

DRAFT VERSION

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK DRAFT RESPONSES

The formal responses to the consultation have been independently analysed. The tables below draw out the themes from the consultation feedback as identified by the independent analysis.

Also provided in the table below is the draft response to the feedback themes.

The first section relates to feedback on Seashells.

The second section related to feedback on Millmead.

The third section relates to relevant feedback provided across both sites.

The draft KCC responses are provided for consideration by the Cabinet Member.

Section 1: Seashells.

Consultation feedback relating to Seashells (as detailed in the Consultation Report)	
Consultation Feedback	Draft KCC Response
Seashells must not close: vital to / an integral part of the community, used by many families; closing it would have a significant impact	<p>It is acknowledged that Seashells plays an important role for the local community.</p> <p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the centres.</p>
Gateway will not be able to offer the same level of service, it's not big enough, will not be able to house all the services on offer at Seashells	<p>It is acknowledged that the Seashells centre was purpose built. However, the services which are funded under this contract can effectively be delivered from many different locations and utilising the Gateway means that the Family Hub service can be retained for local families.</p> <p>Some capital investment can be made available from existing agreed budgets to make amendments to the Gateway location with regards to safeguarding and appropriate use of space.</p>
Seashells is invaluable for children; their development, enjoyment, wellbeing, socialising, soft play, nursery.	<p>The Family Hub offer across the whole county, including the proposed offer at the Gateway, will continue to assist with the development, enjoyment, wellbeing and socialising for children.</p> <p>The nursery provision is not one of the services commissioned under the Family</p>

	<p>Hub contract and therefore is not one of the services that would end if the contracts were not re-commissioned.</p>
<p>Seashells / the staff are welcoming, supportive, make you feel part of a family / concern staff will lose their jobs</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and a supportive place for whole families to come and receive support, advice and guidance.</p> <p>Staff that are currently delivering the Family Hub commissioned services at Seashells and Millmead are eligible for TUPE transfer. KCC HR colleagues are engaging with the providers on this issue.</p>
<p>Seashells offers key support to (new) mums / parents and babies, postpartum support and invaluable for parents raising their children</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the county provides precisely this support for all mums, including new mums and mums-to-be. This service will be available at Gateway if the contract is not recommissioned.</p>
<p>Gateway will have safeguarding issues; for children, being on the high street / possibility of passers-by / non-users / strangers walking in</p>	<p>Funding is available through the DfE Family Hub Transformation grant to undertake capital works to facilitate the safe and appropriate use of the Gateway site.</p> <p>This may include safeguarding the access following this specific concern being raised. This will not interfere with the universal access of the building but will alleviate concerns that children may be able to run out into the road.</p> <p>The site is used by other agencies, including Children's Services and it is considered beneficial for service users to be able to access the wide range of services on offer in the one location.</p>
<p>Seashells is local, accessible on foot, with pushchairs / for the disabled; many wouldn't be able to access other centres, nor afford to use transport</p>	<p>The Sheppey Gateway is a level access site and is situated in the middle of the town, approximately 0.2 miles away from the Seashells Centre.</p>
<p>Seashells has a free accessible car park, Gateway does not</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that parking is not available at the Gateway, however many Family Hubs across the county do not have dedicated parking for service users.</p> <p>Parking is available a short distance from the Gateway. However, users do need to pay for this.</p>

	<p>It is therefore acknowledged within the Equality Impact Assessment that the impacts of this change may be particularly felt by those with a disability that affects their ability to walk.</p>
<p>Seashells provides a social aspect / making friends / prevents social isolation</p>	<p>The network of Family Hub locations across the county are designed to be places that families can attend and meet other families. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing Family Hub services at Seashells and support their transition. We are also developing a network of peer mentors and Family Coaches that will help build the sense of community.</p>
<p>Seashells is a warm, safe, secure, trusted, reliable space.</p>	<p>The role that the centre plays in its own right is acknowledged. However, the Family Hub network across the county is designed to be a safe and welcoming place where parents can access a range of support and guidance. Since Kent County Council rolled out Family Hubs we have received positive feedback from families and children about how welcome and supported they feel.</p>
<p>Gateway is not family friendly</p>	<p>Our Gateway and Library spaces are universally accessible and welcoming for all residents of Kent.</p> <p>Funding is available through the DfE Family Hub Transformation grant to undertake capital works to facilitate the safe and appropriate use of the Gateway site.</p>
<p>If Seashells closed, we / many would be unable to attend anywhere else</p>	<p>Our network of Community Development Workers will help families with the transition to using the alternative site.</p> <p>The current proposals only affect the recommissioning of the Family Hub element delivered at Seashells and do not impact on the other services offered from there. Families and children will be able to access all the other services i.e. nursery, health services, food bank, etc offered from Seashells.</p> <p>The proposed alternative location at Sheppey Gateway is 0.2 miles away.</p>

<p>Seashells is good for mental health support, has mental health session</p>	<p>Subject to continued need and timetabling, the Family Hub service at the Gateway could provide sessions focused on mental health, particularly Perinatal Mental Health, as well as more generally focused on assisting overall wellbeing for families.</p>
<p>Gateway is used by too many other services: banking, library, clubs</p>	<p>The site is used by/for other services and other agencies, and it is considered beneficial for service users to be able to access the wide range of services on offer in the one location.</p>
<p>Seashells is a lifeline to many</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the centre plays an important role for local communities.</p> <p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the centre and families can continue to access those services, if they choose to do so.</p>
<p>Seashells has outdoor space / we have no garden / children can play outside</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the Gateway does not benefit from a secure open space. There are however other facilities locally where free open space is available for families.</p>
<p>Seashells is an information resource / they provide advice and signposting</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for whole families to come and receive support, advice and guidance. This includes signposting or referral to other available advice and support.</p>
<p>This is an area of recognised high deprivation; closing it would impact the most vulnerable / in need, pushing them further into deprivation</p>	<p>The level of deprivation in the ward is acknowledged. Patterns of deprivation have been present consistently within this community for a long time.</p> <p>A comparative Family Hub service (although not like-for-like) can be delivered from the Gateway setting, subject to specific timetable arrangements.</p>
<p>Seashells is safe for children, has door release button / children can play safely / away from the busy high street</p>	<p>Gateway is a structurally a safe building.</p> <p>Funding is available through the DfE Family Hub Transformation grant to undertake capital works to facilitate the safe and appropriate use of the Gateway site for the work with children and families.</p>

	<p>This may include safeguarding the access following this specific concern being raised. This will not interfere with the universal access of the building but will alleviate concerns that children may be able to run out into the road.</p>
<p>Seashells has health clinics, baby weigh clinics, health visitors</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the centres. The decision will not impact on the continuation of these services from Seashells.</p>
<p>Gateway is only open 4 days a week</p>	<p>We will have the opportunity to review the opening of the Gateway considering the additional services that will be provided.</p> <p>The provision of activity under the Family Hub contract at Seashells is approximately 14 hours a week. The provision of at least 14 hours Family Hub activity per week can be accommodated at the Sheppey Gateway.</p>
<p>Seashells has the food bank which many rely on</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as the food bank which are run from Seashells are not within the scope of the decision. Families may continue to avail themselves of this service, should they choose to do so.</p>
<p>There are lots of (free) clubs, activities, sessions, groups, invaluable to many who couldn't afford otherwise</p>	<p>Free sessions and activities are a key part of the Family Hub offer across the county and would be included within any timetable for services at the Gateway. Families across the county who access our Family Hubs' free services have offered positive feedback about the activities that are offered.</p>
<p>There is no private space at the Gateway</p>	<p>There are spaces at the Gateway that can be used for private sessions and confidential conversations.</p>
<p>Taking it away will cause more social problems, including an increase in referrals to family support services</p>	<p>The level of need that families who access Seashells have is below the threshold for statutory intervention and so we would not expect current families accessing these services to be facing issues that qualify for statutory intervention. As a result, we do not</p>

	<p>expect to see an increase in families requiring referral to the Front Door team.</p> <p>The duty to provide statutory services under Children Act 1989 or 2004 is not part of the current contract in place for Seashells and it is not a function that Local Authorities can commission out to voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSEs).</p>
Seashells has sensory rooms, used by many	The sensory room at Seashells was put in outside of the commissioned contract for Family Hubs and is therefore unaffected by this proposal.
Comments / reasons for not using Gateway / Gateway should not be used	The proposal to use the Gateway means that the Family Hub service can be retained for local residents whilst the Council works to address the significant financial challenges that it faces.
Seashells is inclusive / equality is all they know / everyone is welcome	The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for all families across all parts of our community to come and receive support, advice and guidance. This includes signposting or referral to other available advice and support.
Seashells serves some of the most vulnerable and deprived residents / areas / plans discriminate against those people / people living in Sheerness	The level of deprivation in the ward is acknowledged. A comparative Family Hub service (although not like-for-like) can be delivered from the Gateway setting, subject to specific timetable arrangements.
Consider the children / the impact on their lives and their futures without the safety, support, familiarity, importance of Seashells	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the centres</p> <p>The Family Hub offer across the whole county, including the proposed any offer at the Gateway will continue to assist with the development, enjoyment, wellbeing and socialising for children.</p>
Consider accessibility for users with a disability / mums with pushchairs	The Gateway site has level access and whilst it is across two floors, the site benefits from a lift for those users that require it.
Discriminates against those who are losing access to services, e.g. especially mums and babies	It is acknowledged within the Equality Impact Assessment that most users of the services are mums, children and babies. Therefore, the impact of these changes may be disproportionately felt by those groups.

	<p>However, the proposal to use the Gateway means that the Family Hub service can be retained for local residents whilst the Council works to address the significant financial challenges that it faces.</p>
<p>Consider those with SEN needs, the neurodivergent, discriminates against those if no longer able to access services</p>	<p>The proposal to use the Gateway means that the Family Hub service can be retained for local residents whilst the Council works to address the significant financial challenges that it faces.</p> <p>We acknowledge that changing locations presents challenges for families coping with additional SEND needs. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Seashells and support their transition, linking in with our SEND service as required.</p>
<p>Not representative of the area, needs to be a local / community assessment</p>	<p>The Gateway is a local space used to deliver services to the community.</p>
<p>If the funding is withdrawn, it is likely that Seashells would face no alternative other than to charge room rates, at the moment all room space is free of charge.</p>	<p>This is a commercial decision for the independent company running the centre.</p> <p>There are national funding streams available for voluntary, community and social enterprise sector that the company running the centre can apply for, if interested.</p>
<p>Families will not access Sheppey Gateway as it is seen as a negative place to go (i.e. you only go there if you have a problem with housing or benefits).</p>	<p>Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Seashells and support their transition to Gateway.</p> <p>Sheppey Gateway also houses a library. KCC Libraries are universally accessible and all residents in Kent are welcome. There is positive feedback from residents related to KCC libraries.</p>

Section 2: Millmead

Consultation feedback relating to Millmead (as detailed in the Consultation Report)	
Consultation Feedback	Draft KCC Response
<p>Millmead is local / accessible / many wouldn't be able to go elsewhere / unable to even afford the bus fare / mums with pushchairs can walk there / mums postpartum can access / others are uphill and inaccessible to mums on foot</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the current Millmead site is accessible for local families.</p> <p>The Family Hub model across Margate includes three other centres all within 1.5 miles. It is acknowledged that this may present a barrier for some and that travel on foot is not possible for all.</p> <p>As a result of this feedback, KCC will provide parents and children bus tickets for those that previously accessed services from Millmead and now can't afford the bus fares to access the other Family Hubs from Margate.</p> <p>We maintain that there is sufficient provision to meet local need. Time-limited assistance to cover the cost of transport to the alternative venues would be offered as a means of helping support service users through the transition.</p>
<p>Millmead must not be closed: is much needed resource, relied upon by many families, offering lots to local often deprived families, closing it would be devastating, save money elsewhere</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the centre plays an important role for the local community.</p> <p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the centre and are not funded by Kent County Council through the existing contract.</p> <p>The provision of activity under the Family Hub contract at Millmead is approximately 9 hours a week. The provision of at least 9 hours Family Hub activity per week can be accommodated at the other centres.</p> <p>KCC is required to make savings across a wide range of services to meet the financial challenge currently faced by the Authority. The Statutory Duty on KCC to provide sufficient access to Children's Centres can still be met and as such it is felt that it is acceptable to make these savings. The rest of the in-house Family Hub network was</p>

	<p>subject to similar savings in previous decisions.</p>
<p>Lots of deprived children attend Millmead: is invaluable for their development, enjoyment, well-being, socialising, soft play, nursery, Sure Start</p>	<p>The level of deprivation in the ward is acknowledged.</p> <p>The Family Hub offer across the whole of Margate will continue to assist with the development, enjoyment, wellbeing and socialising for children.</p> <p>There are three alternative Family Hub locations within Margate, all within 1.5 miles of the Millmead Centre.</p> <p>Families across the county who access our Family Hubs' free services have offered positive feedback about the activities that are offered.</p> <p>The nursery provision is not one of the services commissioned under the Family Hub contract and therefore is not one of the services that would end if the contracts were not re-commissioned.</p>
<p>The staff at Millmead are welcoming / supportive / we trust them and we and the children have developed close relationships with them</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for whole families to come and receive support, advice and guidance.</p> <p>Staff that are currently delivering the Family Hub commissioned services at Seashells and Millmead are eligible for TUPE transfer. KCC HR colleagues are engaging with the providers on this issue.</p>
<p>Millmead is a safe / warm / secure / comforting / familiar / welcoming environment</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for all families across all parts of our community to come and receive support, advice and guidance. This includes signposting or referral to other available advice and support.</p> <p>There are three alternative Family Hub locations within Margate, all within 1.5 miles of the Millmead Centre.</p>
<p>Millmead has a free accessible car park / others do / may not</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that whilst limited free parking is available at Northdown Road Family Hub, it is not available at all the alternative locations proposed. Many</p>

	<p>Family Hubs across the county do not have dedicated parking for service users.</p> <p>Parking is available a short distance from the other locations, however, users may need to pay for this.</p> <p>It is therefore acknowledged within the Equality Impact Assessment that the impacts of this change may be particularly felt by those that manage a disability that affects their ability to walk.</p>
<p>There are lots of clinics attended / health visitor / baby weigh / healthy child clinic</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the Millmead and are not within the scope of the current contract that is under review.</p> <p>There are national funding streams available for voluntary, community and social enterprise sector that the company running the centre can apply for, if interested.</p>
<p>Millmead is relied upon by new mums, provides postpartum support, breastfeeding support, used by lots of mums / parents with babies</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the county provides precisely this support for all mums, including new mums and mums-to-be.</p> <p>Infant feeding support and postpartum support are key parts of the service offer available in the other Margate Family Hubs.</p>
<p>Many families would no longer be able to attend, use services if Millmead closed</p>	<p>Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Millmead and support their transition.</p> <p>There are three alternative Family Hub locations within Margate, all within 1.5 miles of the Millmead Centre.</p> <p>Time-limited assistance to cover the cost of transport to the alternative venues would be offered as a means of helping support service users through the transition.</p>
<p>Others will not be able to offer the same level of service, it's not big enough, will not be able to house all the services on offer at others</p>	<p>The Family Hub services provided under the commissioned contract are available at the alternative Family Hub sites in Margate.</p> <p>Capacity within these location exists</p>

<p>Clubs, events, activities are free, couldn't afford to pay for such like, we attend lots of activities we wouldn't be able to otherwise</p>	<p>Free sessions and activities are a key part of the Family Hub offer across the county and would be included within any timetable for services at the other Family Hubs from Margate.</p> <p>The provision of activity under the Family Hub contract at Millmead is approximately 9 hours a week. The provision of at least 9 hours Family Hub activity per week can be accommodated at the other centres.</p> <p>Families across the county who access our Family Hubs' free services have offered positive feedback about the activities that are offered.</p>
<p>Change not good for those with anxiety - places, people, surroundings, means they would not be able to attend elsewhere</p>	<p>We acknowledge that changing locations presents specific challenges for families coping with anxiety or additional needs. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Millmead and support their transition, linking in with our SEND service as required.</p>
<p>Other hubs would be stretched</p>	<p>There is capacity within the other hubs to deliver services to families currently accessing Millmead.</p>
<p>Millmead has baby sensory rooms / classes</p>	<p>The sensory room at Millmead was put in outside of the commissioned contract for Family Hubs and is therefore unaffected by this proposal.</p>
<p>Millmead provides a social aspect / making friends / prevents social isolation</p>	<p>The network of Family Hub locations across the county are designed to be places that families can attend and meet other families. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Millmead and support their transition. We are also developing a network of peer mentors and Family coaches that will help build the sense of community.</p>
<p>Millmead is accessible for the disabled, all on one level</p>	<p>The other Family Hub sites are equally accessible.</p>
<p>Others are not family friendly, not set up for families and children</p>	<p>The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for all families across all parts of our community to come and receive support, advice and guidance.</p>

	Families across the county who access our Family Hubs services have offered positive feedback about the support they received from practitioners.
Millmead is a lifeline for many families	The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the Millmead.
Millmead provides lots of information and advice, signposting	The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for all families across all parts of our community to come and receive support, advice and guidance. This includes signposting or referral to other available advice and support.
Millmead is inclusive / equality is all they know, everyone is welcome	The Family Hub model across the whole county is designed to be a welcoming and supportive place for all families across all parts of our community to come and receive support, advice and guidance. Families across the county who access our Family Hubs services have offered positive feedback about the support they received from practitioners.
Consider accessibility for disabled, mums with pushchairs - Millmead is very accessible	The other Family Hub sites are equally accessible. However, it is acknowledged that the impact of changing service locations is likely to be more challenging for service users managing disabilities. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Seashells and support their transition.
Discriminates against those who are losing access to services, e.g. mums and babies	It is acknowledged within the Equality Impact Assessment that the majority of users of the services are mums, children and babies. Therefore, the impact of these changes may be disproportionately felt by those groups. However, the proposal to use the alternative Family Hub locations means that the Family Hub service can be retained for local residents whilst the Council works to address the significant financial challenges that it faces.

<p>Not representative of the area / needs to be a local / community assessment</p>	<p>The three proposed alternative Family Hubs are all local spaces used to deliver services to the community.</p>
<p>Consider those with SEN needs, the neurodivergent, discriminates against those if no longer able to access services</p>	<p>The proposal to use the alternative Family Hub sites means that the Family Hub service can be retained for local residents whilst the Council works to address the significant financial challenges that it faces.</p> <p>We acknowledge that changing locations presents specific challenges for families coping with additional SEND needs. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Millmead and support their transition, linking in with our SEND service as required.</p>
<p>Consider those with mental health issues</p>	<p>Subject to continued need and timetabling the Family Hub service at the alternative sites proposed, sessions will be provided focusing on mental health, particularly Perinatal Mental Health, as well as more generally focused on assisting overall wellbeing for families.</p> <p>We acknowledge that changing locations presents specific challenges for families coping with mental health concerns. Our network of Community Development Workers will work with families that are used to accessing services at Millmead and support their transition, linking in with our SEND service as required.</p>
<p>Consider safeguarding - others are not safe for children – location / building nor from other users</p>	<p>The proposed alternative Family Hub sites are all safe for children and families to access and are currently operational Family Hub sites.</p> <p>There are no health and safety concerns in any of the Family Hubs buildings in Margate.</p> <p>All staff who work in the Family Hubs services including those in Margate are Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checked and pose no risk of harm to children. All the staff working in the Family Hubs estate have receive comprehensive training to offer safe and evidence-based support to children and families.</p>

<p>In Margate, there are three Family Hubs close to each other. One of those should be closed to save Millmead.</p>	<p>The revenue saving (running costs) of closing one of the other three Family Hubs in Margate is approximately £41,000 and therefore would not meet the saving target.</p> <p>Millmead have been approached to ascertain the potential costs of hiring space to provide a KCC run Family Hub service from the centre (as opposed to a commissioned contract under which the provider provides the service from their own building). Hire costs have been estimated as between £65k and £85k per year.</p> <p>If KCC cease services at the location that costs £41k a year and hired space, the impact on the KCC revenue budget would therefore be an additional pressure of at least £25k (£65k minimum hire charge minus £41k saving at the closed centre). These are property costs, not staffing costs.</p>
<p>The variety of services available at Millmead is important and this cannot be replicated elsewhere.</p>	<p>The wider Family Hub network of services available to residents at the alternative sites is equally beneficial. The wider service offer available will adapt over time in response to the need of the community accessing the Family Hub network.</p>
<p>Important health concerns might go unnoticed due to lack of proximity to medical facilities since Millmead is the only place families go to.</p>	<p>Health services are outside of the scope of the commissioned Family Hub services and are therefore not part of Kent County Council's proposals to move out of Millmead should the commissioned contracts not be renewed.</p>

Section 3: Feedback relevant across both sites

Consultation feedback relevant across both sites	
Consultation Feedback	Draft KCC Response
<p>The loss of this significant revenue will result in the closure of both centres, with community midwifery being displaced.</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract. Other services such as nurseries and health provision would remain at the two centres and are not within the scope of the current contract that is under review.</p> <p>The extent and value of the commercial relationship between the two companies running the two centres and the various Health providers is unknown to Kent County Council; however, that commercial relationship is not within to scope of the current contract review.</p>

	<p>There are national funding streams available for voluntary, community and social enterprise sector that the companies running the two centres can apply for, if interested.</p>
<p>Limited availability of alternative clinical spaces should the Family Hubs in Seashells and Millmead close.</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract.</p> <p>The extent and value of the commercial relationship between the two companies running the two centres and the various Health providers is unknown to Kent County Council; however, that commercial relationship is not within the scope of the current contract review.</p>
<p>Most of the alternative locations that may be suitable for relocation of community midwifery services from Millmead and Seashells are already full given the outcome of the communities services consultation.</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract.</p> <p>Health Visiting and Midwifery services, whilst a part of the wider Family Hub network, are not within the scope of the current commissioned contracts. It is up to the companies that run Millmead and Seashells to negotiate their commercial relationship with the Health providers should they choose to do so.</p>
<p>Whilst the consultation document states that the proposals set out in the consultation do not directly impact Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT), there are concerns that the services KCHFT deliver will indirectly be affected.</p>	<p>The proposal is only related to the services that are commissioned under the Family Hub contract.</p> <p>Health Visiting and Midwifery services, whilst a part of the wider Family Hub network, are not within the scope of the current commissioned contracts and therefore could stay in place at Millmead and Seashells if required.</p> <p>Service delivery requirements for Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) can be reviewed regularly to determine whether additional capacity is required. This can be monitored through the KCC Public Health Commissioning team. Additional spaces can be made available if required on Sheppey at either the Queenborough Library co-location site or at the Sheppey Gateway. Clinical space is</p>

	<p>already available in Thanet at all three alternative sites – Northdown Road Family Hub, Cliftonville Family Hub and Margate Family Hub.</p>
<p>KCHFT is mindful that this could potentially result in both Family Hubs charging KCHFT for delivery space which has previously been provided free of charge as a way to secure additional funding streams.</p>	<p>This may present an additional cost pressure (approx £30k per annum) for the Public Health commissioned contracts to KCHFT.</p> <p>The commercial relationship between KCHFT and the two companies running Millmead and Seashells is not within the scope of the contract that is under review.</p>
<p>Concerns that the purpose of moving services is that KCC hopes to wind the services down?</p>	<p>KCC is not intending to wind down the Family Hub service. Investment from the Department for Education over the last three years has facilitated the transformation from our previous Open Access service to the new Family Hub model. Part of the funding is to ensure the service is operationally sustainable.</p>
<p>Families may not wish to access services in the building with children’s social services creating a barrier.</p>	<p>A strength of the whole Family Hub network is that it draws on the links across the wider Early Help system, including our social services support to assist families where needed.</p>
<p>Concerns that there has been a distinct lack of communication on KCC’s part to fully investigate the impact of the changes and a more thorough options appraisal should have been carried out to seek options that do not create such huge disparity in the level of service being proposed to what is required</p>	<p>An options appraisal was carried out in advance of the consultation, and this was detailed within the information available for residents.</p> <p>Following the consultation response, an additional option has been considered which assesses the possibility of not renewing the commissioned contracts, but instead renting space within the centres for Kent County Council to deliver the Family Hub services.</p>
<p>Safeguarding and child protection issues will increase if the centres close – lives will be lost.</p>	<p>Our Family Hub service provides a wide range of services for all families across universal and targeted levels of need (as the term ‘need’ relates to the Kent County Council children’s services offer). The universal and targeted levels of need sit under the threshold for statutory Children Services intervention who assess and support children in need, children who suffer or are at risk of suffering significant harm and children in care.</p>

	<p>The duty to provide statutory services under Children Act 1989 or 2004 is not part of the current contract in place for the two children's centres and it is not a function that Local Authorities can commission out to voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSEs).</p> <p>Families that have a higher level of need and where children are in need or are at risk of or suffer significant harm receive support from Children Social Work Teams and intensive Early Help. The statutory duties provided by Kent County Council in regards service delivery under the various Children Act provisions remains unchanged as a result of this proposal. These services are still available through existing channels and partnerships across the wider Early Years network.</p>
<p>The community pantry and clothes bank are vital for the community and should not be lost.</p>	<p>These services are not part of the commissioned Family Hub contract and therefore fall outside of this proposal.</p>
<p>If contracts not renewed, community midwifery will be displaced alongside other services</p>	<p>The community midwifery service sits outside of the commissioned Family Hub services at Millmead and Seashells and therefore the service delivery is not within the scope of the current contract.</p> <p>Despite this, in Margate all three Family Hub locations already include clinical space for use by community midwifery. The Sheppey Gateway can be adapted to include clinical space for community midwifery if required.</p>
<p>Impact on single dads and their mental health will be impacted.</p>	<p>Our Family Hub network across the county is a welcoming and supportive place for all parents and carers. Through our Start for Life insights work we have developed z-cards and one-minute interaction guidance for all Family Hub staff to help boost engagement with dads.</p> <p>Our continued work with Dadspace is developing our offer to fathers, with a focus on their mental health and the relationship with their children. If needed this is something that can be broadened to deliver specific sessions for dads in these areas.</p>

<p>There will be a large impact on schools having to take in children that have not had the early intervention that Millmead and Seashells Family Hubs offer.</p>	<p>The Family Hub service will still be available to local people online (for example the free Easy Peasy app) and at the alternative sites proposed.</p> <p>Any families in Margate and on the Island of Sheppey have several opportunities to engage with the Family Hubs services should they choose to do so.</p>
<p>Both of these locations were pilot Family Hub sites, how can they now be closed?</p>	<p>Both Millmead and Seashells have played an important role in the transformation of the Family Hub model in Kent.</p> <p>However, the financial challenges that the Council face are significant and all options for easing the pressure on the budget are being explored.</p> <p>The contracts for these two centres have always been time limited and they end in March 2025. It is therefore timely and appropriate to consider whether the services can be delivered to families locally in a way that meets their needs while helping to address the Council's financial challenges.</p>