

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 13th December 2022

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report 2022

When does the decision need to be implemented? N/A

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient childcare for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 – 14 years (or up to 18 years for disabled children).
- 1.2 As part of these duties, Torbay Council is required to report annually to Elected Members on the local arrangements to ensure those duties are met and a report is available and accessible for parents. The purpose of this is to provide an update on progress since 2021.
- 1.3 A copy of the Childcare Sufficiency Report is attached to this report at Appendix 1.

2. Reason for Proposal and its Benefits

- 2.1 At the time of submission, the report establishes that there are sufficient early years childcare places to meet the requirements for funded children in Torbay. There is a potential oversupply in relation to funded places, meaning that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate children aged under 2 and children from outside of the Torbay area.
- 2.2 The recruitment and retention issues affecting the early years sector need to be monitored closely as this is beginning to have an impact on the availability of childcare places. This could particularly affect the availability of places for children aged under 2 where the adult to child ratios are higher.

- 2.3 When looking at the wraparound care available for school-aged children it is evident that there is sufficient supply of places for before and after school care which meets the needs of most families. The wraparound care that is available has sufficient capacity to accommodate more children and schools have indicated that their supply is led by demand.
- 2.4 This sufficiency report highlights that some families continue to have difficulty accessing holiday childcare when they need it. The responses to the parent questionnaire suggest there remain problems in relation to age ranges, availability, suitability of the offers, and affordability.
- 2.5 Other important elements of the report include:
- No formal complaints have been received from parents who have been unable to access a suitable funded childcare place
 - A new section has been added about informal childcare; use of grandparents etc which was a request by Cabinet Members
 - 84% of all Early Years providers are graded either Good or Outstanding by Ofsted; an increase since 2021 (74%)
 - 11% of Early Years providers are awaiting their first graded Ofsted inspection; a decrease of the figure in 2021 (18%)
- 2.6 The report was presented to Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21st November 2022 a copy of their report is set out in Appendix 2. Overview and Scrutiny recommended that the Cabinet be recommended to approve the submitted Childcare Duty Sufficiency Report subject to inclusion of the national average of women smoking during pregnancy and consideration being given to future reports including statistics around women vaping during pregnancy. The report has been updated to include the national averages and work will be conducted to assess the viability of collecting data on vaping for the 2023 sufficiency report.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1. That the Childcare Sufficiency Report for 2022, as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report 2022

Appendix 2: Childcare Duty Sufficiency Report – Report of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

Background Documents

N/A

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report 2022 provides an overview of the local childcare market, changes in the supply and demand for places and the actions necessary to ensure there are sufficient, accessible childcare places in Torbay to meet our statutory duty.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 N/A

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 N/A

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 N/A

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 The Childcare Duty Sufficiency Report was created using early years provider surveys and parental surveys to understand local trends and requirements.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 N/A

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 N/A

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 N/A

9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
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Older or younger people	Children under the age of five have access to high quality early years provision which impacts on having the best start in life and future long-term outcomes.		
People with caring Responsibilities			No differential impact
People with a disability			No differential impact
Women or men			No differential impact
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)			No differential impact
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			No differential impact
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual			No differential impact
People who are transgendered			No differential impact
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			No differential impact
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave	Availability of sufficient childcare places for those wishing to return to work.		
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	The availability of sufficient funded childcare places is vital for parent and carers to enable them to work.		
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)			No differential impact

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 None