered by workers in the new service will be available across the county, so that they can be targeted at those who require them most.</p> <p>There is national evidence that supports the effectiveness of certain programmes. Focussing on these services will enable Oxfordshire County Council to deliver the programmes that are</p>

	<p>most likely to be effective and result in positive outcomes for users.</p> <p>For these reasons this proposal was rejected.</p>
Charging for certain services	<p>Feedback from the engagement process indicated that there may be willingness to accept charges for certain services. Charging for certain services may generate income that can be used to enhance or expand service provision in other areas.</p> <p>However, the costs of administering a charging model indicate that this would not be a practical option to implement.</p> <p>For the reasons described above this proposal was rejected.</p>
Option two - Limited universal services	<p>Under this option the provision of universal services would be provided or commissioned by the local authority. Capacity for this would be created by reducing the outreach provided by the service to all part of the county.</p> <p>The dual budget and service pressures within Children's Social Care, mean that the county council must focus its resources on those children and families it has a statutory duty to support. This will be done by targeting services towards the most vulnerable children and families and ensuring resources are prioritised for these groups. Maximising the capacity for the service to provide outreach to vulnerable families across the county needs to be maintained and take priority over the provision of universal services.</p> <p>For the reasons described above this proposal was rejected.</p>
Option three - Universal services through community investment	<p>Under this option £1million would be made available to the voluntary and community sector for the provision of services to children and families. The resource would be found by reducing the number of Children and Family Centres from 8 to 6, resulting in no Centre in either Abingdon or Bicester, and a reduction in the Service's capacity to deliver outreach and group programmes across Oxfordshire. Maximising the capacity for the service to provide outreach to vulnerable families across the county needs to be maintained and take priority over the provision of funding to the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>For the reasons described above this proposal was rejected.</p>

Impact Assessment:

Impact on Individuals and Communities:

Overarching impacts

The proposed option involves reducing the provision of open access services. This will have a negative impact on Oxfordshire's children, young people and families, who will experience reduced access to, and availability of, universal services. Their access will be further limited by having fewer Children and Family Centres, meaning many people will have to travel a greater distance to access Centre based services which may reduce community cohesion.

Despite the proposed removal of open access services, the provision of targeted, evidence based programmes of support for families through the Family Support Service will achieve better outcomes for those in greatest need. Furthermore, an integrated service that combines preventative work with social care, delivered via Children and Family Centres and a network of outreach locations, will have a positive impact on families across the county by providing greater coverage and more consistent contacts within the service for families.

Some specific overarching risks that have been identified are:

Risk	Mitigation
People using targeted services are stigmatised	<p>The revised proposal includes the provision of open access within the eight Children and Family centres which would reduce the risk of stigmatisation.</p> <p>Opportunities to work with partners to provide other services from Children and Family Centres, e.g. health services, will be explored to assist with de-stigmatisation.</p>
A reduction in the number of Children's Centres may affect children, young people and families accessing services provided by partners at current sites	The council has been engaging with partner organisations, and partners are being kept informed of developments to ensure that their service plans reflect necessary changes and their services continue uninterrupted as far as possible.
The impact of closing centres that families are reliant on for support will have a negative effect on those children and families	As part of the transition to the new model of integrated working, staff and the public are being kept up to date with developments and will be signposted to other forms of support available.
Reducing open access services may limit opportunities for children, young people and families to develop informal networks	<p>The revised proposal includes the provision of open access within the eight Children and Family centres.</p> <p>A Locality and Community Support Service will continue to work with universal support providers, such as schools and voluntary/community sector organisations, to enhance or supplement their provision.</p>

	Families will continue to be signposted to other groups and activities operating in their area to help them develop informal networks.
The reduction in early intervention services will have an impact on the Oxfordshire community as a whole. The long term costs of providing services to families in crisis will be higher than providing preventative services which will have an impact on resources for all agencies	Early intervention support will be targeted at those families in the most need to reduce the number of families reaching crisis point.
The reduction in early intervention services and subsequent increased pressure on the social care services will increase the safeguarding risk to children and young people	The revised proposal for an integrated service of Early Intervention and Children's Social Care will target services to those in greatest need. This includes including children where there are safeguarding concerns.

Impact on groups with protected characteristics

Reducing the number of Children and Family Centres may temporarily or permanently affect the provision of other services that currently operate from some of the Children's Centres, such as health clinics and breastfeeding support. This will impact on children, young people and families currently accessing these services from sites not included in the proposed list of locations for Children and Family Centres.

Some specific impacts on groups with protected characteristics may be:

Risk	Mitigation
Pregnancy and maternity Reduced access to support for pregnant women and new mothers could increase prevalence of mental health concerns	The Health Visiting service, commissioned by Public Health, will continue to monitor the mental health of pregnant women and mothers with children up to the age of 5 and refer to appropriate support services where a mental health need is identified. The Health Visiting service also delivers a level of breastfeeding support as part of health visitors' regular contact with new mothers.
Gender The reduction in services available will have an impact on women and men who will suffer as a result of the reduction in universal services.	Universal services will continue to be delivered by partners such as health, who will deliver their services from the Children and Family Centres .

<p>A reduction in preventative services and universal services will impact on women who may be more at risk of post-natal depression and domestic abuse</p>	<p>The Health Visiting service, commissioned by Public Health, will continue to monitor the mental health of pregnant women and mothers with children up to the age of 5 and refer to appropriate support services where a mental health need is identified.</p> <p>The Children and Family Centres will be able to provide a base for the delivery of groups to support women experiencing post-natal depression and domestic abuse.</p>
<p>Age The identification of health concerns in young children as a result of contact with trained staff in Children and Family centres, and/or, as a result of parents and carers comparing their child's development to other children in Children and Family Centres, may be affected by a reduction in centres providing an opportunity for concerns to be identified, particularly children who are not covered by the Health Visiting service</p>	<p>The Health Visiting service will continue to monitor the progress of children up to the age of 5 and refer to appropriate support services where concerns are identified.</p> <p>The creation of a Locality and Community Support Service, which supports all professionals working with children, provides a route for emerging needs and safeguarding concerns to be identified among children of any age.</p> <p>This service will provide specialist co-ordination and support to ensure the needs of these children are met.</p>
<p>Disability Families where there are disabled parents and/or disabled children where travelling is expensive and challenging will be affected by the need to travel further to access services.</p> <p>The cumulative impact of savings made from supported transport budgets may also increase the risk of limited accessibility.</p>	<p>Children and Family Centres are proposed to be located in larger conurbations that are well served by accessible public transport.</p> <p>The service will provide an outreach service to all parts of the Oxfordshire, meaning children and families will not have to travel to the main Centres to receive a service.</p>
<p>Religion or belief The use of religious buildings to provide services could isolate people of different religions or with no beliefs who may not be able to access certain religious buildings, leading to a lack of social cohesion and increased isolation</p>	<p>The council will work with communities with the intention of keeping local centres available for community groups, such as town councils, voluntary or charity groups, to provide universal services.</p>

<p>Race Families from non-British national or ethnic origins may not feel comfortable accessing a specialised service and specialised services, may not be available in all geographical areas. This could lead to a lack of social cohesion and increased isolation.</p> <p>Children from non-English speaking families may not be school ready if they are not able to access universal services to enhance their language development</p>	<p>The council will work with communities with the intention of keeping local centres available for community groups, such as town councils, voluntary or charity groups, to provide universal services.</p>
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Impacts on areas of deprivation

The proposed option should not have a negative impact on those living in areas of greatest deprivation, as the proposed Children and Family Centre are located in these areas.

The eight proposed Children and Family Centre locations cover the six highest ranked settlements for child deprivation, where 73 per cent of children under 5 live (based on 2011 Census data). These locations would also provide a Centre in every district/city area.

From these locations the Family Support Service will work with the most vulnerable children and families, specifically targeting children in need, those on child protection plans, looked after children and those identified as vulnerable through an early help/CAF assessment.

However, the reduction of council-funded universal services under the proposed option is likely to have a negative impact on the wider community, and vulnerable families who do not live in the most deprived areas of Oxfordshire. These families will benefit from the outreach service and other forms of universal support provided by alternative agencies who will be supported by the Locality and Community Support Service.

Risk	Mitigation
<p>Vulnerable families in less deprived areas of the county may struggle to access targeted support because the Children and Family Centres are based in areas of greatest need.</p>	<p>A comprehensive analysis of local need has been completed, taking into account a wide range of indicators to determine the most appropriate Children and Family Centre locations. The proposed locations are centred around the areas of greatest deprivation.</p> <p>The proposal includes an outreach service that will</p>

Early identification of these families may be affected by a reduction in universal services, meaning they do not receive support when they most need it.	enable vulnerable families in less deprived areas without a Centre to access targeted family support services. The Locality and Community Support Service will also support agencies that provide universal services across the county, and ensure that vulnerable families are signposted and referred to targeted support when it is needed.
Concerns that relate to a specific locality will not receive appropriate support	Outreach work will be provided by the service, meaning that children and families do not need to travel to the main Centres to receive support.

Impact on rural communities

The loss of Children’s Centres in rural locations will negatively impact rural communities and may contribute to rural isolation, as people in these areas will have to travel further to access centre based services. Data collected by existing Children’s Centres shows that more than 50 per cent of all Centre users currently walk to the existing sites, although almost one third drive.

Rural communities will rely on the outreach network for access to targeted family support services.

Risk	Mitigation
Children, young people and families in rural communities will have to travel longer distances to access support, as it will not be based locally to them. Families who do not have cars will need to use public transport which is likely to be indirect and will take longer. There may be an economic impact on rural communities who will have to travel further to access support services.	<p>The proposed option includes targeted outreach to deliver support to families in rural locations.</p> <p>Children and Family Centres are proposed to be located in larger conurbations that are well served by public transport, providing various modes of access for rural communities to centre based services.</p> <p>The mobile bus that is used to deliver services to rural communities and the traveller community will be retained to continue to deliver services to these communities that are less likely to attend the main centres.</p>

Impact on Staff:

The majority of the current budget is spent on staffing. To achieve the required savings, the proposed option includes a significant reduction in staffing levels and changes to the staffing structure, and the location and structure of family support services. These changes will also require a shift in culture and practice.

A reduction in the staffing establishment will inevitably have a negative impact on staff morale, and for some employees the process itself is likely to cause anxiety. This could affect levels of concentration, motivation and absenteeism.

A staff advisory group has been established to allow staff a voice to air concerns, feed into the programme board and to input into the new service delivery model. In addition, formal staff consultation and a structured communications programme will ensure all staff are kept up to date and encouraged to be part of the restructured service, taking up the opportunities for the newly created roles.

The integrated Family Support Service requires that a significant proportion of staff within the service are qualified social workers. As a result, staff within the current Early Intervention Service who do not have a social work qualification will be most affected by the changes.

Risk	Mitigation
A reduction in available funding for staffing will lead to a significant number of job losses and increased unemployment.	Staff will continue to be kept informed of progress with service changes, including the restructure of posts within teams. Staff will be encouraged to access staff support services where applicable. Outplacement support will be offered to staff
Staff are not sufficiently qualified in the social work led integrated Family Support Service.	A workforce development strategy is being developed to map the current skills base and identify opportunities for development.
Staff morale is low due to a reduction in the staffing establishment, affecting concentration and motivation, absenteeism.	<p>The staff consultation will run in Spring 2016 all members of staff will be encouraged to participate</p> <p>Staff will continue to be kept informed of progress with service changes, including the restructure of posts within teams. Managers are being briefed regularly to help support their staff.</p> <p>Staff will be encouraged to access staff support services where applicable.</p> <p>Staff will be referred to Penna outplacement support if they are not successful in obtaining a role in the new structure. This service supports staff to apply for internal vacancies, consider career development opportunities and redundancy.</p>
Staff who are redeployed as part of the restructure may have to travel longer distances to reach their place of work.	The county council have a redeployment policy

Impact on other Council services:

Children's Social Care currently use Children's Centres and Hubs across the county to facilitate supervised contacts for families. A reduction in centres will reduce the

amount of available space to carry out this duty. Alternative locations and arrangements will need to be made.

No other impacts on council services have currently been identified, but there is an option to explore potential opportunities with other services including (but not limited to) libraries and the fire service.

The proposals for Early Intervention Services will be considered in conjunction with savings proposals for other service areas to ensure there are no unintended consequences for Oxfordshire’s residents, or on other council services.

Risk	Mitigation
Reduction in available space to facilitate supervised contacts. Children and families will need to travel longer distances in order to attend contact.	Children's social care to identify alternative locations for contact to take place. The Children and Family Centres will have some capacity to host supervised contact and some space may be available at the child care centres which have support until April 2017.

Impact on partners and providers:

Providers

The proposed model has a reduced finance with which to commission services. However, there may be opportunities to commission external providers where a specific area of need has been identified.

The council has maintained contact with current external providers regarding the proposal and will continue to keep them informed of developments through active engagement.

Impact on partners

Many of the current Children’s Centres are used by other service providers, such as Oxford Health, as venues to provide their services from, e.g. clinics run by health visitors and jointly run parental support classes. The closure of existing centres will impact on partners as they will be required to find alternative venues from which to deliver services.

Whilst it is still the council’s intention to provide joint-use facilities within the new service, we acknowledge that there will be fewer centres from which these can be provided.

The council is in conversation with partners who currently use existing sites for their services and will continue to keep them informed of developments through active engagement.

Options for the integration and co-location of services are being discussed as part of the development of the proposal. This could provide positive opportunities for

collaboration and deliver great benefits to children, young people and families across Oxfordshire.

Risk	Mitigation
<p>The voluntary and community sector, schools and other agencies are not capable and do not have the capacity to deliver alternative universal services across Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>A Locality and Community Support Service will continue to work with universal support providers to enhance or supplement their provision.</p> <p>The county council's Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure contract is designed to support growth and development within the sector to make it fit for purpose.</p> <p>As a 'Social Enterprise Place,' Oxfordshire is committed to growing social enterprise communities across the county by bringing together the local councils, universities, businesses, charities, budding social entrepreneurs and local residents.</p>
<p>Reduction in the number of Children's Centres could lead to increased pressure on the Health Visiting service due to a reduction in available space to hold clinics and limited accessibility to additional support to refer new mothers / families to.</p>	<p>Engagement with partner organisations has started early and partners are being kept informed of developments to ensure that their service plans reflect necessary changes.</p> <p>This could provide positive opportunities for collaboration and deliver great benefits to children, young people and families across Oxfordshire.</p>
<p>A long term impact on health services due to a reduction in breast feeding which has an impact on children's long term health</p>	<p>Breastfeeding support continues to be commissioned by the county council.</p>
<p>An increased pressure on schools to support children who start school without being school ready and to support children and families who do not reach the threshold for a service from the new integrated Children's service</p>	<p>The new Locality and Community Support service will provide specialist advice and support to professionals, including those from schools, and will facilitate support to vulnerable families.</p> <p>Targeted support on school readiness will continue be available to vulnerable children.</p>
<p>Reduction in external services commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council could lead to increase in unemployment within those services</p>	<p>The council has maintained contact with current external providers about the proposal and will continue to keep them informed of developments through active engagement.</p>

Action plan:

Action	By When	Person responsible
Carry out public consultation on proposals	Sep-Dec 2015	Jim Leivers
Continued engagement with children, young people and families (including service users) regarding impact of proposals and possible mitigations	On-going	Jim Leivers
Continued engagement with providers regarding impact of proposals and possible mitigations	On-going	Jim Leivers
Assess consultation responses and consider whether any community groups with protected characteristics are disproportionately affected by the proposals	On-going	Jim Leivers
Update SCIA throughout consultation process as and when relevant feedback is provided	On-going	Jim Leivers
Proposal to be considered at Cabinet	23 rd February	Jim Leivers
Staff consultation	Spring 2016	Jim Leivers

Monitoring and review:

Person responsible for assessment: Jim Leivers, Director of Children, Education and Families

Version	Date	Notes
V1	27 August 2015	Initial draft
V2	8 October 2015	Updated
V 3	5 February 2016	Updated following public consultation