1 Decision Required

1.1 This report makes the following recommendations to the decision-maker:

Cabinet is requested to agree to the variation of the Children’s Centre contracts to extend them by six months from October 2019-March 2020. This would mean agreeing for:

- **Home-start Greenwich** to deliver Children’s Centre services from October 2019 to April 2020 in ‘Central A’ at a total cost of £668,894.40 for the period.

- **Central Greenwich** to deliver Children’s Centre services from October 2019 to April 2020 in ‘Central B’ at a total cost of £466,999.65 for the period.

- **Quaggy Development Trust** to deliver Children’s Centre services from October 2019 to April 2020 in ‘West’ at a total cost of £439,715.70 for the period.

- **Greenwich Leisure Limited** to deliver Children’s Centre services from October 2019 to April 2020 in ‘East’ at a total cost of £614,437.65 for the period.

- **Greenwich Leisure Limited** to deliver Children’s Centre services from October 2019 to April 2020 in ‘South’ at a total cost of £633,297.60 for the period.

1.2 The recommendation would lead to a total spend of £2,823,345.00 for the period.
2  **Links to the Royal Greenwich Strategy**

2.1 This report relates to the following high level objectives contained within the Royal Greenwich Strategy:

- Children and Families in need
- Social Care and Heath
- Economic Prosperity and Anti-Poverty
- Education

2.2 The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to improve the well-being of young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them. They must make arrangements to secure early childhood services provided in an integrated manner through sufficient Children’s Centres, so far as reasonably practicable, to meet local need.

2.3 Children’s Centres in Greenwich are commissioned to deliver a range of universal and targeted services for children under 5 and their parents/carers. These services work to achieve parental and child resilience and improve early learning, prevent the escalation of problems, identify needs and provide support or refer to appropriate services.

2.4 Children’s Centres work alongside partners to improve the health and wellbeing of children and families in the borough, for example by encouraging and supporting breastfeeding, healthy eating and positive parenting. In addition, Children’s Centres contribute to poverty reduction and social mobility by providing and signposting to financial and benefits advice, skills development and employment for parents.

3  **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

3.1 The Royal Greenwich Children’s Centres contracts were commissioned in 2014 for three years (1st October 2014 to 30th September 2017) and operate across five areas. Royal Greenwich subsequently enacted the 2-year optional extension clauses within the contracts from 1 October 2017 – 30 September 2019 with a 10% reduction in contract value.

3.2 This report seeks agreement to a variation of those contracts to extend them for a further six months from October 2019 - March 2020. This will align them with the Public Health Nursing Service (including Health Visiting and School Nursing) and Universal Youth Services (year round and summer programme) contracts. This will provide opportunities to review all services
together to determine the best way to use the available resources to improve a range of cross-cutting outcomes for children and young people, whilst achieving economies of scale.

4 Background

4.1 Children’s Services and Public Health currently commission a range of services with a focus on resilience, prevention, early identification of additional needs and universal support, which includes Public Health Nursing and Universal Youth Services. These contracts have been aligned to end in March 2020 and provide an opportunity to re-model services to both improve ways of working and to better work with other provision such as Live Well Greenwich, the new early help model and local care networks.

4.2 In varying the existing Children’s Centre contracts to extend by 6 months it would allow Children’s Services and Public Health to incorporate them into this programme of work.

Performance

4.3 Children’s Centres are commissioned to meet the following outcomes:
- All Children’s Centres are good or better;
- We close the gap for under-achieving groups compared to all children in Royal Greenwich;
- Children receive effective early help which builds resilience;
- Parents have the information, advice and guidance they need to access employment and training;
- More children are healthy and children and families make healthy choices.

4.4 Performance is evaluated through:
a) Quarterly returns from providers, including data on outcomes, finance, governance arrangements and case studies;
b) Quarterly Early Years Improvement Partner visits to assess the quality of provision, range of services and impact of leadership and governance arrangements;
c) Healthy Early Years Programme;
d) Young people mystery shopping against ‘You’re Welcome’ criteria for young people friendly health service.
4.5 Contracts have a 10% performance payment attached for the following indicators:
- Children engaged by the area (Target of 65%+).
- Early Help Referrals leading to a contact or assessment (Target of 100%).
- % of two year olds taking up free early learning places (Target of 75%).
- % of parents reporting back that the Children’s Centre has made them more resilient (Target of 85%).

4.6 All Children’s Centres areas achieved the 10% performance targets in year 3. This demonstrates an improvement on the previous year when two of the five areas achieved all the targets.

4.7 Areas of good performance includes:
- All areas achieved Silver Healthy Early Years Award and are ‘You’re Welcome’ accredited Unicef Baby friendly
- Children’s Centres recorded 1377 compliments in the year.
- Increase in the range of adult learning opportunities (ESOL, functional skills, accredited training, etc) available in all areas
- Parents/Carers volunteered 8,430.15 hours, 143 gained accreditations and 72 gained employment as a result of Children’s Centre support.
4.8 Table 1 provides an overview of reach and take up of Early Learning Entitlement across all five Children’s Centre areas.

Table 1: Reach and Take Up of Early Learning Entitlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered (%) children under 5&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of under -5s seen by the Provider&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of under -5s engaged by the Provider&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take up of 2yr old early learning places</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take up of 3yr old early learning places</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take up of 4yr old early learning places</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan registered with CC</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan engaged with CC</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.9 Table 1 above illustrates that:

- Registration rates have to date remained relatively stable
- There has been a significant improvement in the take up of 2 year old places. Based on the latest benchmarking information, Royal Greenwich is 9% above the national average and 20% above the London average.

4.10 Overall Children’s Centres have performed strongly in demonstrating impact through the take up of two year old early learning places and early help referral work.

4.11 Areas for further improvement include: increasing engagement of adults in training and development courses/opportunities; systematically tracking the impact of adult learning on employment outcomes and improving links with schools. Providers and commissioners monitor progress against these areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Registered: family are registered with the children’s centre, they have given basic family details and have signed to consent that the information be held on the children’s centre database

<sup>2</sup> Seen: have been seen at least once in the year (CCs link with provision in their reach areas for quality support, outreach and targeted work)

<sup>3</sup> Engaged: have been seen at least three times in the last year at a children’s centre and/or take up 2,3 or 4 year old provision (measure recommended by an HMI inspector and used subsequently)

ITEM NO: 11
4.12 Feedback through the 2018 Children’s Centre Survey, completed by 2745 registered parents/carers shows the following:

- 98.13% overall satisfaction rate.
- 94.32% of parents and carers feel that accessing the centres has had a positive effect on how they feel.
- 97.9% of parents and carers feel the Children’s Centre they most attend is a safe environment for them and their child/ren.
- 62.2% of those who attend Children’s Centres, return because their children enjoy it, and they have acknowledged that it makes a difference in their child/ren’s lives as the centres have helped them learn new things.

4.13 In 2016 Royal Greenwich Children’s Services and Public Health commissioned a Public Health Nursing Service for 0 - 19 year olds that includes a 0-5 years health visiting element. The contract began on 1 September 2016 and involved a significant re-structure of services to align them more closely with Children’s Centres.

4.14 In 2017/18, Public Health undertook an evaluation to understand how Children’s Centres and Health Visiting were working together, using attendance data, analysis of the parent survey and interviews with parents and staff from both services.

4.15 The review found that people who access Health Visiting services in Children’s Centres gain several benefits. The review made the following recommendations:

- Further integration of health visiting and Children’s Centres
- Better shared and joint planning
- Joint training
- Shared protocols
- Commissioners should review the contract monitoring to see whether the key performance indicators can be designed in a way to encourage health visiting contacts in a Children’s Centre, or contacts delivered together with Children’s Centre staff.

Funding

4.16 The Children’s Centres contracts are dual funded, 87.25%/12.75% between Children’s Services and Public Health respectively. The same funding arrangement will be in place for the proposed extension.

ITEM NO: 11
5 **Available Options**

5.1 Cabinet may choose to:

- Accept the recommendation of the report to vary the current contracts and extend for a period of six months from October 2019 - March 2020; or
- Reject the recommendation of the report and return to the market to undergo a tender process without aligning the contract to other Children’s Services and Public Health contracts.

6 **Preferred Option and Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 Varying the existing contracts to extend them for six months from October 2019 - March 2020 will provide an opportunity to review and re-model services to better align with Universal Youth Services (year round and summer programme) and Public Health Nursing (Including Health Visiting, School Nursing) whilst supporting the Council to make economies of scale and deliver better outcomes through better use of the available resources. The current providers are performing well and performance will continue to be robustly monitored during the extension.

7 **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Sign-off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal</strong> including Human Rights Act</td>
<td>This report is asking Cabinet to approve a modification to the existing contracts with the above organisations in accordance with Regulation 72.1(b) PCR 2015 at a cost of £2,823,345.00 over a period of six months, in order to bring the service delivery in line with other services. This modification to extend the duration for the provision of the same services was not included in the initial procurement but a change of contractor by running a new procurement is likely to cause significant inconvenience and substantial duplication of costs for the council.</td>
<td>Cynthia Erove Senior Lawyer, Regeneration and Procurement. 05/10/18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The total aggregate of variation to date is £2,823,345.00.

The approval sought is recommended.

The approval of this modification has no legal or Human Rights Implications.

In accordance with the provisions of CSO 28.5, Chief Officers are required to keep a record of all variations and summarise the variations in a report to Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee every quarter.

A notice of this modification will be sent to the OJEU for publication in accordance with Regulation 51.

In accordance with provision of Regulation 7 of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, The decision-making officer must produce a written record of any decision which falls within paragraph (2). A decision falls within this paragraph if it would otherwise have been taken by the relevant local government body, or a committee, sub-committee of that body or a joint committee in which that body participates, but it has been delegated to an officer of that body either—
(a) under a specific express authorisation; or
(b) under a general authorisation to officers to take such decisions and, the effect of the decision is to—
(i) grant a permission or licence; (ii) affect the rights of an individual; or (iii) award a contract or incur expenditure which, in either case,
materially affects that relevant local government body’s financial position. 
(3) The written record must be produced as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision-making officer has made the decision and must contain the following information—
(a) the date the decision was taken; 
(b) a record of the decision taken along with reasons for the decision; 
(c) details of alternative options, if any, considered and rejected; and 
(d) where the decision falls under paragraph (2) (a), the names of any member of the relevant local government body who has declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Finance and other resources including procurement implications</strong></th>
<th>The cost of extending the Children’s Centres contracts for a further 6 months is £2,823,345. There is sufficient budget to fund this. The budget is made up as follows:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>£2,395,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>£360,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td>£67,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£2,823,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equalities</strong></td>
<td>The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maddy Baxter</strong>&lt;br&gt;Children’s Services Finance&lt;br&gt;4 October 2018</td>
<td><strong>Dave Borland</strong>&lt;br&gt;Head of Joint Commissioning,&lt;br&gt;Children’s Services&lt;br&gt;17 September 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The recommendation of this report is to extend the existing Children’s Centres contract by six months on order to align with Universal Youth Services (year round and summer programme) and Public Health Nursing (Including Health Visiting, School Nursing).

8 **Background Papers**

- Cabinet March 2014 - Children’s Centres 2014-17

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