

## REQUEST FOR CALL IN OF AN EXECUTIVE DECISION

ON COMPLETION BY CALL-IN MEMBERS THIS PROFORMA SHOULD BE FORWARDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DIRECTLY TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES (Floor 6, QW) FOR RECORDING AND REFERRAL TO THE CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

[N.B. NO EXECUTIVE DECISION MAY BE CALLED IN PRIOR TO PUBLICATION]

**TO: CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**From: COUNCILLORS: Adshead, Cordingley, Duffield, Lloyd, D. Western**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

[Notes: (1) Only Overview & Scrutiny Councillors are entitled to request call-in of a decision.  
(2) The Chairman or, where appropriate, the Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee can be asked by any 3 Overview & Scrutiny Members to exercise the right to request that the Chief Executive call in a decision.  
(3) The Chairman can exercise the right to request call in of a decision under his / her own authority.]

### **EXECUTIVE DECISION TO BE CALLED IN: (Title & Ref. No.)**

Reconfiguration of Trafford Children Centres: Post Consultation Feedback Analysis and Recommendations

E/4.03.13-5

### **DECISION TAKER:**

Executive (Councillors Anstee, Dr. Barclay, Miss Blackburn, Colledge, Cornes, Coupe, Hyman, Mitchell, Williams and M. Young)

### **DATE OF MEETING / DECISION**

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

### **Decision:**

**To approve the reconfiguration of Trafford's Children Centres**

### **Criteria checklist (MUST be specified): ✓**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a) Inaccurate information of a substantial nature given to decision taker | ✓ |
| b) Inadequate consultation was carried out                                | ✓ |
| c) Alternative options were not given sufficient consideration            | ✓ |
| d) Insufficient information was available                                 | ✓ |

**Reasons for call-in:**

### **INACCURATE INFORMATION**

The report on page one suggests that 'consultation written responses do not indicate a strong objection to the proposal to refocus resources', this claim is repeated again on p33, 7.3. This suggests support for the proposals, however 73% of respondents opposed the proposals and the written submissions list a lot of concerns which are not reflected on in the Executive Summary.

Pages 3 and 9 of the report list perceived weaknesses identified in the early stages of the Children's Centre review, however this information has to be treated with caution as page 81 of the report highlights that attendance is not always recorded, which will distort the data.

The report starts by identifying 'the need for Children Centre functions to shift towards an outreach family support model' and suggests 'the number of families registered with Children Centres were not necessarily engaging with the Centres'. However, this seems contrary to the rationale used to support the retention of a base in Sale Moor (p6-'Sale Moor has very low engagement figures').

Parents have raised concerns about the suitability of some of the venues listed as community venues available to provide services. Parents have advised that some of the venues have already been rejected due to the expense of hire. This was not made clear before the Executive took their decision.

### **INADEQUATE CONSULTATION**

Pages 14-16 of the report highlight a number of concerns with the consultation process. Parents registered with Children's Centres were reporting to the Council as late as December that they had not received consultation information by email/post. Parents reported that forms were not promoted at the Children's Centres which is obviously a main access point for service users. Though the Council did produce an easy read version of the form, this does not address how parents struggling with literacy would be able to participate in the consultation with confidence.

The consultation period effectively lost two weeks over the Christmas period, requests were made by parents and councillors to extend the consultation period, which were refused.

The Executive did not pay due regard to the concerns raised about the consultation period when taking this decision.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS WERE NOT GIVEN SUFFICIENT CONSIDERATION**

The report is framed to suggest that the changes proposed were triggered by the early findings of the Children's Centre review. This contrasts with the report presented to the Executive at the special meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012, where the proposal is listed under the heading 'CYPS Savings Proposals'. It is therefore unclear whether the changes are being driven by a massive, £1.7m, reduction of the budget or the outcome of the children's centre review.

With this being the case, the report does not demonstrate why the status quo would not address the issue of engaging those who are in greatest need. Page 4 of the report under the heading 'Other Options' indicates insufficient work carried out when considering alternatives, with three short paragraphs being devoted to this section within an 86 page report.

## **INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION WAS AVAILABLE**

Page 2 of the report (Executive Summary) refers to the completion of EIA's for both service and staff, stating that both are attached to the report. The Service EIA, which identifies medium risks is included in the report, however the staff EIA, which identifies high risks, has not been included. This is key information not available to the Executive when they took the decision to approve the report's recommendations.

A number of councillors have referred to services not being affected by the proposals; one example cited being the impact in Timperley following the closure of Broomwood Children's Centre. However, the Council's response to consultation suggests that this rests on recruiting more volunteers. The report does not make it clear that some services will not be able to continue without the support of volunteers and therefore requires further scrutiny.

**PLEASE NOW FORWARD THIS PROFORMA DIRECTLY TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES (FLOOR 6, QW) FOR RECORDING AND REFERRAL TO THE CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

I accept / do not accept\* that one or more of the above criteria is met in relation to this decision. The criteria accepted, from those specified in the call-in request, are: \_\_\_\_\_. I therefore request that the Chief Executive calls in this matter for consideration by the \_\_\_\_\_ Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman, Scrutiny Committee

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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(FLOOR 6, QW) FOR RECORDING AND REFERRAL TO THE CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE

I accept / ~~do not accept~~ that one or more of the above criteria is met in relation to this decision. The criteria accepted, from those specified in the call-in request, are:

Inaccurate Information

Insufficient Information was available

I therefore request that the Chief Executive calls in this matter for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee.

Signed B Shaw.

Chairman, Scrutiny Committee

Date 15/3/13

\* I have not upheld this call-in request for the following reasons:

Any additional comments from the Chairman:

[Note for the Chairman: On completion, please forward this form to Democratic Services (Floor 6, QW) for immediate attention.]