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Reference SAK/CCR/02/19

**Children's Centre Rationalisation Briefing No 19-002**  
**The Westbury Children's Centre, Eden Vale Road.**

When debating this proposal what should be paramount in everyone's mind **what is in the best interest of the Child/Children** of that area.

It should also be remembered that within Westbury Town 16% of the Westbury population live within the most deprived areas<sup>[1][2]</sup>, not just Wiltshire but England, and the Westbury Children's Centre is based in the very middle of that area.

We should also understand that many families that need the Centre are disorganised and dysfunctional. Some of the children are on the At Risk Register therefore this Centre is crucial to these children and to the community. There are parents who just need assistance with parenting, home learning, domestic abuse support, employment and \*healthy lifestyles; or just a nonjudgmental person to listen. This trust can only be built through time and in an environment in which people feel comfortable – with the proposed move to different venues this trust and contact will be lost.

The most recent Ofsted report<sup>[3]</sup> on the Westbury Children's Centre is shown as Good, which is a better result than some of the schools in the area.

To expect families, some of the most vulnerable families, to remember each week or month which Centre will be open on this occasion and at what time the Centre will be open is expecting too much. There also has to be taken into consideration that families may have more than one child, all of whom got ready and either looked after, taken to nursery or school. The Westbury Centre is based to all these amenities.

The cost of travel also has to be thought about. When living on a small budget, as many are, the cost of travel to another venue is out of the question therefore contact with the most vulnerable children and families will be lost..

Within the Westbury Children's Centre is a Sensory Room. The equipment in this much used room is large, heavy, expensive, and not easily dismantled. Therefore expecting this equipment to be dismantled and reassembled, at different venues is unrealistic. To subject such a valuable piece of equipment to potential damage and loss to the community would be reckless.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Reference Wiltshire Community Area JSA 2016, Health Wellbeing & Leisure

<sup>[2]</sup> 28% of 10-11 year olds in Westbury Community Area are obese or overweight

<sup>[3]</sup> <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/13/23577>

As a Wiltshire Magistrate I sat for six years in the Family Court and Chairman of the Wiltshire County Family Panel for three years, I fully understand the proposal and the families involved.

The Westbury Children's Centre is trusted and needed by all the families. It would be an irreplaceable loss to the Westbury Community and the most vulnerable if this asset were moved from its current home.

Cllr Mrs Sheila Kimmins.

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