

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date:	8 July 2020
Title:	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Covid-19 Impact and Response for the Childcare Sector
Report From:	Steve Crocker, Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Select Committee on how the Local Authority complies with its statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare to meet parental need, in accordance with the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (June 2018).
2. The full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) was taken to Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People meeting of 20 November 2019 and is provided as Appendix 1 to this report.
3. This report summarises the key findings of the CSA and identifies the progress against priority actions identified in the CSA. Progress on many of the priority actions has been delayed due to Covid-19 and this report details the impact of Covid-19 on the CSA actions and upon the childcare sector more widely.

Recommendations

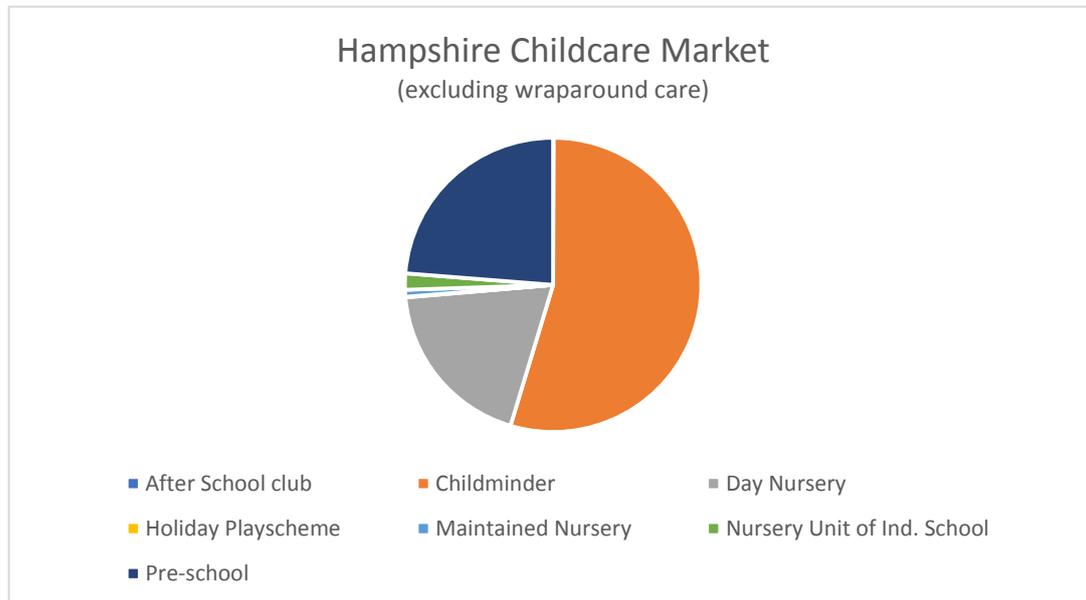
4. That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the content of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019 and the associated action plan together with the updated position in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
5. That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon the childcare sector and the County Council's support to the sector during this time.

Executive Summary

6. Statutory guidance requires that the County Council is able to secure sufficient childcare for working parents and to undertake a sufficiency assessment to be brought to Executive Members on an annual basis.
7. The detailed CSA in Appendix 1 provides an overview of childcare in Hampshire as at 2019. It provides an action plan that looks forward to 2020 year beyond, delivery of which would support the County Council in maintaining a vibrant and diverse childcare market.
8. Delivery against the Action Plan 2019-2021 contained in the assessment has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. On 20 March 2020, the Government required all childcare settings to close to all but vulnerable children and the children of key workers.
9. The number of providers open and children attending childcare significantly reduced immediately following the lockdown announcement but has gradually increased (and continues to do so) as lockdown measures have been relaxed.
10. Hampshire County Council facilitated attendance of key worker and vulnerable children during lockdown through a brokerage services for families, and through direct work with providers to encourage attendance.
11. The County Council has implemented a variety of financial, learning and communication measures to support the childcare sector during the pandemic so far, and further support will be required in the short, medium and longer term to ensure the Hampshire childcare sector continues to provide sufficient places for Hampshire children.
12. With the need for the economy to start recovering, there is also need for the childcare opportunities for parents to be available. Ensuring sufficiency and supporting the childcare sector over the coming months and years will be challenging and there are many unknowns.

Hampshire's Childcare Market and Funding Context

13. The Hampshire childcare market comprises c. 1470 settings, excluding before and after school clubs. The chart below shows the composition on the market:



14. Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare for working parents in the local authority area. Local authorities need to secure early years education places offering 570 hours a year, over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year, for every three and four year old child in their area from the term after their third birthday until the child reaches compulsory school age, known as “universal entitlement”. There is also a requirement to secure Early Years Education provision for eligible two year old children, from the term after their second birthday.
15. In addition to this, there is an extended entitlement that increases the number of hours of free childcare available to eligible working parents of entitlement” free on top of the “universal entitlement” of an additional 15 free hours per week.
16. Latest data suggests there are 24,297 children accessing the Universal Entitlement of 15 hours centrally funded childcare, 12,142 children accessing the Extended Entitlement of 30 hours childcare and 2,115 eligible two year olds accessing childcare in Hampshire.
17. There have been concerns raised nationally that Early Years Funding to the sector has not been sufficient prior to Covid 19. The DfE recognised this to some extent with changes in the Statutory Guidance in 2017 to allow for providers to make consumable charges and to seek voluntary contributions from parents, but there remain concerns as to whether Early Years Funding is sufficient for long term sufficiency.

18. Families do not always utilise their free 570 hours or 1,140 childcare entitlements in a consistent way – usage fluctuates depending upon school holidays, parental working patterns, and provider’s opening hours. This is known as a ‘stretched offer’, whereby families stretch their entitlement to meet their needs, and results in funding changing from month to month.
19. Parents also have a ‘right to request’ wraparound and holiday childcare at the school where their child attends. They can sign up to and use their Tax Free Childcare account which provides a financial contribution of £2 for every £8 (up to a maximum) to working parent to support childcare costs. The County Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient wraparound childcare for working parents in the local authority area.
20. The childcare market is financially supported by two primary sources of income:
- (i) Early Years Education (EYE) funding that is provided through the LA based on the number of children attending in support of the LA statutory responsibilities. This is funded through the Early Years block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
 - (ii) Private income generated through the private parental fees directly agreed between the setting and the parents.
21. Table 1 below provides a summary of the proportions of each of these funding source the Hampshire market receives:

Table 1:

Range of children privately funded	Number of providers
all EYE funded	69
all privately funded children	161
greater than 0% up to 5% privately funded for 1 to 4 children	32
greater than 10% up to 20% privately funded 1 - 16 children	146
greater than 20% up to 30% privately funded 1 to 42 children	122
greater than 30% up to 40% privately funded - 1 to 43 children	86
greater than 40% up to 60% privately funded - 1 to 132 children	244
greater than 5% up to 10% privately funded 1 to 9 children	47
greater than 60% up to 80% privately funded - 2 to 180 children	274
greater than 80% and less than 99% privately funded - 5 to 410 children	199
Misc data	91
Grand Total	1471

Hampshire County Council’s Sufficiency Duty and Sufficiency Assessment

22. Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 placed a duty on local authorities to secure sufficient childcare, so far as reasonably practicable, for working parents. The Childcare Act 2016 further refined this duty with implementation of 30 hours

childcare. The duty was also set out at regulation 33 of the Childcare (early years provision free of charge) (extended entitlement) regulation 2016.

23. The Early Education and Childcare statutory guidance for Local Authorities (June 2018) outlines the requirement to report annually to Council Members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and to make this report available and accessible to parents. Accordingly, the full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) was taken to Executive Lead Member for Childrens Services and Young People meeting of 20 November 2019.
24. Hampshire County Council publishes updated childcare sufficiency reports on the Council website for each of the 11 boroughs and districts and updates elected members through briefings.
25. The detailed CSA in Appendix 1 provides an overview of childcare in Hampshire as at 2019. It provides an action plan that looks forward to the 2020 year and beyond, delivery of which would support the County Council to maintain a vibrant and diverse childcare market.
26. The County wide priorities identified in the CSA action plan are set out in Table 2 below, along with a progress update.

Table 2 – CSA Action Plan Summary

Action Plan Priority	Description	Progress Update
Childcare for under twos and two year olds	Capacity of the market and assessment against population	The January 2020 census information provides the basis of the scrutiny. Data and information had been gathered and the planned detail review of this has been affected by the Covid-19 response requirements.
Out of school childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of the market and assessment against trends in 30 hours take up • Recruitment of (temporary) dedicated project officer to assess OSC/Holiday scheme provision and develop strategy. • Development of data set to share with schools on 30 hours take up of new Year R in-take to support schools planning for new intake and potential demand for out of school provision. • Targeted data collection from out of school clubs and schools to inform OSC place planning. 	<p>The trends in take up of 30 hours are matched against the admissions to schools of children moving to Year R in the September. The data analysis for summer 2020 has been delayed due to the Covid-19 response requirements.</p> <p>In December 2019 a temporary Project Officer for Out School Childcare was appointed for a year. Their role is to undertake a full review of what provision is available in Hampshire through private and voluntary providers and also including schools.</p> <p>Further work to develop the data set and data collection has been delayed due to Covid-19.</p>
Rural childcare	Review capacity of the market and assessment of rural sustainability and assessment against population	Desktop review of establishing rural indicators had commenced. However, the project review is now delayed due to the Covid-19 response requirements.
Childcare for new housing developments	Review all known housing developments and phasing to determine the future childcare needs.	This work continues through ongoing desk-based analysis and engagement with the Children's Services Strategic Planning Team to ensure

		childcare requirements are included and appropriate.
Provider sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development and implementation of a set of early indicators to support Development Officers to identify risks to childcare sufficiency in the childcare market. Continued review of the costs pressures of childcare providers to inform strategies to strengthen the provider base where possible. 	<p>A set of early indicators of providers experiencing financial difficulties has been developed.</p> <p>Covid-19 has concentrated, and in some cases, exacerbated the financial pressures for early years and childcare settings. This is further detailed in paragraphs 27-34 of this report.</p>
Early Years Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued monitor of 2 year old funding to ensure access, and taking action to maintain access if appropriate. Continued monitor of 30 hours childcare to ensure access and taking action to maintain access if appropriate. Continued monitor to ensure take up of entitlements for disadvantage children: Early Years Pupil Premium; Disability Access Fund; SEND and taking action to maintain access if appropriate. 	<p>2 year old take up: Autumn 2019 saw the reintroduction of direct mail letters to introduce and remind families identified by the Department for Work and Pensions who had applied and met eligibility, but had not taken up a place. This was targeted to the three lowest take up districts Fareham, Rushmoor and Test Valley. Writing directly to these families has had a positive impact with 70% of these families accessing a place. The summer 2020 mailing was delayed due to Covid-19.</p> <p>30 hours childcare: Prior to Covid-19, take up for the extended entitlement had been consistently growing in numbers and hours. The spring census 2020 saw 11,000 child claims. There is concern in the sector that the “stay at home” and “work from home” arrangements due to Covid-19 may have changed working parents demand for future childcare. It is difficult to say at this time if this will be the case but there is national understanding</p>

		that parental confidence is low in use of childcare or return to school at this time.
Childcare Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued promotion of childcare as a career choice at job fairs and liaison with Job Centre Plus. Continued development with Further Education colleges, Housing Associations, and Job Centre Plus of the roll out of “Sector Based work academy- childcare” programme to support new entrants to childcare workforce. Continued monitor through EYNFF survey of the numbers of staff and qualification in the sector. 	<p>During summer and autumn 2019, this area of work has focussed on supporting stakeholder promotion and attendance at local job fairs to outline childcare as a career option. The Sector Based Work academy programme with Basingstoke College, Job Centre Plus and Housing Associations held three courses during 2019/20 supporting circa 30 unemployed adults with early years and childcare level 2 qualifications and paediatric first aid, together with work experience. There have been five people currently reported as securing employment in 2019. This scheme was to be further rolled out in spring 2020 but has been delayed due to Covid-19.</p>

Impact of Covid-19 During Lockdown

27. The impact of Covid-19 upon the CSA priorities for ensuring childcare sufficiency in Hampshire is clear from the summary in Table 2.
28. Following lockdown, Government guidance required childcare providers to close to general admissions but, similarly to schools, the Government requested that childcare providers continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response and cannot be safely cared for at home.
29. This resulted in a mixed economy of 'open' and 'closed' providers and a number of financial challenges to the sector, the most significant of which was the reduction in private parental income (see Table 1 in paragraph 17 for a breakdown of sources of income for Hampshire childcare providers).
30. The childcare sector varies in terms of structure and there are a significant number of community, parent led and/or childminders who may not have had the infrastructure or expertise to assess and understand the financial support packages available from government. The County Council has strived hard to help the sector to understand complex guidance issues by the Department for Education.
31. The out of school sector have not been able to operate since 20 March. The government restrictions also mean that it is very difficult for these services to be able to operate in the spirit of the current government guidance. These issues and concerns have been raised up to the DfE and it is anticipated some revision to the guidance may follow announcements in early July. Many of the out of school service providers are concerned for their survival should autumn not return them to usual patterns of delivery.
32. The numbers of children attending provision during the lockdown from 20 March to 30 May has been extremely low due to implementing the government guidance and restrictions in attendance to only keyworker and vulnerable children. Prior to lock down, there were c. 39,00 children aged 0-4 years attending childcare provision.
33. Table 3 is an extract from daily survey returns from providers and gives a representative view of attendance for: the week after lockdown; 1 June when provision reopened; and to the date of writing this report. The responses from open providers varied throughout the survey collection, and therefore this data only represents 40 – 50% of all open settings. It would be reasonable to extrapolate from this that attendance across all open providers on 16 June was likely to be in the region of 7,000-8,000 children; 20% of the pre-Covid attendance figures.

Table 3 – Attendance summary

Date	Children attending during Covid19 aged 0-4 years			
	Key Workers	Vulnerable Children	Other children	Total Attending
30-Mar-20	257	35	0	292
01-Jun-20	1958	290	1717	3965
16-Jun-20	1551	247	1900	3698

Data from provider returns through daily survey.

34. From 30 March 2020, the County Council commenced daily data collection to understand the proportion of the childcare sector remaining open. Initially only 116 early years and childcare providers indicated that they remained open, although this has increased in line with demand since that date, with a steep increase following the government's change in guidance from 1 June. As at the 18 June there were some 1,216 providers open (see table 4 below).

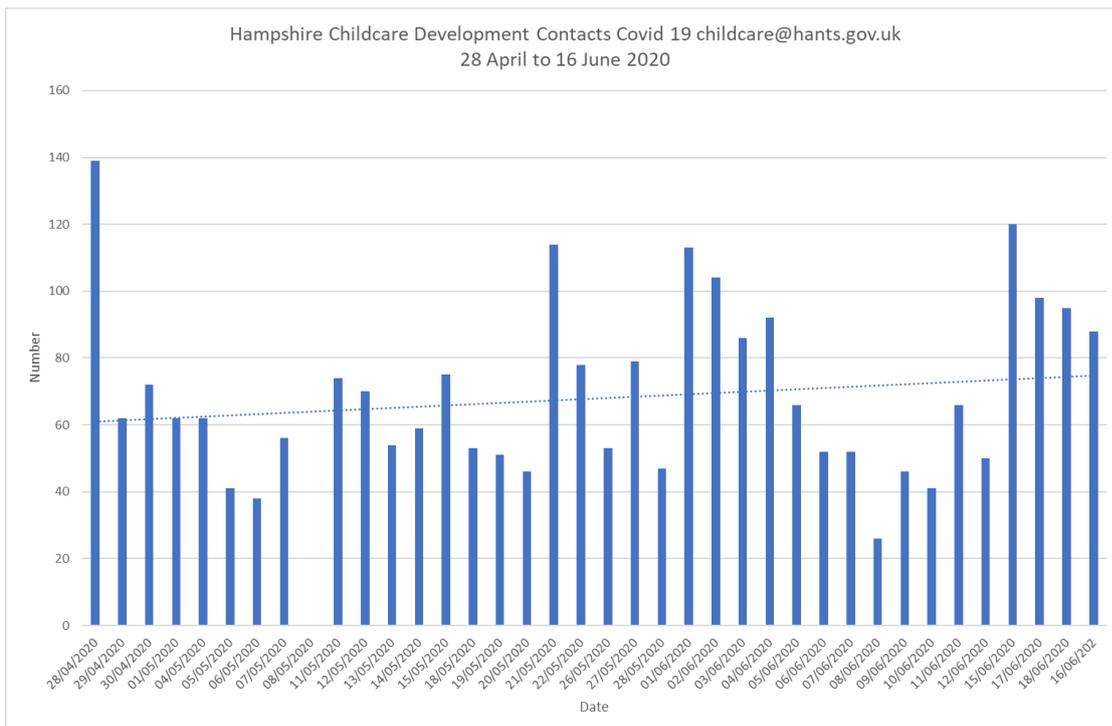
Table 4 – Open childcare providers 26 June 2020

Provider type	Closed	Dormant	Open	Unknown	Grand Total	% open	No. providers expected to open next week	% open from next week
After School club EYE			1	1	2	50%		50%
Childminder	65	32	603	98	798	76%	21	78%
Day Nursery	22	2	245		269	91%	3	92%
Governor Run EYE			24		24	100%		100%
Holiday Playscheme EYE			1		1	100%		100%
Maintained Nursery			12		12	100%		100%
Nursery Unit of Ind. School	7	1	18		26	69%		69%
Pre-school	20	7	309		336	92%	11	95%
Non EYE Childminder	7	2	13	341	363	4%		4%
Out of School clubs	5	1	2	57	65	3%		3%
Total	126	45	1228	497	1896	65%	35	67%

Hampshire County Council's Support to the Sector during Covid-19

35. The County Council has endeavoured to support childcare providers and families requiring childcare during the pandemic in a variety of ways.
36. Frequently asked questions have been produced and issued at least weekly to ensure that the childcare market was kept informed of government guidance. These were directly emailed to all providers and also uploaded to the "latest news" section of the website. These will continue to be provided until such time as they are no longer required.

37. To support early years and childcare settings, arrangements were made to provide an upfront payment of Early Years Entitlement funding at the beginning of April 2020 to assist with cashflow. All settings were also able to make claims for those children they would have usually expected to attend in the summer period.
38. The Children’s Services Department has (and continue to) provided detailed commentary on the issues facing the sector and the guidance required to government during lockdown, frequently engaging with the Department for Education to advocate for the sector.
39. Throughout the Covid-19 response, and to support the new social distancing and infection control measures, some children needed to temporarily move providers. In these circumstances funding was able to be claimed at the new temporary provider, without any reclaiming of funding from those providers unable to operate.
40. A small exceptional funding grant has been established to support providers where there were costs that were exceptional or additional due to the Covid-19 response, where such costs were unable to be covered by income or other government relief funds. There have been 38 applications sent to providers and 14 applications returned. Of these currently seven have been approved to a total value of £30,244.
41. All contact (whether from providers or families) was channelled through a central email account to ensure effective triage and response whilst staff at working at home. There have been over 2,500 messages to this email address since lockdown commenced:



42. Children's Services provided a brokerage service to support key workers in identifying childcare in the event that their usual provider was closed and/or to ensure childcare was available to support shift patterns, school holiday working etc.
43. In late May, a series of webinar sessions took place during the day and evening, with separate sessions for childminders and group settings. At both, we invited a speaker from the representative sector to outline their approach to meeting the revised standards. These sessions were well attended with 351 group settings and 200 childminders and there was positive feedback that they had been helpful to the sector.
44. Similarly, out of school providers were invited to attend two webinar sessions to draw the sector together and explore the issues and concerns they had regarding the limitations the government guidance was impacting on their potential business reopening.
45. Throughout the pandemic, a variety of useful tools and resources have been made available on the Services for Young Children learning platform ('Moodle'), this platform including recordings of the webinars for any setting who was unable to attend the live sessions.
46. Specific webinars have been delivered in partnership with Public Health England and Public Health Hampshire to support the sector in their understanding of dealing with suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19.

Immediate Issues for the Childcare Sector

47. Whilst summer EYE funding and government support funds have sustained the childcare sector, the loss of parental income during this period, and uncertainty in respect of expectations from September 2020 is causing significant anxiety for providers.
48. Government guidance continues to evolve at a pace, but any form of social distancing and/or capped 'bubbles' of attendance restrict providers' ability to operate at capacity. Whilst restrictions exist, some providers will be unable to offer childcare to all their usual children due to a lack of capacity, further exacerbating financial concerns.
49. Whilst attendance is increasing, settings are informing us that parental confidence in seeking to access childcare is still low. Continued uncertainty as to uptake of childcare prohibits childcare providers from effective financial planning for the future and exacerbates the instability of the sector.
50. The sector has a mixed infrastructure to provide external support and guidance. Many are members of National Day Nurseries association and Preschool

Learning Alliance or PACEY, but others choose not to be. There are also some small network groups operate where providers come together. We have provided a platform for the sector to support each other through our Self-Sustaining networks where this are coordinated by a nominated sector lead. These networks operate a Facebook page and offer support and bring to us any specific needs or training. Many insurance companies provide some basic sector support.

51. Finance and management finance accounting with forecasting and understanding the cashflow is often a challenge to the sector. Community pre-schools are a particular concern in relation to lack of infrastructure. These settings are usually run by group of parents/volunteers who will be faced with a variety of complex issues which they may feel ill equipped/unqualified to manage. There is increased likelihood of these settings closing down as a result. There are 192 such settings in Hampshire offering in the region of 3,000 – 4,000 places for children. This represents 15% of Hampshire’s early years places.
52. At the earliest opportunity, providers need to understand what Early Years Entitlement (EYE) funding they will receive for the autumn term. On 17 March 2020, the government confirmed that local authorities should continue to pay for free early years entitlement places for 2,3 and 4year olds even if settings were closed. This message was contradicted by later guidance which suggested that local authorities should use EYE funding flexibility to support vulnerable and key worker children to access childcare should, their usual provision be closed. In Hampshire, this later guidance could not be implemented as summer term EYE funding had already been paid to providers. To support the sector, the County Council will ensure that providers have an upfront payment on 1 September and providers will then make their headcount claim in the usual way and receive the full autumn term funding by 30 September. We will continue to provide opportunities for providers to add any new entrants over the autumn period. This will enable providers to receive early years funding throughout the autumn term.
53. The Out of School Care sector (OSC) continues to be restricted, causing concern for both providers and families who rely on this provision. As at mid-June, OSC providers may only offer provision outside, provided they can do so safely in line with the Government’s “Staying alert and safe (social distancing)” guidance which allows up to six people from different households to meet outdoors. In doing so, providers must ensure they can keep children a minimum of 2 metres apart and in groups of no more than 6, including staff members.
54. Government guidance requires OSC settings that offer indoor provision should remain closed for the time being. The Government’s current planning assumption is that adjustments to current measures for such settings will likely be part of Step 3 of the recovery strategy (anticipated no earlier than 4th July), based on further detailed scientific advice provided closer to the time.

Medium Term Challenges for the Childcare Sector

55. Sustained loss of private parental income will result in providers exiting the market and sufficiency challenges for local authorities. Effective financial planning is impossible without a clearer sense of when and how families will access childcare. Providers require minimum occupancy level to breakeven financially. Many providers require occupancy levels of between 60-80% in order to survive. 80% of their costs relate to staffing and so there are limited opportunities to reduce costs without affecting sustainability and sufficiency.
56. There were a number of financially vulnerable childcare providers prior to Covid-19. There are seven early years settings, offering 400-500 places that are considered as high risk due to financial sustainability issues. There are a further nine childminders (offering circa 27 places) and 14 group providers considered at medium risk due to financial sustainability issues who offer in the region of 650 places. These providers will be particularly vulnerable as we move forward.
57. Autumn is traditionally the leanest period in the early years calendar, with majority of 4 year olds going to school. It is usually the more generous attendance patterns of summer that sees the provider through the lean autumn period. Many are concerned that they are exhausting much of their finances in summer with limited time to recover during autumn.
58. It is anticipated that the extended lock down period will have had lasting effects on parental demand for childcare. Parents may require less childcare as they are able to work more flexibly from home, anxiety regarding the safety of provision and unemployment will result in less uptake. The market will need to evolve and potentially contract, whilst local authorities will simultaneously need to ensure sufficiency of places.
59. It is possible that there will be a decrease in the quality of childcare provision as a result of lack of time and financial resources to support the necessary training and development to continuously improve.
60. There is a risk that childcare providers operating from rented accommodation are affected by landlords choosing to increase rent or dispose of property assets in order to support their own financial future. This would further destabilise the childcare market.

Longer Term Challenges for the Childcare Sector

61. The issues in relation to effective business planning will continue into the longer term. It has been widely reported that the sector many need Government financial investment in order to expand again.

62. Sufficiency planning will require significant time to horizon scan and evaluate the affects to changes in culture, employment and working patterns as well as market adjustments. The County Council will need to revisit and revise its sufficient assessment more frequently during this period.
63. Generating capacity in the childcare sector takes time – new settings take an average of 6-12 months to become operational. Continued acceleration of Ofsted registration timescales would be helpful to enable new provision to get up and running as soon as possible.
64. Schools may choose to deliver more 2-11 provision and/or wraparound childcare which will reduce demand in the private and voluntary sectors for such services. Less demand for 3 and 4 year olds in childcare would present further challenges to the childcare sector. If school only offer to youngest at 2 years then it is very likely that baby childcare will become very challenging to provide on its own, due to the ratios of staff and the space requirements.
65. In Hampshire, there has been growth in the hours of childcare provided through the introduction of 30 hours. Many families purchase more hours than the government scheme and therefore less employment may see a reduction further in the fee income of providers and less hours needed in the sector.
66. The impact of the lockdown on birth rates could result in increased demand for childcare in the event there is population growth.

Conclusion

67. Support to parents in finding childcare solutions has been successful during the Covid-19 response. As more settings have opened since 1 June, thus far provision has kept pace with demand.
68. There has been continued support to the sector in a variety of forms to enable them to deliver or plan to deliver places during the Covid-19 lockdown and wider openings of provision.
69. The CSA 2019-2021 action plan has been delayed due to the Covid-19 response requirements although it is recognised much of the plan had been started and is still relevant.
70. The development of the financial risk tool has been helpful in the Covid-19 response and is helping to understand the wider financial vulnerabilities in the market.
71. With the need for the economy to start recovering, there is also need for the childcare opportunities for parents to be available. Ensuring sufficiency and

supporting the childcare sector over the coming months and years will be challenging and there are many unknowns.

72. Where it is possible, clarity and timely direction from government on the use of EYE funding and guidance to settings regarding what is permissible will support providers in the short term.
73. In the medium and longer term, the role of officers supporting childcare sufficiency will be crucial in horizon scanning and targeted action to ensure there is childcare of the right type and in the right place for families in Hampshire. Further development of sector specific financial planning is becoming a growing need.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	no

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	<u>Date</u> 20 November 2019
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u> Childcare Act 2006: Section 6, Section 7 (as substituted by section 1 of the Education Act 2011) Section 7A (as inserted by the Children and Families Act 2014) Section 9A (as inserted by the Children and Families Act 2014) Childcare Act 2016 Section 1	<u>Date</u> 2006 and 2016

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA):

It has been agreed with Childrens Services Equalities Impact Assessment officer that the Childcare Sufficiency report taken to Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People Decision Day on 20 November 2019 did not require an EIA as there is no change to policy and the report is an assessment of business as usual.

This report to the Children and Young People Select Committee is an information report and therefore no impact has been identified.

APPENDICES

20/11/2019 - Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People
Decision Day [Childcare Sufficiency Assessment](#)