

<b>15 October 2015</b>		<b>ITEM: 6</b>
<b>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
<b>Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment 2015</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Report of: Michele Lucas: Interim Strategic Lead Learning &amp; Skills</b>		
<b>Accountable Manager:</b> Michele Lucas, Interim Strategic Lead Learning & Skills		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services		
<b>This report is Public</b>		

### **Executive Summary**

This report outlines Thurrock's Annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2015. It breaks down geographically early years places and identifies areas where we have both a surplus and deficit of places.

This report is part of the statutory duty as set out in the Childcare Act 2006 which states Local Authorities need to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of early years entitlement with due regard to planning and growth across the Local Authority.

It recognises the regeneration opportunities locally and will look to support some of the national drivers around early years education.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1.1 To support further early years & childcare development in Aveley & Tilbury recognising the deficit outlined in the sufficiency report.**
- 1.2 To promote and encourage more schools to consider eligible 2 year old intake.**
- 1.3 To support public village hall use for the increase of early education particularly related to costs associated with tenancy**
- 1.4 To consider early education future needs before decision are taken in relation to capital assets across the Local Authority**

## **2. Introduction and background:**

### **Local Policy Context**

The Annual Assessment links with the following Council objectives:-

1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity
2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

### **National Policy**

The introduction of the eligible 2 year old entitlement has seen an increase in demand for childcare places across the country. Thurrock has been working closely with its early years providers to ensure we can support vulnerable 2 year olds into early education. We are currently slightly above the national average for 2 year old take up and we are continuing to work closely with regional colleagues to increase further over the Autumn term, this will strengthen our communication strategy to encourage eligible parents to take up the 2 year old offer.

To further support the national driver in supporting working parents the Government have recently requested expressions of interest for Local Authorities to support providers in offering 30 hours of childcare for three and four year olds of working parents. Thurrock has submitted an expression of interest to the Department for Education to be in the first phase of this pilot recognising that the exciting regeneration opportunities locally will provide a range of employment pathways for Thurrock residents, and ensuring that we have the appropriate childcare pathways will be critical to the success of encouraging residents to take advantage of the local job opportunities.

In relating this back to our Annual Assessment we recognise that this has the potential to impact on the places that will be available to 2 year olds across Thurrock. The Childcare Sufficiency Officer is working closely with early years providers to ensure that we can meet local demand for both 2/3 and 4 year old provision.

Current Support to Early Years Providers from Childcare Sufficiency Officer:-

- Support pathways for new early years providers
- Visits to local sites to support early years providers
- Liaison with planning department and assets team
- Close working with School Improvement Team
- Monitoring new planning applications to ensure early years provision is included in new development as and when required.

## **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

Consultation will take place with parents during the Autumn Term to ensure we have the voice of parents/carers included in any requirements for early education opportunities.

## **6. Impact on corporate Policies, Priorities, Performance and Community Impact.**

6.1 This report contributes to the following corporate priorities:

- create a great place for learning and opportunity
- encourage and promote job promotion and economic prosperity

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
**Finance Manager**

We are currently ensuring that we meet the requirements around 2 year old funding to meet local targets.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**  
**Deputy Head of Legal and Governance**

This report is part of the statutory duty as set out in the Childcare Act 2006 which states Local Authorities need to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of early years entitlement with due regard to planning and growth across the Local Authority.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development &  
Equalities Manager**

Equality of opportunity is a key principle of all early years' providers, they ensure they meet statutory duties around offering places to all early years children – part of the Ofsted requirement is to evidence how they have ensured equality of opportunity.

### **7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None

**Appendices to this report:**

**Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment 2015**

**Report Author**

Michele Lucas

Interim Strategic Lead Learning & Skills