

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Education, Skills & Culture Cabinet Board**

29<sup>th</sup> November 2018

### **Report of the Head of Participation – Chris Millis**

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All Wards

### **Expansion of the Childcare Offer in Neath Port Talbot**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To seek approval for the Childcare Offer Wales to be implemented across Neath Port Talbot by end of January 2019.

#### **Executive Summary**

The Childcare Offer has been delivered across 14 pilot areas of Neath Port Talbot since September 2018. Applications have been approved for 150 children with 3,872 hours of funded childcare being provided through the offer during September.

It is proposed that the remaining wards are phased in over three stages (see Appendix 1). The report proposes that all remaining wards become eligible by January 2019.

## **Background**

The Welsh Government's (WG) "Taking Wales Forward" Programme identified free childcare as one of its main pledges to remove barriers to parents taking up employment.

The childcare offer provides working parents with 30 hours of government-funded childcare and early education for 3 and 4 year olds for up to 48 weeks of the year.

The offer combines Foundation Phase nursery provision during term times, with additional childcare up to a total of 30 hours. During the weeks of the year when nursery is not provided, qualifying children will receive 30 hours of childcare, supporting working families with the costs of holiday care.

The government-funded childcare is available:

- from the term following the child's third birthday and will continue until the child starts reception class in his/her primary school the September after their fourth birthday.
- if all parents in the household meet the eligibility requirements for income from wages or identified benefits.

In 2017, Welsh Government began a pilot of the offer with six local authorities. Neath Port Talbot started its pilot in September 2018.

All childcare providers registered with Care Inspectorate Wales are able to sign up to be part of the offer and parents choose provision to meet their needs. Parents will be able to use their childcare hours outside of Neath Port Talbot so relationships will need to develop with providers in neighbouring authorities to ensure that parents have access to suitable provision.

### Progress on Pilot Phase

Since July, 171 applications have been received for the Childcare Offer, 150 of which have been approved. An online application system has been developed by the Council's IT section which allows parents to provide all of their details and associated evidence for the eligibility

checks. Further developments are currently being made to the system to support the payments to childcare providers.

Currently 78 childcare providers are registered to deliver the offer, approx. 53% of all providers in NPT. During September, the first month of delivery, 3,872 hours of funded childcare were provided, with a total payment of £17,424 being made to providers.

A Childcare Offer Lead, Support Team Officer and Outreach Worker have been appointed to deliver the offer and ensure promotion and support is available throughout the lifetime of the offer for both providers and parents. The three posts are fully funded through the childcare offer grant.

### Proposed Roll Out

Following the initial pilot it is proposed that the remaining wards are categorised into a further three phases - phase 2 to be implemented from December 2018, and phases 3 and 4 from January 2019. See Appendix 1. This will ensure that eligible parents from all areas of Neath Port Talbot will be able to apply for the offer from end January 2019.

### Funding

The childcare offer is fully funded by Welsh Government through funding for childcare providers and a delivery grant for local authorities. An SEN grant is also available to support children with additional needs to access childcare.

An application for £5m of capital funding has been made to Welsh Government to support the development of childcare provision, which will be utilised over the next three years. A decision is expected on this in early 2019.

## **Financial Impact**

The childcare offer will be fully funded by Welsh Government. Funding of £166,939 has been confirmed for 2018/19 including a one-off start up payment of £67,250.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the initial screening assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **Workforce Impacts**

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

## **Legal Impacts**

There are no legal issues associated with this report.

## **Risk Management**

There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendations**

That approval is given for the Childcare Offer to be phased out through the listed wards shown in Appendix 1.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

To ensure that the Childcare Offer is implemented throughout Neath Port Talbot by January 2019.

## **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Table of Phased ward roll out

## **List of Background Papers**

None

## **Officer Contact**

Chris Millis, Head of Participation

Tel: 01639 763226

Email: [c.millis@npt.gov.uk](mailto:c.millis@npt.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Proposed Phased Roll Out

<b>Phase 1 September 2018</b>	<b>Phase 2 December (3<sup>rd</sup>) 2018</b>	<b>Phase 3 January (2nd) 2019</b>	<b>Phase 4 January (31st) 2019</b>
Aberavon	Allt-wen	Cwmllynfell	Glynneath
Baglan	Cadoxton	Godre'r Graig	Aberdulais
Blaengwrach	Cimla	Rhos	Neath North
Bryn-Coch North	Crynant	Coedfranc North	Dyffryn
Bryn-Coch South	Neath East	Coedfranc West	Neath Central
Cymmer	Sandfields East	Briton Ferry West	Bryn and Cwmavon
Glyncorrwg	Sandfields West	Briton Ferry East	Pelenna
Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen	Tonna	Port Talbot	Coedffranc Central
Gwynfi	Trebanos	Margam	
Lower Brynamman	Ystalyfera	Seven Sisters	
Onllwyn			
Pontardawe			
Resolven			
Tai-bach			