

Appendix D

Joint Consultation on the Organisation of Sure Start Children's Centres and Provision for Children under Five with Difficulties and Disabilities from April 2011

Why are we consulting you?

It was agreed by the Wiltshire County Council Cabinet meeting on 23 October 2008 that the management of the Children's Centres would be opened to competitive tendering using the normal procurement process from April 2011. The present contracts end on 31 March 2011. The contracts for the provision for children under five with difficulties and disabilities also end on 31 March 2011.

The competitive tendering process is a requirement under European Union Procurement Directives and the Public Contracts Regulation 2006 to ensure open and fair competition amongst the member states of the European Union. Wiltshire Council is accountable to the HM Treasury to show that we are ensuring that the best value for money is obtained from public funds.

We aim to be a council that is truly representative of local people and is a transparent and local council. We aim to provide excellent services at good value for money and achieve high public satisfaction.

Who is being consulted?

- Present providers
- Schools with a children's centre on site
- Staff
- NHS Wiltshire, including Midwives and Health Visitors
- Social Care Teams
- District Specialist Centres
- Portage Services
- Voluntary Sector Forum
- Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
- Jobcentre Plus

What is the present provision?

Sure Start Children's Centres

Presently, the 30 children's centres are managed by a variety of different organisations

Table 1

Children's Centres	Provider until March 2011
Chippenham Redland ,Malmesbury ,Wootton Bassett , Cricklade, Calne Priestley Chippenham The Rise and Chippenham Kings Rise Corsham	Barnardos The Rise Trust Wiltshire Council
Marlborough and Tidworth Pewsey Devizes North and Devizes South	Rural Needs Initiative VAK Southbroom School Governors
Amesbury, Bulford, Salisbury City , Salisbury Little Folly Tisbury, Wilton and Downton Salisbury Elim Mere	Action for Children Elim Centre Trustees Mere Footprints
Trowbridge Studley and Trowbridge Longfield Trowbridge Bellefield Melksham Kings Park Melksham Queensway Bradford on Avon Westbury, White Horse Warminster, The Avenue	Wiltshire Council Bellefield School Governors Kings Park School Governors Queensway Chapel Trustees Fitzmaurice School Governors Westbury Infant School Governors The Avenue School Governors

What is the present provision for children under five with difficulties and disabilities?

The parents of children under five who have difficulties and disabilities are able to choose where their child attends early year's provision. Pre-schools, nurseries and childminders all provide the Early Years Foundation Stage and parents can choose a combination of provision that is most suitable. All settings should be suitable for all children; however some children may need more support that would include a range of specialist day care and family support services. In recognition of this there are a range of specialist providers;

- Stepping Stones in Trowbridge
- Springboard in Chippenham
- John McNeill in Salisbury
- Devizes Opportunity Centre
- Starworld Nursery in Marlborough (specialist maintained nursery)
- North and East Wiltshire Portage Service
- Salisbury Portage
- West Wilts Portage

At present the specialist provision for children with difficulties and disabilities is not consistent and equitable throughout the county. Centres generally have different opening times during the week, are term time only, provide a limited choice of holiday provision and have differing eligibility criteria.

The voluntary organisations presently managing the existing services have developed locally, but the service from the point of view of families receiving the service should not depend on where they live. Wiltshire Council wants to ensure that children under five with difficulties and disabilities receive a service that is flexible, innovative and responsive to change.

Further to the public consultation in 2006; establishing the team around the child multi agency Inclusion Support Meeting process, and the development of Wiltshire Children’s Centres we now need to consolidate these initiatives as we develop a plan to provide an equitable, cohesive and sustainable service for the future.

Proposals for the organisation of Sure Start Children’s Centres from April 2011 Table 2

Option one	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>To offer pre-determined clusters of children’s centres in the service specification e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chippenham Cluster (Redland, King’s Rise, The Rise) • Salisbury Cluster (Little Folly, Salisbury City, Elim) • Trowbridge Cluster (Studley Green, Bellefield, Longfield) • Devizes Cluster (Devizes South, Devizes North) • Melksham Cluster (King’s Park, Queensway) • South West Wiltshire Cluster Mere, Tisbury and Wilton. • Wootton Bassett and Cricklade • Marlborough and Pewsey • Tidworth, Bulford and Amesbury <p>The rest of the centres as single sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces management costs by offering more than one children’s centre under a single management structure. • Enables joint working between teams assigned to specific areas of the County particularly in the main towns. • Greater opportunity to provide joined-up services for families. • Reduces the possible duplication of work. • Enables a cluster of centres together in the south of the County with small numbers of children to work together to provide the core offer of services. • Enables centres serving Armed Forces families to work together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential providers would be required to bid for a cluster in some areas of the county. • Depending on the outcome, providers may be working in clusters that would be different from the present arrangements. • There is less opportunity for creative solutions.

Option two	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>To offer the children’s centres as single sites but during the selection process to favour bids that demonstrate best value for money through economy of scale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives greater flexibility for potential providers to show how their bid could offer the best and most competitive service for the local community. • Present providers do not feel excluded from the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for greater management costs than option one and therefore a reduction in the amount of money available for children and families • Present providers may ‘play safe’ and lack the creativity to present new ways of working.

Option three

Suggestions for another approach to organising Wiltshire’s children’s centres.

Proposals for the future of specialist services for children under five with difficulties and disabilities.

Table 3

Option 1	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>For a service in each area of the 4 hub areas of the County; Trowbridge, Devizes, Salisbury and Chippenham that is consistent, ensuring parents have an equitable service wherever they live. This would include family services provided in partnership with Wiltshire Children’s Centres; specialist day care would be available as a minimum from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday and for at least 48 weeks of the year. The service would include family support outreach services offering one to one support in the home; this could be delivered in partnership with another organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with difficulties and disabilities would receive a consistent service wherever they live • The service would be available all year round • The service would support parents who wish to work • It matches the delivery of the children’s centres. • It requires service providers to work in partnership with others to meet the service specification. • It meets the needs of the service users. • Promotes multi agency working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be some disruption if the service is covered using too many partners. • Funding may be disproportionate • Inconsistency of service provision • Geographical barriers
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with difficulties and disabilities would receive a consistent service wherever they live • The service would be available all year round • The service would support parents who wish to work • It matches the delivery of the children’s centres. • It requires service providers to work in partnership with others to meet the service specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not build on the strengths of the present service. • May jeopardise the Government and Wiltshire Council’s commitment to the involvement of a range of voluntary providers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It meets the needs of the service users. • More efficient and equitable use of funding • More efficient use of specialist staff • Parents may not have to travel so far to receive specialist support. 	
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Option 3

Suggestions for an innovative approach to organising the provision for children with significant difficulties and disabilities to provide effective working and fair access for parents and children.

From April 2011, accommodation will be available at Longfield Children’s Centre in Trowbridge, and Kings Rise Children’s Centre in Chippenham. Successful service providers would be expected to work alongside Wiltshire’s Children’s Centres in the delivery of integrated services for children with difficulties and disabilities.

What will happen next?

Two evening open meetings will be held on 28 January and 2 February (venues to be confirmed) to outline the plans and answer questions. On the deadline date, the responses will be collated and they will form part of a paper to Wiltshire Council Cabinet. The Cabinet will be asked to agree the way the services will be offered for tendering and the timetable to achieve this. This timetable is still in draft form at present.

How to express your views

Responses must arrive no later than **Friday 26 February 2010**. Responses may be for the children's centre options or the proposals on the provision for children under five with difficulties and disabilities, or respondents may wish to reply to both.

Further copies are available in hard copy or by email from Charlotte Stephens 01225 785695
charlotte.stephens@wiltshire.gov.uk

The responses can also be returned to charlotte.stephens@wiltshire.gov.uk

Or by post to : Early Years and Childcare Team,
 Unit 1 Ascot Court,
 White Horse Business Park,
 Trowbridge
 BA14 0XA

Timetable	
Dec 2009	2 December meet with Portfolio Holder for Children's Services to agree the key points in the tendering timetable. Consultation on the proposals begins on Friday 4 December for 12 weeks until 26 February 2010. This goes out to present providers, partner organisations such as NHS Wiltshire and social care teams, district specialist centres and schools where a children's centre is on a school site.
Jan 2010	2 evening meetings to brief providers 28 Jan Devizes Corn Exchange and 2 Feb 2010 Salisbury Guildhall at 6.30pm.
2 February	Paper outlining the timetable to Children's Trust Board – deadline date for paper 2 February
26 February	End of consultation period
3 March	Deadline for the submission of the Cabinet paper to Democratic Services
23 March	Cabinet paper to propose agreement for the tendering process
1 April	Advertisement for expressions of interest
22 April	Deadline for returns of expressions of interest
23 April	Send out pre-qualification questionnaires PQQ
14 May	PQQs returned
17 - 28 May	Evaluation of PQQs including finance
1 June	Send out tenders
1 July	Closing date for questions about the tenders
August	
7 September	Deadline for return of tenders
8 September	Tenders are opened at County Hall
20 September	Tender evaluations begin. Panel meeting for each children's centre cluster and each specialist centre involving stakeholders potential for minimum of 20 events
Oct	Tender evaluations continue
5 November	End of tender evaluations
12 November	Notify decisions
15 – 26 November	Standstill period
December	Deal with any challenges Contracts awarded
Jan 2011	TUPE consultation
Feb	
March	
April	New contracts begin

**Response to the proposals for the organisation of
Wiltshire's Sure Start Children's Centres from 2011**

Name

Postcode

What is your interest in the future of the Children's Centre (e.g. current parent, local resident, member of staff etc)

Which option do you support?

Children's centres specification sent out already clustered as above – option 1

Service specification for each children's centre as a standalone centre with the best value decision taken during the selection process – option 2

Another approach – option 3

Any other comments – additional sheets may be added

Please send your responses by **Friday 26 February 2010 either by email to**

charlotte.stephens@wiltshire.gov.uk

Or by post to

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Unit 1 Ascot Court,
White Horse Business Park,
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Response to the proposals for the provision for children under five with difficulties and disabilities from April 2011

Name

Postcode

What is your interest in the future of specialist provision? (e.g. current provider, current delivery partner, member of staff etc)

Which option do you support?

Hub based provision – option 1

One county-wide provision covering all 20 community areas – option 2

Another suggestion – option 3

Any other comments – additional sheets may be added

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