

Family Resilience, Phase 1: Children’s Centres Consultation Report Tuesday 29 January 2019

Purpose of report:

This report summarises the consultation response, assesses potential mitigation options, any changes to the proposals and suggests recommendations to be agreed by Cabinet.

Recommendations:

1. Endorse the remodelling of the remaining Children’s Centres to create Family Centres as part of a wider Family Service to support families with children aged 0-11 that are the most vulnerable.
2. Agree to the reduction in number of Children’s Centres in Surrey from 58 centres to 21 centres and satellite sites, to be located in areas where children are most likely to experience poor outcomes. At least one main centre in each district and borough supported by the use of satellites, outreach workers and community venues.
3. Agree to reduce the number of mobile Family Centres in Surrey from two to one in order to reach areas where there are small numbers of vulnerable children and families.

Consultation Proposals and Approach:

THE NEW FAMILY CENTRE MODEL

4. It is proposed that our new Family Centres will focus on the children and families in most need. Currently the children’s centres offer a universal service and there is strong evidence that the families who are in greatest need do not use the centres, instead accelerating into child protection and public care. Research undertaken at Durham University points to better outcomes where there is a stronger focus on ‘hard to reach’ children and families.
5. There will be at least one Family Centre in every district and borough, 21 in total, with 9 satellite centres. We will also retain a mobile Family Centre. We will enable other service providers to offer some universal services from our Family Centres, but Surrey County Council will no longer offer universal or open access services. The Family Centres however will act as hubs for partner agencies and community organisations to offer universal services such as health visiting, breast feeding advice and support for new parents.
6. The new Family Centres will work with children aged 0 to 11 and their families. The services will be targeted and referrals will come via our new Early Help Hub, which will replace the current MASH (Multi Agency Service Hub) arrangements. This new approach builds on the Family Resilience model, based on early intervention and support. We are seeking to avoid children becoming subject to child protection or public care. There will be parallel services for adolescents.
7. The backdrop to these changes is that Ofsted have twice rated children’s services inadequate for children in need and protection in Surrey. Too many children are

accelerated into high level child protection and public care services. The aim of the new Family Centres is to identify these families earlier, and to work alongside them to improve outcomes. There is little evidence to suggest that such families ‘walk into’ the current children’s centres and referrals for these families tend to come via schools, GPs and the police. The current model is not effective and will not meet the requirements set out in the Ofsted inspection frameworks and need to change.

8. Many local authorities have reorganised their children’s centres into more targeted models. Local authorities including Hertfordshire, Essex and Nottinghamshire have services for Children in Need of Help and Protection that are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, and these models have been the inspiration for Surrey County Council’s proposals.
9. By 2030 we want Surrey to be a uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind. Family Centres will contribute to this vision by focussing on vulnerable families who without support would be left behind and experience poor outcomes.
10. Some examples of changes are given in the report “Stop Start: A Review of Children’s Centres” published by the Sutton Trust in April 2018. The report provides strong evidence from across the country regarding the scale of changes to Children’s Centres and the reasons that local authorities have changed their models. The reasons outlined in the report are very consistent with the proposed Surrey County Council approach.
11. The proposed plans for Family Centres in Surrey will mean that the 21 main Family Centres and nine satellite sites will have greater capacity to provide targeted services, while benefiting from economies of scale. Staff will also offer outreach services in the community and in family homes. Surrey County Council will retain a mobile Family Centre presence.
12. The new model will lead to savings of £3.4 million in 2020/21, as well as an in-year saving of £1 million for 2019/20. The financial savings are part of an overall strategy to ensure Surrey County Council provides the best it can for residents within a sustainable budget.
13. The proposed changes are consistent with funding, governance and guidance changes from 2013, when Children’s Centres guidance was altered to make provision more aligned for a more targeted service. This time also saw the introduction of the Early Intervention Grant and the cessation of ring-fenced funding for Sure Start Children’s Centres. The alterations Surrey County Council proposes would bring its provision in line with these changes.

CONTEXT

14. Surrey County Council believes that every child in Surrey should have the opportunity to reach their potential and that the best place for children to achieve this is within their own families. Whilst many children will do that without support, some will need help. That might be because of additional needs they have, their family circumstances or problems they are dealing with. We want to help these children, and their families, as soon as we can.
15. We know that we haven’t been doing this well enough. Ofsted inspected the Outcomes for Children in Need of Help and Protection in Surrey in 2018 and 2014 and reported

these services were ‘inadequate’. That means we haven’t been keeping some children and families safe and giving them the right help when they need it.

16. We are also facing significant challenges to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children and families, whilst managing very difficult financial decisions. We need to make sure that the money we have makes the biggest difference to the children and families who need support the most. This means we need to spend less on universal provision and focus our resources on children and families who are more likely to experience poor outcomes without support.
17. We think the best way to do this is by helping families to become more resilient. That means they will be able to cope with change and bounce back when difficult things happen. To support family resilience, we need to change the way we do things and our culture – our values and the way we behave. Everyone who works with children and young people, and their families, will work together in an open way to identify both the strengths and needs of families, to find practical and achievable solutions, and provide the right amount of information, advice and support at the right time. We will focus on preventing problems before they happen and offer flexible, responsive support when and where it is required.
18. This will mean changes to a range of services and activities that children, young people and families use at the moment. The focus for Phase 1 of the Family Resilience consultation is on the role that we propose children’s centres will play in the new family resilience delivery model. The proposal section below describes how we envisage services provided by children’s centres will continue to contribute to meeting the needs of children and families in Surrey through centres, outreach and increased partnership working.

DETAILED PROPOSALS

19. There are 58 Children’s Centres in Surrey providing a universal service to families with children aged 0-5. Whilst they prioritise families with identified need, we cannot be confident that all children and families who need the support the most benefit from the support provided by the staff in Children’s Centres. We know that some of our most vulnerable families are the least likely to make use of existing Children’s Centres and we therefore need to focus our resources differently. We also know that the way in which Children’s Centres have been funded to date has meant some areas of the county have had less funding despite having higher levels of need. The Children’s Centre remodelling proposal seeks to address both issues.
20. Within the current Children’s Centre model, some Centres have already begun to offer targeted services that help families who are most in need. We think that Children’s Centres should build on this to give more help to the children and families that need it the most.
21. Centres are already offering support to families with children 0-5 and their older siblings - families are often varied with children ranging in ages. In recognition of this we are proposing the centres will focus on families with children aged 0-11. This would mainly be for families in need of Early Help or Targeted Help from the Family Resilience model. These services would be delivered in partnership with other provision such as the Family Support Programme and Targeted Youth Support.
22. Whilst we propose to focus the council’s Children’s Centre resources on the most vulnerable children and families, we also think that Children’s Centres should be the place where families can get support from other universal services such as health

visiting, midwifery, Citizen’s Advice and support with housing and employment. We are working with partners to ensure that access is maintained for these services.

23. We propose to reduce the Children’s Centre budget by £3.4 million from April 2020, reducing the 58 current centres to 21 main centres and 9 satellite sites. The remodelling will take place between April 2019 and September 2019 and will achieve an in year saving of £1 million.
24. Each of the 11 districts and boroughs in Surrey will have at least one main centre. There will also be smaller satellite centres offering fewer services and open less frequently, but these will be places where social workers who are supporting families can meet with them. The main Centres, however, will also provide outreach support to families in their own homes, and will continue to use community venues where needed. This is a model that is already used effectively to support families that do not live near a Children’s Centre.
25. For this new model to work, some of the universal support currently provided will no longer be offered by Children’s Centres staff. The Centres will however continue to work with partner agencies and enable them to provide universal activities and support from the Centres.
26. Surrey County Council is also creating an Early Help Hub which will identify which services are most appropriate for families in need of Early Help and Targeted Help. The hub will provide a single point of contact to a range of services and will include a consultation telephone line and the Family Information Service. The Hub will work in partnership with the Children’s Centres to identify families who need the support available at the Centres and through the outreach workers.
27. The consultation proposed to withdraw the two mobile Children’s Centres from service due to the lack of use and high running costs. However, after considering the consultation feedback and the equalities impact analysis, we can see that the effective use of a mobile centre could help families in need of support who do not live near a main centre or community venue providing outreach support. We are now proposing to retain the use of one mobile Family Centre and will be exploring the most cost-effective way of achieving this. The mobile Family Centre will be deployed across the County in areas that do not have access to a local Family Centre, satellite or community venues.
28. The model will seek to maintain and where possible increase the level of outreach support to families using community venues where necessary.
29. To make sure we spend money on those who need it the most, we need to prioritise having centres in areas that are most likely to have children affected by deprivation or living in households that have low incomes or unemployment. The 2015 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) scores (measures that show the proportion of children under the age of 16 that live in low-income households, broken down into neighbourhood area codes) have been used to identify these areas. For this measure, low-income households are defined as:
 - Children in Income Support households
 - Children in Income Based Job Seekers Allowance households
 - Children in Working Families Tax Credit households whose equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) is below 60% of median before housing costs

- Children in Disabled Person’s Tax Credit households whose equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) is below 60% of median before housing costs.
 - National Asylum Support Service (NASS) supported asylum seekers in England in receipt of subsistence only and accommodation support.
30. We also recognise that some types of need, such as children affected by domestic abuse and parental mental health, cross the boundaries of deprivation. The funding allocation for each district and borough has therefore been designed to also reflect the total population of children in communities.
31. The new funding allocation has also been used to ensure the budget is also focussed on those areas that need it the most. The range of proposed budget reductions therefore range from an increase of 2% in Elmbridge compared to a 58% reduction in Mole Valley.
32. In developing the approach, we have worked with existing Children’s Centre providers to develop locally agreed solutions for their borough/district. Where agreement has been reached between existing providers these have formed the proposals submitted for consultation. In some district/boroughs local solutions are still being negotiated. Where this is not successful the council will carry out a formal tender process to establish a new provider in those areas.
33. Some existing providers, including schools, do not wish to continue providing Children’s Centres in the future and so it is inevitable that some new local solutions will be necessary for the future model.
34. We have asked for feedback on how the Centres could help create more resilient communities where families support one another through the normal challenges of parenting and family life.
35. The following key data was also used to inform the proposal:
- Early Help Needs Assessment and District & Borough Needs analysis
 - Income Deprivation affecting Children in Need Index (IDACI)
 - Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) figures
 - Gender distribution in Surrey - Surrey-i
 - Responses to the Proposed Model by Providers– Surrey Says
 - Feedback from initial engagement and cluster meetings with providers.
 - Children and Family Health Surrey – NHS
 - Health and Wellbeing Surrey
 - Office for National Statistics Figures
36. The proposal differs for each Surrey district and borough as the proposed changes are based on the principles of providing support where it is needed most, a summary of the changes by district and borough is shown here:

Elmbridge		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Walton Sure Start Children’s Centre	Cobham Sure Start Children’s Centre	Burhill Sure Start Children’s Centre
Three Rivers Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	Weybridge Children’s Centre – A Sure Start for all
		The Dittons Sure Start Children’s Centre
		Claygate and Oxshott Sure Start Children’s Centre

Epsom and Ewell		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Riverview Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	St Martins Sure Start Children’s Centre
Epsom Primary Sure Start Children’s Centre		Meadow Sure Start Children’s Centre

Spelthorne		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Stanwell Sure Start Children’s Centre	Buckland Sure Start Children’s Centre	Kenyngton Manor Sure Start Children’s Centre
Clarendon School & Sure Start Children’s Centre	Saxon Sure Start Children’s Centre	Spelthorne Sure Start Children’s Centre

Runnymede		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
The Haven Sure Start Children’s Centre	Proposal to locate a satellite children’s centre in Addlestone, location to be confirmed	Sayes Court Sure Start Children’s Centre
	Chertsey Nursery School and Children’s Centre	The Poplars Sure Start Children’s Centre
	Community venues depending on identified need	

Surrey Heath

Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Orchard Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	Bagshot Sure Start Children’s Centre
Pine Ridge Sure Start Children’s Centre		Chobham and West End Sure Start Children’s Centre
		Mytchett Sure Start Children’s Centre

Woking

Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Sythwood Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	St John’s Sure Start Children’s Centre
Woking Sure Start Children’s Centre		Pyrford and Byfleet Sure Start Children’s Centre
		Horsell Sure Start Children’s Centre
		Brookwood Sure Start Children’s Centre

Mole Valley

Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children’s Centre (North Holmwood Goodwyns Road site)	Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children’s Centre (West Street site)	Leatherhead Trinity School & Children’s Centre
	Community venues depending on identified need	

Reigate & Banstead

Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Epsom Downs Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	Steppingstones Sure Start Children’s Centre
Welcare in East Surrey Sure Start Children’s Centre		Dovers Green Sure Start Children’s Centre
The Red Oak Merstham		Horley Community Sure Start Children’s Centre
Horley. Proposed offer within Horley Youth Centre		The Windmill Sure Start Children’s Centre
		YMCA Sure Start Children’s Centre in Banstead

Tandridge		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Caterham Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	Hurst Green & Holland Sure Start Children’s Centre
		St Piers Sure Start Children’s Centre
		Hamsey Green Sure Start Children’s Centre

Guildford		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Guildford Nursery School and Sure Start Children’s Centre	Ash Grange Sure Start Children’s Centre	Boxgrove Sure Start Children’s Centre
The Spinney Sure Start Children’s Centre	Community venues depending on identified need	St Pauls C of E Infant School & Sure Start Children’s Centre

Waverley		
Future locations for main children’s centres	Future locations for satellite children’s centres	Current Centres where no SCC service would be offered
Loseley Fields Sure Start Children’s Centre	Wharf Nursery School & Sure Start Children’s Centre (Eashing Building or community venues)	Tennyson’s Sure Start Children’s Centre
Hale Sure Start Children’s Centre	Potters Gate Sure Start Children’s Centre	Christopher Robin Sure Start Children’s Centre
	Community venues depending on identified need	Elstead & Villages Sure Start Children’s Centre

37. Consultees were asked for their views on the locations of the main Centres and were presented with a list of the proposed changes as listed in the tables above. They also had the opportunity to express whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposed locations and supply their own comments.
38. Many of the activities taking place in Children’s Centres are not delivered by Children’s Centre staff. The existing Children’s Centres already use volunteers to support the work they do. Voluntary sector, private organisations and partner agencies also regularly use the Centres to support families. We expect this to continue in the new model and Centres will work in partnership to make best use of Children’s Centre buildings and community venues.
39. The consultation set out our intention to rename our Children’s Centres to reflect the new model. The consultation feedback supported changing the name to ‘Family

Centres’ we are therefore proposing to take this forward as we implement the new model.

APPROACH

40. Initial engagement sessions were held between January and February 2018 in the four Surrey quadrants to acquaint partners and relevant stakeholders with the proposed model and what it could mean locally. Cluster meetings were also held across the 11 district and boroughs in Surrey during spring 2018 and engagement workshops were undertaken with current Children’s Centre staff in October 2018.
41. In addition, a seminar for Surrey County Council elected members took place in April 2018 which provided opportunity to discuss the overall Early Help consultation proposals with a strong focus on Children’s Centre restructure.
42. On 16 October 2018, the decision was taken to commence public consultation on the proposal outlined – under delegated powers by a council officer – by Dave Hill, Executive Director Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture. This decision was taken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children.
43. The consultation for family resilience and Children’s Centres was launched, run and promoted as part of the Have Your Say consultation campaign. Alongside the family resilience consultation, the ‘Concessionary Bus Travel’, ‘Special Educational Needs and Disabilities’, ‘Libraries and Cultural Services’ and ‘Community Recycling Centres’ were all included in the campaign.
44. The consultation was launched on Tuesday 30 October 2018 and concluded on Friday 4 January 2019.
45. Several public drop-in sessions took place throughout the consultation period. At least one week-day session was held in each district & borough with further sessions booked in the evening, on a Saturday and an additional mid-week session in Reigate and Banstead – these sessions were booked in response to feedback from the public in the first weeks of the consultation period.
46. Several Local Committees were invited to consider and discuss the proposed service changes as they relate to their respective areas. At the date of writing this report, recommendations have been made to the following Local (or Joint) Committees:
 - Waverley Local Committee, 14 December 2018.
 - Elmbridge Local Committee, 26 November 2018.

In addition, both public and Member written questions have been submitted and considered at the following:

- Mole Valley Local Committee, 12 December 2018. Written public questions.
- Spelthorne Joint Committee, 10 December 2018. Written Member questions.

At these local and joint committees, no specific actions or decisions were taken regarding the family resilience consultation.

Summarised Consultation Analysis

47. The consultations followed a rigorous and robust method to analysing, interpreting and synthesising large amounts of data. Specifically, a series of analytical workshops have ensured that each consultation working group have collaborated to co-design a user-centred framework and analysis process to ensure that the users’ voice is reported in a clear and digestible fashion.
48. Responses to the consultation were received in a variety of formats however the majority were submitted via the online Surrey Says questionnaire. All responses whether submitted online, by post, or via written correspondence to Members and officers, have been considered as part of the analysis. The number of responses received in total, via each channel, is as follows:

Email/ Letters	17
Surrey Says	3,797 Direct online response (Surrey Says) = 3,659 Easy Read paper questionnaires = 11 Standard paper questionnaires = 127

49. A demographic analysis was carried out on all responses:
- Reigate and Banstead registered the largest response with 611 respondents, whereas Epsom and Ewell registered the smallest response with 129 respondents.
 - The majority of responses were from women aged 25-44 years old (2,178 – 57%).
 - The majority of respondents (87%) reported no health problem or disability.
 - A third of respondents were in full-time employment and a third in part-time employment and just over 11% were homemakers.
 - Over 79% of respondents identified as White British. The number of BME groups in the sample under-represents their proportion in the Surrey population.
 - Nearly half of the sample reported they were Christian and just over 40% said they had no religion.
50. Respondents were asked a number of questions on the overall family resilience approach; targeting of resources, the use of mobile centres, charging for services and volunteering. Each of these questions were analysed by all the key demographics and over 100 tables of analysis are available. For ease of presentation the overall response to each question is summarised here:
- a) There was strong support for **our aim to invest more in services that help families earlier** with over 81% agreeing. The level of agreement was observed across all boroughs and all demographic sub groups.
 - b) There was very limited support for our **proposal to withdraw the mobile Children's Centres from service** with about a fifth of people agreeing. Over a third **strongly**

disagreed. All boroughs exhibited a similar response but residents from some, including Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge, exhibited noticeably higher disagreement with this proposal.

- c) Only two fifths of the responses (38%) agreed with the proposal **to allocate funding to Children’s Centres in areas where there are more families on low incomes**. This was highest in Spelthorne (54%) and lowest in Elmbridge (28%). In Mole Valley and Waverley, which will take the largest percentage cuts in funding, 43% and 46% agreed with this proposal.
- d) Nearly two thirds of respondents (60%) agreed with the proposal **that families who can afford it should pay a fixed charge for certain activities**. Agreement was highest in Epsom and Ewell (70%) and lowest in Guildford (53%).
- e) There was strong support (73%) from all boroughs for the proposal **that children’s centres could play a role in supporting local communities to take part in volunteering to help children and their families**.
- f) Nearly two thirds (61%) of respondents agreed that **Children’s Centres should encourage more people to volunteer to run activities and help in the children’s centres**. Spelthorne registered the largest support with 69% agreeing with this approach. When asked if **they would volunteer** to help in a children’s centres nearly half (43%) said they would. This was highest in Spelthorne and Runnymede (49%) and lowest in Mole Valley (32%)
- g) There was strong disagreement (86%) that Children’s Centres are an appropriate area to make savings and strong agreement (79%) that “Savings should be made from other county council services before making any savings from Children’s Centres”. These findings were reflected across all boroughs.
- h) Respondents were asked to select a name for a new service from a list of three or to suggest a new name. Nearly a third of respondents didn’t have a view on this. A quarter (25%) preferred *Family Centres* followed by 23% preferring *Child and Family Centres*.
- i) Respondents were presented with the plans for each district and borough and asked whether the right locations were chosen for the Centres within their borough. They were also given the opportunity to comment on the plans for other boroughs which a small percentage of respondents chose to do. The question asked was as follows:

“Given that we have to make these reductions and are committed to targeting funding at the areas of highest need; to what extent do you agree or disagree that we have chosen the right locations for these services?”
- j) In summary, around a sixth to two fifths in each borough thought the right locations were chosen. Epsom and Ewell registered the highest level of agreement (39%) whereas Surrey Heath and Tandridge registered the lowest level of agreement (17%).
- k) Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following approach;

“If we are unable to use the current Children’s Centre buildings we will endeavour to find a local alternative”

In summary, about a fifth to a half of residents agreed that the council should try to find a local alternative. Spelthorne recorded the highest level of agreement (53%) and Guildford the lowest level of agreement (21%).

51. Within the Family Resilience consultation questionnaire respondents could answer up to three ‘free text’ questions. A detailed qualitative analysis was carried out on this feedback – including feedback received from other written correspondence – and these provide an indicator of the main concerns and issues residents have with the proposed changes to Children’s Centres.
52. Whilst many agreed that it was right to target Children’s Centres at those most in need, there was concern that although a parent may not be on a low income they still have needs and require support to help them through the first years of parenting. For example, the issues mentioned most often included help for women with post-natal depression and help to alleviate isolation and the lack of local family support - which affect people from all social classes. There was also concern that deprivation indicators do not always take account of the pockets of deprivation in affluent areas.
53. Residents and practitioners praised the work of Children’s Centres, supporting their views with personal experiences describing how the Centres had helped them through difficult times. Many viewed the Centres as a community asset and believed their closure would be “taking part of the community away” leaving some areas struggling to cope. People were particularly concerned about the increasing isolation that will be felt by some new parents and the mental health problems that will result.
54. Some respondents felt that closing Centres and stopping some universal activities would undermine the principle of early intervention, with vulnerable children and families not being spotted early enough, resulting in more costly intervention further down the line.
55. The issue of access to the remaining services - whether that be direct access to the Centres or the provision of sufficient outreach services - was mentioned by significant number of residents. It was believed that closing Centres in some semi-rural areas with poor public transport could result in further isolation for vulnerable families. When commenting on the borough specific plans, some people observed that the Centres selected to stay open were too geographically close together, leaving large areas without reasonable access to the service.
56. Some respondents reported that several Centres are oversubscribed with queues for basic services, albeit the majority of these could be described as universal services. There was a belief that closing Centres could only make this situation worse.
57. People made various suggestions as to how to minimise some of the negative consequences of the closures.
 - Increasing outreach and mobile services to reach isolated families
 - Charging those who can afford to pay for services
 - Encouraging more volunteering
 - Pooling resources from different sectors e.g. health and council services
 - Make better use of other services and buildings

- Supply more information about other services
 - Keeping more centres open but reducing opening hours
58. The suggestions and alternatives put forward in the consultation have been considered together with the Equality Impact Analysis. The suggestions to either keep Centres open as they are now or with reduced hours have been considered. These suggestions however would increase how much is spent on buildings and leadership rather than supporting vulnerable families and have therefore not been proposed.
59. Charging for services and encouraging volunteers are both aspects of the new delivery model that will be taken forward by individual centres in the future but we will need to ensure that charges are not a barrier for families who need the services and volunteers are used effectively. Neither of these proposals however would prevent the need to close the centres as proposed.
60. The suggestions to increase outreach support and maintain the use of the mobile Children’s Centres are being taken forward by keeping the use of one bus and wherever possible increasing the number of outreach workers as the Family Centres are implemented.
61. Pooling resources, working in partnership with other agencies and improving access to information are features of the wider family services improvements and transformation. The new Family Centres will enable and develop local partnership working to meet the needs of the families in communities using the Family Centres and through outreach using community venues.
62. Full results from the consultation [are available on the council’s website](#).

Proposals Implications and Mitigation Options

63. A detailed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted to assess the potential implications of the proposals and the impact on residents, service users and vulnerable groups. The proposal is expected to affect:
- Children and families
 - The staff working in Children’s Centres
 - Health practitioners such as Health Visitors and Midwives who deliver services from current Children’s Centres
 - Provision delivered by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector, and Lifelong Learning, that is currently offered at Children’s Centres. This may result in a broader loss of provision for families, and a loss of funding for the sector.
 - Young people who access youth provision at some of the venues being considered and staff who work there
 - Schools due to impact on the school readiness of children, and change of use of buildings on their premises.
64. Potential negative and positive impacts resulting from the proposals have been considered in detail, with a significant range of evidence sources used to inform the analysis, further detail is included in the attached EIA (Annex 1a) and an overview of the key potential impacts is provided here:

- Children aged 0-11, and their families, will have access to targeted activities and services that will help them to progress.
- Funding and provision is being allocated based on the Index of Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI). Therefore, children and families who live in areas of lower income will benefit from services being located within their community.
- Families who need support but do not live close to a Children’s Centre will be supported by outreach workers.
- More women will be affected by the proposals through possible redundancy and resignations as they make up the majority of the workforce of Children’s Centres
- Disabled staff and staff who have caring responsibilities, and their families, may be negatively impacted by the proposals if service relocation requires different methods of transport. There is also the possibility of being redeployed to roles not best suited to disabled personnel.
- Some children and families who experience particular barriers to engagement, are unable to travel to their nearest Children’s Centre or do not engage with universal provision may miss out on support and activity at an early stage because they remain unknown to the outreach teams.
- The consultation responses have shown a low level of agreement with the proposed locations of Family Centres. The responses largely focus on the loss of a local facility and access to the universal services they provide. A significant number of responses suggested using alternative community venues.

65. A number of key actions have been identified in order to mitigate and reduce the potential negative impacts resulting from the proposals; these are documented in the Equality Impact Assessment in detail and can be summarised as follows:

- We will ensure clear communication with health colleagues about the potential changes and supporting them to find alternative delivery sites to minimise disruption to services where necessary. We will ensure joint communication with the public about access to these services to provide reassurance
- We will continue to make use of community venues and will work with partners and other community facilities and providers to ensure the needed support and service is in place. There will be an expectation for the Family Centre to develop and enable universal provision and it will form part of the new Family Centre specification and contracts that will be put in place
- The consultation did not stipulate the wide range of community venues that are used by existing Children’s Centres, this will be made clearer as the new Family Centre model is established.
- We will work with other services and voluntary organisations that support Gypsy, Romany and Traveller work in the community. Continuation of targeted outreach services and provision of adequate resources to support minority groups.
- Ensure joined up working with Local Family Partnership initiatives.
- Change the proposal and retain 1 mobile Children’s Centre

Changes to Consultation Proposals

66. The consultation proposed to withdraw the two mobile Children’s Centres from service due to the lack of use and high running costs. However, after considering the consultation feedback and the equalities impact analysis we can see that effective use of a mobile centre could help families in need of support who do not live near a main centre or community venue providing outreach support. We are now proposing to retain the use of one mobile Children’s Centre and we be exploring the most cost-effective way of achieving this.
67. The consultation proposed locating a satellite centre at the Addlestone Youth Centre. Whilst we are still proposing to have a satellite centre in Addlestone we are relooking at where the centre is best located and are in discussions with the existing provider of Sayes Court Children’s Centre.

Risk management and implications:

68. If we continue to deliver Children’s Centres as we do now, we will not meet the needs of the most vulnerable children in the county.
69. The new Family Centre model will focus resources on families who need it the most, therefore the amount of universal support currently delivered by Children’s Centres will be reduced.
70. A detailed implementation plan will set out with key milestones and resources required to minimise the impact on families currently being supported by Children’s Centres during the transition to the new Family Centre model.
71. In addition, expanding the age range of children that Children’s Centres will support from 0-5 to 0-11, while simultaneously reducing the budget and number of them, there is a risk there will be fewer services available for children aged 0-5. This will be balanced out by the offer of more targeted support for some of the most vulnerable families with children aged 0-11.

Financial implications:

72. In the event that Cabinet make the decisions recommended to them, the overall financial implications for the council’s budget are as follows.
73. The council’s Final Financial Strategy (Annex 6) confirms the new model for Family Centres will achieve a £1 million saving in 2019/20 with a full year saving of £3.4 million anticipated from April 2020. The model is expected to be introduced between April and September 2019.

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Sources/background papers:

Children’s Centre Consultation Response Analysis Report

Annexes:

Annex 1a – Children’s Centre Equality Impact Assessment