

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**15 December 2015**

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**Subject: Children's centre services - proposals for future service delivery following public consultation**

**Cabinet member: Councillor Laura Mayes – Lead Member for Children's Services**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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### **Executive Summary**

In line with Central Government requirements Wiltshire created 30 designated Sure Start children's centres between 2006 and 2011. The initial centres were located within areas with the highest levels of deprivation and additional centres were set up in areas with a higher population of children aged under five. There were three waves of development. Given the rural nature of Wiltshire, many families currently do not find it easy to access a children's centre building.

The core purpose of children's centres is set out in statutory guidance and has not changed since the programme of development began:

- To support good early child development and school readiness.
- To raise parenting aspirations and improve parenting skills.
- To improve child and family health and life chances.

Wiltshire's children's centre services are currently delivered by four voluntary and community sector organisations and these contracts come to an end in June 2016. A tender process will start in January for organisations interested in delivery of children's centre services from July 2016. Wiltshire Council has less funding to deliver these services and so needs to find ways to ensure that the money spent has the greatest positive impact on young children's development. The Council wants to maximise support for families living in the most deprived areas whilst retaining some access to children's centre services across the county.

The Government's policy on free entitlement to childcare for disadvantaged two year olds and the recent announcement on the increase in free entitlement to childcare for three and four year olds of working parents (from 15 to 30 hours) means that the Council also needs to look at how to create more childcare places as part of its early years strategy. There is an opportunity to consider this agenda alongside delivery of children's centre services.

In this context, in September 2015 the Council published a public consultation document that set out proposals for the future use of children's centre buildings and delivery of children's centre services. The full public consultation document is included in Appendix 2. The aims and impact of the proposals are as follows:

- To refocus the current funding to deliver more services within local communities with less emphasis on running dedicated children's centre buildings.
- Children's centre staff would continue to provide some services and support in all areas of the county.
- Children's centre services would be delivered from 15 key buildings based in four geographical clusters – North, East, South and West - to achieve greater financial and service efficiencies.
- A number of buildings currently used to deliver children's centre services would change their use for alternative delivery of services to young children, including childcare, and would no longer be registered children's centres.

The proposals in the public consultation document setting out where dedicated children's centre buildings should be located in the future were based on a combination of the following factors:

- The level of deprivation in each area
- The number of children aged under five living in the area
- The suitability of current buildings to deliver children's centre services
- The potential to expand childcare provision

Public consultation on these proposals commenced on September 17<sup>th</sup> and closed on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

In responding to the feedback received during the consultation process, the initial proposals have been revised. The reasons for the revised proposals include:

- The recent publication of the updated Indices of Multiple Deprivation data (October 2015) show that there have been some changes in levels of deprivation in some parts of the county.
- Some local communities have put forward helpful ideas about ways in which they can financially support the continued delivery of children's centre services in their area.
- A high number of people provided feedback on the importance of any alternative venues being available on a regular rather than an ad hoc basis.
- The need to ensure that all suitable dedicated children centre buildings can continue to be used to provide support for young children and families (either childcare or activities linked to primary education).
- The potential highlighted during the consultation process for some dedicated children's centres to offer both childcare and some space for continued delivery of children's centre services in the future.

The revised proposals recommend that the Council retains 17 designated children's centre buildings with the potential for an additional 2 buildings to be used for delivery of children's centre services if providers and local communities are willing to support the funding of this (Wilton and Chippenham). All options will still ensure that the Council is continuing to comply with its statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006.

The Council expects to make annual contract value savings of £0.5m as a result of the revised proposals set out in the recommended option for future delivery. As part of the Council's procurement process starting in January 2016, the Council will set out that any organisations interested in running these services in the future will need to:

- Keep reallocation of their own central organisational overheads to a minimum;
- Continue to look at making efficiencies in the way they deliver services;
- Contribute to the delivery of services through use of volunteers and/or income generation.

### **Proposal**

Cabinet is asked to note the feedback from the public consultation and to approve the recommendations for the future delivery of children's centre services set out in Option 3 within this Cabinet paper and delegate authority to Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and senior officers to develop and implement the proposals including completion of the tender process.

All councillors are advised to consider the equality issues and impact of the proposals in the decision making process and satisfy themselves that the Council's Public Sector Equality Duties are being met (Appendix 1).

### **Reason for Proposal**

The proposals are made in the context of needing to find ways to continue to meet the needs of young children and their families through re-shaping service delivery whilst looking at opportunities to save money. The Council wants to ensure that it maximises support in the most deprived areas whilst retaining some access to children's centre services across the county.

Carolyn Godfrey - Corporate Director and Director for Children's Services

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## Cabinet

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**Cabinet member:** Laura Mayes – Lead Member for Children's Services

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The current contracts for children's centres finish in June 2016 and the Council is looking at how to ensure that the money spent has the greatest positive impact on young children's development before re-tendering the contract.
- 1.2 This report provides information on the proposals for future delivery of children's centre services, a summary of feedback gained during the public consultation on these proposals and recommendations for future service delivery.
- 1.3 The report has been informed by extensive public consultation, the outcomes of which are contained within the report.
- 1.4 Careful consideration of the impact of this proposal on the Council's Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) has been undertaken to assist councillors in ensuring compliance with these duties in the decision making process.

### 2. Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

- 2.1 The annual contract value for children's centre services is currently just under £4M (with the Council also providing additional funding for some property and IT-related costs). With significantly less funding available due to reductions in central government funding, proposals have been developed to continue to meet the needs of young children and their families through re-shaping service delivery. Children's centre services would continue to be delivered across the county but with a smaller number of dedicated children's centre buildings in more deprived areas in line with the Council's priority to continue to support our more vulnerable children and families.

### 3. Main Considerations for the Council

- 3.1 The contracts for delivery of children's centre services finish in June 2016 and children's centres services need to be re-shaped and re-designed to ensure that the funding provided by the Council has the greatest impact and improves the life chances of young children.

- 3.2 There has been significant change in both national and local policy on early years since the children's centres contracts started in 2011. Nationally the Childcare Minister has emphasized the importance of delivering support in the community rather than focusing on the buildings. Locally the use of partnerships with midwifery, health visiting, childcare providers and primary schools will allow us to deliver effective support to those families that most need it, ensuring that more children have the best start in life and are ready for school.
- 3.3 The Government's policy on free early education for disadvantaged two year olds and the recent announcement on the increase in free early education for three and four year olds means that the Council needs to look at how to create more childcare places as part of its early years' strategy. As there is evidence that outcomes for young children are generally better where childcare provision is linked to primary schools, we are keen to work with schools to increase this type of provision. There is an opportunity to consider this agenda alongside delivery of children's centre services as many children's centre buildings are located on primary school sites.
- 3.4 Public consultation on proposals on the future delivery of children's centre services commenced on 17<sup>th</sup> September and closed on November 6<sup>th</sup> 2015.
- 3.5 The findings from the public consultation confirm a general acceptance of the need to re-focus the delivery of children's centre services so that dedicated children's centre buildings are only retained in more deprived areas with high numbers of families with young children. However, in some communities where it is proposed the children's centre building changes its use there is considerable concern that this will remove a valuable community resource. The full feedback from the consultation can be found at Appendix 3.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 In line with Central Government requirements Wiltshire created 30 designated Sure Start children's centres between 2006 and 2011. Some of the new builds and renovations were funded from a specific Surestart Capital grant. The initial centres were located within areas with the highest levels of deprivation and additional centres were set up in areas with a higher population of children aged under five. There were three waves of development. Given the rural nature of Wiltshire, many families currently do not find it easy to access a children's centre building.
- 4.2 The core purpose of children's centres is set out in statutory guidance and has not changed since the programme of development began:
- To support good early child development and school readiness.
  - To raise parenting aspirations and improve parenting skills.
  - To improve child and family health and life chances.
- 4.3 The Children's Services Commissioning Team has worked with colleagues both within the Council's Children's Services and with other partners to consider how children's centre services can be re-shaped and re-designed to ensure increased impact of service delivery but within a reduced financial envelope. The team has also worked with Public Health colleagues to ensure a link between the delivery of children's centre services and the delivery of the national Healthy Child Programme

by Health Visitors. The Council wants to ensure that it maximises support for the most deprived areas whilst retaining service coverage across the county.

- 4.4 There are currently 30 registered children's centres in Wiltshire delivering services from 28 children's centre buildings (in both Devizes and Salisbury, two registered centres operate from the same building). In each area of the county, some children's centre services are already delivered from other community buildings to provide easier access for families. Some children's centres operate in clusters to provide efficiency in the use of staff and resources.
- 4.5 Wiltshire's children's centre services are currently delivered by four voluntary and community sector organisations. The contracts for children's centres finish in June 2016 and the Council is looking at how to ensure that the money spent has the greatest positive impact on young children's development before re-tendering the contracts.
- 4.6 Before publishing the public consultation document, initial consultation sessions were held with providers, a range of professionals and some parents to look at what has worked well in delivering children's centre services since the current contract began. The proposals for future delivery of children's centre services are based on the views expressed at the initial consultation sessions that it is front line staff and effective partnership working that makes the most difference to families with young children.
- 4.7 The Children's Select Committee set up a Children's Centre Task Group, chaired by Councillor Mary Douglas, and the findings of the Task Group were also considered in developing the proposals for consultation.

The public consultation document proposed that from July 2016, children's centre staff would be based in 15 key buildings in four geographical clusters – North, East, South and West Wiltshire - to achieve greater financial and service delivery efficiencies. The proposals on where dedicated children's centre buildings should be located in the future were based on a combination of the following factors:

- The level of deprivation in each area
- The number of children aged under five living in the area
- The suitability of current buildings to deliver children's centre services
- The potential to expand childcare provision

- 4.8 The proposals suggested that a number of buildings currently used to deliver children's centre services would change their use so that additional childcare provision or other support for young children could be provided in local communities. It was proposed that the two children's centre buildings in Marlborough and Wilton would no longer be used to provide services for young children and would be closed.

### **Consultation process**

- 4.9 Public consultation on proposed changes to delivery of children's centre services commenced on 17<sup>th</sup> September and ended on November 6<sup>th</sup> 2015. The public consultation document and list of consultation events can be found at Appendix 2. During the consultation period, officers attended 44 events to present the proposals and seek feedback including at Area Board meetings (where invited), Children's Centre Advisory Boards, parent consultation meetings in each area and a range of professional meetings including Health Visitors, Midwives, District Specialist Centre

leads and Early Years Professionals. Letters were received from Town Councils in some areas, from schools and a GP practice.

4.10 The main themes of the consultation feedback can be summarised as follows:

- Many parents who find it difficult to access a children's centre building feel that the model of delivering services in a wider range of community buildings is a good idea.
- Whilst there were some positive responses to being able to access services in a broader range of venues in local communities, parents in some areas are concerned that losing a building would mean that there is not a central point for all early years professionals/services to work together.
- Parents would like to retain local drop-in services for advice and want this to be held in a specific place at a regular time.
- There may be hidden costs of working from a range of venues such as storage of equipment, staff travel and hire of venues.
- There is some concern around local alternative venues and the suitability of these for delivery of services to families with children under 5.
- There is a need to take services out to isolated rural communities whilst making sure that families in town centres do not have reduced access.

There was some specific feedback from areas where it is proposed a centre closes:

- Trowbridge - There is a petition signed by 612 parents (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015) requesting that Wiltshire Council consider keeping two of the Children's Centres in Trowbridge open. However, if there is a reduction from three centres to one, as proposed, then Longfield should be the remaining centre rather than Studley Green.
- Chippenham – The community have suggested that the ability of the Rise Trust to fundraise should be taken into account when considering closures. There is a petition with 362 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015) against the proposal to change the use of the King's Rise Children's Centre to provide childcare.
- Malmesbury - Parents consider that the children's centre is the only place locally where parents can meet and get access to a range of services. There is a petition against closure of the children's centre with 160 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015).
- Marlborough – There is a petition signed by 214 parents in Marlborough (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015) against closure of the centre. Parents feel that the current venue is the most suitable for delivery of children's centre services.
- The Wilton, Corsham and Bradford on Avon children's centres are highly valued in their communities and parents consider that access to other children's centres is difficult due to the cost of transport. These communities are concerned that loss of the children's centre building will affect support offered to parents in their area. Parents in Bradford on Avon have submitted a petition with 96 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015).
- Mere and Tisbury – Parents have stated that children's centres in rural areas are vital to enable access to services and that there would be benefit from Mere and Tisbury children's centres working together to ensure services are provided across this large rural area.

4.11 The above issues have been considered alongside the overall feedback from the consultation as set out in Appendix 3. Response and mitigation to the issues raised include:

- Local venues have been identified to host regular drop in sessions and activities for a minimum of 1 full day per week in each area where there would no longer be a dedicated children's centre building. In addition to this, local libraries will be used as a point of access and information for families.
- Where a children's centre building changes its use to deliver extended childcare provision, in some cases there will be an opportunity to deliver some elements of children's centre services from these venues and an obligation for childcare providers to work closely with children's centre services to ensure local access.
- The new service specification and contract for children's centre providers will set out the requirements to ensure close partnership working in a range of community venues accessible to whole communities. Alongside this there will be an expectation that information about services and access to support is made available via a range of media including through websites. There will be a clear point of access for help and advice in each children's centre cluster.
- The service specification will set out the expectation that all alternative venues for delivery of children's centre services must be child and family friendly and accessible.

4.12 Local areas have responded to the consultation with suggestions for additional alternative venues for delivery of children's centre services. These suggestions will be incorporated into the Invitation to Tender documentation for organisations that wish to be considered to run children's centre services from July 2016. Organisations will be asked to respond to these suggestions within their bids to run services.

4.13 In responding to the feedback from the consultation process, revised proposals have been put forward for Cabinet to consider. The reasons for the revised proposals include:

- The recent publication of the updated Indices of Multiple Deprivation data (October 2015) show that there have been some changes in levels of deprivation in some parts of the county.
- Some local communities have put forward helpful ideas about ways in which they can financially support the continued delivery of children's centre services in their area.
- A high number of people provided feedback on the importance of any alternative venues being available on a regular rather than an ad hoc basis.
- The need to ensure that all suitable dedicated children centre buildings can continue to be used to provide support for young children and families (either childcare or activities linked to primary education).
- The potential for some dedicated children's centres to offer both childcare and some space for continued delivery of children's centre services in the future.

4.14 There are 3 options for Cabinet to consider:

**Option One: Retain all children's centres**

Keep all children's centres open and make no change to current provision.

This is not a realistic option as there is a need to reduce the budget and ensure services are more efficiently delivered, provide increased childcare places, work more closely with

Midwives and Health Visitors to improve outcomes for young children, and to ensure more vulnerable families are targeted and offered support.

**Option Two: Implement the proposals as set out in the public consultation document.** The proposals are set out in full in Appendix 2.

**Option Three: Implement revised proposals based on specific feedback to the consultation document**

In response to the public consultation the table below sets out revised proposals. Under this option, the Council would retain 17 designated children’s centre buildings with the potential for an additional 2 buildings to be used for delivery of children’s centre services if providers and the local community are willing to support the funding of this (Wilton and Chippenham).

The Council expects to make savings of £500K on the contract values as a result of the proposals set out in Option 3. As part of the Council’s procurement process starting in January 2016, the Council will be clear with any organisations interested in running these services in the future that their own central overheads will need to be kept to a minimum, providers will need to continue to look at making efficiencies in the way they deliver services and also contribute to the delivery of services through use of volunteers and income generation.

<b>Cluster area</b>	<b>Children’s Centre</b>	<b>Consultation proposals</b>	<b>Recommendation following consultation</b>
<b>North</b>	Cricklade	Remain as a children’s centre building	Remain as a children’s centre building
	Royal Wootton Bassett	Remain as a children’s centre building	Remain as a children’s centre building
	Chippenham The Rise	Remain as a children’s centre building	Remain as a children’s centre building
	Chippenham Spring Rise	Remain as a children’s centre building	Remain as a children’s centre building
	Calne	Remain as a children’s centre building	Remain as a children’s centre building
	Malmesbury	No longer designated as a children’s centre building. Discussion to take place with Malmesbury Primary School about future use of the building, including potential for expansion of childcare.	No longer designated as a children’s centre building. The Riverside campus could be available on a regular 1-2 days per week for children’s centre service delivery, storage can be made available and there is potential for staff to be based at the campus or to use hot-desking facilities.  There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children’s centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Malmesbury.

Cluster area	Children's Centre	Consultation proposals	Recommendation following consultation
			Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.
	Chippenham King's Rise	No longer designated as a children's centre building and to be used for expansion of childcare provision.	The option for ongoing use of the King's Rise children's centre building will be included in the tender documentation for organisations interested in running services in the north cluster to consider.
	Corsham	No longer designated as a children's centre building and to be used for the expansion of childcare provision.	<p>The Springfield campus will be available on a regular 1-2 days per week for children's centre service delivery, storage can be made available and there is potential for staff to be based at the campus or to use hot-desking facilities.</p> <p>There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children's centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Corsham. Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.</p>
<b>West</b>	Trowbridge Studley Green	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Westbury White Horse	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Melksham Canberra	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Trowbridge Bellefield	No longer designated as a children's centre building and building returned to school for their use.	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Some sessional children's centre services could be delivered from here with agreement of the school.

Cluster area	Children's Centre	Consultation proposals	Recommendation following consultation
	Bradford on Avon	No longer designated as a children's centre building and to be used for expansion of childcare provision.	<p>No longer designated as a children's centre building. There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children's centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Bradford on Avon. Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.</p> <p>Currently there is both nursery and children's centre provision in one building based on Fitzmaurice primary school site. The nursery provider could expand the number of childcare places and is keen to maintain good links with children's centre services including offering the on-going use of the sensory room for delivery of services at specific, regular times, by children's centre staff. Alongside this the Youth Centre and the Library are available on a regular 1-2 days per week as an alternative site for regular delivery of children's centre services</p>
	Trowbridge Longfield	No longer designated as a children's centre building and offered to Oasis Academy to use to expand childcare provision.	Children's centre building to be retained, and registered as a single children's centre with Studley Green with delivery of children's centre services from both buildings.
	Warminster Happy Feet	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Princecroft Primary School to potentially use the building for provision of childcare	<p>No longer designated as a children's centre building.</p> <p>There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children's centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Warminster. Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.</p>

<b>Cluster area</b>	<b>Children's Centre</b>	<b>Consultation proposals</b>	<b>Recommendation following consultation</b>
			The school is willing to offer space for children's centre staff if required and some continued use of space for delivery of children's centre services including access to the sensory room.
	Melksham Kings Park	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Discussion with River Mead Academy about the future use of the building including potential expansion of childcare provision.	No longer designated as a children's centre building.  Building to be used by River Mead Academy for delivery of family support and school services including joint working with children's centre services to deliver support.
<b>South</b>	Salisbury City	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Salisbury Little Folly	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Bulford	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Tisbury	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Salisbury Elim	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Staff already based in Salisbury City Children's Centre with delivery from community buildings.	No longer designated as children's centre building. Services delivered within community settings.
	Downton Clearbury	No longer designated as a children's centre building and to be used for expansion of childcare provision.	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Possible use of the sensory room for delivery of services at specific, regular times, by children's centre staff.  There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children's centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Downton. Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.
	Amesbury Five Wishes	No longer designated as a children's centre building and used for the expansion of childcare provision.	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Possible use of the sensory room for delivery of services

Cluster area	Children's Centre	Consultation proposals	Recommendation following consultation
			<p>at specific, regular times by children's centre staff.</p> <p>There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children's centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Amesbury. Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.</p>
	Mere	No longer designated as a children's centre building and to be offered to the community/school for alternative use.	To be retained as a children's centre building jointly registered with Tisbury with 2 days service delivery from the Tisbury campus and 3 days in Mere Children's Centre.
	Wilton	No longer designated as a children's centre building.	The Wilton Middle School Education Trust have proposed they fund the rental on the current building for one year following the end of the current lease period up to a maximum of £10,000 then offer a re-furbished building at a low rental cost from 2017 for children's centre use. The tender documentation would encourage bidding organisations to consider this option within the available level of funding for the South cluster.
<b>East</b>	Tidworth Windmill Hill	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Pewsey	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Devizes South	Remain as a children's centre building	Remain as a children's centre building
	Devizes North	No longer designated as a children's centre building. Staff already based in Devizes South Children's Centre with delivery from community buildings.	No longer designated as a children's centre building
	Marlborough	No longer designated as a children's centre building and	No longer designated as a children's centre building.

Cluster area	Children's Centre	Consultation proposals	Recommendation following consultation
		offered to the community for alternative use.	<p>Potential for continued use of some space in this building for sessional delivery of children's centre services.</p> <p>There will be a <u>minimum</u> of 1 day per week of children's centre sessions/drop-in delivered in Marlborough. Organisations interested in running services from July 2016 may choose to provide more sessions on the basis of need in this area.</p>

4.14 If too many Department for Education (DfE) funded buildings are closed, the DfE may request "clawback" of the capital funding. However proposals for re-use of buildings are reasonable and clawback is believed to be unlikely.

4.15 All of the options set out will ensure that the Council is continuing to comply with its statutory duties under the Childcare Act 2006.

## 5. Safeguarding Considerations

5.1 Wiltshire Council is committed to providing our children and families with the right care and support and having involvement with families from the very beginning is extremely important. Our focus will be delivering services across the county but with dedicated children's centre buildings in more deprived areas or where there are more young children.

5.2 By strengthening our partnership working with a range of professionals including health visitors, midwives, social workers, early year's settings and primary schools, we will be able to ensure that all families with young children are offered support and that any safeguarding concerns continue to be addressed.

## 6. Public Health Implications

6.1 Children's centre services will continue to work in close partnership with health professionals such as midwives, health visitors and GPs to meet public health targets.

6.2 The importance of a healthy pregnancy and the first years of life in laying the foundations for a child's future health and wellbeing remains a priority for Wiltshire Council and key public health outcomes will continue to be integral to the children's centre specification.

6.3 The Healthy Child Programme for 0-5 year olds, led by the health visiting service, will continue to be provided in its entirety to all children and families in Wiltshire. This universal public health programme offers all families a programme of screening tests,

immunisations, developmental reviews, information and guidance on parenting and healthy choices to enable every child to have the best start in life. Its universal nature also ensures those families in need of additional support and children at risk of poor outcomes are identified early and given the appropriate support.

- 6.4 Public Health and Protection, working with maternity and health visiting services, will ensure there remains equitable and easy access to the Healthy Child Programme across Wiltshire, paying attention to the needs of those requiring greater support and who may not easily engage with services
- 6.5 An emphasis on child development and improving family health will continue through delivery of children's centre services with key areas such as breast feeding support remaining a priority.

## **7. Corporate Procurement Implications**

- 7.1 The contracts for delivery of children's centre services come to an end in June 2016. A procurement process will commence in January 2016 with a view to awarding new contracts in April 2016. The new contracts will start from July 2016 following a three month mobilisation period.

## **8. Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

- 8.1 The Steering Group working on the reshaping of the children's centres has given consideration to the impact of the proposals throughout the process (Appendix 1). The Equality Impact Analysis will be monitored throughout the life of the contract.

There was a comprehensive consultation process that took place between September 17<sup>th</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup> 2015. This included:

- On line and paper publication of a public consultation document setting out the proposals for change
- An online survey - advertised widely via all children's centres, community professionals, Wiltshire Parent Carer Council. Paper copies of this survey were also made available through children's centres.
- Presentations and question and answer sessions with parents in each of the areas in Wiltshire with a children's centre building.
- Presentations to Area Boards, where invited.
- Presentation and question and answer sessions with groups of key professionals.

Specific contact was made with parents of children with disabilities and hard to reach communities via children's centre staff who encouraged members of these communities to attend consultation events and/or complete the survey.

- 8.2 Following this comprehensive consultation with the public and service users, it has been deemed that there will be no adverse equality impact considerations.
  - The future delivery of children's centre services will be measured against the Early Years Outcomes Framework that is currently being developed to ensure that there is a clear focus on improving outcomes for young children.
  - The requirement for each centre to have in place an Advisory Board which includes parents will remain to ensure stakeholders are regularly consulted.
  - The Children's Commissioning Team will undertake:

- Quarterly contract monitoring with each children's centre cluster provider.
- Scrutiny of Advisory Board minutes.
- Check and challenge self-evaluation forms completed by registered centres.
- Analyse data about take up of services by different groups of parents.
- An annual customer satisfaction survey.

## 9. Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

- 9.1 The reduction in the number of children's centres will reduce the energy usage and carbon footprint of the service. There will be positive benefits to environmental protection and impact on climate change from improved ways of working such as shared office base, improved use of IT, mobile working and less reliance on paper records.
- 9.2 Although staff may potentially be increasing their travel to work in a wider range of community locations this will be mitigated by families reducing their travel as services are more likely to be delivered nearer to where they live.
- 9.3 The service specification will include the requirement to ensure that public transport routes are considered when any new services are planned in community settings and the service providers will be required to reduce their energy and fuel use.

## 10. Risk Assessment

- 10.1 A risk log has been completed throughout the project with mitigating actions undertaken. The most significant risks relate to ensuring the continued delivery of accessible services to the most vulnerable families within fiscal constraints and the potential for demotivating and destabilising the current workforce during a time of change
- 10.2 The most significant risks that may arise if the recommended decisions on future delivery of children's centre services are not taken are:
1. Risk that services are not able to be focused towards the most vulnerable families in locations that are most accessible to them
  2. Risk of continued low level of use of some dedicated children's centre buildings
  3. Risk of continued inefficiencies of service delivery
- 10.3 Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Action to mitigate the risk</b>
1. Reduced awareness of families of how and where to access services	Clear expectation within service specification
2. Risk of partners dis-engaging in joint service delivery	Continued proactive communication and dialogue with colleagues

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 3. | Potential providers may not bid for services as the budget is reduced  | Good engagement with potential providers and clear financial information included within tender documentation  |
| 5  | Risk of buildings being left empty and unused. The consent of the DfE will be required for a disposal or change of use of a building which was funded with sure start capital funding. | Continued discussion with schools and childcare providers to ensure that buildings are used for delivery of services for young children. The constitutional process for the disposal of buildings needs to be considered before any marketing is undertaken. |

## 11 Financial Implications

11.1 The current contract value for children's centre services is £3.985m. The Council incurs additional costs through running the buildings, including maintenance, and through provision of some Information Technology support.

Current Contract & Support Arrangements	Contract Value	Database Costs Incurred by the Council	Property Costs Incurred by the Council	ICT Costs Incurred by the Council	TOTAL COST TO THE COUNCIL
<b>Current Delivery Model</b>	£3.985	£0.060	£0.114	£0.093	£4.252

11.2 The proposed full year saving on the value of the contracts is £0.5m. Savings will be achieved through running fewer dedicated children's centre buildings alongside economies of scale and efficiencies from delivery within four geographical clusters and centrally held coordination.

11.3 Within the new contracts, providers will need to pay some rent for the use of the buildings but it is expected that this cost will be offset by income generation, the increased use of volunteers and lower organisational overheads charged by providers.

11.4 The current contracts expire on 30th June 2016; therefore year 1 will be a part year saving on the contract value - 9/12ths of £0.500m which is £0.375m. There will also be Council savings in asset management and ICT where costs at centres are no longer carried centrally. Remaining children's centres premises will be leased to providers at a subsidised level. The Council will continue to cover the cost of the external maintenance of the buildings where the Council assesses work is necessary.

11.5 A fair and transparent formula will be used to allocate funding to each geographical cluster of centres based on 0-4 year old population, deprivation and sparsity in each cluster area. The amount of funding available for each cluster of children's centres will be made available within the tender documentation to be issued in January 2016.

## 12. Legal Implications

12.1 The proposal is subject to various legislative provisions, namely the Childcare Act 2006 (which sets out the legislative framework for children's centres) and the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty).

Section 1 of the Childcare Act places a duty on local authorities to improve the well-being of young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them.

Section 3 places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner in order to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their parents.

Section 5 places a duty on local authorities to secure that such consultation as they think appropriate is carried out before any significant change is made in the services provided through a relevant children's centre.

12.2 The Council must also have regard to the Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance issued April 2013 when exercising functions under the Childcare Act 2006.

12.3 The Best Value duty under the Local Government Act 1999 also places a responsibility on the Council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement which includes a wide duty to consult when changes to services are proposed.

12.4 Wiltshire Council has met its responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1999 and Section 5 of the Childcare Act 2006 by means of a wide ranging and extensive public engagement and consultation process identified within this report.

## 13. Conclusions

13.1 The delivery of children's centre services from within four cluster areas from a reduced number of designated children centre buildings offers an opportunity to deliver a flexible, innovative service to meet the needs and improve outcomes for the most vulnerable families with young children in Wiltshire.

13.2 The procurement of service provision for the delivery of the children's centre contract is due to commence in January 2016 with award of contracts expected in early April.

13.3 Prior to procurement, Cabinet is asked to consider the options set out in this paper and confirm the preferred option for future delivery of children's centre services and delegate authority to Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and to senior officers to develop and implement the proposals including completion of the tender process.

**Julia Cramp - Associate Director (joint with CCG) for Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness, Children's Services (01225 718221)**

Report Author:  
Debbie Hirons - Project Manager (01225 713255)

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Equality Analysis Document

Appendix 2 - Link to Children's centre consultation document: Shaping the future of children's centres in Wiltshire – Focusing support towards vulnerable families and list of consultation events

Appendix 3 –Summary of feedback from consultation events and survey free text

Appendix 4 – Alternative venues for children's centre service delivery

Appendix 5 – Service re-design consultation survey results

Equality Analysis Evidence Document					
<b>Title: What are you completing an Equality Analysis on?</b>					
Shaping the future of children’s centres in Wiltshire					
<b>Why are you completing the Equality Analysis?</b> (please tick any that apply)					
Proposed New Policy or Service	Change to Policy or Service ✓	MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy)		Service Review	
<b>Version Control</b>					
Version control number	3	Date	1.12.15	Reason for review (if appropriate)	The contracts for children’s centres finish in June 2016. The council is looking at how to ensure the money spent on this service will have the greatest impact on young children’s development before re-tendering the contracts.
<b>Risk Rating Score</b> (use <a href="#">Equalities Risk Matrix</a> and guidance) **If the Risk Score is 1 or 2, an Impact Assessment does <b>NOT</b> have to be completed. Please check with <a href="mailto:equalities@wiltshire.gov.uk">equalities@wiltshire.gov.uk</a> for advice					Inherent risk score on proposal 6
					Residual risk score after mitigating actions have been identified 6
<b>Section 1 – Description</b> of what is being analysed					
The national program to develop children’s centres started in 2004 with a focus on pre-school children and their families. Services provided play a key role in supporting good early child development and school readiness, helping parents in the crucial early years of a child’s life, and improving child and family health. In line with central government requirements, Wiltshire created 30 designated children’s centres between 2006 and 2011 with the initial centres located within areas with the highest levels of deprivation and additional centres set up in areas with a higher population of children aged under five. There are currently 30 registered children’s centres in Wiltshire delivering services from 28 children’s centre buildings (in both Devizes and Salisbury, two registered centres operate from the same building).					
<b>Section 2A</b> – People or communities that are currently <b>targeted or could be affected</b> by any change (please take note of the Protected Characteristics listed in the action table).					

Where children's centre buildings are de-registered, services will be delivered by staff in the community through outreach support – making the service more accessible to some vulnerable groups than it is at present. Areas with the greatest levels of need and more young children will continue to have access to a designated children's centre building in or close to their local community. All children's centres will work together to deliver services and some children's centres may deliver more support than they do now. Open access services for all families with young children will continue through more use of community buildings and increased partnership working with Midwives and Health Visitors. Increasing provision of childcare in some buildings proposed for deregistration will provide greater availability of childcare places in communities where more provision is needed.

As part of performance management the children's centres have a range of targets. There is specific emphasis on the inclusion of priority and excluded groups. They will continue to report on the quantitative and qualitative data of engaging with the following groups of people:-

- \* Teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers
- \* Lone parents
- \* Families on low income
- \* Children in black and minority ethnic groups
- \* Disabled children and children of disabled parents
- \* Other groups that are vulnerable in the children's centre area e.g. Armed Forces, traveller families

- **Age** - the service is designed and funded for children under five and their families
- **Disability** - the buildings are all Equality Act 2010 compliant and they have been designed to meet the latest legislation.
- **Gender** - the centres will continue to welcome everybody. In the guidance there is a commitment to reaching fathers who traditionally have had less contact with their children's service provider.
- **Race** - BME groups are included in the Governments performance indicators and centres will be regularly monitored on their success in including these identified groups
- **Religion/belief** - No identified issues
- **Sexual orientation** - No identified issues

**Section 2B** – People who are **delivering** the policy or service that are targeted or could be affected (i.e. staff, commissioned organizations, contractors)

Wiltshire children's centre services are currently delivered by four voluntary sector providers. This intention is to tender the service out again to enable voluntary sector organizations to continue to provide this service. The proposed future delivery model is based on the view of children's centre staff, early years professionals and parents that it is front line staff and effective partnership working that makes the most difference to families. The proposal is for staff currently working from buildings that may be deregistered to continue to deliver services via outreach and using community buildings – ensuring that available funding is used to retain children's centre staff to continue front line delivery of services and support.

**Section 3** –The underpinning **evidence and data** used for the analysis (Attach documents where appropriate)

*Prompts:*

- *What data do you collect about your customers/staff?*
- *What local, regional and national research is there that you could use?*
- *How do your Governance documents (Terms of Reference, operating procedures) reflect the need to consider the Public Sector Equality Duty?*
- *What are the issues that you or your partners or stakeholders already know about?*
- *What engagement, involvement and consultation work have you done? How was this carried out, with whom? Whose voices are missing? What does this tell you about potential take-up and satisfaction with existing services?*
- *Are there any gaps in your knowledge? If so, do you need to identify how you will collect data to fill the gap (feed this into the action table if necessary)*

- Each centre has an Advisory Board. This is made up of the centre’s management, staff, health and social care representation and other agencies such as health visitors, early years advisory teachers, the library service, childminding network coordinators and Jobcentre Plus. The function of these groups is to challenge that local need is being met and to ensure equality of access to services. Parental satisfaction is one of the performance indicators.
- Consultation events have taken place with providers, parents using the centres and other professionals, a workshop was held with partners of the Children’s Trust Executive and further consultation has taken place over a period of 7 weeks. Where buildings are proposed for deregistration Advisory Boards have been consulted as well as Area Boards.
- It has been identified that in areas where a building may no longer be used for the delivery of children’s centre services there will be a need to relocate the health visitor clinic to another premises if one is currently set up to run from the building. Commissioning officers are currently working with colleagues within children’s community health services to source alternative venues in the community.

Children’s centres collect a range of data about clients that is used to measure performance and inform future planning of service delivery. The guidance and performance indicators are based on national research. Each centre must complete a self-evaluation that includes all aspects of the take up of services and identified barriers.

An example of the data collected is:

<b>Performance indicator</b>
% children with a total of at least 78 points in the Foundation Stage Profile. With at least 6 points in each of the personal, social and emotional development and communication language and literacy scales
% teenage mothers 16-19 in education, employment or training
% access to the most excluded groups: * Teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers * Lone parents * Children in workless households * Children in black and minority ethnic groups * Disabled children and children of disabled parents * Other groups that are vulnerable in the children’s centre area
% children in Reception who are overweight or obese (BMI falls above the 85 <sup>th</sup> to 95 <sup>th</sup> centiles respectively of the reference curve for their age and gender)
% mothers initiating breastfeeding
% parents in the children’s centre area satisfied with services
% children 0-4 years living in households dependent on workless benefits

**\*Section 4 – Conclusions** drawn about the impact of the proposed change or new service/policy

Prompts:

- *What actions do you plan to take as a result of this equality analysis? Please state them and also feed these into the action table*
- *Be clear and specific about the impacts for each Protected Characteristic group (where relevant)*
- *Can you also identify positive actions which promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between groups of people as well as adverse impacts?*
- *What are the implications for Procurement/Commissioning arrangements that may be happening as a result of your work?*
- *Do you plan to include equalities aspects into any service agreements and if so, how do you plan to manage these through the life of the service?*
- *If you have found that the policy or service change might have an adverse impact on a particular group of people and are **not** taking action to mitigate against this, you will need to fully justify your decision and evidence it in this section*

The steering group working on the reshaping of children's centres services has given consideration to equalities throughout the process. The Equality Analysis will be reviewed throughout the life of the contract.

There was a comprehensive consultation process that took place between September 17<sup>th</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup> 2015. This included:

- On line publication of a consultation document setting out the proposals for change
- Online survey - advertised widely via all children's centres, community professionals, Wiltshire Parent Carer Council. Paper copies of this survey were also made available through children's centres.
- Presentations and Q & A sessions with parents in each of the areas in Wiltshire with a children's centre building.
- Presentations to local community Area Boards where invited.
- Presentation and Q&A sessions with key professionals groups.

Specific contact was made with parents of children with disabilities and hard to reach communities via children's centre staff who encouraged members of these communities to attend consultation events and/or complete the survey.

Following this comprehensive consultation with the public and service users, it has been deemed that there will be no adverse equality impact considerations. TUPE (transfer of employment) will apply to all staff currently working in the service.

The service specification sets out clearly how the preferred provider(s) are required to work to promote equality and reduce health, social and educational inequalities. The new service model will ensure that areas with the greatest levels of need and more young children will continue to have access to a designated children's centre building in or very close to their local community. The service provider(s) will be required to report on performance and engagement with vulnerable groups at quarterly monitoring meetings throughout the life of the contract.

A number of buildings currently used to deliver children's centre services would change their use so that additional childcare provision or other support for young children can be provided in local communities. This will provide more free early education places for three and four year olds and will have a positive impact on vulnerable children under 5.

**\*Section 5 – How will the outcomes from this equality analysis be monitored, reviewed and communicated?**

Prompts:

- *Do you need to design performance measures that identify the impact (outcomes) of your policy/strategy/change of service on different protected characteristic groups?*
- *What stakeholder groups and arrangements for monitoring do you have in place? Is equality a standing agenda item at meetings?*
- *Who will be the lead officer responsible for ensuring actions that have been identified are monitored and reviewed?*
- *How will you publish and communicate the outcomes from this equality analysis?*
- *How will you integrate the outcomes from this equality analysis in any relevant Strategies/Polices?*

- The service will be measured against the Early Years Outcomes Framework that is currently being developed.
- The requirement for each centre to have in place a multi-agency Advisory Board which will include parents will remain to ensure stakeholders are regularly consulted.
- The Lead Commissioner will undertake:
  - Quarterly contract monitoring with each centre
  - Scrutiny of Advisory Board minutes
  - Centres will continue to produce a Self evaluation form
- Data about take up of services will continue to be collected and used as a performance management tool.
- An annual customer satisfaction survey.

Completed by:		D Hirons
Date		1.12.15
Signed off by:		J Cramp
Date		1.12.15
To be reviewed by:		Children's centre re-design steering group
Review date:		18.12.15
For Corporate Equality Use only	Compliance sign off date:	

Equality Impact Issues and Action Table					
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions (only use those characteristics that are relevant)	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
<b>Age</b>					
<b>Disability</b>					
	Alternative community buildings being located with parking considered and are EA compliant.				
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>					
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>					
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>					
Support for young mothers and teenage pregnancy	Front line services will be protected in areas where there is no building by community delivery.  Increased partnership working with Midwives and health Visitors.	Lead Commissioners	Quarterly monitoring.  Strategic Meetings with Health Leads	Performance management against data collected.  Information sharing and data collection	All young parents will receive the level of support they need from increased health visitor input and outreach support from the children's centre.
Location of health Visitor clinics where current building will no longer be available	Alternative community buildings being located	Lead Commissioner and Lead Health Visitor	June 2016	Strategic meetings with health	Families will continue to access a health Visitor clinic in their community area.
<b>Race</b> (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)					

Ensure that all vulnerable families continue to receive support from a children's centre	Front line services will be protected in areas where there is no building by community delivery.  Better information sharing between agencies and analysis of data to ensure all families with a child under 5 are able to access support	Lead Commissioners and Troubled Families co-ordinator	Quarterly monitoring.	Performance management against data collected. Analysis of referrals for children under 5 to gateway panel of Children's Social Care.	Improvement in levels of development for children in families in this category.
<b>Religion and Belief</b>					
<b>Sex</b>					
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>					
<b>Other</b> (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc)					
Military families remain a high priority. The rebasing of these families over the coming year will impact on the service required to support the increased number of children under 5.	It is proposed to keep both the centres servicing army families in Wiltshire – Tidworth and Bulford.	Lead Commissioners Troubled Families Employment Advisers Family Learning	Quarterly monitoring Strategic Meetings between providers of Family learning and return to work programmes.	Army Welfare represented on the Advisory Boards of these centres to ensure families' needs are met.	Children will be kept safe and will enjoy improved health and educational attainment. Parents out of work will receive skills/support to gain employment.

## Appendix 2 – Link to Children’s centre consultation document: Shaping the future of children’s centres in Wiltshire – Focusing support towards vulnerable families and list of consultation events

Link to public consultation document:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/childrens-centre-consultation.pdf>

Date	Event	Numbers of people
17.9.15	Trowbridge Area Board	Approx. 15
21.9.15	Calne Parents group	6
21.9.15	Salisbury children’s centre staff	10
21.9.15	Tidworth Area Board	Approx. 40
22.9.15	Strategic Leads Meeting	18
22.9.15	Trowbridge Advisory Board	25
22.9.15	Marlborough Advisory Board	9
23.9.15	Chippenham Advisory Board	Approx. 40
24.9.15	Health Visitor Team Leaders	8
25.9.15	White Horse Advisory Board	4
28.9.15	Warminster Advisory Board	7
29.9.15	Westbury parents	5
1.10	Amesbury Area Board	Approx. 30
5.10	Malmesbury parents	20 Including 1 councillor and 2 town councillors
6.10	Tisbury parents	4
6.10	Calne Area Board	25
7.10	Pewsey parents and Advisory Board	1 Parent and 2 professionals
8.10 .15	District Specialist centre/Portage managers	5
8.10	Mere parents	2 councillors 6 parents
9.10	Mere, Wilton, Tisbury Advisory Board	6
12.10	Wilton parents	10 parents 2 clergy and 1 councillor
12.10	Malmesbury Advisory board	13
13.10	North Wilts Advisory Board	7
14.10	Marlborough parents	3 parents 6 professionals
14.10	BoA Advisory Board	13

15.10	Tidworth parents	1 parent 3 staff
15.10	Corsham parents	21
20.10	Clearbury parents	8 parents 4 staff
22. 10	Salisbury Group Advisory Board	15
21.10	Warminster parents	10 parents 1 staff
23.10	Bulford parents	11 parents 4 staff 1 professional
23.10	Amesbury parents	8 parents 4 staff
22. 10	Salisbury Group Advisory Board	20
27.10	Wootton Bassett parents	11 parents 2 staff
27.10	Cricklade parents	7 parents 2 staff
29.10	Salisbury parents	6 parents 5 staff
2.11	Melksham Advisory Board	8 professionals including 4 staff
3.11	Trowbridge Parents	8 parents
4.11	BoA parents	5 parents
4.11	The Rise parents	85 adults Parents, grandparents, professionals and staff (mostly parents 60)
6.11	Devizes parents	5 parents
6.11	Melksham parents	0 parents , 2 professionals
9.11	Corsham Area Board	8
12.11	Trowbridge Area Board	Approx. 20 + including 4 parents

### Appendix 3 Summary of feedback from consultation events and survey free text

The consultation took place between September 17<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015

#### Consultation meetings:

We have attended 44 consultation events across the County including attendance at 4 Area Boards, each of the Children’s Centre Advisory Boards and parent consultation events in each area of Wiltshire. 580 people in total have attended the consultation meetings.

#### Survey responses:

There have been a total of 738 responses to the survey on line. A analysis of the survey responses can be found at Appendix 5.

Key themes from consultation meetings and survey		
Area	Consultation comments	Response
<b>General</b>	<p><u>Central place for families of young children to access support</u></p> <p>Whilst there is some positive response to being able to deliver more services in a broader range of venues in local communities, parents are concerned that losing a building would mean that there is not a central point for all services to work together.</p> <p>Some parents feel that it has taken several years to build up the trust of local families, particular those who are vulnerable, to enable them to access the centres. This work would potentially be lost and parents may be confused about how to access services and support.</p> <p>Although parents accept that in some areas there are good alternative venues for some services to be delivered from, there is a concern that this does not replace the drop- in and easy access nature of a permanent, centrally based children’s centre.</p> <p>Others commented that there are plenty of other nurseries and playgroups for less needy parents to use. One parent says she accesses some of our local children's centre activities but does not need the support. Some parents strongly agree that resources should be channelled</p>	<p>In most areas where there are proposed change of use of the children centre building there is the potential for using local libraries on days on which they are closed to the public.</p> <p>Libraries could also be a point of access for information about services being delivered across a cluster area</p> <p>In several areas children’s centre services are already delivered from a range of local venues and also jointly with existing services for the under 5s such as Mother &amp; Toddler groups.</p> <p>There would be the expectation within the service specification that there would be one central phone number for each cluster area.</p> <p>An interactive website along with use of social media to ensure parents are kept up to date with the programme would be a requirement of the new provider.</p> <p>It is the expectation that the new providers would work closely with other early years professionals such as health visitors to deliver a coordinated</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>to vulnerable children and using existing childcare settings might help to reach those with greatest need.</p> <p>The suitability of the buildings should be a higher priority than the number of under 5s as the age demographic of an area is subject to change and if the building is not suitable it may not get used to its full potential.</p> <p>To ensure programme of events held across Wiltshire is given out in Maternity units, HV clinics etc. So everyone is aware of what's happening and where. There is poor communication and it's not advertised enough. Can a Facebook page be set up so we can be kept up to date on events, groups we can go to.</p>	<p>response to families.</p>
	<p><u>Cost savings and efficiencies</u></p> <p>There is concern that the actual savings of the proposals have not been made public</p> <p>Many people feel that clustering of services is a good idea and will be more efficient and several responses in the survey say they agree with the proposals given the financial pressure the council is under.</p> <p>There may be hidden costs of working from a range of venues such as; Storage of equipment; staff travel; hire of venues. It is unclear to many parents whether this has been calculated into the costs</p> <p>Staff are concerned about where they will be based and about the increase in lone working</p> <p>Parents feel that these are short sighted plans that will not save money in the long term.</p> <p>Parents don't wish to see empty buildings in the future</p> <p>IT is a real issue – staff need to be able to work flexibly and so will need</p>	<p>The proposed savings are linked to the council's overall savings plan.</p> <p>Detailed savings for each individual children's centre going forward are not available as the savings have been calculated for the services as a whole applying the proposed new service delivery model which is different from the existing model.</p> <p>Whilst there will be some costs of hiring local venues these can be reduced by commitment to long term rental agreements and working with local community organisations to negotiate access to these. Some local venues, such as church buildings, have low rent as they meet a jointly agreed aim in that community. Some council buildings could be available for delivery of services including for example accommodation in libraries, campus buildings and potentially County Hall.</p> <p>Updated IT would be a requirement within the specification to facilitate mobile working to reduce travel.</p> <p>The new provider would be expected to efficiently plan working patterns</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>good IT systems. Staff require a place to work securely, due to the sensitive nature</p> <p>Many comments that the proposals seem reasonable. It would be nice to see more support for children living in villages, perhaps by supporting the existing toddler groups. Providing some of the existing services/groups in different locations would be a good move, it would make them more accessible for more families and save on the running costs of a specialised centre and so many staff.</p> <p>Some views around politically motivated cost-cutting meaning that future generations of Wiltshire children are to be deprived of the good quality care they need – a feeling that the population should be asked if they would deprive these children for the sake of a few pence on their rates.</p> <p>A lot of parents and professionals responding to the survey feel that these proposals are short sighted plans that will not save money in the long term. Some are concerned about how reducing this service will impact referring services i.e. social services safeguarding.</p> <p>Some comments that the planned selection criteria for proposed change of use is very short sighted, and potentially closing centres of high % population growth, therefore increased demand - this is a typical short sighted view of future demands.</p> <p>Quite a lot of parents in the survey are saying they would be prepared to make a donation for the services they receive.</p> <p>Some views that it is absolutely the right thing to do - the centres are highly resourced and these resources can be used in community spaces, pre-schools and settings where they will have more use. Staff in larger clusters will work better and more efficiently if they are based in one place, office space should not be a priority with the main focus being on</p>	<p>and delivery of services</p> <p>Services will focus on meeting outcomes to improve the lives of children under 5</p> <p>Current equipment would be rationalised and storage found within local community venues or remaining children’s centres where applicable.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>staff using community spaces.</p> <p>It should be made compulsory that pre-schools and settings register every child with the children's centres.</p> <p>Many agree with the proposal, as long as families can still access children's centre services in their local area - this includes universal services &amp; family support. Finding alternative buildings that aren't being used is the best option.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Reshaping of services</u></b></p> <p>One suggestion is to take the centres away from charities and become run by Wiltshire Council - far too much of the budgets are spent on wages for Chief Executives of charities. Not enough money spent at ground level on the families.</p> <p>Children's services could be located in existing buildings e.g. Town campus which are centrally located or village halls. Easily accessible for everyone. The Council needs to consider raising council tax instead of just slashing services everywhere and offloading the problems onto volunteers and the most vulnerable citizens.</p> <p>Early Help is the Key and there are no other universal services that provide the space/centre for families to be able to access and drop in with an issue. Health are moving services into the centres daily, children centre buildings are the best place for these. Access to these services is essential for families and needs to be maintained.</p> <p>Reduce the number of staff and organised groups and just have the centres open as a meeting place for mums.</p> <p>Suggestion that the workers should be placed in a multi-disciplinary team</p>	<p>Providers will be able to charge for some services as they feel relevant.</p> <p>Providers are also able to rent out rooms in the children's centre buildings when they are not used for children centre activities such as weekends and evenings.</p> <p>The new providers will be expected to work closely with partners to deliver services together in accessible places</p> <p>Providers will be expected to develop a delivery model that is efficient and makes the best use of all potential resources including the use of volunteers and charitable income.</p> <p>Co-location of services is encouraged and new providers will be expected to consider this where practical</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>that already exists.</p> <p>Better use of buildings - incorporating more activities for a variety of ages. Cooking classes for parents in the evening. Yoga classes for mothers. Also a youth club for key stage 2 children?</p> <p>There should be more advertising for use of the children's centre.</p> <p>In more affluent areas perhaps charge a small fee for clubs and groups to help cover costs. Rent out rooms to cover costs of certain groups e.g. singing groups, baby reflexology or baby massage. Work on a business model to bring in extra funds to keep the centre open.</p> <p>Allowing CC contracts to support children and families up to 18 to reduce burden of CiN in CSC. This model is effective in Somerset</p> <p>Putting children's centre staff into preschools/nurseries where the children already attend will lead to greater engagement as parents are already there and have to make less effort.</p> <p>Children's Centres to become early help hubs and renamed accordingly.</p> <p>Wilts council need to consider if the money saved from closing CC could be better used in placing outreach workers/Nursery Nurses with in the Health Visiting service to provide one to one support for the more vulnerable families.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council should consider whether these buildings and services could be used in conjunction with other groups and services. They should not close any centres entirely. Even cutting back the services a bit would surely be preferable to closing the centre completely.</p> <p>It is good that services are being prioritised over buildings. Services are very well used and appreciated by families. Trained qualified paid staff should be continued to be employed for all groups and activities to</p>	

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>maintain continuity. Volunteers can continue to support groups. Groups should continue to meet close to where families live.</p> <p>Several survey responses suggested a play bus type service. A timetabled mobile service would provide consistency for families as well as give them the opportunity to 'drop in' for queries.</p> <p>Co-locate and jointly provide children centre services on school or pre-school campuses. In time this is more efficient in terms of assets for the providers and likely to provide an improved, more coherent, better and enhanced service to the service user. Professionals co-locating can lead to very creative ways of working, better confidence in deploying initiatives, activities and schemes and facilitates the sharing of resources, ideas - thus delivering a better quality and more attractive service to children and families</p>	
	<p><b><u>Quality/level of service</u></b></p> <p>Concerns about how it will be possible to provide the same standard and level of work with fewer centres.</p> <p>People are concerned about the local Health Visitors being a main focal point of contact for "targeted services". They are saying it is unrealistic that what they perceive as an already under-funded and creaking service is to be expected to take on even more responsibilities; including signposting families to the Children's Centre (reduced) services.</p> <p>Several concerns expressed that cutting the number of centres by half may put new mothers at risk of developing Post Natal Depression and may deprive children of interacting and socialising</p> <p>The key is to support vulnerable families. There are many groups available (run in/ by Churches, by the library etc.) for a very small charge if any</p>	<p>The service will be subject to Ofsted inspection to ensure standards are meeting requirements.</p> <p>The provider will be expected to report on agreed service outcomes on a regular basis and their contract monitored.</p> <p>Providers will be able to make some small charges for some services as required and agreed with commissioners.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>charge is made at all.</p> <p>If a new model goes ahead, how much analysis has been done to ensure that a similar standard can be achieved from a potentially remote location? How will the new model be subject to regular assessment with the possibility of a return to a more established building in the future if the new model is found to be less successful?</p>	
	<p><b><u>Transport and accessibility</u></b></p> <p>Many people raised concerns about transport costs and lack of good public transport from rural areas where centres are to be closed. Many locations are difficult to get to by public transport before 9 or after 5, especially with prams etc. Missing well established centres won't see people travel to new locations; they will simply stop going at all. This seems self-defeating.</p> <p>Transport/accessibility both in terms of physical access but also affordability i.e. don't transfer the cost to the family. More use of volunteers is an idea to transport the vulnerable to services they need in this large rural county.</p> <p>Distance required travelling - providing transport to town centres if smaller villages or towns can no longer be funded.</p> <p>Accessibility needed so not all provision is in a deprived area. A 15 minute walk is reasonable for anyone to travel without a car and is a good activity in itself.</p>	<p>There is an expectation that the new provider will deliver services throughout each cluster in order to ensure that families who are vulnerable are able to access support.</p> <p>Families are not expected to travel into remaining centres - services will be delivered in a range of local community settings and places where services are already being delivered, to meet assessed need.</p>
	<p><b><u>Knowing what is happening and where</u></b></p> <p>Need to ensure services are advertised accordingly as different locations could cause confusion.</p> <p>There is a concern that parents might not being aware of services as they</p>	<p>The provider would be expected to ensure that information is widely available and in a variety of formats at a local level. The Council will also act as a central point for information and signposting on a county-wide</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>are less visible and more difficult to access.</p> <p>Social tools such as apps need to be developed to keep in touch with those who need the services</p> <p>More advertising of the children's centres and the services they provide should be made to women while pregnant: New mums don't always get out very much and if services are not known about we don't attend, numbers appear low and it's assumed the services aren't needed.</p>	<p>level – linking with universal health services.</p>
	<p><b><u>Reaching more people in local communities</u></b></p> <p>Whilst there has been some concern around missing vulnerable families if buildings are not available, many parents agree that more people in local communities need to have access to children's centre services.</p> <p>Some areas have already developed the model of using a range of community buildings and the children's centre building as an admin and information base only. In these areas parents fully support this model as have been able to experience services being delivered in their local communities and the benefit this brings.</p> <p>Parents have reported many success stories of families being able to access local services in community venues that they would not have otherwise been able to access as they do not have transport. There is a concern that if all buildings remain these services will not be accessible to families who most need it.</p> <p>Vulnerable families report that they are keen to be able to access more locally delivered services in venues that they feel are more accessible and where they are comfortable. These could be places they already go such as local pubs/ coffee shops</p> <p>Early years staff reported that some of the children's centres do not seem to have a lot going on in them. Staff need to be out in the community</p>	<p>The existing model of taking services out into the community will be expanded and developed across Wiltshire and clearly set out within the new service specification.</p> <p>There will be an expectation that the services will be delivered not only as part of a cluster but across Wiltshire. This will ensure shared learning and shared practice to increase flexibility and efficiency of delivery and the ability to reach the most vulnerable families who don't currently access any of these services.</p> <p>The new provider will be expected to work with local communities, in particular vulnerable families, to find out and deliver services where families already go – this might include local, social clubs, coffee shops etc</p> <p>Children's centre front line staff will be expected to work with existing provision to reach families including childcare settings, schools and established community groups.</p> <p>Front line staff are likely to be the same staff working in the centres now who will have transferred to the new contract holders so will have existing relationships with families and good knowledge of the local area and community settings.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>more.</p> <p>Parents feel that it is most important that good staff go the extra mile to engage with families that will not attend children’s centre as some parents, especially the dads, can find establishments threatening. For example, traveller families will rarely attend a centre but can be engaged with initially on sites building up trusting relationships.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Alternative venues for delivery of services</u></b></p> <p>Whilst all areas have alternative venues from which children’s centre services could be delivered, these are not always child and family friendly, parking can be difficult and they are often fully booked in advance.</p> <p>Poverty is increasing – there is a greater need for food banks and debt advice to be delivered from children’s centres.</p> <p>The staff don’t need lots of equipment but need the flexibility to support where and when needed. Not having a building could mean a new way of thinking for many staff.</p> <p>Staff will need to work alongside families. That maybe in the home or a suitable safe environment agreed by them</p> <p>Many issues a new mother faces cannot be discussed in any location and may require privacy and discretion (post natal depression, feeding issues, problems with abusive partners etc).</p> <p>Many parents are concerned that alternative venues will not be as accessible or suitable to take their young children. Different age groups of children private rooms to talk, bathroom facilities. Libraries are not felt to be suitable for younger children.</p> <p>Several people feel that the proposals are good as long as the services are available and the children’s centres open do cover the wider area and staff</p>	<p>In areas where services are delivered from community venues the provider will be expected to ensure these venues are accessible and child friendly.</p> <p>Providers will be expected to work with local communities to continually assess the venues they use for delivery of services to ensure they meet identified needs.</p> <p>Many of the alternative venues are already used for delivery of services to children under 5.</p> <p>Children centre staff will be expected to deliver services where families are already accessing other services such as childcare setting and Mother &amp; Toddler groups.</p> <p>We will need to work with each community to ensure alternative accessible places for food banks are found.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>go into the community. This includes universal services &amp; family support. Finding alternative buildings that aren't being used is the best option.</p> <p>Several people think the proposal could work but children's centres still need to have a strong presence and identity within the community and they are worried this will be lost if there are not many buildings or offices around.</p> <p>Some commented that the suggestion to use other buildings such as community centres and town halls or school halls for services is a good one -reducing overhead costs of a permanent building. However, it needs to be well managed with a regular programme rather than moving location from week to week.</p> <p>Children's centres are needed in more than just the most deprived areas, but as long as alternative places would be found to still provide the stay and play sessions and parenting courses would still continue then it's something the public could adapt to. If we keep the buildings open but can't provide any of the services/courses this could in the long run have a bigger negative impact.</p> <p>There needs to be the opportunity for everyone to be able to physically visit a children's centre support network, perhaps a clinic and activity session within the local village hall, community centre or school every one or two weeks would be sufficient.</p> <p>Some concern that the remaining children's centres will be unable to cope with increased use by families</p> <p>If groups are to move to community venues they would still have to pay out to hire that venue, as well as centre staff transport costs. Would they be able to provide such good activities and experiences if they have to take resources from place to place? They need to make sure that they are</p>	

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>being inclusive and not alienating families.</p> <p>The location of the centre is not the key factor. The main reason people don't attend is that it's really daunting to attend a group for the first time - you need someone right from the birth of your child who supports you, who tells you about services/ groups and who if needed attends with you or introduces you to another mum who attends the group with you - if this was set up the existing services would be better used.</p> <p>Many of the buildings are on school sites and so there seems to be no financial gain from the proposals to close the buildings as they could not be sold/leased to the majority of the private sector.</p> <p>A one stop shop (Children's Centre) must be retained- if this is not local then the most vulnerable families should be offered bus vouchers to get to their nearest centre.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Partnership working</u></b></p> <p>There is a lot of partnership working from the children's centres and there is a concern from parents and professionals that this may be lost if a centre closes.</p> <p>Health visitor clinics are the way in which most parents access the children's centres and this must not be lost. There is a need to make sure these clinics are held in regular accessible places with the support of children centre staff.</p> <p>A midwife being accessible in children's centres is really important - how will this happen in the future. There is real need to reach parents during the ante-natal period</p> <p>Regular (and free) contact between all settings, regardless of locations of settings or Ofsted inspections - even 'Outstanding' settings require</p>	<p>The expectation of the new provider will be that they continue to work closely in partnership with all relevant professional and delivering services jointly where possible from shared venues.</p> <p>New providers will be expected to deliver joint health visitor /midwife sessions and clinics at local accessible venues.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>ongoing support and communication, even if it a fortnightly email or phone call.</p> <p>Partner with local community groups to share the provision of services and the costs of the facilities.</p> <p>Please ensure that providers maintain the good links already developed between health professionals, charities and others also working with families. Home-start South Wiltshire support many families who do not have the confidence or ability to go to a children's centre through working in families' homes until they are ready and can be encouraged to use local services. Home Start would like to see their role recognised in the tender process.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council needs to ensure that children's centre provision does not duplicate work which is already happening but where possible maintains the partnership work we already do.</p> <p>Home Start service does not rely upon buildings as volunteers visit families at home. Why insist children's centres recruit volunteers to support parents when they could work with Home-Start who have a tried and tested volunteer family support model which works and has been in place for 30 years - don't reinvent the wheel!</p> <p>Town hubs should be created and all services for children including social care should hot desk in the buildings so practice and advice can be shared between services. Also health should be included.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Border issues</u></b></p> <p>Some areas where there are proposed closures of centres are on the border of another county; Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset for example and there is a need to think about how these families will access services in the future too</p>	<p>Wiltshire commissioners are committed to working with neighbouring commissioners to find solutions to cross- border issues</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

Area	Consultation comments	Response
	<p><b><u>Targeting services</u></b></p> <p>Many parents , whilst understanding that there is a need to focus services on vulnerable families, feel that children’s centre services should be available to all as all new mothers are vulnerable to a certain extent regardless of their income/ education etc.</p> <p>Parents feel that the resources need to be put into the early years and not taken away as this is when the greatest long term impact can be made.</p> <p>Vulnerable children and their families shouldn't be the main focus of the model. There are plenty of parents from more affluent backgrounds that have cause to use the services and wouldn't know how to access help if they weren't there. Many people feel Centres should be able to cater for all children not just deprived areas families as all parents need support. Emotional resilience of parents - new parents are particularly vulnerable and social isolation could increase.</p> <p>Data about families doesn't always show individual hardship. Having worked in centres that are in deprived and so called affluent areas, the level of outreach is the same. Families’ problems are the same in all areas and we don't want families in less deprived areas to feel even more isolated because of where they live and the lack of access they have to services</p> <p>The emotional barriers faced by those vulnerable families that are already accessing services at current centres may deter their engagement in future. The limitations of providing services to a wide reach area with limited resources and funding. The impact on staff retention. The impact on professional relationships that are already established with existing staff and centres.</p> <p>Children’s centres play an absolutely vital role in safeguarding children. In this sad day and age when social services appear to only be able to deal</p>	<p>Health visitor services are universally available and children’s centres services will be delivered in partnership to ensure all families are aware of children centre services and able to access them locally.</p> <p>The new provider will be expected to deliver services jointly with other services for families including for example mother &amp; toddler groups and early years childcare settings.</p> <p>The Council is committed to prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable families as there is strong evidence to demonstrate that the greatest difference can be made in the long term to children within these families.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>with those children who are in critical and substantial need, who will provide a basic level of support if there are no children's centres? They often facilitate the role of lead professional when a CAF has been carried out.</p> <p>There were a lot of comments regarding the proposals being based on deprivation levels.</p> <p>Just because an area doesn't seem monetarily deprived, does not mean that socially it is ok. Wiltshire has such a high level of armed forces activity, which in turn means there are lots of parents coping on their own and relying on the children's centre services to provide support and a reason to go out.</p> <p>Just because there isn't a high level of deprivation in an area doesn't mean people don't need support. To presume that only children and parents from "certain areas" need this early intervention is a huge and risky generalisation. Children's centres are vitally important in providing this early intervention to children and parents from ALL areas.</p> <p>Domestic violence and post-natal depression etc. can affect parents from any social demographic.</p> <p>'Deprivation' should not be a factor in the proposed model and it would be worth considering expanding services within the current model/budget.</p> <p>Flexibility is needed as community demographics change. An area doesn't need the support now, may do in the future and vice versa.</p> <p>People felt strongly that one of the most important services offered by children's centres is the provision of advice and help on a "drop in" basis. It is vital that new parents are able, without needing an appointment, to drop in and receive help. There are concerns that without this the effect of post-natal depression will be worse, which will cause vulnerable people</p>	

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>to suffer who may not yet be classed as "vulnerable" or "deprived". It is hard to see how this service can be offered without a dedicated location.</p> <p>Several comments indicate that focusing children's centres in socially deprived areas will increase socioeconomic division. Children's centres are an impartial venue, bringing together parents who would not normally mix socially.</p>	
<b>West</b>	<p><b><u>Trowbridge</u></b></p> <p>Parents are not clear about where in the community services could be offered and venues need to be in the centre of town.</p> <p>Trowbridge parents have developed a petition with 612 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015) against closing two children's centres in the town.</p> <p>Many people think that Studley Green children's centre is too small and Longfield should be retained. Early years Inclusion Officers know many families use this centre and attend many of the activities.</p> <p>Access to Studley Green by public transport is not very good and the car park and road will not be able to cope with additional traffic.</p> <p>Some people consider that Bellefield is the centre to keep open. The most vulnerable children appear to be in Bellefield but this is the centre which is being closed. This ranks as no 2 in terms of deprivation. If children's centres are about supporting the most vulnerable, the data you have provided is not reflected in the proposal. Areas with low deprivation are keeping centres and areas with high deprivation are losing centres.</p> <p>There is a strong opinion that there needs to be two children's centres in Trowbridge as it is a large town and other major towns are retaining 2 centres (eg, Chippenham cluster - low deprivation per your figures and retaining 2 centres does not seem fair for the 3 significantly more deprived</p>	<p>There are a range of alternative venues available in Trowbridge including for example the library, County Hall, the Tesco room.</p> <p>There is a need to increase childcare places in this area and there may be potential for joint delivery of services with children's centre staff from these venues</p> <p>There is a potential to keep Longfield as the children's centre site and for the school to change the use of Studley Green to provision of childcare whilst retaining some space for delivery of children's centre services from this building.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>areas in BA14).</p> <p>Trowbridge has one of the highest levels of children with Speech and Language issues, obesity and domestic abuse in the county and yet it looks as though you are considering cutting the number of centres from 3 to 1.</p> <p>People will not visit Studley Green due to the stigma attached to it.</p> <p>Concerns raised that if Longfield closes how services will be delivered to minority and ethnic community where there is a high level of Polish and Moroccan speaking families.</p> <p>Trowbridge and Chippenham are growing rapidly and to reduce the number of children's centre makes it seem that the Council lacks foresight in the future requirements of growing communities which have diverse needs.</p> <p>Why even retain Studley Green? Why not do it in the community as planned for the other 2 centres and give the current facilities to the school to assist in running some service?</p> <p>The levels of deprivation (IMD rankings) 2015 indicate that the LSOA around Longfield has higher levels of need than in the 2010 figures therefore the need is still in that area. The IMD rankings don't necessarily show the true level of need in the area due to the new houses just down the road.</p> <p>Not sure where else services can be offered. No suitable alternatives have been identified in West Wiltshire, without an alternative investigated and in place how can you close the service</p> <p>The proposal sounds reasonable, as long as existing services remain in place somewhere. Trowbridge has really good network of excellent children's centre services, and should reach more children/families</p>	

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>Support for keeping Longfield Children’s Centre open includes comments from the nursery attached to the centre that they use the centre daily for parents who have a variety of needs. There are 2 big new housing estates in this area which need to be taken into consideration when deciding which centre to close. Longfield is a much more central centre for families to be able to use, as Studley Green is out of town and a long way from this side of town.</p> <p>These are services that often require the provision of a crèche which means 2 separate rooms are required; there are few venues available in Trowbridge that can offer this. The other issue is that some of the community buildings (for example the Tesco community room and the Longfield and Studley Green community centres) are used a lot and there is actually limited availability to other agencies.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Bradford on Avon</u></b></p> <p><b>Letters received from:</b> Local GP practice who expressed concern about the proposed change of use of the children’s centre in that they manage many families with significant health and social needs who they believe will be less likely to access services further afield.</p> <p>Fitzmaurice Primary School Governors expressing concern about closure of the centre and the lack of alternative venues for delivery of services in Bradford on Avon. The school feel that the centre ‘plays a vital role in providing for the under 5’s’.</p> <p>There is a petition of 96 parents ( as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015)</p> <p>This children’s centre is a gateway for parents with bad experiences to access school.</p> <p>Parents will not be able to get to the children’s centre in Studley Green as bus services are poor.</p>	<p>The current childcare provider would be open to increase childcare places at this site. There is then the potential that some children’s centre services can be delivered from this site.</p> <p>Alternative venues that are accessible to families that have been identified by the community include: The old youth centre , the library (1.5 days pw) to be used for children’s centre service delivery for dedicated, regular access</p> <p>The new children’s centre provider for the West cluster will be expected to work closely with the school to retain the good links that exist</p> <p>The clusters have been developed around levels of need and it the expectation of new providers that services will be delivered throughout the whole cluster area to meet identified need.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>There is only one children’s centre in Bradford on Avon and not many other suitable venues.</p> <p>The clusters seem uneven as in this area we are going from 4 buildings to 1, in other areas it is from 4 -2.</p> <p>The children’s centre would need to be re-modelled for use as a nursery and that will cost money.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Warminster</u></b></p> <p>Parents understand the need to reach more local communities.</p> <p>They don’t feel this centre is well used although would like to retain somewhere to do messy play, as feel that they are not able to do this at home.</p> <p>Outside play space is vital and there should be more use of the Forest School.</p> <p>This centre is easy to walk to although people don’t use it as it is not well advertised.</p> <p>The needs of Warminster with a formula that takes account of military families' incomes would be good. Such a formula is considered for school funding and the government has highlighted these families' needs through additional pupil premium funding for service children in schools. How assessable other centres would be to the families that live local to the centres that will be closing, not everyone has transport or feels comfortable going to other settings.</p> <p>Concern expressed that vulnerable children in Warminster will lose out. This area is often underfunded as the high number of military families skew statistical measures of deprivation (due to income levels of the</p>	<p><b><u>Warminster</u></b></p> <p>The Head teacher of the school has agreed to expand the current children’s centre area to use for Parent Support Advisors (PSAs) and have a children’s centre outreach worker based there for one or two days a week as a “drop in” facility.</p> <p>The library is also a good potential site for 1.5 days pw dedicated time for children’s centre services</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>serving family member). However, experience suggests that there are high numbers of children in need and military families suffering the impact of transient lifestyles, lack of child care options and lack of family support in the local area. Many of these families do not have cars and would not travel to Westbury.</p> <p><b><u>Melksham</u></b></p> <p>Parents in this area feel that the centre is not well used and there is potential for more work with families in the community</p> <p>Local parents will not access the Kings Park centre and don't go to Canberra either. There is a gap in provision for vulnerable families in this high need area.</p> <p>More joint working with the school would help to engage with the families we want to reach.</p> <p>There is a real need for support around communication and parenting in this area.</p> <p>The school could work more with children's centre services.</p>	<p>River Mead School would welcome the opportunity to use the space available should the King's Park children's centre change its use. The space could be used to deliver a range of parenting support and support for vulnerable families in conjunction with children's centre staff.</p>
<b>North</b>	<p><b><u>Chippenham</u></b></p> <p>The Rise Trust expressed great concern that this facility would be lost to the community as believe there is a real need for it in their community. They report that the Rise delivers £2 of service for every £1 Wiltshire</p>	<p>There is the potential for a provider to use space in the building for delivery of children's centre services if this can be self-financing.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>contributes, and feel that as the King's Rise centre is classed as 'Outstanding' this should remain open as a children's centre.</p> <p>Parents feel that there are limited options for alternative venues for delivery of services in this area.</p> <p>There is a concern that cost of renting alternative community venues would be greater than continued use of the children's centre building.</p> <p>Over 80 people attended the consultation event and expressed their dismay at the potential loss of the King's Rise children's centre as a resource to families in the area. There is petition to retain the centre from families with 359 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015).</p> <p>Parent report that the centre is well used by many vulnerable families Chippenham.</p> <p>There is strong opposition to closing King's Rise children's centre. It is attached to Springboard Opportunity Group and relied upon by many vulnerable children with additional needs and their families</p> <p>They are building new houses in Pewsham and as of yet no plans to open another GP surgery. This with the closure of the children centre will cripple the GP service with additional visits for parents and kids for minor illnesses and also an increased rate of mental illnesses due to isolation (lack of public transport) and now no children's centre for support and social.</p> <p>Concerns that the buildings in Chippenham already are used well - so much so that they do not have the capacity to offer regular lettings to services like CAMHS or contact sessions. After attending a recent Super Advisory board meeting for The Rise it is evident that the trust delivers far more services (all outstanding) than the LA money currently allocates to the 3 centres.</p>	<p>Many services in Chippenham are already delivered out in other buildings</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>Pewsham has already lost the bus service. It would make travelling to another centre difficult. There is also a new development of houses due to be built.</p> <p>Some people are saying they feel King's Rise Centre is by far the best centre in Chippenham offering a sensory room that will impact children with disabilities.</p> <p>King's Rise is in the middle of a huge housing estate and in the catchment area for 3 primary schools and a secondary school. They are also proposing to build between 200-500 new houses outside Pewsham. This would bring a multitude of new families and children into an area which (if King's Rise was closed) would not get support.</p> <p>It is now even more difficult to take children to the centres further than Pewsham now the bus service has been cut, if you don't have your own transport.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Malmesbury</u></b></p> <p>Parents are very concerned about the potential closer of the children's centre and have formed a petition with 158 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015).</p> <p>Some people feel that the campus could be an alternative place for delivery of services.</p> <p>Community members feel that the centre is currently not well advertised and not enough families know about it so there is a potential for increased use.</p> <p>There are more houses being built and these people will require a service.</p> <p>The town is isolated and the M4 is a barrier to families accessing services.</p>	<p>The Malmesbury Campus could be available for delivery of children's centres services on a regular 2 days per week for sessions, drop in and as a point of information and advice should the new provider wish to use it. Staff would be able to hot desk from here.</p> <p>As there is to be an increase in housing it is imperative that these services will need to be delivered in a wider range of venues across Malmesbury including for example the Town hall and youth centre.</p> <p>Alongside this, children's centre from line staff will be expected to deliver services jointly with services already delivered across Malmesbury such as health Visitors, Childcare settings and Mother &amp; Toddler groups</p> <p>The new provider would be expected to meet the needs of army families</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>Costs of the transport are very high and are not regular.</p> <p>There are more houses being built and these people will require a service.</p> <p>The children's centre makes a huge difference to families in all circumstances, the centre create community.</p> <p>The schools in the town value the input of the centre teams as it has made families more willing to access support in schools.</p> <p>Would be possible to share use with the re-developed Youth Centre.</p> <p>Less services in towns like Malmesbury to access – in towns like Chippenham there are already other services. Would be better if it was possible to say that the alternative was using the campus, and then it wouldn't feel as scary.</p> <p>There is deprivation in this area, although it might not be the financial kind of deprivation experienced elsewhere. Deprivation needs to be all encompassing.</p> <p>Diverse army population coming from all over the globe and the country. Experience from the army base is that not having the community centre there means that families don't access services. Families from there would also be unable to access Chippenham services because there are no transport links.</p> <p>Children's centre is very effective because it is somewhere different from the camp and they don't want the stigma of accessing services on camp. Currently more families on the camp accessing the counsellor at the children's centre than on the camp.</p> <p>Indices of deprivation don't cope very well with army families because they will all be in work and will have a member of the family in</p>	<p>and understand and priorities this within their delivery.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>employment.</p> <p>The centre is crucial to families all around the area both in and out of the town.</p> <p>Impossible to provide what is provided now without a building designated as a children's centre. Community groups will not be able to provide places to meet without charging more to cover cost of hiring that building.</p> <p>With proposed cuts to the children's centre in Malmesbury do we have to leave families with no support until they become a 'vulnerable' statistic?</p>	
	<p><b><u>Corsham</u></b></p> <p>Parents understand that the building is inadequate and in the wrong place, but feel that there still needs to be a building</p> <p>The number of houses being built means that there will be a shortfall in the number of spaces for 5 year olds.</p> <p>Corsham is being seen as a satellite, but there needs to be a definite Corsham base with open access.</p> <p>Bus service is inadequate in the area. Mums won't be able to use the bus to get to remote locations or to Chippenham.</p> <p>Campuses are an untapped resource. There needs to be a permanent presence in the Springfield campus and it is known that they have the capacity to host the centre.</p> <p>Food bank use the centre as a permanent delivery point. Won't be able to use the building to do this, and families won't be able to access the food banks.</p> <p>There is a need at least a permanent room for crisis and for social care</p>	<p>The campus would be available for delivery of children's centre services could on a regular 1-2 days per week. This would provide the regular access and consistent base that parents have asked for. Staff are also able to hot-desk from there and storage would be available. There would be a facility for provision of information about children centre services</p> <p>The current children's centre building would change its use to provide much needed childcare in the area. There is potential for the childcare provider to work with the children's centre provider to deliver some sessions from there.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>when they call and say they need somewhere safe to meet the family.</p> <p>Using community building such as Corsham Campus to provide the children's centre staff with permanent space to meet the needs of families and not just leave them with telephone support. The ability to 'drop in' for support during a crisis is very important for families. Families currently benefit from a sensory room which is used on a daily basis which would be a loss of service. The ethos of children's centres is to meet the needs of children and families. The LA needs to not focus on too much 'targeted' work as those families are already able to access additional support from Health Visitors and social care etc and the other children will slip through the net.</p> <p>Have no problem with relocating the services to other buildings in Corsham but would be concerned if services were relocated to Chippenham due to accessibility.</p>	
<b>East</b>	<p><b><u>Marlborough</u></b></p> <p>There is an online petition with 158 signatures (as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015) of parents who feel strongly that the centre should remain.</p> <p>All of the centres earmarked for closure on the fringes of Wiltshire which does not seem right as there are no reliable public transport options - Would have to use 2 buses to get to Pewsey, costs £5 return. Many families in Marlborough do not have cars.</p> <p>Parents are concerned that the building might remain empty</p> <p>Parents feel that although Marlborough is viewed as privileged, there is some serious deprivation across the town and so it is short sighted to remove the centre.</p> <p>Parents reported that they would be happy to pay to attend a session</p>	<p>The expectation of the new provider would be that children's centre services would be delivered within Marlborough at regular accessible venues including the Leisure centre and youth centre.</p> <p>It will be an expectation of the new provider that they work with the local community to identify additional venues where vulnerable families already access and deliver services to those places.</p> <p>Services could be delivered on a regular basis 1.5 days per week from the library as a point of access and drop-in.</p> <p>The joint working with Mother &amp; Toddler groups will continue and be enhanced.</p> <p>Food parcels could be distributed through other venues/organisations.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>rather than see the centre close</p> <p>The children’s centre is a really accessible venue, in the middle of town and parents feel that the centre brings parents from all walks of life together, it creates community cohesion.</p> <p>The best location would be a purpose built unit at the new St Mary's/St Peters school, there are numerous families living in rural Wiltshire who need the support that children's centres can offer and could probably not be able to or not want to have to travel to Swindon to access this support.</p> <p>Families who need the help will just not know where to access it. With no information centre, no children's centre, no job centre or CAB to just drop in on in the Marlborough area, people may not have a place to turn to. Some people are afraid to use the phone too. Services need to be planned out carefully before the changes are made to ensure families feel confident knowing where they can turn to.</p> <p>There are already minimal baby groups available in Marlborough that don't cost a fortune. New parents that move to the town will now have one less place to meet new parents.</p> <p>The centres that are being kept open need to be central and accessible. Apart from the families in the town, Marlborough Children's Centre serves families from a wide rural area. Many of the more needy parents come into Marlborough on the bus to shop etc. and access support at the children's centre at the same time. In order to get to the nearest centre in Pewsey these parents would have to take their babies and toddlers on two buses.</p> <p>From the information on the consultation document it would appear that a higher percentage of needy families live in the Pewsey area, however, despite its leafy appearance Marlborough has a high level of deprivation. The head of the St Mary's Infant School in Marlborough reported that the</p>	

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>children's centre provides much needed support for families both before and after the children start school. This year's Mosaic Index which comes from the local authority put us as the 11th most deprived school out of 177 in Wiltshire.</p>	
<b>South</b>	<p><b><u>Amesbury</u></b></p> <p>Concern from town councillors that the centre is needed to make sure that parents have access to support when they need it. They feel that travel to Bulford for parents is not an option as the bus service is not adequate.</p> <p>There are a further 650 houses planned for Amesbury including 40% affordable housing.</p> <p>Parents fully supported the proposed delivery model of taking services out into a range of community venues.</p> <p>This is already the model of delivery in Amesbury and the centre is currently mostly used for a staff base.</p> <p>Parents reported that the outreach service is more important than the building.</p> <p>The staff have made all the difference, offering outreach and courses, sorting out benefits and offering support at the most important and difficult times. The negative stories in the press don't say how important the actual service is rather than the building.</p> <p>Would agree with the principles however cannot see how the current proposals to move the centre to Bulford will work. By virtue of population figures, the deprivation as well as the number children under five must be greater in Amesbury. The children's centre in Amesbury is new and much better suited than that offered in Bulford.</p>	<p>The current model of delivering children's centre services via a range of local venues will be further developed.</p> <p>The library is an alternative venue Monday morning and Wednesday for Mum2Mum Breastfeeding Group.</p> <p>Universal services will continue to be accessed through toddler groups and health visitor services.</p> <p>With the increase in housing due there is need to increase the range of venues used to ensure as wide an outreach as possible across all areas.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>Parents want a central location in the town, makes it easier for people to go to, and know where to go to for help and support as well as classes.</p> <p>In favour of having one service provider in south Wiltshire.</p> <p>It is apparent that no consideration has been given to traffic/parking issues in the areas of Kitchener Road and Cold Harbour. This is being caused by a massive increase in the school toll from 205 in 2009 to a projected 420 for July 2016. Current roll is 379, in itself an increase of 50 in the last 6 months. Any increase in the provision of nursery care for the children's centre must be considered; it is also apparent that the outreach provision is not reaching the centre of deprivation in the Town (the Wyndham Hall and Nicholson centres have been highlighted in the survey) but, it is understood that use of the Redworth centre (Sports centre) has not been feasible due to the high costs that would be incurred. Wiltshire Council rapidly needs to rethink its charging strategy and make full use of its own buildings and facilities.</p> <p>It has become clear that the majority of the services are delivered from external sites and outreach and a conclusion could be reached that savings would be made from not having to staff a large building that is not used and that this money could be better used to support delivery of services within the community. In order to continue to drive these figures upward – a consistent and rational debate is needed about the use of authority run spaces. What needs to be done now is to ensure that Local Authority departments working in conjunction with each other are communicating effectively to support delivery of our services within the local community by the provision of affordable public and authority funded spaces for the providers to access such as Libraries, Leisure Centres and Community Centres as this will be crucial to saving money from any existing building costs</p>	
	<p><b><u>Mere</u></b></p>	

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>Letter from Town Councillors suggesting that Mere remains as a centre rather than Tisbury as limited alternative venues in Mere and will work with the council to also offer adult learning from the centre in the future.</p> <p>The community feel that Mere has lost all of its other services.</p> <p>Having the centre building is a life line to families who are transient such as military families.</p> <p>Parents are concerned that:</p> <p>Closing the building might not represent a cost saving, especially if the school can't use the building.</p> <p>There are other borders with other local authorities and so there should be agreement such a Dorset and Somerset. Some of the over border towns have lost their centres completely, and so there is nothing for families to go to.</p> <p>Rurality needs to be taken into account as a REAL vulnerability because, unlike towns, there are no other services or places to go.</p> <p>Tisbury is not an alternative – too far away so makes no sense to keep that one and not Mere - more need in Mere</p> <p>Parking would be an issue everywhere else in Mere. Good accessibility here and lots of parking.</p> <p>The school does not want to take the space over because it cannot afford to.</p> <p>There is continuity of bringing your child to the same place for children's centre, pre-school and then school.</p> <p>There is more need in Mere than in Tisbury</p>	<p>There is a potential for Mere to continue to be used to deliver children's centre services 2 days per week and work in partnership with Tisbury as a single Children's Centre hub.</p> <p>The current use of this building is very expensive and costs could be streamlined to allow for more services to be delivered in a variety of community venues.</p> <p>Local venues such as the Grove building and lecture hall could be regularly used for delivery of services.</p> <p>Rural areas will have regular services delivered to them as these families cannot access Mere.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>Availability of equipment and toys-the children's centre in Mere provides a huge range of activities and toys that would not be possible if they had to be transported to and from groups. It is set up for children in a way that no other venue is.</p> <p>Some sort of community hub is needed, possibly developing the pre-school space could combine services, but Mere residents would not travel to access the Tisbury centre, so outreach would need to be well resourced.</p> <p>If Mere one does get closed then maybe they should set up a pick up and drop off service for those that like to still go to a children centre. This way the families that have lack of money and resources can still go to them.</p> <p>Mere wins over Tisbury on all counts - deprivation higher, number of children higher, suitability - the Tisbury Campus cannot offer things like the sensory space at Mere and will not allow for toys etc. to be left about for the next morning, there is room at Mere to expand.</p> <p>That this may have a big long term effect on child development and local community. Mere has a good low crime rate and a good school. This may be challenged for the long term if services reduce.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Wilton</u></b></p> <p>Rev Mark Wood set out a proposal from the Wilton Middle School Education Trust to renovate local church rooms to provide children centre services from there. They will pay for an additional 1 year lease at the current centre, whilst this renovation of the church rooms is taking place.</p> <p>Parents feel that the children's centre is the heart of the community and many people travel from out of the area to attend.</p> <p>There is a strong feeling that without the centre there would be nowhere</p>	<p>A new provider could use the space at the proposed new community building although there would be ongoing costs of utilities for one year at existing building and then ongoing for new building</p> <p>There will be a small charge for rent for new building that will need to be taken into account by a new provider.</p>

**Key themes from consultation meetings and survey**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Consultation comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<p>for parents to meet and offer peer support</p> <p>Parents are concerned that:</p> <p>There is no way parents will go into Salisbury for services as the bus is very expensive as is parking.</p> <p>A new housing development is planned and this will increase the population.</p> <p>It is difficult to recruit volunteers in this area.</p> <p>Health clinic in Wilton needs a place where both the centre staff and health visitor can work together in a multi-agency approach.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Downton</u></b></p> <p>Children’s centre staff are already delivering in the future model – out where parents are and this has been successful.</p> <p>Boundary issues – need to work with neighbouring commissioners to agree who can access what and also allow centres to count these as families for targets</p> <p>What should also be taken into consideration is travelling distances &amp; transport connection. For example there is no point in having many centres in Salisbury, but closing the one in Downton that serves all the villages in the area. There are also vulnerable children &amp; parents here.</p>	<p>The current building will be used as childcare provision and some children centre services can continue to be delivered in partnership</p>

## Appendix 4

### Alternative venues for children's centre service delivery

The table below sets out venues that could be used for the delivery of children centre services. Many of these are currently being used for delivery of children's centre services.

North Cluster
<p>In addition to various local village halls throughout the cluster the following venues would be available for delivery of children's centre services.</p> <p><u>Malmesbury:</u> Riverside Campus, Town Hall, Wellington Place Community Centre, Library</p> <p><u>Corsham:</u> Springfield Campus, Church rooms, Pound Arts Centre</p> <p><u>Wootton Bassett:</u> St Michaels Church Hall, fire station</p> <p><u>Chippenham:</u> Needle Hall; St Pauls Hall, Ladyfield Hall, The Hub, Sheldon Rd Methodist Church</p> <p><u>Calne:</u> Coleman's Farm Community Centre, St Dunstan's Primary, Beversbrook Sports Centre</p>
West Cluster
<p>In addition to various local village halls throughout the cluster the following venues would be available for delivery of children's centre services.</p> <p><u>Trowbridge:</u> Tesco room, County Hall, Library, Sports Centre, Castle Place leisure centre</p> <p><u>Bradford on Avon:</u> Youth Centre, Library, The Mount</p> <p><u>Warminster:</u> Avenue School ,The Hive, Sports Centre</p>
South Cluster
<p>In addition to various local village halls throughout the cluster the following venues would be available for delivery of children's centre services.</p> <p><u>Salisbury:</u> Libraries, Methodist Church.</p> <p><u>Mere:</u> Grove Building Lecture Hall</p> <p><u>Wilton:</u> Community Centre Church Rooms Wyndham Building</p> <p><u>Amesbury:</u> Library</p> <p><u>Downton:</u> Leisure centre, Morgan's Vale Academy, Old Sarum Community Centre</p> <p><u>Tisbury:</u> Ludwell Primary, Tisbury Sports Centre</p>
East Cluster
<p>In addition to various local village halls throughout the cluster the following venues would be available for delivery of children's centre services.</p> <p><u>Marlborough:</u> Library, Marlborough leisure centre, Lawrence Acre Day Room, Methodist Hall Aldborne</p>

## **Appendix 5**

### **Service re-design consultation survey results**

#### **1. Introduction**

Wiltshire Council are consulting on proposals to reduce the number of designated children centre buildings across Wiltshire and the development of a new service delivery model to ensure focus on vulnerable families. The model would be delivered via four clusters and with 15 designated children centre buildings with services being delivered in a range of community venues throughout each cluster. A public consultation was held from 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and closed on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015. As part of the consultation process public and professionals were asked to complete this on line survey. Results of the survey have been analysed along with feedback from over 40 consultation events.

#### **2. Methodology**

An online version of the consultation questionnaire was made available on the Wiltshire Council website, while the URL address was advertised via children's centres paper version of the questionnaire was created using Snap Survey software and a version was also available online.

In total, 738 responses were received.

On line responses were exported into an Excel compatible data file, which was augmented with manual entry of all paper copies received. Data was checked and cleaned to ensure it was of the best quality.

#### **3. Demographics**

##### **3.1 Gender**

Respondents were asked to state their gender. Of the 727 respondents who answered this question the percentage split was as follows:

	<b>Responses</b>
Female	651 (90%)
Male	58 (8%)
Prefer not to say	18 (2%)

##### **3.2 Type of respondent**

Respondents were asked to indicate if they were users of children's centre services. Of the 737 respondents who answered this question, the results were:

Type of respondent	Responses
A parent/carer of a child who does not at present use a children's centre	54 (7%)
A parent/carer of someone who uses a children's centre	369 (50%)
A parent/carer of someone who has recently used a children's centre	76 (10%)
A professional working in the sector	142 (19%)
A resident	41 (6%)
Other	55 (7%)

### 3.3 Age of youngest child

Those respondents who indicated that they were the parent of a child who was or who had accessed children's centre services were asked to indicate the age of their youngest child. Of those respondents who answered this question (437 out of 445) the results were:

Age of youngest child	Responses
Under 1 years old	158 (36%)
1 years old	112 (25%)
2 years old	101 (23%)
3 years old	39 (9%)
4 years old	14 (3%)
5 years or older	13 (3%)

### 3.4 Children's centre reach area of respondent

Respondents were asked to identify their postcode so that this could be matched to the reach areas of individual children's centres.

Bellefield	33
Bradford on Avon	31
Bulford	24
Calne	31
Canberra	3

Clearbury	25
Corner House	18
Corsham	50
Cricklade	30
Devizes North	8
Devizes South	12
Elim	7
Five Wishes	33
Happy Feet	14
King's Park	10
King's Rise	60
Little Folly	8
Longfield	20
Malmesbury	67
Mere	26
Pewsey	11
Salisbury City	6
Spring Rise	44
Studley Green	20
The Rise	33
Tisbury	1
White Horse	18
Wilton	5
Windmill Hill	12
Wootton Bassett	8
Incomplete	54
Out of area	16

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1 Alternative venues

Respondents were asked to identify venues which might be suitable for the delivery of children's centre services. Respondents could choose from six pre-populated suggestions and through an open text box could suggest venues of their own. This question allowed for multiple choice answers.

Venue	
Village halls	327
Schools	226
Community Centres	443
Pre-schools/nurseries	300
Online	43
Children's centres	631
Other	78

Of the respondents who selected 'children's centres', a total of 118 chose this as a sole option for the delivery of services.

In the 'other' open text box, respondents could record whatever they wished. Extrapolating the venues mentioned, the results in order of popularity are:

Library	9
Doctor surgeries	7
Leisure centre	4
Health visitor clinic	2
Hospital	2
Parks	2
Town hall	2
Health centre	1
Playgroups	1
Soft play	1
Swimming pool	1

In addition to the above, 15 responses indicated that only children's centre buildings were suitable.

#### **4.2 Buildings versus services**

If there was less funding going forwards, respondents were asked to indicate whether they would rather see savings made from buildings or services (ie front line staff). Of the 714 respondents who answered, the results were:

	<b>Responses</b>
Reduce children's centre buildings, but keep existing services available at alternative venues in your local area.	414 (58%)
Keep existing buildings open, but with fewer services available for families in the area.	215 (30%)
Other	85 (12%)

Although 85 respondents selected 'other', a total of 127 individuals actually commented in the open text box. Many of the responses made multiple points and so these were extracted into individual comments and were grouped in themes as below.

Some individuals (9) noted that alternative venues could be used, but only if they were easily accessible and suitable for children aged 0-5 (ie have changing facilities, be warm and friendly). However, some were concerned that services could not be run as effectively from buildings which were not purpose built, and if they were not on a public transport route this would stop families without cars accessing (6).

A proportion of respondents did not think that savings should be made from children's services (13) because of their importance and the risk to vulnerable families being missed. A range of alternatives (no staff travel, improve efficiencies, cut salaries from top down) were suggested, while some (6) thought funding should be increased because of the cost savings later in the child's life. Many (19) noted that none of the buildings should be closed, while a further number (33) specified that neither buildings nor services should be affected. Some also questioned whether closing buildings would save money if providers of services were forced to pay for alternative venues.

Rather than make cuts, (11) thought that extra revenue could be raised by using volunteers to run some services, by charging/asking for contributions (16), or by hiring out space to other groups to run sympathetic services (9). Some thought there could be more targeting of work to make it more cost effective (5) while some wanted less.

### **4.3 Targeting of services**

Respondents were asked to identify the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements:

- It is important for children's centre buildings to be in areas that have more vulnerable children.
- It is important to offer more services to vulnerable children than to all children.

The results were:

<b>It is important for children's centre buildings to be in areas that have more vulnerable children.</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Strongly agree	231 (32%)
Agree	234 (32%)
Neither agree nor disagree	121 (17%)
Disagree	105 (14%)
Strongly disagree	39 (5%)

<b>It is important to offer more services to vulnerable children than to all children.</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Strongly agree	102 (14%)
Agree	227 (31%)
Neither agree nor disagree	95 (13%)
Disagree	201 (28%)
Strongly disagree	103 (14%)

### **4.4 View of proposal**

Comments within this section have been fed into the overall consultation summary at appendix 3 of the Wiltshire Council Cabinet Report 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Key themes are:

- Central place for families of young children to access support
- Cost savings and efficiencies
- Deprivation and vulnerability
- Reshaping of services
- Quality/level of service

- Transport and accessibility
- Knowing what is happening and where
- Reaching more people in local communities
- Alternative venues for delivery of services
- Partnership working
- Border issues
- Targeting services

#### **4.5 Issues the local authority needs to consider**

As above - Comments within this section have been fed into the overall consultation summary at appendix 3 of the Wiltshire Council Cabinet Report 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015

#### **4.6 Use of volunteers**

Children's centres have always been tasked with recruiting volunteers, both as a means to build community participation and as a pathway for parents to return to work. Respondents were asked if they thought that further volunteer recruitment might be a suitable way to increase capacity and allow for extra services to be delivered. Of the 730 respondents who answered this question, the results were as follows:

<b>Do you think more groups/activities could be provided by volunteers</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Yes	314 (43%)
No	269 (37%)
Don't know	147 (20%)