

## Appendix 2 – “Shaping the Future of Children’s Centres in Kent” – Frequently Asked Questions

*This was updated on 27.08.2013 to incorporate a number of questions asked through the consultation period so far.*

### **\*NEW\* Is the consultation information available in alternative formats and languages?**

If you require the consultation document and questionnaire in an alternative format of language please phone 0300 333 5540 or speak to a member of staff at your Children’s Centre who can phone on your behalf.

### **\*NEW\* How do I create a petition?**

We have become aware of a number of petitions which have been set up as a result of the consultation. These petitions relate to both specific proposals and the countywide proposal in general. It is important that any petition which is set up is hosted at the following address;

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/your\\_council/have\\_your\\_say/petitions.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/have_your_say/petitions.aspx)

KCC has no obligation to recognise any petitions which are not hosted at this website. If you are aware of any petitions which currently exist outside of formal site, please contact [cc.consultation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:cc.consultation@kent.gov.uk)

### **\*NEW\* When will a decision be made and when will the changes take place?**

A decision will not be made about any Centre until the consultation has finished on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and feedback responses have been analysed and reported upon.

A decision is expected in December 2013.

We promise to tell you the outcomes of the consultation on these web pages. Feedback information will also be available at your local Children’s Centre.

Any changes will start to take place from April 2014.

### **\*NEW\* I have commented on Facebook and have not received a reply. Why is this? Will my views still be captured?**

Staff are not permitted to respond to any questions or comments regarding the consultation via Social Media and views made in comments will not be fed into the consultation. To have your say, please visit [www.kent.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.kent.gov.uk/childrenscentres) and complete the online questionnaire.

### **\*NEW\* It is proposed that the hours at my Centre reduce. If this happens, when will it be open?**

It is proposed that any part time Centres are open for 18 hours a week. The actual operating times have not been prescribed as we would like with families and the local community to have a say in the opening hours that they would like. If it is agreed that a Centre will become part time then Centre staff will work with families and the local community to identify most appropriate operating hours to maximise families’ ability to access the Centre and other community services.

### **\*NEW\* Will my Children’s Centre service that is currently delivered at a venue other than the actual Children’s Centre continue? (off-site/outreach)**

The consultation does not propose any changes to services that are delivered off-site. This includes services provided by KCC partners, such as Health Visitors. The locations of many of these KCC services are marked on the maps in the consultation document with a cross (labelled ‘off-site service not affected’). We are aware that not all current off-site services are shown on the maps.

However, every year Children's Centres review what services are delivered, where these services are delivered and how they are delivered in line with the needs of local communities. This service planning process will continue in the future as it has done for a number of years.

### **\*NEW\* My Centre is a proposed closure where can I access alternative services?**

Details of alternative Centres or off-site delivery are contained within the consultation document. You can also download a map to show the nearest alternative Centre or off-site delivery. Information is available by [district](#). Alternatively members of staff in any Children's Centre will be able to provide you with a copy of the consultation document.

We will consider increasing our off site delivery in some areas if a Children's Centre is closed. This will be based on needs of local communities.

### **\*NEW\* Where in Dover Town Centre would the proposed new Children's Centre be?**

We are looking at all alternative available accommodation in Dover Town Centre, this includes the Dover Discovery Centre.

### **\*NEW\* Is it true 99% of 0-4 year olds will still be able to access a Children's Centre within a 15 minute drive time if the proposed Centres close?**

The drive time analysis that has been undertaken identifies that 99% of households with a child aged 0-4 will be able to access at least one of Kent's Children's Centres within a 15 minute drive time from their home if the proposed 23 Centres close.

This may not necessarily be the Centre a user currently visits and assumes that the population has access to a car.

### **\*NEW\* Have you looked at access by Public Transport if the proposed Centres are closed?**

Yes. This identifies that 98% of 0-4 year old KCC population are within 0- 90 minute of a Centre by public transport and that 78% of 0-4 year old KCC population are within 0- 20 minute of a Centre by public transport if the proposed 23 Centres close.

This may not necessarily be the Centre a user currently visits and assumes that the population can access public transport.

### **\*NEW\* Why is Beaches shown as being located in Eastchurch and not Leysdown? Is it proposed that Beaches moves?**

It is not proposed that Beaches is relocated. This is an unfortunate error in the consultation document. An updated map can be viewed online at [www.kent.gov.uk/ChildrensCentres](http://www.kent.gov.uk/ChildrensCentres)

### **\*NEW\* What is MOSAIC?**

Mosaic Public Sector designed by Experian (<http://www.experian.co.uk/public-sector/index.html>) is a comprehensive analysis of residents at postcode and household level. It provides deep insight into the socio-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour of residents. Using data from a wide range of public and private sources, Mosaic Public Sector has been linked to specific data sources from health, education, criminal justice and local and central government. This data has been combined to create 13 distinct groups based on their characteristics, behaviours and attitudes. This provides a picture of residents which can indicate their requirements for public services. We have used this information to help us identify the potential impact of our proposals on certain groups across Kent.

## Why are you consulting?

In the current economic climate efficiency savings must be made so it is vital that the council sets out a new model for its Children's Centres which is sustainable for the long-term future. We have come up with a proposal, and **want to know your views**. There is also a legal requirement within the Childcare Act 2006 to consult.

## How much money does KCC have to save from its Children's Centre programme?

In 2014/2015 we need to save at least £1.5 million.

## When does the consultation close?

We will be consulting on the proposals from 9am on Thursday 4 July until 5pm on Friday 4 October 2013.

## How much does each district have to save?

We have not set targets for individual districts to save. We have decided to undertake a countywide approach to reaching our savings target to make sure that children and their families across the county continue to receive the services they need.

## Are all Children's Centres included in the consultation?

Yes. Kent currently has 97 Children's Centres. All Centres are included in the consultation proposal.

## What are you consulting on?

We are consulting on one proposal which includes:

1. reducing the number of Children's Centres from 97 to 74
2. linking Children's Centres to reduce management, administrative and building costs
3. reducing hours at 13 Children's Centres.

## How did you select Centres for closure?

Centres were identified using extensive data and local knowledge. In summary we identified Centres for closure based on:

- those serving areas where the need for our support is 'low'
- if the Centre serves an area of 'low' need and only signposts to services at other Centres
- at least 50% of users attending other Children's Centres in the locality that are not proposed for closures
- access to other community facilities suitable for signposting to Children's Centre services.

\*NEW\* Further information is available at -

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/education\\_and\\_learning/childcare\\_and\\_early\\_education/childrens\\_centres/shaping\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_centres/countywide.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/education_and_learning/childcare_and_early_education/childrens_centres/shaping_the_future_of_centres/countywide.aspx)

## How have Children's Centre Plus Centres been identified?

The 'Children's Centre Plus' Centres included in the consultation are based on:

- Centres located in areas of highest support
- Centre buildings/ location better suited to offer additional services and/or accommodate extra staff.

## How have part time Centres been identified?

Part time Centres have been identified using the same data and local knowledge used to identify Centres for closure. Additional factors such as high numbers of families and children accessing only one Centre, rural location and operating patterns have suggested a need to retain a presence but to alter operating hours.

## **What impact will there be on pre-schools and nurseries operating within Children's Centres?**

Some Children's Centres share their buildings with pre-schools or nurseries. Nurseries and pre-schools are excluded from this proposal.

## **What will happen to the buildings at Children's Centres proposed for closure?**

A number of options are being considered for the use of buildings, all of which are being investigated further during through the consultation period. Any affected Centres will be individually considered.

## **Has the proposal been Equality Impact Assessed?**

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) initial screenings have been completed at a Centre level for Centres that are a proposed closure or reduction to part time hours. A countywide EQIA has also been undertaken. Copies are available by [district](#).

The consultation questionnaire asks respondents for protected characteristic information. A number of full impact assessments will be completed following the consultation period (as required).

## **What will happen to the staff in the Centres proposed for closure?**

It should be stressed that this is NOT a consultation regarding staffing structures. We will not be formalising structures until we know the results of the consultation and a decision has been made. Proposals may vary considerably as a result of the consultation and therefore we cannot fully determine any impact on staff at this time.

A decision regarding the service delivery model of Children Centres is planned for December 2013. Once this is agreed we will be able to consult with staff about any structure changes.

KCC processes and procedures will be followed at all times and staff supported through times of change and uncertainty.

## **What will be happening with Children's Centres delivered by another organisation?**

We are consulting on the proposal to "link Children's Centres." The proposed future shape of Children's Centres does not include any "stand alone" Children's Centres. Centres currently delivered by another organisation will be required to integrate into the new model of working which is proposed.