Ref: 08/2016

For use by Legal and Democratic Services only

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

RECORD OF MEMBER DELEGATED DECISION

OPTIMISING THE USE OF CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUILDINGS IN THE CONTEXT OF EFFECTIVE PREVENTION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Date Of Decision	16 September 2016
Decision Maker	Mr M L Bayliss – Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families
Brief Description Of Decision	The Cabinet Member: (a) noted the information in the report and accompanying background information and the detail contained in the accompanying Appendices 1 to 6, including statutory duties, detailed appraisal of consultation responses and district specific equalities impact assessments; (b) approved the proposal to allocate a one-off sum of £30,000 which is used to support the universal provision to become self-sufficient (as outlined in detail in paragraphs 29 and 33 of the report); (c) approved the recommendations to change the use of 18 children's centre buildings as outlined in paragraph 34 of the report and detailed in the accompanying Appendix 1 and authorised the Interim Director of Commercial and Change to make the necessary property and lease arrangements; (d) authorised the Director of Children, Families and Communities to take all necessary steps to put the above into effect including a dedicated 6-9 month transition period as described in paragraph 35 of the report; (e) authorised the Director of Children, Families and Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, to find and implement an alternative proposal that is of similar nature (i.e. still meets the definition of a children's centre) in the unlikely event that any of the particular proposals outlined in paragraph 34 of the report are unable to be implemented; and

	(f) agreed to receive a further report (following any further consultation which may be necessary) if it is does not prove possible to find alternative proposals under (e) above, in order to make any further decisions around the use of specific children centre buildings.
Reason(s) For Decision	As set out in the report. The re-design of the 0-19 prevention services is underpinned by an early help needs assessment which sets out the rationale for change. As part of this re-design the current providers that occupy / manage the 32 Council owned buildings (children's centres) are re-focusing services to target children, families and communities in greatest need. There is no requirement for them to continue to deliver services from the 32 buildings. Instead services need to be made available in the most appropriate manner, including delivering in families' homes, to best meet need. However, it is recognised that the existing 32 buildings are important community assets and should continue to be used for the purpose they were built (i.e. to deliver early childhood services from). The decision taken relates to 18 buildings and in all cases, will allow for a better mix of childcare provision including more funded nursery places; before and after school care; use by the community; parenting groups and family learning; activities during school holidays and/or a space for meetings with families. It also means no formal closure of children's centre buildings. The recent consultation builds on the previous consultation held between November 2015 and January 2016. The most recent consultation was focused on specific centres and was targeted at service users, centre staff and the respective advisory board (note: advisory boards are no longer centre specific but operate on a district basis or across the town areas in Wychavon) There are six district focused documents and six district equality impact assessments that provide a breakdown of the feedback received and the equality impact. The information within these documents has been noted as highlighted in recommendation (a) Specific attention has been drawn to the various legal duties imposed by the Childcare Act 2006 outlined in the report and supporting information. These duties will continue to be discharged through the provision of the 0-19 Integrated Public Health Nursing Service, Parenting and Family Support Provider and the full range of early years education settings operating across Worcestershire. The decision will also contribute towards realising the £1.5million savings (based on current base budget)

	attributed towards the early help budget.
Alternative Options Considered And Rejected	**Rainbow** at St Mary's School – Wyre Forest **Proposal:** Transfer to childcare provider with access for health and other providers. The provider will expand the current childcare provision to offer additional places, including for funded two year olds and deliver transitional stay and play sessions. Space will also be made available for health clinics/sessions. **Alternative Proposal:** St Mary's School submitted a detailed objection to the proposals and their own proposals for the use of the area of the building, including use of the space for existing family support, professional meetings, stay and play sessions, before and after school provision and existing family learning. **The alternative proposal was rejected** due to the 46% deficit of available early years and childcare hours within this ward. The current onsite early years provider is rated by Ofsted as Good and meets the national requirements to offer funded hours for 2, 3 & 4 year old children. The school's proposal did not meet this requirement.
Any Conflict of Interest declared by a consulted Cabinet Member/ any dispensation granted	None
Signature of Decision Maker	Mr M L Bayliss