

# MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

### SERVICE RESPONSE TO HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL – CHILDREN'S CENTRES AND BIRTH DATA

**Executive Member for Children, Families & Learning :  
Councillor Michael Carr**

**Executive Director of Children, Families & Learning : Gill Rollings**

**Date: 26 April 2011**

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#### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of the report is to present an Action Plan which shows how it is proposed to respond to the Health Scrutiny Panel recommendations.

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That the Action Plan attached as Appendix 1 be endorsed.

#### IF THIS IS A KEY DECISION WHICH KEY DECISION TEST APPLIES?

3. It is over the financial threshold (£75,000)  
It has a significant impact on 2 or more wards  
Non Key

X
X
✓

#### DECISION IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE

4. For the purposes of the scrutiny call in procedure this report is

Non-urgent  
Urgent report

✓
X

If urgent please give full reasons

## BACKGROUND AND EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

5. At a meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel in November 2010, a Member raised concerns centred on Children's Centres and specifically, the level of intelligence they have access to relating to birth data for their geographical area of responsibility. The Panel was advised that a concern persisted that Children's Centres, in not having a sufficiently detailed picture of births in their area of responsibility, could not appropriately target services at those most in need of them.
6. The Panel received evidence from the Registration Services Manager at a meeting on 18 February 2011. The Panel was advised that the legal powers and responsibilities placed on registrar services are quite clear and are as follows:
7. Section 564(3) of the Education Act 1996 provides for a registrar to make returns of births to a Local Education Authority as and when required by that Authority. This may be via printouts, electronically if the Local Education Authority can accept them electronically or on any forms supplied by the Authority. It was confirmed to the Panel that information provided is restricted to that contained in the registers, which is currently:

Reference no.  
Date of Birth  
Place of Birth  
Name of Child  
Sex  
Name of Father  
Place of Birth (Father)  
Occupation (Father)  
Name of Mother  
Place of Birth (Mother)  
Occupation (Mother)  
Usual Address  
NHS Number

8. It was confirmed that information can be supplied as and when required, but it was recommended that this is weekly, due to the high volume of birth registrations. Returns would include all births registered at Middlesbrough Register Office. This will include approximately 50% of non-Middlesbrough residents due to the fact that James Cook University Hospital is also the main maternity unit for the surrounding area. It was noted that any Middlesbrough resident that gives birth outside of Middlesbrough would not be included, as they are obliged to have the birth registered in the district they were born, although these numbers are small.
9. As such, it became clear to the Panel that if CFL (as the 'Local Education Authority') requested the data, registrars would be obliged to provide it. This would undoubtedly be of huge benefit to Children's Centre staff in planning services, and understanding the location and frequency of births in their areas of responsibility.
10. Whilst significant progress has been made to implement the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel, the Department of Work and Pensions has launched a new process called "Tell Us Once" which aims to share family information from Registrars to all agencies. Middlesbrough has joined the scheme, which will commence in July 2011.

11. This scheme will be separate to the new arrangements with the Registration Service. Although the Director of Children's Services has requested the information and systems are being set up to manage the data, it will not be as straightforward as the Department of Work and Pensions scheme. This is because the information that is received from the Registration Service has to be filtered, as it includes all children born at James Cook Hospital and does not include particular details, for example, the postcode for the child's address.
12. Within the Action Plan the service will continue with the prior arrangements and expectations that Health Visitors register new families and identify those families in greatest need, as the information from the Registration Service does not give any indication of the level of need.
13. The final report of the Panel is attached at Appendix 2.

### **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

14. An Impact Assessment has been completed at Level 1, a Level 2 full Impact Assessment is not required.

### **OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSMENT**

15. The recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel are fully accepted and reflected in the Action Plan.

### **FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS**

16. **Financial** – There are no financial implications.
17. **Ward Implications** – There are implications for all of the wards in the town.
18. **Legal Implications** – There are no legal implications.

### **SCRUTINY CONSULTATION**

19. The Scrutiny Panel's methods of investigation were as follows:
  - (a) Detailed officer presentations supplemented by oral evidence and relevant documentation.
  - (b) Consideration of relevant documentation in respect of Council policy.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

20. The Panel's recommendations are set out in Appendix 1 along with the proposed actions to form the Action Plan.
21. This report recommends that the attached Action Plan be endorsed.

## **REASONS**

22. The Scrutiny Panel has undertaken a thorough review of Children's Centres and birth data. The attached Action Plan will ensure that the recommendations are actioned.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

23. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Final Report of the Health Scrutiny Panel – Children's Centres and Birth Data

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SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHOM	BUDGET COST	TIMESCALE
<p>2. That the Department of Children, Families and Learning &amp; Registrar Services establish a working relationship that ensures the dissemination of information to, and about the Children's Centres, at the time of registration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Managers from Children's Centres Sure Start will develop a working relationship with the Registrars Office.</li> <li>• Registrars are signed up to the new TUO system by DWP and will provide new birth information to it.</li> <li>• At registration of birth the Registrar will record the registration information on the TUO system. Additional details are gathered from the informant as to who they want to be notified. (Consent). Registrars will promote the Family Information Service and Children's Centres to the informant.</li> <li>• The Registrar Service has attended the Family Service Directory training, so has an understanding of the services provided by the Family Information Service.</li> <li>• Registrars share Children's Centre literature with all families who register a birth.</li> </ul>	<p>Service Managers</p> <p>Registrars Service</p> <p>Registrars and parents</p> <p>Registrars Service and Family Information Service</p> <p>Registrars / Operational Service</p>	<p>Nil</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Printing costs of welcome packs and leaflets</p>	<p>31.04.11</p> <p>July 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In place</p>

SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHOM	BUDGET COST	TIMESCALE
<p>3. That the Department of Children, Families and Learning, establishes systematic processes to ensure that the birth data is accurately and regularly disseminated amongst Children's centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information from the Registrar's Office will be disseminated on a monthly basis to Children's Centre leads.</li> <li>The Family Information Service (FIS) will manage the data that is provided by TUO.</li> <li>The data will include name, date of birth and address. A letter and Family Registration Form will be sent out to informants and will include a pre-paid envelope to encourage its return. Decision on most appropriate time needed, e.g. at 2 months of birth? Assess best time with parents.</li> <li>The fair processing notice is included on the Registration Form.</li> <li>The Family Information Service will set up a protected excel spreadsheet with details of all families in order to monitor the return of the forms and compare % returns with health visitor birth statistics.</li> <li>A follow up letter will be sent out, should the forms not be returned within 2 months.</li> <li>Returned forms will be forwarded to the correct Children's Centre and stored/archived as per Children's Centre policy. Family details will be entered onto the E-start database and families will receive quarterly mailouts of activities happening in</li> </ul>	<p>Service Managers / Children's Centre Leads</p> <p>FIS Team</p> <p>Operational Services</p> <p>Operational Services</p> <p>Operational Services</p> <p>Operational Services</p> <p>Children's Centre Receptionists</p>	<p>Nil</p> <p>Staff time, approx 1 day per month. 2500 letters and prepaid envelopes per year</p> <p>1000 letters and pre-paid envelopes. 8000 leaflets and postage costs.</p>	<p>31.05.11</p> <p>July 2011</p> <p>July 2011 onwards monthly.</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>July 2011 onwards</p>



SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHOM	BUDGET COST	TIMESCALE
<p>4. That Children's Centres use that birth data to appropriately target services to those most in need of them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's Centres will use the data they have received to target families in their areas, directly and through the Family Health Visitors, and encourage the families to register with Children's Centres.</li> <li>Upon receiving the completed Registration Form, Children's Centres should invite the family into the Centre for a welcome meeting and hand out a 'Your Guide to Middlesbrough Children's Centre' publication.</li> <li>Children's Centres will continue to request families most in need to be identified by health visitors and maternity services, who are best placed from their face to face contact, and referred for a tailored home visit.</li> <li>Maternity services begin to deliver post –natal drop in services from Thorntree, West Middlesbrough and Hemlington Children's Centres, and refer families most in need direct for Children's Centre services.</li> </ul>	<p>Children's Centre Leads</p> <p>Children's Centre staff</p> <p>Children's Centre multi-agency governance partnerships.</p>	<p>Nil</p> <p>Cost of phone calls. Staff time 2 days per month per Children's Centre. Publication costs of 'Your Guide'</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>July 2011 onwards</p> <p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>

SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHOM	BUDGET COST	TIMESCALE
<p>5. That the Department of Children, Families and Learning reports back to the Health Scrutiny Panel, at an appropriate juncture, on how birth data is being applied to plan and market Children's Centre services to those who would most benefit from them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report will be prepared for the Health Scrutiny Committee</li> <li>• Information provided by TUO will be cross-checked with the data received from health to account for any discrepancies against out of the area births. This information will be reported to Children's Centre lead officers to include in departmental performance monitoring.</li> <li>• Report back outcomes of receiving new births registration details on uptake of service in first 6 months of life, to the Health Scrutiny Panel.</li> </ul>	<p>Deputy Director, Safeguarding. Children's Centre Leads / Deputy Director, Safeguarding</p> <p>Deputy Director, Safeguarding</p>	<p>Nil</p>	<p>31.12.11</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Date to be agreed.</p>