



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Community Centre: Early Years bookings compliance review
Date:	19 November 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At the full Council meeting on 1 October it was agreed a report would be made to the Development Committee following an urgent review of all the council's community centres to ascertain if groups hosting early years provision were compliant with legal requirements.
1.2	Immediate action was taken with community centres identifying whether or not there was early year provision/ groups or services operating and registered with social services. This was classified as early years' provision for under 5 years where groups/ services are responsible for the care of children. Given parents / guardians are in attendance, by default this does not include parent and toddler groups.
1.3	Once a scheme offers more than 2 hours of child care provision it falls into registered provision and there are three categories of childcare setting required to register with trusts: childminders, full day care and sessional day care.
1.4	All community centres confirmed by 22 October that there was either no early years provision or any provision which was present was registered with social services. Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of response per centre.
1.5	Where groups have chosen to offer early years provision in community centres they must register the venue with social services. This triggers an assessment by Social Services as to the suitability of the venue as part of the provision. A venue is assessed as part of a general application by an early years' provider. The majority of the provision in our council community centres falls into the third category, we have therefore included the additional criteria for sessional day care.
1.6	The council currently has 12 community centres which have been assessed and recognised as registered venues with social services given they have been hired for this purpose by external early years providers.
1.7	Booking conditions for the community centre clearly state (item 4b) the hirer must

	ensure all events are conducted in a safe and responsible manner and in accordance with all relevant regulations.
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2	Key Issues
2.1	<u>Booking conditions</u> The hirer of community centres is responsible for ensuring they meet all relevant regulations as noted on the Conditions of Hire detailed in the application for booking.
2.2	Legal opinion on whether or not the current booking terms and conditions need strengthened for safeguarding requirements was sought. They recommend that the Council should take steps to make sure the Social Services registration, and therefore the regulatory requirements, is evidenced at the time of booking; otherwise the Council would be exposing itself to reputational risk.
2.3	It is further recommended that our conditions of booking specify that compliance with the relevant legal requirements for the provision of care/services is a mandatory condition of use.
2.4	The Service is currently refreshing its booking forms and will incorporate this recommendation into the new pro-forma.
2.5	<u>The Council's safeguarding responsibilities</u> To support the Council's safeguarding of children in council venues the Play Development Officer is devising a 'safeguarding children' checklist for community centres and across council for officers to reference if they are taking bookings from organisations offering early years provision. The checklist will also support community centre led programmed activities. It will include a definition of what is early years and when a service needs to be registered etc.
2.6	This checklist is currently being developed and will be issued in November 2013.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	No resource implications only officer time.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality or good relations considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are requested to note the contents of the report which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Confirms the council's community centres are currently compliant when hosting early years' provision. ii. Outline additional steps to support compliance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Update community centre booking forms to ensure we stipulate the formal requirements for those providing early years care/services which must be met as mandatory conditions of contract b) Introduce a safeguarding checklist to support council officers when a booking for early years' provision is received to allow this to be assessed and rejected if non-compliant.

6	Decision Tracking

The CYP manager will implement the agreed actions.

8	Documents Attached
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Appendix 1 - Community centre early years provision return October 2013 Appendix 2 - PEAGs places: Pre School Education Advisory Group (PEAGs) List of voluntary providers
