



HILLINGDON  
LONDON



# Cabinet

## Councillors in the Cabinet

**Date:** THURSDAY, 16 MARCH  
2017

**Time:** 7.00 PM

**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOM 6 -  
CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH  
STREET, UXBRIDGE UB8  
1UW

**Meeting  
Details:** Members of the Public and  
Press are welcome to attend  
this meeting.

Ray Puddifoot MBE (Chairman)  
*Leader of the Council*

David Simmonds CBE (Vice-Chairman)  
*Deputy Leader / Education & Children's Services*

Jonathan Bianco  
*Finance, Property & Business Services*

Keith Burrows  
*Planning, Transportation & Recycling*

Philip Corthorne  
*Social Services, Housing, Health & Wellbeing*

Douglas Mills  
*Community, Commerce & Regeneration*

Richard Lewis  
*Central Services, Culture & Heritage*

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# Notice

## Notice of special urgency decision

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, 28 clear days notice of a decision on **Item 5 – Children’s Centre Programme Delivery Model**, detailed on this supplementary agenda, was not practicable.

Additionally, this agenda and report has also been circulated less than 5 working days before the Cabinet makes any decision. Under special urgency rules set out in the Council’s Constitution, the Chairman of the Executive Scrutiny Committee has kindly agreed that a decision on **Item 5** can be considered at this Cabinet meeting because it is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

The reason for urgency is to enable the Council to consider the responses to the consultation in a timely manner and following which consider the future delivery children centre services that local residents use.

Decisions on this agenda will be taken in public. However, fuller Notice of the Council’s intention to hold the Cabinet meeting part in public and also in private is set out on the main Cabinet Agenda A for this meeting.

Issued 9 March 2017

# Agenda

## **Cabinet Reports - Part 1 (Public)**

- 5** Children's Centre Programme Delivery Model  
(Councillor David Simmonds CBE)

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## CHILDREN'S CENTRE PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODEL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor David Simmonds CBE
<b>Cabinet Portfolios</b>	Deputy Leader of the Council Education and Children's Services
<b>Officer Contact</b>	Tom Murphy - Children and Young People's Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Consultation Report Petition Hearing Minutes Equalities Impact Assessment

### HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Summary</b>	This report provides a summary of proposed changes to the Children's Centre programme delivery model following a BID Review of 0-19 Family Support services commissioned by the council. It includes an overview of the outcomes of a consultation exercise that was undertaken in relation to the proposed changes.
<b>Putting our Residents First</b>	This report supports the following Council objective of: <i>Our People.</i>
<b>Financial Cost</b>	The proposed new delivery model set out in this report will enable the service to contribute towards a part year Medium Term Financial Forecast budget saving of £404k (£215k of which is in the 2016/17 base budget, with a further £189k identified in 2017/18), increasing by a further £95k in 2018/19 reflecting the full year effect of this proposal.
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Children, Young People and Learning
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

### RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the outcome of the Children's Centres consultation report; the views given by residents at the Petition Hearing of 1 February 2017; and the outcome of the completed Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment and has full regard to them in deciding whether to implement the proposals.
2. Ratifies a decision taken by the Leader of the Council and Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Residents Services on 2 March 2017 to agree that Hillside and Uxbridge College Children's Centres be no longer operational as delivery sites from 1 April 2017 in support of the wider BID transformation Children's Centres project; and

/continued...

**3. Notes that the Children's Centre programme will be delivered in-house with effect from 1 April 2017 and agrees to the subsequent reshaping of services into a localities model with a number of hub centres and linked satellite provision.**

**Reasons for recommendations**

Hillingdon Council currently has 18 children's centres. Under the current delivery model, each centre is registered as a standalone centre and has its own distinct leadership and management arrangements. The provision is resourced by providing each individual centre with a budget allocation to employ a range of staff to deliver the core programme offer.

The recommendations concern remodelling the children's centre programme as part of a wider transformation process relating to family support services commissioned by the Council. The proposal will create five distinct geographical service delivery areas across the Borough. Each area will be served by a lead children's centre 'hub' and a number of linked sites with shared leadership and management across all sites. The lead 'hub' centre will be responsible for coordinating the delivery of early childhood services and managing the distribution of activity and staff within their area according to need.

The recommended new model supports the concept as outlined in the Statutory Guidance for Children's Centres 2013, that children's centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as they are about providing premises in particular geographical areas. In practical terms, this means that only the lead centres will be registered as standalone children's centres with Ofsted. The remaining centres will be listed as linked sites and will no longer be subject to individual inspections.

The proposed changes will further strengthen the current approach to the planning and delivery of integrated and flexible family support to residents, in accordance with the findings of the BID Review of 0-19 services. It will also improve the efficiency of the programme by moving away from the historic approach of providing standard core funding to 18 centres by introducing a model which will enable a more focused and targeted approach to meeting resident needs and priorities.

**Alternative options considered**

The option to continue with current arrangements was considered. It is not recommended as the commissioning of the programme via 11 separate external providers alongside arrangements for managing seven centres directly does not enable the Council to secure consistency of service across the programme. Moreover, the ambition of the proposed model is to develop a new approach to providing family support services based on feedback offered by parents during the 0-19 BID Review process. The approach of separately commissioning services limits the scope for developing a more coherent and consistently commissioned service with the scope to extend beyond the current 0-5 remit of the Children's Centre programme.

Alternative approaches to managing and organising provision were also considered, including variations in localities and arrangements for leading and managing services. It is considered that the five locality model offered the best solution in terms of creating manageable areas to coordinate and plan services within.

## Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage. Policy Overview Committees were consulted on Cabinet's budget proposals prior to adoption of the budget by Council on 23 February 2017.

### INFORMATION

1. The Local Authority has a duty to improve the wellbeing of young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them, as well as a duty to make arrangements to ensure 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.
2. Early childhood services are defined as:
  - early years provision (early education and childcare);
  - social services functions of the local authority relating to young children, parents and prospective parents;
  - health services relating to young children, parents and prospective parents;
  - training and employment services to assist parents or prospective parents; and
  - information and advice services for parents and prospective parents.
3. Sure Start Children's Centres are currently one of the mechanisms for ensuring this provision and in Hillingdon there are eighteen such centres in operation across the Borough.

### THE CURRENT SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

4. Ensuring the provision of early childhood services in the area is the responsibility of the Director of Children's Services and within Hillingdon the service with responsibility for delivery is the Early Intervention and Prevention Service.
5. Of the Borough's eighteen Children's Centres:
  - seven centres are directly managed by the Council,
  - nine centres are run by schools,
  - one is provided by a local charity and
  - one run by a local FE College located on their campus in Hayes.
6. All 18 centres are individually registered and managed, however, following a programme restructure in 2013, the centres were reorganised into three locality groups, with a lead centre identified for each locality, to enable the delivery of improved, and more joined up services to residents through collaborative working. The table below sets these out in more detail.

Locality Group	Children's Centre	Operated by
<b>GROUP 1 North</b>	Harefield Children's Centre (lead)	Harefield Infant School
	Coteford Children's Centre	Coteford Infant School
	Hillside Children's Centre	Hillside Infant School

	South Ruislip Early Years & Children's Centre	Local Authority
<b>GROUP 2 South East</b>	Uxbridge College Children's Centre (Hayes) (Lead)	Uxbridge College
	Barra Hall Children's Centre	Local Authority
	Belmore Children's Centre	Local Authority
	Charville Children's Centre	Charville Primary School
	McMillan Children's Centre	McMillan Early Childhood Centre
	Nestles Avenue Children's Centre	Local Authority
	Pinkwell Children's Centre	Local Authority
	Yeading Children's Centre	Yeading Infant School
<b>GROUP 3 South West</b>	Oak Farm Children's Centre (Lead)	Oak Farm Infant School
	Cherry Lane Children's Centre	Cherry Lane Primary School
	Colham Manor Children's Centre	Colham Manor Primary School
	Cowley Children's Centre	Local Authority
	Uxbridge Children's Centre	Local Authority
	Yiewsley Cornerstone Centre	Cornerstone Centre (Charity linked to Yiewsley Baptist Church)

7. Children's Centres provide a wide range of universal family support services for parents and young children. From the earliest start parents-to-be can access centres for their antenatal care provided by the Community Midwifery team and attend antenatal classes provided collaboratively by centre staff, Health Visiting and Midwifery. Continued health support for parents is available in the form of breastfeeding advice and support, weaning workshops, child health clinics and baby weighing clinics. Centres also offer a wide range of sessions for parents and children to attend together, from music and movement, to story and rhyme and stay and play, helping to connect families, reduce isolation and support children's early learning and development.

8. Targeted services for vulnerable children and families provide access to specialist support and include services such as Attention Hillingdon, Language for Life, Speech and Language Therapy, Talking Therapies and targeted family support. Centres also provide access to employment and benefits advice, and adult learning opportunities.

9. New families continue to register with the children's centre programme; January 2017 saw 404 children and 551 adults registering to use services. Current registration for the population of children aged 0-5 stands at 92.9% across the Borough.

10. The most current participation data shows that in January 2017, 36% of all participants at all



Children's Centres were from vulnerable families. This is broken down as 27% in the centres in the North of the Borough, 44% in the centres in the South East of the Borough and 33% in the South West.

11. It is of note that participation rates for families with children aged 3, 4 and 5 years is lower than for families with very young children, due to children accessing early education provision. The current uptake for the 3 and 4 year old free entitlement stands at 98%.

12. Externally commissioned Children's Centre services have been historically managed via a Service Level Agreement, however, it has been a challenge in recent years to agree these with all providers concerned.

## **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DELIVERY REVIEW OF 0-19 SERVICES**

13. Between March and June 2016 extensive stakeholder engagement with over 850 people took place as part of a longer-term internal review of a number of the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) commissioned services for 0-19's. The review concerned a number of services with a broad intent to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and young people and their families. It covered:

- The Healthy Child Programme comprising of The Health Visiting Service, and The School Nursing Service;
- The Children's Centre Programme; and
- Parenting Programmes.

14. The opportunity to look at early intervention and prevention services in this way, was in part informed by the transfer to the Council of commissioning responsibility for public health services in 2013 and 2015, for School Nursing and Health Visiting Services respectively, and the forthcoming expiry of novated contracts for these services in March 2017.

15. Conversations with stakeholders covered all aspects of service delivery including the strengths and weaknesses of current arrangements, the individual experiences of service users, providers and staff and what they considered key priorities for these services, and views on how services could be delivered differently in what is a challenging financial climate for local authorities. Opportunities to further engage, cooperate with, and even jointly commission with partners such as the NHS, the voluntary and community sector, and parents and carers, were also explored.

16. The review engaged 646 parents and carers using services, 45 children and young people using services, 86 service providers including governors, trustees, managers and staff and 81 representatives of 29 partner organisations, agencies and schools.

17. Considered as a whole, the main points of learning from the engagement process were that generally stakeholders who took part valued:

- Local and accessible services;
- Trusted, non-judgemental places that are 'on our side' where families 'feel safe';
- A single point of access for family support;
- Consistency of service and personnel;
- Integrated services from a whole family perspective;
- Partnership working across services;
- Raising the profile of services in the community;
- Parenting support;

- Making the best use of local assets – both people and places;
- Post age five support; and
- Outcome focused emphasis for services.

18. This engagement activity provided valuable resident insight into the services within scope and how they might be strengthened. The views offered during the review process have been considered alongside other information gathered at earlier stages of the review, including models employed by other local authorities to design and develop proposals for the future delivery of the services in scope.

19. Learning from the review is informing the development of a new ‘family network’ approach to the commissioning of family support services. This in turn has led to the commissioning of a new integrated 0-19 Healthy Child Service through a single contract and specification, (formally separate Health Visiting and School Nursing contracts), informed by the views offered by residents during the review process. The specification includes reference to the requirement to deliver services in an integrated and collaborative manner in conjunction with other related services, including those delivered via the Children's Centre Programme.

20. The new joint Health Visiting and School Nursing Service will commence on 1 April 2017 and constitutes Phase 1 of the overall 0-19 Service development process. Phase 2 of the transformation process relates to the Children's Centre Programme, which pending Cabinet's approval, will also commence on 1 April 2017.

## **THE PROPOSED CHILDREN'S CENTRE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL**

21. Within the context of the wider 0-19 Review and informed by the learning gained during the review process, the Council proposed the introduction of a ‘hub and spoke’ model for the delivery of children's centre services. Providers were advised of the proposed changes at a briefing on 9 December 2016. Formal consultation on the proposed changes commenced on 14 December 2016 and closed on 25 January 2017.

22. As part of the process of advising on proposed changes to the current delivery model, external providers were also informed of the Council's decision to discontinue current external commissioning arrangements and assume direct management of all staff employed to deliver the Children's Centre Programme as of 1 April 2017. In addition, two current external providers, Hillside Infant School and Uxbridge College, were further advised of the Council's decision that due to their failure to progress lease arrangements, services from these sites will be discontinued.

23. It is envisaged that the revised delivery model will establish a more effective and efficient delivery model through reconfiguring the current provision into 5 localities with shared leadership and management, directing the staff and resources within each area in response to need and demand. Each of the 5 localities would have a hub centre, connected to a number of link centres (11 in total) to support the programme delivery in the wider locality. If agreed, the new model would essentially form the ‘backbone’ of a new ‘family network’ approach to delivering and coordinating family support services. The introduction of the new model will enable ongoing evaluation of the benefits of an approach that seeks to make best use of the full range of community assets available to support families and not be primarily reliant of a Children's Centre based approach.

24. Each locality would have a distinct geographical reach area arranged by Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs); the size of the reach areas is determined by population levels of children under five, levels of deprivation, socio-economic factors, and practical factors including

transport links.

25. The role of the hub centre is to lead and coordinate services within the defined geographical area, ensuring distribution of directly delivered activity and staff according to need. Whilst it is essential for staff to have a base centre enabling clear lines of supervision and accountability, there would be an expectation that staff would be deployed flexibly across the locality, making best use of their skills and expertise and the wider range of community assets available to them.

26. The proposed hub sites are informed by a number of factors including the size of building and location within the locality. It is envisaged that over time the hubs will seek to provide accommodation for professionals from related services such as Health Visiting, enabling a more integrated and efficient service. The following table illustrates the proposed new model.

27. The proposed model, predicated on a 'Hub and Spoke' arrangement, is a delivery model recognised by Ofsted both in respect of registration and inspection arrangements. The revised Children's Centre Inspection Framework 2013, recognised a number of different centre management arrangements in place across the country and provided the means by which these centres would be inspected. The model proposed for Hillingdon Children's Centres has been implemented by many local authorities across London and larger county councils, including Hillingdon's geographical neighbours in Ealing and Harrow.

28. Prior to consultation, the Hub centre for the North locality was designated as South Ruislip. Following feedback received as part of the consultation process, this element of the proposal has been reconsidered and Harefield has now been identified as the proposed lead for this area.

	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Hub</b>	<b>Satellite Sites</b>	<b>Wards Services</b>	<b>Total Population Aged 0-5</b>
<b>1</b>	North	Harefield	Coteford South Ruislip	Cavendish Eastcote & East Ruislip Manor Harefield Northwood Northwood Hills South Ruislip West Ruislip	6,978
<b>2</b>	Uxbridge & Cowley	Oak Farm	Cowley Uxbridge	Brunel Hillingdon East Ickenham Uxbridge North Uxbridge South	4,416
<b>3</b>	Yeading & Hayes Park	Yeading	Belmore Charville	Barnhill Charville Yeading	4,451
<b>4</b>	West Drayton & Yiewsley	Yiewsley	Cherry Lane Colham Manor	Heathrow Villages Yiewsley West Drayton	4,612

5	Hayes Town	Barra Hall	McMillan Nestles Avenue Pinkwell	Botwell Pinkwell Townfield	5,425
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## THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CHANGE

29. Consideration has been given to potential changes to the Children's Centre delivery model, to ensure that it aligns to the Hillingdon context whilst also agreeing with statutory guidance which states: " A Sure Start children's centre is defined as a place or a group of places:

- which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way;
- through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and
- at which activities for young children are provided "

30. The guidance goes on to state:

"It follows from the statutory definition of a children's centre that children's centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as it is about providing premises in particular geographical areas".

31. The proposed changes have been informed by the view that as currently delivered, the children's centre programme is too narrowly focused on delivery from existing premises and locations. It does not reflect the views of residents shared during the Business Improvement Delivery (BID) review, that whilst they value the current programme, they also value flexible services with the ability to serve communities creatively using a wide range of community assets.

32. Whilst individually each Children's Centre is delivering a diverse range of services within the overall programme they are resource intensive, with each centre being operated individually and incurring a full range of staffing and other associated costs. The current model does not afford the scope to use resources more creatively and flexibly across the whole programme and is limited in its capacity to coordinate services and develop wider networks of family support.

33. The proposed changes are concerned with developing synergies across the children's centre programme and with associated services such as the newly commissioned Healthy Child Service to make better use of resources across the breadth of services commissioned by LBH. It will enable a more integrated approach to service coordination and resource deployment.

34. A key message that came through the review conversations with families was the value they placed on being supported, when required, across the 0-19 age range. There was recognition of the strengths of the Children's Centre Programme and elements of the service that could be translated into a 0-19 model. The proposed changes seek to build on the strengths of the service to be evolved across the 5-19 age range to support families. Progress has been made in this regard through the commissioning of the 5-9 school nursing component of the healthy child service which will be aligned to the proposed hub and spoke model if agreed.

## **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION PROCESS AND PETITION HEARINGS**

35. The proposed changes to the children's centre delivery model have generated a broad range of views from residents and other stakeholders. These have been expressed through the formal consultation process, but also by means of direct correspondence to the Xouncil and through a number of petitions which were heard by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services. In total 618 responses were received through the formal consultation route, 11 responses were received via other forms of communication and 9 petitions were made against the proposed changes. The detail of these views are summarised in the Consultation Report and Petition Hearing minutes attached to this report. The following information summarises the main issues raised during the consultation process:

### **Improving consistency by delivering a more coordinated and flexible service**

36. A significant number of residents questioned whether the proposed new model would deliver an improvement in consistency, coordination and flexibility of services. The views offered can be categorised in the following themes:

- Children's Centres are already working well, they don't need to change.
- Services will no longer be tailored to the needs of the local community.
- There will be less choice of services.

37. The responses suggest that there is a significant level of satisfaction with the existing children's centre service and that children's centres are highly valued by families in Hillingdon. Consequently the majority of respondents do not see the need for change or improvement. There also appears to be a view that an increase in coordination and flexibility could lead to a reduction of staffing and loss of responsiveness to local need.

38. Resident satisfaction with the service provided have been noted as have the reservations in relation to how the proposed model might affect staffing levels and responsiveness to need.

### **Strengthening the offer by redesigning the children's centre service into 5 hubs and 11 linked centres**

39. A number of residents question the value of the proposed 'hub and spoke' model. The views offered can be categorised in the following themes:

- Good relationships between parents and staff will be lost;
- Children's Centres will no longer be able to respond to local need and
- Services will be diluted, of poorer quality and harder to access.

40. The individual response in this area were similar to that of the previous point with concerns primarily relating to the assumption that the proposed changes would lead to an end of current positive working relationships.

### **Developing alternative ways in which families can be supported in the areas currently serviced by Hillside and Uxbridge College (Hayes) Children's centres**

41. A significant number of residents, particularly current users of Hillside Children's Centre, raised concerns at the discontinuation of the Children's centre programme from the premises in question. Views on alternative ways residents might be supported were:

- Don't close these children's centres;
- Find another venue in the local area; and
- Provide free transport to other centres.

### **Views in relation to the disadvantaging of any residents as a consequence of the proposed changes**

42. Consultation respondents, including current users of Hillside and Uxbridge College Children's Centres also expressed concern that residents could be disadvantaged as a consequence of the proposals. Key concerns were:

- That reducing the number of centres will mean there will no longer be sufficient capacity to meet individual needs; and
- That families will find services harder to access due to having to travel further which in turn could lead to isolation and financial hardship for the most vulnerable families.

### **Views in relation to how the Council can continue to improve children's centre services in the future**

43. Respondents offered a range of views on how the Council can continue to improve children's centre services. They may be summarised as follows:

- Keep the children's centres as they are;
- Keep centres closely linked with schools to support children with transition to school;
- Maintain current levels of services and staff;
- Invest more funding into children's centre services to be able to offer a wider range of services;
- Consider working parents by offering more flexible services in the evenings and at weekends;
- Increase the number of places available at sessions/at popular sessions;
- Offer activities for a wider age range for parents with more than one child; and
- Improve the booking system, offer bookings online.

### **Conclusion**

44. The views offered by residents and other stakeholders during the consultation process have been noted.

45. Service users expressed concerns that valued relationships with staff would be lost as a consequence of the proposed changes. It should be noted that the majority of the staff currently working on the programme are already employed by the Council and for the most part will be maintained in their current delivery locations pending further consideration of how the overall staffing establishment aligns with the proposed hub and spoke model should it be agreed.

46. There were also concerns that the breadth and quality of services would be reduced and that they would be harder to access. Whilst recognising the concern, it should be noted that the locality approach to assessing need and planning and prioritising services is intended to ensure services are more effectively targeted to those most in need. The range of service offered will be tailored to identified and prioritised needs in each locality.

47. Residents have also expressed concern about the impact of discontinuation of programme delivery via Hillside and Uxbridge College due to potential increases in travelling time to access other delivery points, and increased demand placed on those centres. Residents concerns are understood. Residents and stakeholders have been advised that services are being discontinued from the sites in question as a consequence of lease negotiations with the two providers not being concluded because of their failure to agree terms. As a consequence the Council does not have the surety of access required to plan for the delivery of services going forward. The views of residents in relation to alternative delivery locations have been noted and are being pursued. Work continues to develop and introduce alternative support arrangements given the loss of the two sites in question from the programme.

48. It should also be noted that the proposed model is predicated on an approach that is informed by the need to enable family access to support and as a consequence does not limit its planning and delivery to the current children's centre estate. The planned intention is to assess need in each given locality and develop a creative and flexible service in response, which includes targeting the most vulnerable and in need of support.

49. In conclusion, it is recommended that the proposed children's centre delivery model is approved as proposed. Should the proposal be agreed officers will continue to work with residents and stakeholders to allay any outstanding concerns raised through the consultation during the implementation process. Having considered the views offered during both the 0 - 19 BID review process and the consultation process, the identified benefits of the proposed changes remain and are summarised as follows:

- The scope to build on the effectiveness of current arrangements for planning and coordinating services on a locality basis;
- Increased flexibility in use of staffing and resources to meet needs of defined localities;
- Improved coordination of related services such as the Healthy Child Programme;
- The consolidate and develop the structure that's already in place;
- More effective and efficient use programme resources by moving away from deployment via a standardised 'centre by centre' arrangement to a locality needs and priorities based approach; and
- The introduction a locally and nationally well-regarded approach that will provide the basis from which to develop the wider 0 -19 offer.

## **Financial Implications**

The consequence of this change will result in the transfer of all staff currently employed by the externally commissioned Children's Centres to the line management of the Council with effect from 1 April 2017, the funding for which will no longer be provided to the organisation, but instead will be managed directly by the Council.

These changes will also result in the discontinuation of the programme at Hillside Infants and Uxbridge College.

The subsequent move to a hub and spoke model later in 2017, will enable the service to contribute to a Medium Term Financial Forecast part year saving of £404k (£215k of which is already included in the 2016/17 base budget, with a further £189k identified in 2017/18), increasing by a further £95k in 2018/19 reflecting the full year effect of the proposed implementation of the new hub and spoke delivery model.

It should be noted that the Children's Centre programme was developed using Sure Start Grant funding; as such, any changes that result in the closure of a centre, could invoke a clawback of

capital funds by the Department for Education. The clawback clause exists for a period of 25 years, with the value diminishing over that period.

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

If approved the recommendations will lead to the introduction of a locality based model for the provision of children's centre services. The proposed model will result in the planning, coordination and targeting of services to residents in the proposed locality area based on need. Service users currently accessing services from Hillside and Uxbridge College will be supported to access services from alternative delivery sites.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed in order to consider any potential impacts of the proposed new model should it be approved. A further assessment will be completed as part of the process of considering potential workforce changes should they be required post TUPE transfer.

As part of the changes an element of re-provisioning of services will be required in the areas affected by the discontinuation of services for Hillside and Uxbridge College locations. The needs of existing users of these locations, including vulnerable children and families will be considered and responded to as part of the transition process.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

A six week public consultation was carried out from 14 December 2016 - 25 January 2017 which outlined the proposed changes to the children's centre delivery model and what this would mean for service-users. The consultation received 614 responses. A summary of the responses and full survey results are contained within the consultation report attached, and referenced within the main body of this report.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report, noting that the introduction of a hub and spoke delivery model for Children's Centres during 2017 is expected to contribute towards delivery of MTF savings within the service as outlined above. New structures for in-house operation are yet to be fully determined and will be implemented following completion of relevant internal processes and consultation with the staff group as required. Implementation costs associated with the roll out of the new model are expected to be financed from a combination of capital receipts and earmarked reserves in line with the Council's broader funding strategy for service transformation.

The financial implications note that there remains a risk of historic Department for Education capital funding becoming repayable if buildings are no longer used for Children's Centre delivery. While the Council will seek to engage with the awarding body to avoid any such repayment of grant monies, it should be noted that any cost ultimately borne by the Council will be met from capital resources, reflecting that the assets created remain in public ownership and available to delivery of services to the public.



## **Legal comments**

The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty upon local authorities to make arrangements for early childhood services in their area. In complying with this duty local authorities must ensure there are sufficient children's centres, so far as reasonably practicable to meet local need. Cabinet will need to be satisfied on the evidence before it that the proposed service delivery model is sufficient to meet local need.

A statutory duty to consult arises before closing a children's centre or making significant changes as how services are delivered, including through linked sites. The local authority conducted a formal consultation on its proposed changes between 14 December 2016 and 25 January 2017. The consultation appears to have been conducted lawfully having been undertaken at a time when the proposals were still at a formative stage; provided sufficient information as to the proposals; and provided adequate time for response. With regard to the Hillside and Uxbridge College sites, landlords failed to agree leases and therefore the consultation focused on alternative ways in which families can be supported in the areas currently serviced by Hillside and Uxbridge Children's Centres. The outcome of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account before a decision is made.

The local authority, as a public body, is subject to the Human Rights Act and also to the Public Sector Equality Duty which is contained in the Equality Act 2010. The local authority must therefore have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those without it. The protected characteristics, in summary, are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

An Equalities and Human Rights assessment has been prepared and is attached to this report. The assessment takes into account the consultation responses the Council received and has regard to data obtained from registrations at the children's centre. The report analyses the potential negative and positive impacts upon residents. The report concludes negative impacts to residents can be mitigated through the provision of other local services. There is no suggestion in the report that the human rights of residents will be violated. Due regard must be had to the report before any decision is made.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL.

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# HILLINGDON

LONDON

## The Future of the Children's Centre Programme Consultation REPORT

### Introduction

This report presents the key findings of the future of the Children's Centre Programme consultation conducted by Hillingdon Council.

The consultation was conducted from **14 December 2016** to **25 January 2017**.

The purpose of the consultation was to communicate to and seek views from residents regarding proposed changes to the current children's centre programme, which are:

- To deliver a new children's centre model through 16 children's centre sites, with 5 lead children's centres (hubs) co-ordinating 11 other linked centres; and
- To discontinue the use of the children's centres located at Uxbridge College Hayes Campus and Hillside Primary School, Northwood and explore alternative options for delivery of services in these localities.

The responses to the consultation are to be used to inform the final decision and to mitigate any potential circumstances where children's centre service-users may be adversely affected by the proposed new model of delivery.

The consultation was publicised via:

- The council's website
- The council's social media platforms; Facebook and Twitter
- Local schools
- Hillingdon's Children's Centres

The consultation received **614** responses via an online questionnaire. In addition a further **11** responses were received via other forms of communication (postal and email) which have also been accounted for in this report. During the consultation period residents also signed and

presented 9 petitions to the council for reconsideration of the children's centre service proposals. These were heard by Councillor Simmonds on 1st February 2017.

The total number of responses and key themes from all open questions are shown in the Key findings. Full responses from open questions are shown in the Survey Results and individual responses are attached as an appendix.

All results are un-weighted.

Results are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.

Where results do not add up to 100%, this may be due to non-responses, multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of don't knows/not stated.

Percentages are calculated based on the number of respondents to each question rather than the number of respondents overall.

In the appendices, comments have not been edited, however any references to information that could be considered confidential have been removed.

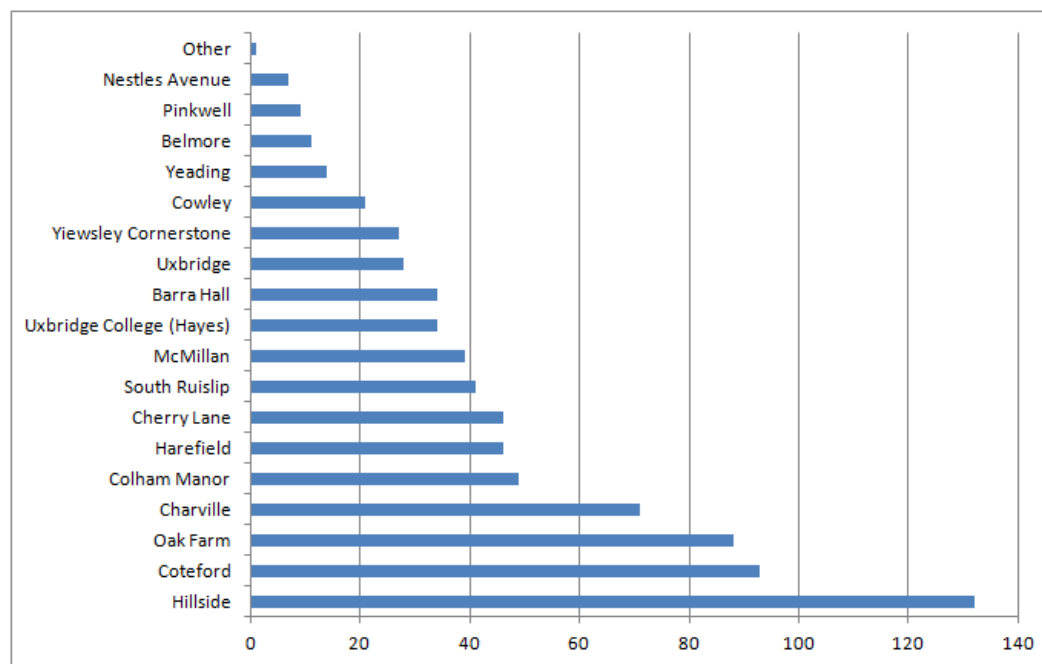
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## Summary of responses

The majority of respondents (**518 or 88%**) to the consultation questionnaire are parents/carers/guardians who currently use one, or more, of Hillingdon's Children's Centres.

The chart below shows the spread of responses as shown in the chart and table below:



Hillside	132	Barra Hall	34
Coteford	93	Uxbridge	28
Oak Farm	88	Yiewsley Cornerstone	27
Charville	71	Cowley	21
Colham Manor	49	Yeading	14
Harefield	46	Belmore	11
Cherry Lane	46	Pinkwell	9
South Ruislip	41	Nestles Avenue	7
McMillan	39	Other	1
Uxbridge College (Hayes)	34		

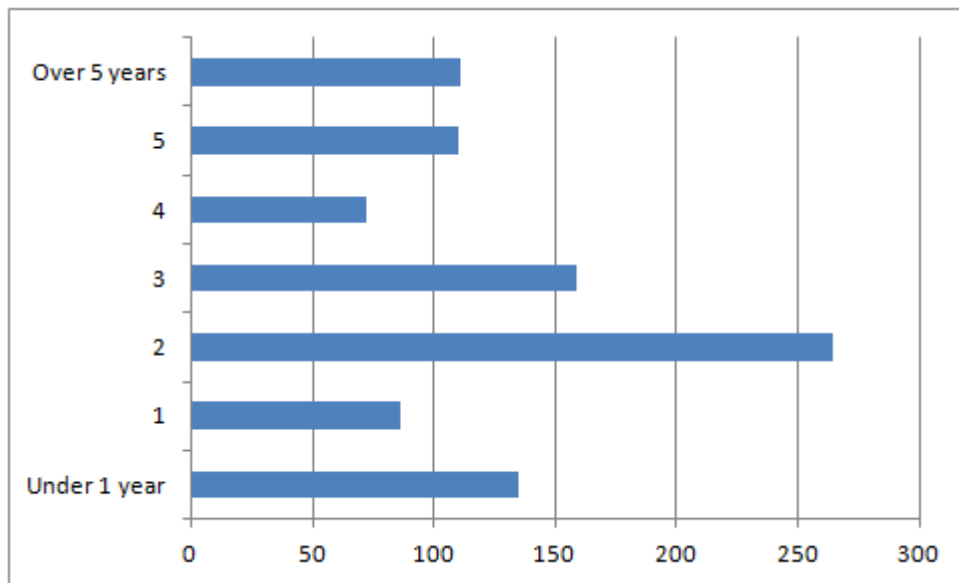
*N.b. Some respondents indicate they use more than one children's centre.*

**4** respondents indicated that they were representatives of a Local Authority.

**18** respondents indicated that they were representatives of a children's centre.

**51** respondents indicated that they were responding in another capacity.

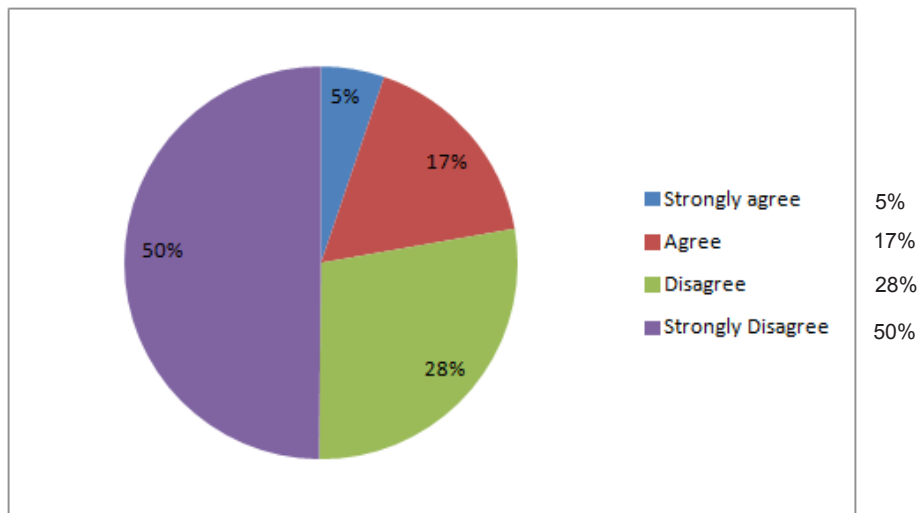
Of the parents/carers/guardians that responded, the age of their youngest child ranged as follows:



Under 1 year	135
1	86
2	264
3	159
4	72
5	110
Over 5 years	111

**Question 1: To what extent do you agree that children’s centre services would benefit from being more consistent; delivering a more coordinated and flexible service?**

There were **612** responses to this question. The majority, **476** respondents (78%), either disagree or strongly disagree that children’s centre services would benefit from being more consistent; delivering a more coordinated and flexible service.



**136 (22%)** respondents either agree or strongly agree that children’s centre services would benefit from being more consistent; delivering a more coordinated and flexible service.

The reasons for disagreement can be categorised into the following common themes:

- Children’s Centres are already working well, they don’t need to change.
- Services will no longer be tailored to the needs of the local community.
- There will be less choice of services.

The responses suggest that there is a high level of satisfaction with the existing children’s centre service and that children’s centres are highly valued by families in Hillingdon. Consequently the majority of respondents do not see the need for change or improvement.

The individual responses indicate that there is an assumption that delivering a more coordinated and flexible service means that there will be a reduction in staff and, if this is the case, this will lead to additional pressures in delivering children’s centre services, resulting in poor quality services that are diluted across the range of centres.

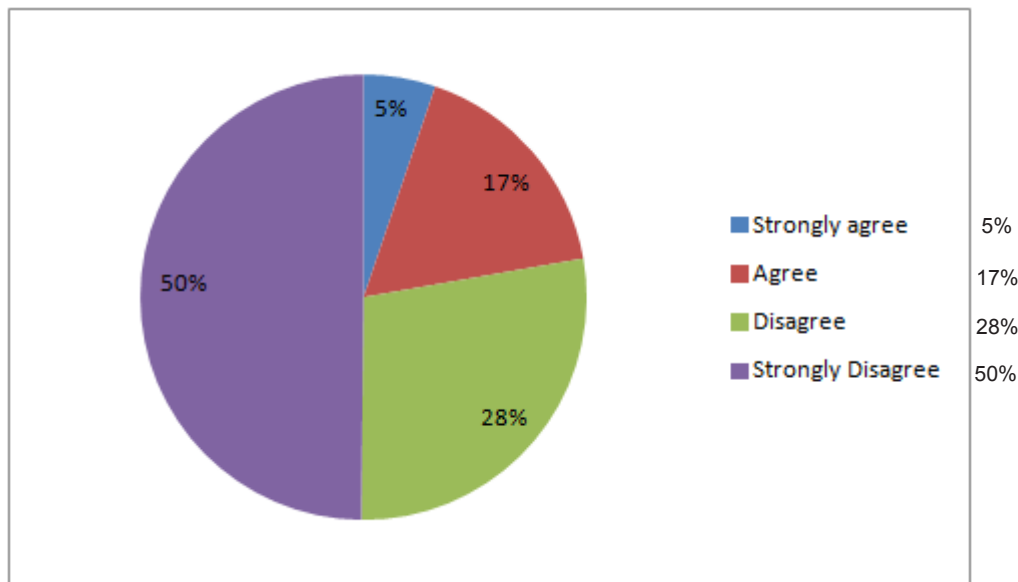
The responses to this question also suggest that there is an assumption that services will be reduced, that this will lead to a lack of choice for families and increased demand on remaining services, resulting in services being less accessible.



An assumption is also made by respondents that taking a more coordinated approach means that services will no longer be responsive to the needs of the local community and that staff will be relocated.

**Question 2: To what extent do you agree that the council’s proposal for redesigning the children’s centre service into 5 hubs and 11 linked centres is reasonable?**

There were **612** responses to this question. The majority, **476** respondents (78%), either disagree or strongly disagree that the council’s proposal for redesigning the children’s centre service into 5 hubs and 11 linked centres is reasonable.



**136 (22%)** respondents either agree or strongly agree that the council’s proposal for redesigning the children’s centres into 5 hubs and 11 linked centres is reasonable.

The reasons for disagreement can be categorised into the following common themes:

- Good relationships between parents and staff will be lost.
- Children’s Centres will no longer be able to respond to local need.
- Services will be diluted, of poorer quality and harder to access.

The individual comments in relation to this question do not significantly differ from those related to question 1.

Existing relationships with children’s centre staff are cited often in the individual responses as being of significant importance to families. The comments suggest concern that any changes to the service will mean the end of those relationships through a lack of continuity of staff at each centre.

Many comments indicate that having a local centre that is within walking distance to service-users is very important, particularly for new mothers with very young children who find it difficult to access public transport.

There is a perception that the proposed reduction in children's centres will increase demand at other centres, therefore services will be more difficult to access and no longer tailored to the local community.

**Question 3: If you currently use Hillside or Uxbridge College (Hayes) Children’s centres, do you have any suggestions for alternative ways in which families can be supported in these areas?**

The proposed changes to the current children’s centre service delivery model present the discontinuation in the use of Hillside Children’s Centre in Northwood and Uxbridge College Children’s Centre in Hayes. For the purpose of mitigating any adverse impact on families living in these localities, should the proposed new delivery model be implemented, responses from those that use these two centres have been reviewed separately.

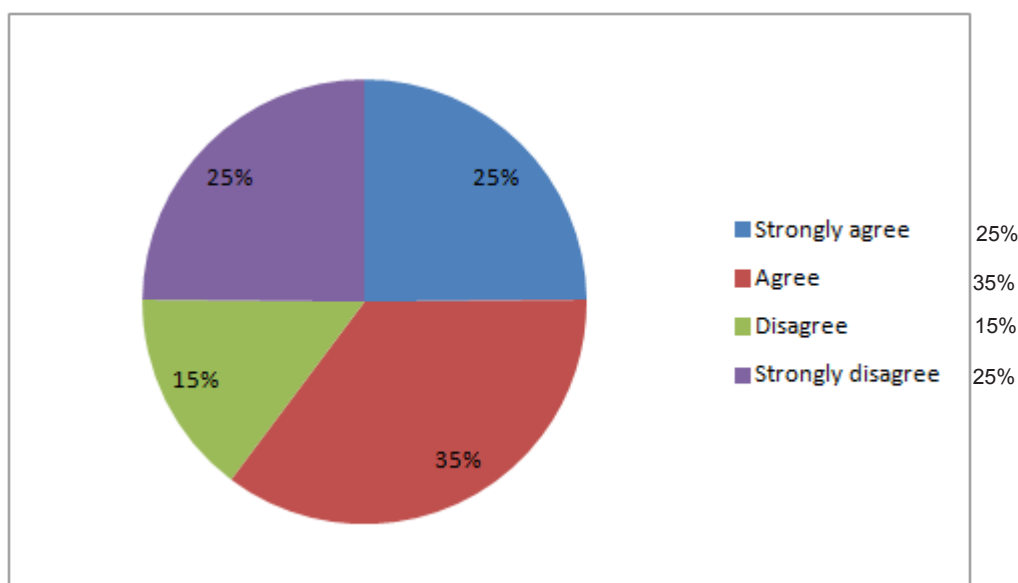
Of those that responded to the consultation:

**132** indicated that they currently use Hillside Children’s Centre.

**34** indicated that they currently use Uxbridge College, Hayes Children’s Centre.

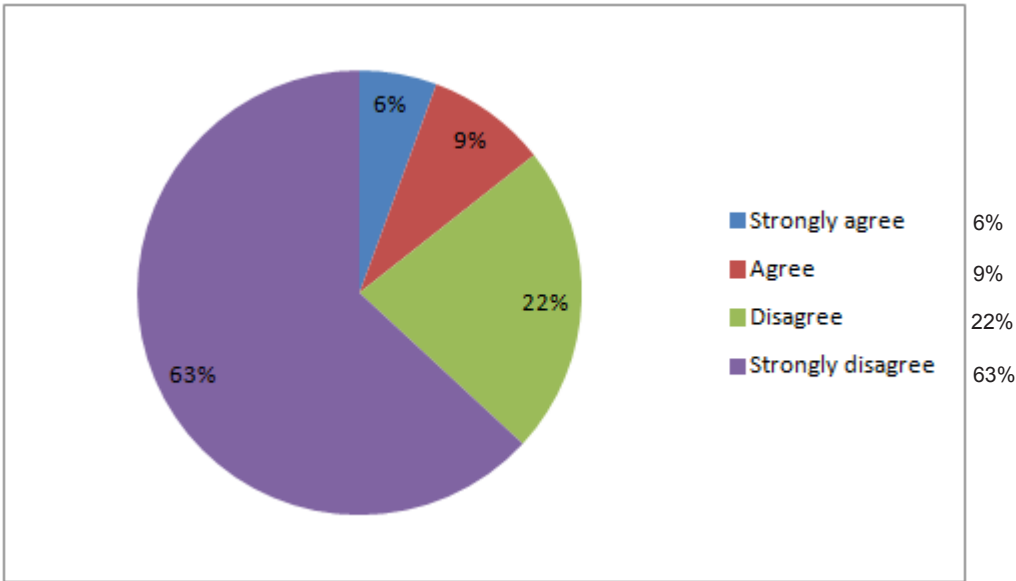
When asked, to what extent do you agree that children’s centre services would benefit from being more consistent; delivering a more coordinated and flexible service?:

- 60% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed; and
- 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

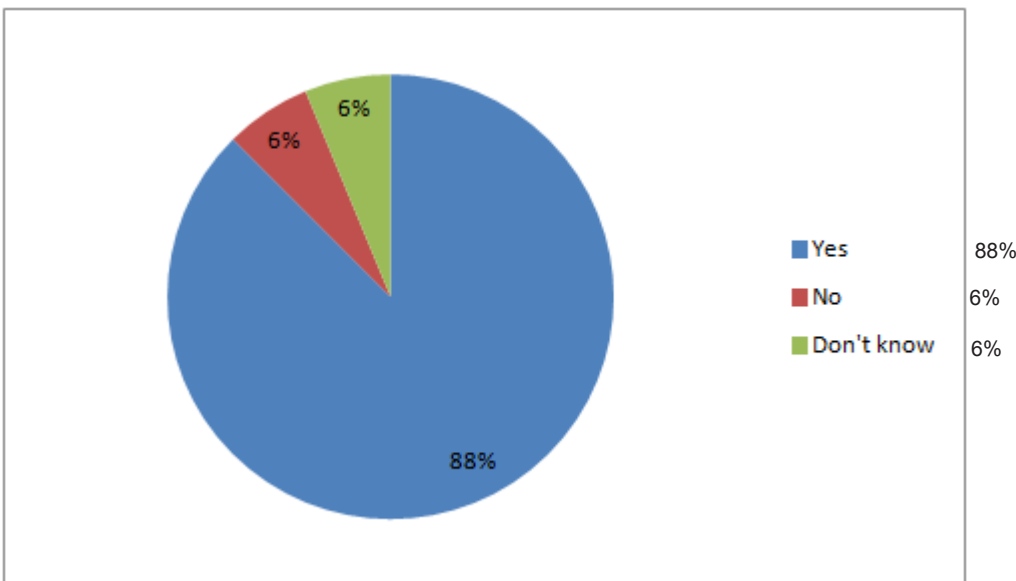


When asked, to what extent do you agree that the council’s proposal for redesigning the children’s centre service into 5 hubs and 11 linked centres is reasonable?:

- 15% either agreed or strongly agreed; and
- 85% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.



The majority (88%) of users of Hillside and Uxbridge College (Hayes) children’s centres that responded to the consultation believe the proposals, if implemented, would disadvantage residents in Hillingdon.



The common reason for this is a perceived loss of local, accessible support for vulnerable new mothers, which could lead to isolation and financial hardship for those required to travel further to access services.

In addition, there is concern that the closure of these two centres will lead to increased pressure on other centres who are considered to be already oversubscribed.

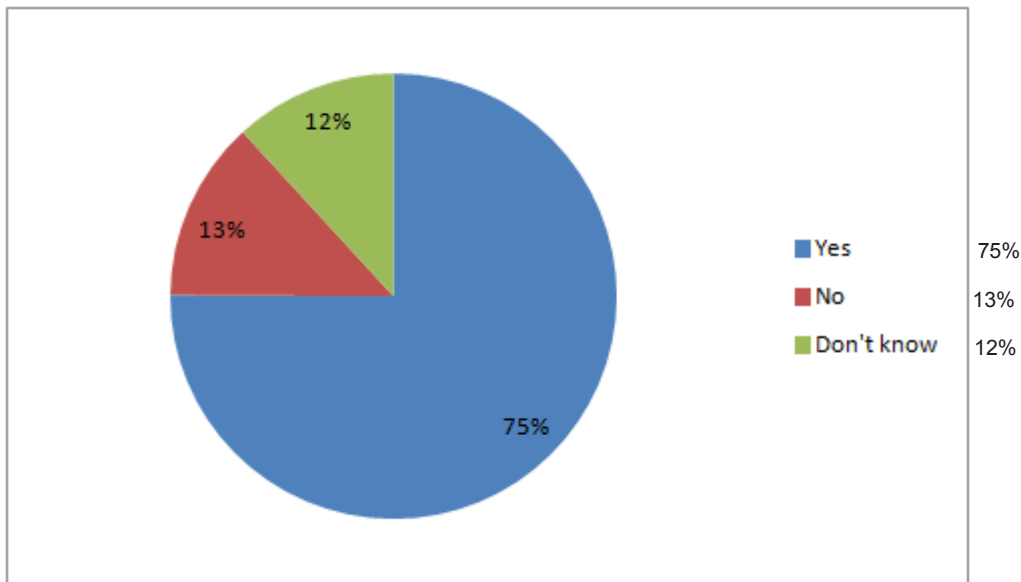
Users of Hillside and Uxbridge College (Hayes) Children's centres were provided an opportunity to offer suggestions for alternative ways in which families can be supported in these areas. The common responses are as follows:

- Don't close these children's centres.
- Find another venue in the local area.
- Provide free transport to other centres.

**Question 4: Do you believe these proposals will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?**

Overall, there were **572** responses to this question.

- **431** respondents answered 'yes';
- **75** respondents answered 'no'; and
- **68** respondents answered 'don't know'.



The majority of respondents to the consultation believe that the proposals would disadvantage residents in Hillingdon if implemented. The reasons for this mirror those cited by the users of Hillside and Uxbridge College (Hayes) children's centres.

The common concerns are:

- that reducing the number of centres will mean there will no longer be sufficient capacity to meet individual needs; and
- that families will find services harder to access due to having to travel further - which in turn could lead to isolation and financial hardship for the most vulnerable families.

**Question 5: Do you have any suggestions for how the council can continue to improve children's centre services in the future?**

The consultation questionnaire provided respondents an opportunity to provide suggestions for alternative ways of working and improvements to the children's centre programme. There were **452** responses to this question.

The responses indicate that parents strongly oppose the local authority having overall management of the children's centres and that children's centres benefit from being independently managed. The common responses to this question were:

- Keep the children's centres as they are.
- Keep centres closely linked with schools to support children with transition to school.
- Maintain current levels of services and staff.
- Invest more funding into children's centre services to be able to offer a wider range of services.
- Consider working parents by offering more flexible services in the evenings and at weekends.
- Increase the number of places available at sessions/at popular sessions.
- Offer activities for a wider age range for parents with more than one child.
- Improve the booking system, offer bookings online.



## **Key themes of additional correspondence.**

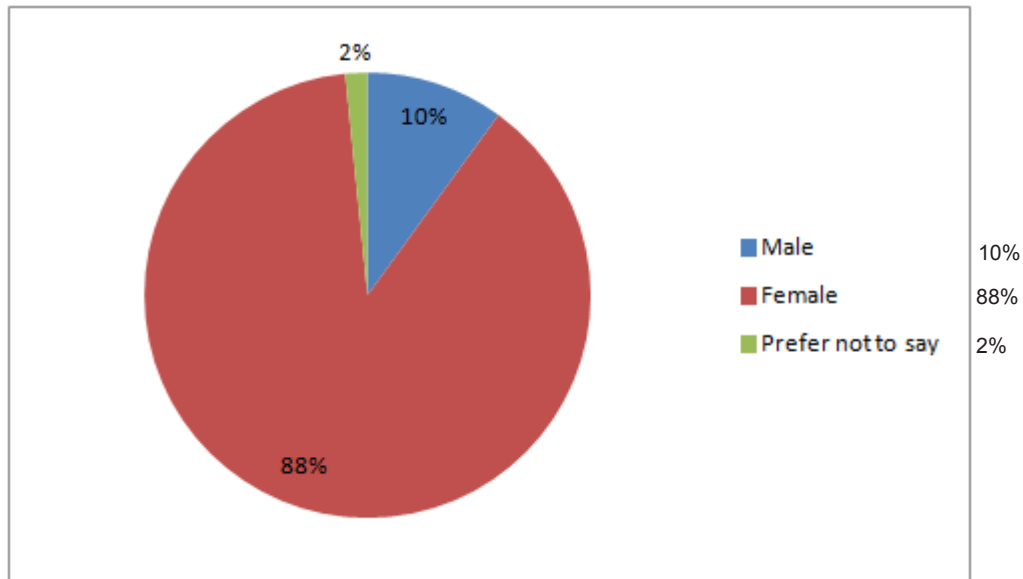
The common concerns raised through additional correspondence during the consultation period are:

- The closure of children's centres presents a risk of vulnerable parents becoming isolated.
- Many parents in the areas where children's centres are proposed to be closed will not be able to afford, or have the capacity, to travel further for support.
- Hillside Children's Centre is a 'lifeline' to desperate mums and if closed it will be a great loss to the community.
- Future provision will be overstretched and unable to accommodate the families where children's centres are proposed to be closed. Views are that this will lead to financial strain on the local authority in the future.
- That 'free' services will no longer be provided to council tax paying families, who are on low incomes.
- That the new model will result in a loss of relationships between parents, children's centres and schools, which currently aid with the child's transition to school.

One correspondent suggests that a way of keeping children's centre's open would be for families to pay for some services to ensure the children's centre programme can continue to meet demand.

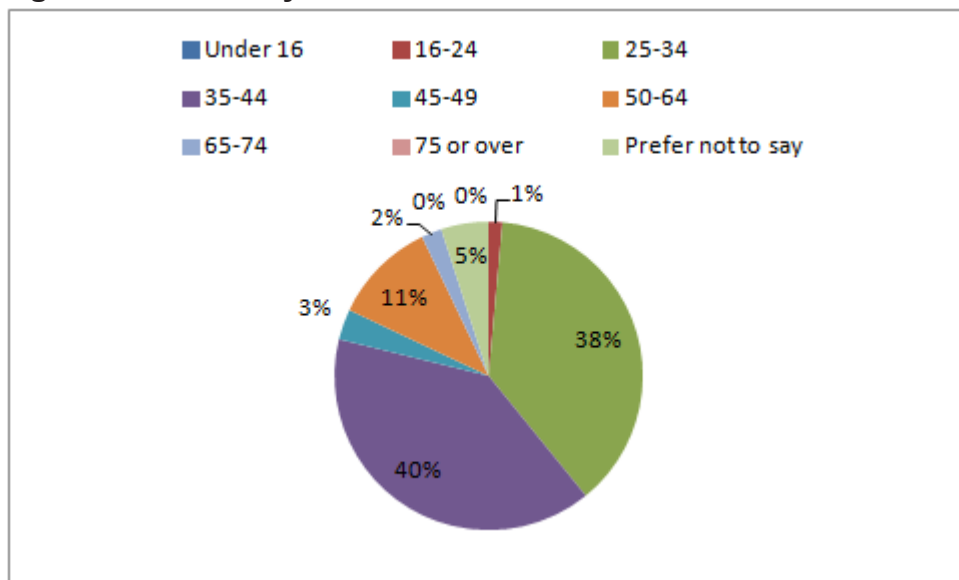
## Appendix A: Profile of questionnaire respondents

### Gender - are you:



Male	56
Female	494
Prefer not to say	9

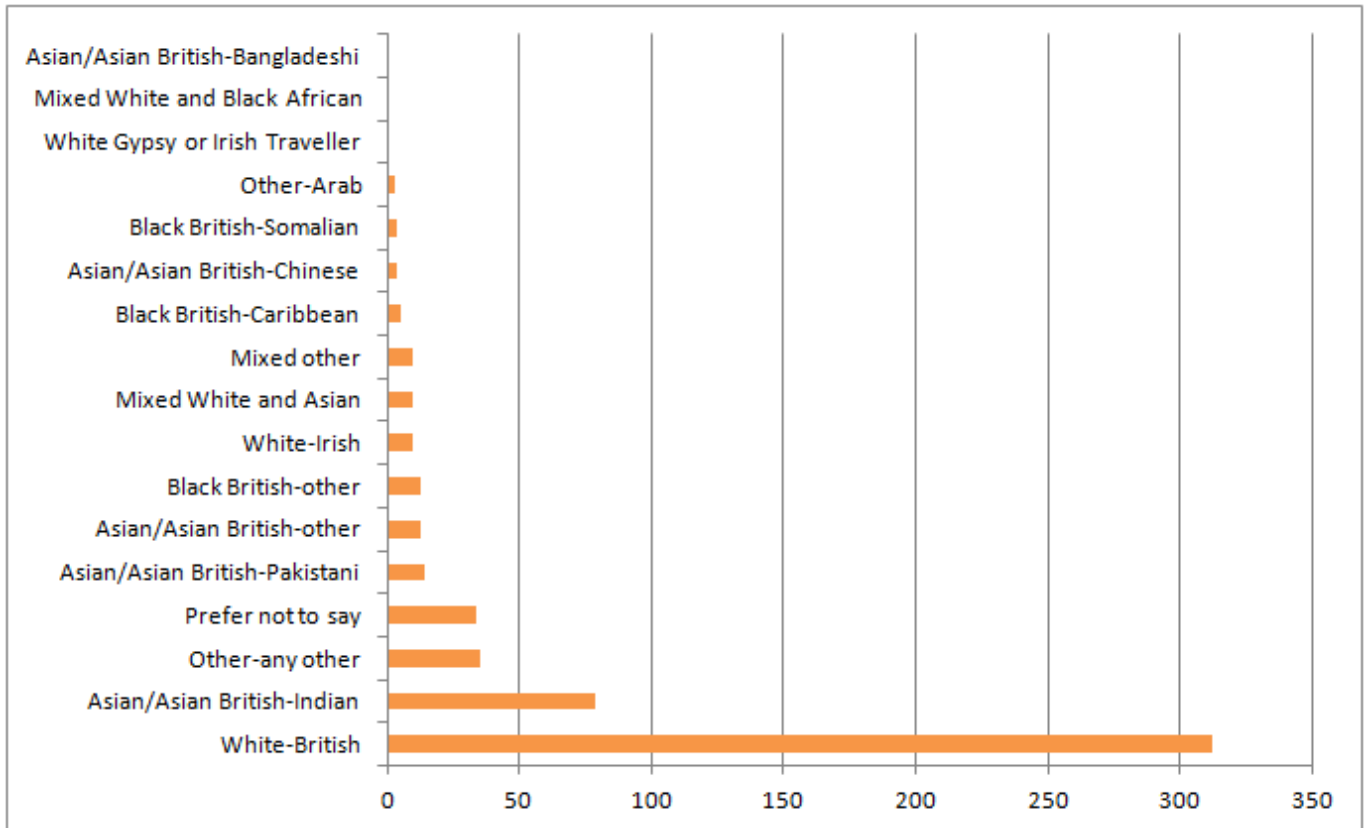
### Age - how old are you?



Under 16	0
16=24	8
25-34	212
35-44	223

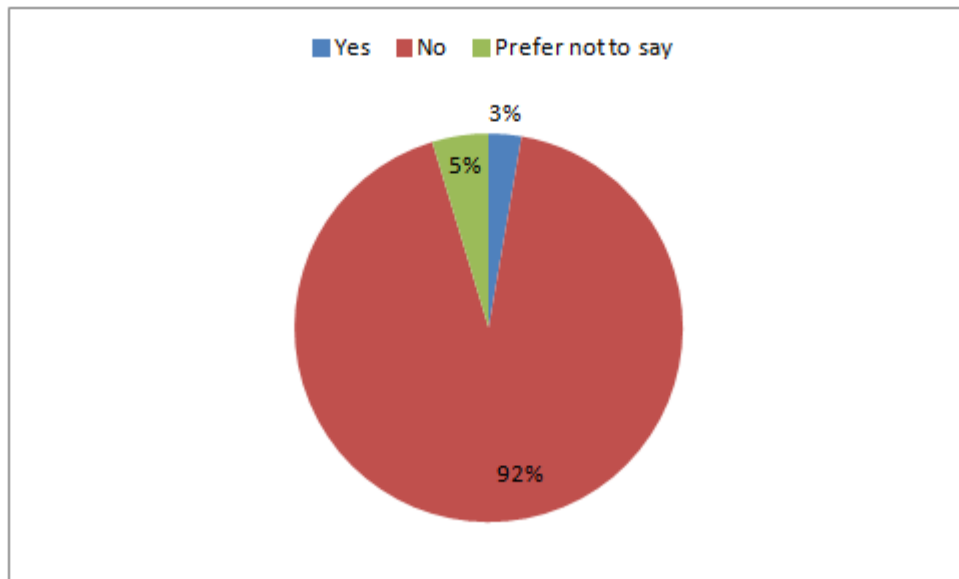
45-49	18
50-64	61
65-74	12
75 or over	0
Prefer not to say	28

### Ethnicity - how would you describe your ethnicity?



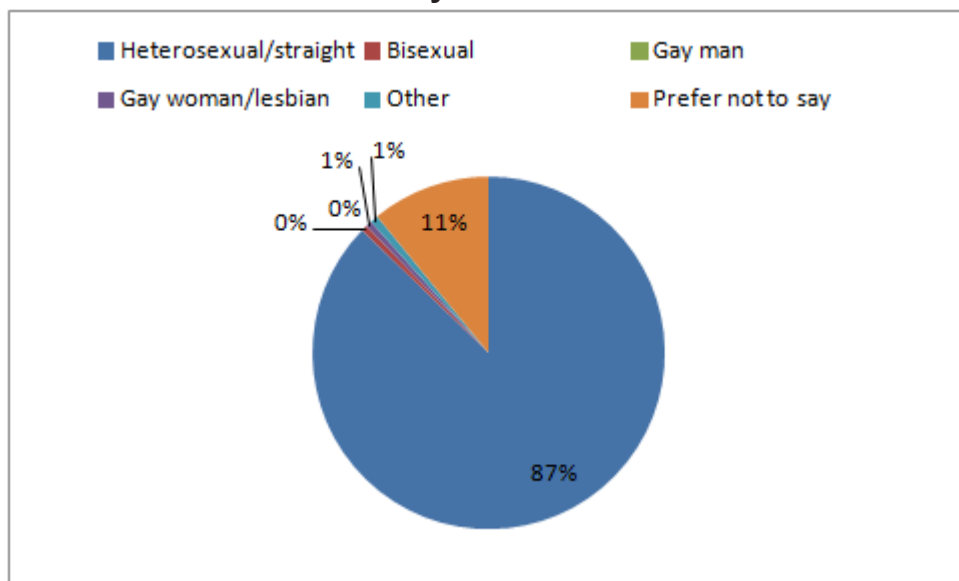
White-British	312	Black British-Caribbean	5
Asian/Asian British-Indian	79	Asian/Asian British-Chinese	4
Other-any other	35	Black British-Somalian	4
Prefer not to say	34	Other-Arab	3
Asian/Asian British-Pakistani	14	White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1
Asian/Asian British-other	13	Mixed White and Black African	1
White Irish	10	Asian/Asian British-Bangladeshi	1
Mixed White and Asian	10		
Mixed other	10		

### Disability - do you consider yourself to have a disability?



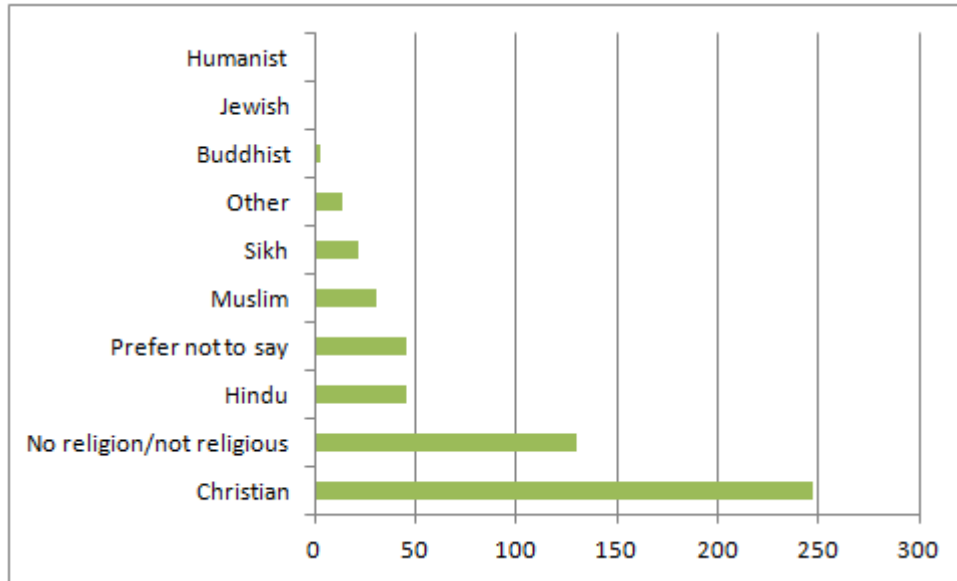
Yes	15
No	512
Prefer not to say	26

### Sexual orientation - what is your sexual orientation?



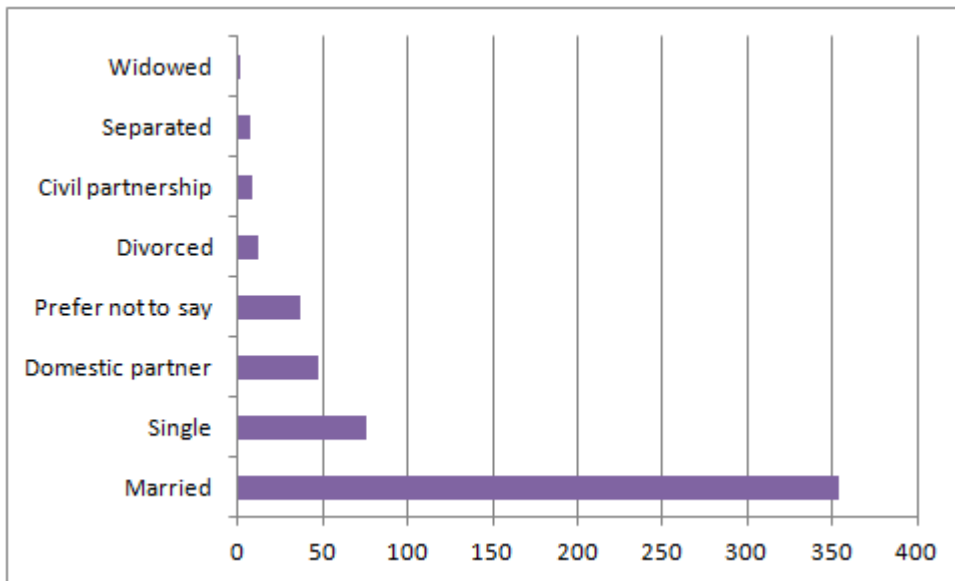
Heterosexual/straight	472
Bisexual	3
Gay man	0
Gay woman/lesbian	3
Other	4
Prefer not to say	59

## Religion - what is your religion/belief?



Christian	247
No religion/not religious	130
Hindu	46
Prefer not to say	46
Muslim	31
Sikh	22
Other	14
Buddhist	3
Jewish	1
Humanist	0

## Marital status - what is your marital status?



Married	354
Single	76
Domestic partner	48
Prefer not to say	37
Divorced	12
Civil partnership	8
Separated	7
Widowed	1

## Appendix B: Individual comments from the consultation questionnaire

(comments have not been edited, however any references to information that could be considered confidential have been redacted).

### Question 1: To what extent do you agree that children's centre services would benefit from being more consistent; delivering a more coordinated and flexible service?

- I use Oak Farm and know all the team. I don't believe that a CC run by beaurocrats would give local people the same service. The team know me and my circumstances intimately and I have confidence that they meet all my needs and offer unbiased information and help. Reducing staff will always reduce the services offered! Please put people before beaurocracy.
- This is a leading question. The consultation document provides no evidence how the proposed changes will achieve this goal without detriment to other goals e.g. local and accessible support.
- I think the way the centres are run is fine. One of the main benefits of the current children's centres is that they are local to several areas meaning they aren't overwhelmingly busy and you have the option to attend more than one on different days
- The Centre has been of great service to us and to many others. The staff and the everyday running has been extremely professional and totally disagree to any changes.
- Children centre is very well run as it is any changes will have an impact on the safeguarding of children
- I feel as a working mum children's centres do not always suit my daughters needs to much is focused on unworking parents.
- The people running the centre currently know the families, the needs of the area and are trusted members of the community, if centers are run by hubs the community support and needs will be lost
- The current session at hillside work very well
- I don't think this needs to be done centrally, local centres can put on their own timetable to meet the needs of the local parents
- Hillside children's centre has offered my family & I so much support throughout my pregnancies where both my maternity appointments were there. It meant I could access my community midwife with ease, particularly helpful when heavily pregnant. Hillside also offered me support as a new mother and my children have enjoyed the classes held there. I received breastfeeding support and have built up a strong rapport with the staff there. To be moved to Coteford children's centre (which is already over subscribed now Pinner children centre has closed) or harefield children's centre (not accessible unless you drive) is to be honest not good enough. It is not nearby and I feel that by being inaccessible future parents will not feel supported on the daunting journey of being a parent.
- The service provided at the moment is already working really well. The children centres working together as a locality but essentially being stand alone centres ensures that parents and families within that area get excellent support
- It already delivers an excellent service targetting the needs of the area it covers

- My Children's Centre already offers a full programme
- The consolidation of services and creating hubs leads to a busier and more pressured service model. The whole point of a useful children's centre is for it to be local. As an isolated mother in need of help or support there is no way I would have been able to travel further afield.
- Leave things as they are!!!
- It should be tailored to meet the needs of the children in the given community
- I think the services are fine as they are
- Different areas have different needs. Services need to be specific to area needs.
- The needs of the communities differ by location and children's centres should be able to match those needs which they would t be able to do if they were streamlined
- The centre already offer a great service I can't see what improvement needs to be done
- I feel that each childrens centre caters for the needs of the families that attend that centre. There is no one fits all modle.
- The children's centres already offer an excellent service to parents, I am shocked that in the north of the borough there will be no provision in Northwood or Northwood Hills for parents, we pay our council tax the same as everyone else so should have access to local centres as well as the residents of Hayes and Uxbridge where all the centres seem to be. It is highly unfair for residents of Northwood/Northwood Hills, and definitely not equal opportunities
- It doesn't make sense - more co-ordinated yet flexible?
- Disagree with propsed changes because of LA hubs are often empty and don't run lots of activities
- The hillside centre supported me a lot, It is the only one for Northwood Hills and Northwood. The staff is lovely and the centre is small.
- nice that centres have their individuality. Makes it nicer to go different places for variety
- It is important to provide a variety of services at different times to allow residents to choose the right centre for them. Different centres have different approaches and attitudes and some residents feel more comfortable in certain settings and surroundings than others.
- I believe that each centre needs to provide services on a need basis
- Because the system works well how it is. The children's centre listen to the parents and work with us, it's flexible and personable
- Each centre should be able to taylor the groups and services offered according to the community needs
- If it's not broke why fix it
- Do not believe it would be any more coordinated compared to now
- Service is well run at the moment
- Each centre needs to be different to enable parents to select which centre best suits them
- I like the variety of different options at the children's centres - it means you can go to different centres for a different experience.



- All areas in the borough are not of the same needs, whether the needs be financial, cultural or other and therefore to apply the same principal to all children's centres is not meeting the needs of the individual families in areas around the diversity of this borough.
- The current system worked really well for us. Being able to visit Hillside as new parents when we had breastfeeding concerns, for example, made life a lot more comfortable for us. Hillside is only a short drive away. We would not have been comfortable having to drive our newborn any further than that in order to receive help.
- Individual services cater for the local needs of residents better than having a blanket model
- I think they are in a unique position to customise their service to the needs of the local parents and do a good job. If you try to make it 'consistent' across the borough you will not be meeting the specific local needs.
- Every industry benefits from consistent, coordinated services, however the proposed changes to the children's centres are not going to deliver that, so I feel as if this question is moot. You plan to remove good children's centres, with excellent links to schools and the local community and place them into a bureaucratic system of pencil pushing and unnecessarily long winded systems to try and deliver the same services. A huge part of what we do is ready children for school and nursery and you're taking us away from the settings we already work in partnership with. Your document claims one of our main aims is to ensure "children develop as confident and curious learners and able to benefit from the transition to school" so how can taking us a step further away from the schools good for the children and families in the localities we service? Every children's centre struggles and works tirelessly to make links with the families living around us, encouraging them to access services to help them now and lay good foundations for their children in the future. It is a delicate relationship that takes time to build and any big changes risk damaging the relationships with the families we've made.
- This will lead to reduced accessibility of services.
- More consistent, how can the Children Staff Centre be more consistent than they already are? The staff are dedicated to delivering high quality support to some of Hillingdon's most vulnerable families. To close down further children's centres is a disgrace.
- Each individual centre runs individual programmes, events and schedules to meet the needs of their users. They cannot run the same schedules for every centre as it depends on the users and what they require. I feel the centres are already consistent so do not agree that by grouping them together would make them more consistent. If anything you would lose some of the schedules as there will be less staff to run all the classes residents currently have available.
- Local tailor made services are more appealing
- Each centre should be able to respond in a bespoke way to the local community need. Parents should not have to travel to multiple sites to receive services and lots of local centres provide this. Staff at children's centres know and respond to the local need
- they already provide that service despite underfunding and staffing shortages

- I think they are already - I found the service in Hillingdon extremely helpful after the birth of my first child.
- The Council are unable to run existing centres - a centralised system will mean cuts
- The proposal does not clarify what this looks like other than consolidated services which will only mean busier remaining centres. The individuality of the centres makes them appealing
- I am concerned that the new proposals will have a negative impact on the quality of services. I believe all centres should have a dedicated manager who is line managed by the headteacher if the centre is on a school site
- The children's centres I have visited on a regular basis are always organised and consistent.
- Misleading question. Service is already at that level and I find it very hard to believe how the proposed change is of any help
- The current programme is working effectively so why have the need to change it?
- I feel that the children centres already deliver a wonderful service and the staff work very hard. Each centre is individual and built up through the families and flexible sessions that are provided. Families can get help from birth, parenting services, play sessions. The service they provided is vital for growing families
- I would be most concerned that the quality in some centres eg Oak Farm would be diluted.
- This centre is more local to me
- It may reduce services at the children's centre
- I am happy with how the centre is currently running. We use the centre every week and would like to see more activities in the afternoon as my child has changed her sleeping pattern.
- It doesn't give us much choice of where to go
- Less choice and unsure of what options we will have
- Happy with the services at the moment, if you cut down there will be less for the children to do
- I like it at the moment not too sure how it will look after, it is already flexible enough
- I think they need to serve the needs of their particular communities, with a strong central offer but then tailored to the needs of their community - this is also a very biased question
- removing us from schools we already have good links with
- proximity is the key to make those services useful for its users
- I have strong concerns about the loss of the Hillside Children's Centre
- The current model works well. This is also an extremely leading question.
- After having my little boy, I used a number of children's centres for various support and groups. Each centre excelled in different areas and combined together I was able to gain a rich and varied support network. Each centre had similar programmes, however had their own way of delivering, therefore enabling me and my baby to experience a wide range of techniques in order to support my son in his development.
- Because the centre is on its own positively influencing and supportive

- The services delivered at Hillside are excellent and I don't believe that restructuring will improve this.
- I prefer the Centres as they are. I like that it is the same staff, friendly faces.. sessions that work!.. be moved to different children centres i dont know .. i like the training and how they change to suit the needs of the community.
- I Love my centre, and i dont want staff to change or worse have to travel further to enjoy sessions that my child enjoys.
- Oak Farm childrens centre is in such a brilliant area, alongside the school. They provide a great service which local residents and parents use all the time.
- works so well where they are why change it is so easy accessible for so many people where it is.
- It's good already, no changes needed.
- The CCs are amazing offering a coordinadted service that is multi professional.The plans will CUT services and staff.Local communities will suffer and the Council will pay more in the long run
- The children's centre's already work flexibly. The centres run groups that meet the needs of the local community. They already work together signposting people to other centres when necessary. A prescriptive approach will not meet the needs of the community!
- I think the children's centres work well in the schools. My child has been going to the children's cente since he was a baby. I had some problems that the staff helped me with. The family support worker was great! They helped settle him at nursery. We continued to use the centre until he started school. Why fix it if it's not broken?
- No further cuts should take place. The centres should stay as they are and provide vital services and should be given more funding
- I dont believe the proposed changes will achieve this. I think there are alternatives ways to achieve a more coordinated approach.
- The Childrens Centres deliver services to their direct communities. many are fully integrated to the schools within which they are based. It seems to me like the proposal is merely a cost saving one and not one built on the desire to improve childrens services. I believe that there is a great risk to some schools of having unfamiliar childrens centres employees on the premises - this is a real safeguarding risk if a school does not have visibility of who is on their premises. I have seen the great work that childrens centres have done in conjunction with the school with which they are linked. I do not believe that your case or evidence is compelling.
- They need to stay local and regular and be linked with the school because a lot of the children who use that Children's center will then go on to use the Nursery etc
- I feel Oak farm childrens centre is managed exceptionally well as it is under the control of Oak Farm school. It was invaluable to me when my children were in the early years.
- Children build relationships with the staff and routine is extremely important in building their futures. Such changes could have negative effects.

- The Children Centre and in particular the Cherry Lane Children's Centre, West Drayton already carries out a consistent coordinated/ flexible service with positive proof amongst the users.
- The children's centres are so vital to so many young families. i believe that what your saying would dilute the services. The children's centre at oak farm for me was like a lifeline for me when my little girl was younger and I have met some lifelong friends from the baby group that was offered there. [Redacted] are fantastic and would be a tremendous shame to not have them for me and so many other families.
- Some are excellent some are not so good
- I think the children's centres need to remain where they are - linked to a school or community. I used the children's centre when my kids were younger and it was so beneficial for me as I had a child in the school Ns one at the children's centre
- Its very helpfull for us
- Centralising the service would result in less efficiency and personalised support within communities. Best practice could be watered down . I believe other ways to improve under performing centres should be sought.
- No community is the same and therefore the services don't need to be consistent but should be adapted to meet the needs of the centre users and local residents
- The children's centre are doing great as they are
- Whilst I think everyone can strive for excellence I do not think that creating a hub will improve children centre services. Rather by basing staff at the civic centre it will dilute the valuable service and consistency offered to children and families. This will mean new mum's may not seek support for postnatal depression, families with concerns about their child may not feel they can seek advice easily, breastfeeding rates will decrease, mums may not be able to travel to the centres offering certain services, early interventions to protect children will be missed or lost and volunteers may be less willing to support services as they may have to pay out for travel or not receive the support needed.
- I think that having services available locally would be more beneficial to people in the local community. I think this proposal will make it harder for people to access vital services and be bad for local children.
- I believe they should be managed in house by managers on the ground who daily see the people with the issues.
- It is a great benefit to the whole community and would be strongly missed!
- Each children's centre is unique to each local community, that is the charm of having them locally. To co-ordinate them as you suggest would loose their charm. Each community has different needs and the staff at these centres should be able to run them with what they value is important for local residents
- Children's centres cater to the needs of those in the community and therefore plan what they need for that. They shouldn't be told what they have to do as they do an amazing job already catering to the community

- the children centre is managed efficiently. and is taking a big part of our family life. as we did move house to be near to the centre. tec...
- Having a local children's centre with consistent staff members and support is invaluable to new parents
- The way the services run at the moment should remain. I visit the children centre at least twice a week. So valuable to me and my daughter.
- As a resident of Northwood Hill, I strongly believe that Hillside Childrens centre serves the community needs perfectly as it stands. Should this service close, the flexibility would diminish as there is nothing else in the local area that serves the mother/baby community in its existing format.
- Oak farm children safety
- Children function individually, and their needs should be looked at individually.
- I don't believe that children's. Entrea could actually be an more supportive or flexible to the needs that they know exist in their specific local areas. Only the staff in the children's centres and coordinating schools can share appropriate data and information, can be completely aware of what areas for development lie in their immediate local community and can cater for these ins personalised and friendly manor.
- I don't know what this means?
- I am a mother of a 3 years daughter and I have been attending Cherry Lane Children's Centre activities since we moved here. I've found an outstanding place, with such diverse educational activities for all small children, with warm, caring and professional staff and a remarkable management. The activities mix fun and education in a really comprehensive way. The effort put by all staff representatives had its results in time; the centre is really popular within the community and us, as parents, we are really glad to have found such a remarkable place, with such a educational grounded focus on our children. Cherry Lane Children's Centre manager, mrs Carole Wright, proves such a relentless attention and creativity towards new activities for children to be involved in and she really made this centre a tremendous dynamic space. Children Centres are not just there to support children. They function in a way which supports all family members and cuts of over £400,000 for 2017/18 will indeed mean job cuts and job cuts also mean a reduction in services, a reduction that would mean that the centre would not be able to offer the same services, at the same level of professionalism as it did so far. It would be absolutely unthinkable for me to see this centre changed in any way or, even worse, shut down. The Cherry Lane Children's Centre is such a creative part of our community and a place with great educational activities and warm people. It served all our community for so many years and all the children in the area have attended to it activities.
- I don't think the council has explained in a really transparent way what "consistent, coordinated and flexible" way means. Also, in the proposal of the Future of Children's centre it is not being explained in a really detailed manner what these changes would mean in terms of services for children and parents.
- I attend Coteford Children's centre with the amazing staff and facilities that I don't know what I would have done without after my twins were born in August 2015. I still attend two classes there free of

charge, which is a blessing for me as I am a postdoctoral research associate and simply can't afford to return to work (with the costs of nursery for twins in this area) until the government contributes towards childcare when twins 3.

- I feel the centres coordinate between themselves well now as it is
- Some centres are amazing - it would be wrong to dilute these services in order to improve failing centres. These centres should be given extra resources to improve rather than taking away resources from ones that are effective.
- Hillside children centre is the closest Hillingdon children centre to me and has supported me in many occasions (e.g. breastfeeding, weaning, positive parenting classes). It would be a great loss for all the members of my family not to be able to enjoy the activities and services organised by Hillside children centre.
- My personal experience of my local children's centre has been immensely positive and I am very concerned about the proposed changes. I feel these centres and the staff, services are a huge asset to the borough and changing the management, proposed closures and reducing the budget will only cause detriment.
- The way the children's centres are run now is far better than what is proposed.
- I don't feel more structure would work in such a diverse borough. There is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to parenting.
- Each centre can then tailor to their local children's needs
- my children's centre is close to where I live and easy to access, I know all the staff and I trust them
- Not consider accessibility to those in northwood. What's the point in streamlining when people can't access them in the first place.
- I disagree because I already have a good relationship with all staff members at Colham Manor children centre, my son is also very familiar with the staff members at Colham Manor children centre it will make him unsettled being introduced to someone new every session which I feel the hub method will do. I find the staff at Colham very approachable and welcoming, this is also the only centre I currently attend and this is the reason why. I'm happy with all the services Colham Manor provides and. Don't feel there is a need to change that. I also feel it's beneficial for the school to stay connected with the children centre they both work very well together and provide amazing services together for example cooking session for families and school fayre.
- I don't think Hillside should be closed
- I enjoy the services the centres offer at the present time
- I feel joining the centres will reduce the level of quality and number of activities available
- They already offer this service
- By centralising this will be taking services away from those who need it most. Reducing the total offering will mean oversubscription to classes and support as well as making it further to travel to access these services. These changes will affect those on maternity who naturally have a lower income

but desperately need the support and vulnerable children who may not have the chance to be socialised.

- The Children's Centres you have decided to close are vital to the community and help thousands of new parents.
- Hillside my is local centre the staff are amazing! Plus I get massive support from the family support worker at hillside she has helped me through some difficult times with my child's behaviour and my low moods by always checking in on me and always making me feel so welcomed at hillside I will be utterly upset if I lose her support
- This does not allow for individual children's centre to meet the needs of their clients. This is a cosy-cuttingbexercise.
- The childrens centre is used continually by the local community and provides plots of different servicesas well as placements for training social workers.
- The children centre provide much needed support to so many families they are literally a lifeline for some.This would for sure have a huge negative effect
- Having more centers in local areas is essential it is so hard to get out and about with a baby and going far is not an option. The children's center was so helpful to me but if it wasn't in such close location this wouldn't have been an option for me.
- The children's centres should be bespoke to the needs of the local community that it services
- Because closing Hillside would mean all those families will either go to Coteford or nowhere. I've used both centres and I like how they are run, both differently, approximately to their area and the families they have on their books. Residents first, you say....I hope you listen to all the backlash to your proposal.
- need all the services currently provided
- The service I have received currently has been great and I'm not sure why you need to change it.
- I understand that there are budget pressures and savings need to be made. However taking this from CC structure is unacceptable! Cluster Centers have proven unsuccessful as structure option with many of them rated inadequate. Centralising management also will bring troubles as LA staff are not based in the centres, nor do they have the understanding to handle the issues 'on the ground' ( No offence to anyone in particular but I work for a London LA and see the disconnection, bureaucracy and wasteful resources management daily). Rather than having political promises of keeping the council tax at the same level, why not have a small increase to cover the shortfall? Services at CCs are already stretched and reducing the available centres would make things even worse. A simple example: my near 3year old has speech problems and we were advised to attend Attention Hillingdon workshop. This can only be run in small groups which takes more resources. Thankfully 1 space was available and we were lucky but how many children are waiting to be helped? So imagine less CCs, less professionals and even more limited options for parents and children? I am also not impressed with Hillingdon as CCs here don't have a lot of provision for second or 3rd time mums (again resources restrictions) but those

will be welcomed and appreciated. Other London boroughs, especially Inner London boroughs have more extended CC provision providing enhanced childcare options for parents. Not only is this not available in Hillingdon but to propose restricting services even more is simply ridiculous! Some of the more specialist workshops can be made as paid option and I would have happily paid for Attention Hillingdon workshop.

- It will benefit all the families to keep more children's centres open so we can use the facilities and seek advice, social contact and bonding with our babies that families need.
- I attend the Hillingdon children's. E tres every week with my baby and find the current structure works well and offers a variety of support groups and classes
- for the community it will have a knock on effect if the changes don't reflect local priorities
- localised children's centres can provide for the specific needs of their particular area. They provide an excellent link between the community and the local schools.
- I'm happy with the service are right now
- I have 3 children 2 are autistic and without charville children's centre I would of struggled. Parenting classes, messy play, attention Hillingdon have all played a massive part in my children's lives, and my children's ages are 2-8.
- I like the centres as they are with lots of open play groups where we can just walk in with our children. The groups as they are, are vital to my child's development and a place for me to meet people and learn about my child's welfare, these changes don't sound like they will benefit the community.
- We will like it to run as it is. Don't need any changes to be done.
- I think the centre is brilliant for children and it would be such a shame to see it close as I have been coming here for a long time with my daughter and it rally has helped her develop rapidly
- I think the centres have good coordination as there are, so without knowing the changes its hard to agree
- I am happy for the children's services to stay as they are for the age group
- need to look at individual needs of families.
- They will be far better now than after a million pounds worth of cuts.
- I like the current services. What are you offering.
- Because each children's centre delivers for the needs of the local children which vary with area
- Because the service they are running now it's perfect for me
- Unaware of proposed changes
- We already have these services
- I am happy with the centers and services as they are. No change is needed. The services provide so much to me as it is.
- Unsure of changes ahead
- The children's centers are a life line for some mums. The classes are beneficial for children's development and interaction with other babies.



- I have used 2 children's centres in the borough and they are extremely important to the local community, they are accessible and focus on the need in that area.
- This is a leading question. The consultation document provides no evidence how the proposed changes will achieve this goal without detriment to other goals e.g. local and accessible support.
- I'm unaware of the proposed changes
- I value the consistency within the service. I do not want to tell my story over and over again to different staff members
- No evidence that this will be achieved
- It is important that centres are accessible to those who need it. Closing centres reduces accessibility.
- this is weaselspeak for job cuts and austerity programs
- Not aware of changes
- Very happy with services as they are
- The service is great as it is any change may have a detrimental effect on toddlers
- Children centre is already delivering these services any further cut down would affect the services & facilities available to me
- The current children's centres are always busy and classes over subscribed with waiting lists fit courses, closing centres will only add to this strain.
- Because there is not enough resources in the other children centres as there are
- I do not find the current services inconsistent. I am very concerned that a proposed 'streamlining' would mean that services are cut short and that the children and parents will be negatively affected.
- Charville always delivered top marks since I discovered the centre 5 years ago.
- I am really pleased with the children center how they work on different aspects of parents and children,s wellbeing and settling in local settings.
- The services are brilliant as they are. We go to 4 centres
- This is a leading question. The consultation document provides no evidence how the proposed changes will achieve this goal without detriment to other goals e.g. local and accessible support.
- I am unsure why this question is worded in this way. I do not think there are any issues with how the centres are run at the moment and think the way this question is written is attempting to make people presume there are problems when there aren't.
- The priority for us as parents is a high quality service, provided locally with satisfied, qualified and caring staff. The core objective of this consultation appears to be consistency but this was only one point reflected in the consultation (as per your document) and there is no emphasis on quality (it could be consistently bad). The current model is working well as currently operating.
- the consultation document shows no evidence that the proposed changes will achieve their goal without affecting the invaluable local, accessible and personal support currently given by the children's centres to local people.

- The centres have supported me tremendously after a very difficult post-natal experience. There is no doubt that my relationship with my child wouldn't be as strong without the individual help and support I have received.
- I believe the service offered to Hillingdon residents via the existing Children Centres is excellent
- The childrens centres work. The published plans will lead to a deterioration of services and will impact not only on kids but also adults who use services such as breast feeding support.
- I believe there are many good or better Children's Centres and ones under LA control are mainly RI. My concern is that all Children's Centres will fall to RI if we do not keep them under the line management at present. How can the LA possibly know what is going on in detail when they have 16/18 compared to a Headteacher that has 1?
- There is no evidence how the proposed changes will achieve this without detriment to other aims such as local and accessible support.
- The children's centres are already delivering a fantastic service. It doesn't need to be changed.
- Would reduce the service level and amount of activities available at each centre
- I feel it is already most consistent and is delivering a very good service
- I would like the services as they are
- I don't know anything about
- We do not know what new changes are
- Not
- This service already exists
- I disagree as I do not think the proposed changes will result in an improvement to the provision which the Centres are now providing due to the severe cuts in budget
- Communities are diverse and need flexibility
- The question assumes there is a problem with the delivery of childrens centre services which needs improving. There is no evidence for this. You give no reason for why the change is being proposed.
- It is a thinly disguised cut
- I am concerned that good children's centres will decline in quality.
- I believe that the proposed model will be detrimental to the children of the local community and families who are currently using the services of Charville Children's Centre. I fear that the changes may reduce the number of qualified staff at the Children's Centre and I am horrified that [Redacted] may lose her job as the Centre Manager. I also fear that the number of sessions at the Centre may be reduced and this will be disadvantageous to our children.
- the children centre is fine as they are
- they are working well as they are
- children centre are working aswell as thy are
- they are working fine as they are
- they are working well,no need to change

**Question 2: To what extent do you agree that the council's proposal for redesigning the children's centre service into 5 hubs and 11 linked centres is reasonable?**

- The same reasons I gave in my previous reply
- Hillside was a lifeline to me as a new mum. I was offered invaluable breastfeeding support and the chance to meet people within walking distance of my house which was crucial. Part of the charm is being local, not being too busy which will happen if services are pooled and a personal bal friendly team. All these things are important as a new parent and will be lost with the new proposals
- The focus will be taken away from the centre
- I am not happy that local authority is taking over control
- There is no evidence that the existing arrangements are not working. Any small management improvements will be overwhelming outweighed by the closure of the two centres. These closures significantly undermine all the other priorities the Council aims to meet. The proposals also contradict Sure Start Statutory Guidance 2013 to "not close an existing children's centre site in any reorganisation of provision unless they can demonstrate that, where they decide to close a children's centre site, the outcomes for children, particularly the most disadvantaged, would not be adversely affected and will not compromise the duty to have sufficient children's centres to meet local need".
- I have concerns that the linked Centres will not be open the same number of hours as currently. I am a parent in the North of the Borough and do not agree with the closure of Hillside Children's Centre - it will be too difficult to attend another Centre for me, and does this mean that other Centres will become busier and harder to access because of the large number of families using them.
- The proposed model may disadvantage residents if services are cut from the link centres and they have to travel further to get the support they need
- Centres know their local community and needs and address them appropriately, this may not be the case within the hub model
- Will not meet the needs in my community
- The current system works there is no need to change it
- As needs to be more locally based for easy access
- The children center that I use have helped me through a tough patch and to take it away would be devastating not only to me but many other family's who the center has helped
- no clear indication of how hubs will control services at other locations, lack of continuity will be lost if staff have to move around, no increase in cover of centres picking up parents from areas where centre has closed. Hub centres not of same quality as those they are supposed to 'lead'
- Many people will be out of work, reduced staff will impact the resources given to the children and I feel that all staff should remain and all current job positions remain in there entirety
- This new proposal only leads to the review of staff numbers and budgets which will then affect the services to the community - this could see seen at the local Christmas gathering (near Iceland Yiewsley) which according to many long time residents was the worst they have seen.
- I benefit from my children's centre exactly the way it is

- Because those in need need their services to be local you could cut out many people making them travel further
- It's hard to get on some classes already so the closure of other centres would make this even harder to get places. Also transport links are easier for town centre locations
- There are more and more families moving into Hillingdon, the services are already stretched to the limit. Decreasing services is only going to mean the more vulnerable children will get missed. The current set up of sites works really well. IF IT ISN'T BROKE, DON'T FIX IT
- Local accessibility, advice, ease with mothers and children, providing good educational resources in my local area, being able to walk to the centre thus helping the environment
- the children's centre is a great place to take the baby.
- Using hillside children centre personally and professionally has been vital for access to a wide range of different services
- The proposals leave Northwood without a CC at Hillside. The greater need in the south if the Borough should not mean that Northwood has no provision. This CC is an important part of the local community and relocation to other centres, not all easily accessible by public transport by pregnant women or parents with young children and (sometimes) a lack of funds to pay for transport will limit access.
- Independent centres take into account view of the locals
- Closing Hillside would mean I would lose access to my local children's centre. If it is too far away I won't use it. Hillside is perfectly close to me
- Residents of Northwood have to travel further to get the support and anyone else not in walking distance of Coteford and Harefield. Of course there are bus services but having to travel far and wide??
- The children's centres need to be run by local staff in local areas & not hubbed together. Everyone who attends hillside children's centre is able to walk there or take a short bus journey. Making children's centres have a central hub will mean parents will not feel like they are in touch with their local support.
- Centres should be equal to one another. A similar model has been used in Ealing and hasn't been effective at all. Why try and replicate something that hasn't been successful when we already have a system that works
- It should remain as it is
- We were already being turned away as the centres were getting too full.
- Yiewsley Cornerstones management have previously failed to follow correct employment guidelines, and the management failed one of its local residents badly through offering a written offer of employment and retracting it outside of employment law, leaving said person without their current employment
- Each centre knows its area and its people. From the manager to the cleaning staff.
- What do other centres know about mine
- Everything works fine now so I have no idea why apart from you trying to save money that you would consider changing and closing centres
- I think that with the new proposed scheme children's centres will become more crowded. Also not everyone will easily access the children's centre if they don't have a car and this will mean that their

children will miss out . I currently live in Northwood and Hillside has been my saviour . I have managed to take my child there throughout her first year and she has enjoyed every session .

- I love the hillside centre convenient nearby made so many friends staff are great and really got me through my maternity leave and good excuse to go there after a walk
- There isn't a plan or a plan that has been divulged explaining how this model will work, what the terms "hub" and "link" centres will mean in practise. The hub centres do not appear to have been chosen for appropriate reasons, and there has been no explanation for how these hub centres have been open. Further the reasons given for the chosen centres to close are inconsistent, as there are other centres which have not had the leases signed, and they are still open. There are other factors at play here, however, there has not been transparency in the way that the model has been developed and designed.
- Parents need local help and support - Hillside and such children's centres are lifelines at times of isolation, desperation and need. Please don't close our centres. It will be cutting off the community's nose while praising the face. Please don't do it.
- Let each centre run as it is why have 5 lead hubs!!!
- It is hard for new mums to travel far
- Keep it in the same. Children centres are brilliant
- The reduction in children centres will increase numbers at the suggested new centres and is unlikely to offer the same service I and my son get at Hillside Childrens Centre. This is such disappointing news.
- I am currently linked to hillside that is in Northwood and find it unacceptable for it to be closed down with no other local alternative. a lot of mums have abs continue to rely on this children's centre and they are fantastic there so I strongly believe it should be kept open or an alternative location in Northwood be available.
- Children centres need to sit in the communities. Young families and babies benefit hugely from being walking distance to centres. Small groups of trained professionals to show parents good skills to care for children. Northwood, Northwood Hills, Pinner are all on the doorstep of hillside, replacing this centrally located building , surrounded by schools and a large population with harefield practise seems an odd choice. Harefield is a fraction of the size in comparison to the towns listed. In the mornings there is a sea of pram she heading to hillside as local people bond and bring their children to meet with the hillside staff. They involve themselves with the weigh-in clinic ,with the midwives of the community. Hillside is dedicated and play an active role in my life , my child's life and my community. Do not take this support network away. They have made me and scores of people better parents and given the next generation a good start at become good moral citizens.
- I don't want to travel far to be able to attend a baby class. The location of Hillside children centre is very convenient and easy to get to and I believe we would definitely attend less sessions if this centre was to close down.
- Because the LA centres are always empty and the others are more targeted and get to the nitty gritty!
- Parents, particularly ones who don't drive need to be within walking distance of thee vital services which provide support and advice for new parents
- There needs to be a local center, otherwise it won't matter what service you provide elsewhere.

- n children's centre is a very busy centre - it provides important services to young families. Closing it would be a major loss for the local community where there are so many young children
- Basically means I will have to travel for miles than having one on my doorstep. I strongly believe without hillside I would have suffered from PND
- It's in a good location
- The more the better - as a new mother without transport I needed to leave the house and one of the proposed sites was in walking distance from my house - I would have been less likely to get out and socialise if I'd had to get public transport as you are not always able to get on the bus in the day as there may already be 2 buggies on there.
- The hillside centre is the proposed to be closed. This is the only centre within walking distance of my house (40 minute walk). If this closed I would not be able to go anywhere as the next nearest is two buses and over an hour away for me. I live in a semi rural area and am already quite isolated. This would isolate me even further and leave me with nothing at all.
- As I feel you are cutting services so more people will be left in the dark . Hillside children centre Northwood is a fantastic place and when my 1st daughter was born I knew nobody and by attending here I made friends. Any parental questions or help I needed always felt comfortable to ask . It has made my daughter into a lovely kind girl . I enjoyed it also as it was not too busy and I was able to relax and interact with my daughter. Also I was at ease with my anxiety here.
- There are so many families in the Northwood area that really value the Hillside children's centres, the team are the most welcoming and friendly team I have ever met I am so angry that the council would even consider closing the only near by Childrens centre to me I will help support this centre any way I can!
- Each centre is so unique. They offer Taylor made services to suit the local residents. It would be so sad to lose that
- The centre is very well structured with help for the people that most need it including new mums and mums to be. By separate these services it is harder for families that struggle with transport, finance etc to get the right support.
- Many childrens centres work closely with the schools they are attached to. The management are involved closely in the childrens centre and not some distant outside body.
- It works fine the way it is
- Closing two is awful then reducing services, which happens in hub and spoke models and demoting managers
- My local children's centre has been a refuge for me over the past 5 years and my children love it. To close some centres and streamlining facilities will mean we will have to fight for places and travel further to benefit from the services
- Because it will mean the closure of hillside. It is already over subscribed. If this service goes I won't have any local service to take my child. I am already feeling isolated.
- Again, the proposals for the North of the Borough are completely unreasonable, we do not deserve to have our children's centre closed in Northwood, there is no direct public transport to either Harefield or South Ruislip and Coteford is always really busy

- I believe keeping the same number of children's centres throughout the borough is important. The children's centres need to be easily accessible. The most vulnerable families may not have cars or the ability to travel across the borough so keeping numerous centres across the borough is important.
- The current locations meet the needs of the communities so why are two closures necessary. This will significantly limit the access that families have.
- As a resident of Northwood, the closure of Hillside Children Centre would be to the detriment of the local community of parents. It is an invaluable service for local parents, myself included. Having to travel to Harefield/Coteford under the new proposals would require a car/public transport rather than being in walking distance, with significantly longer journey times. This would be both financially difficult for some, and the journey alone would mean reduced numbers of local residents accessing vital children's centre services.
- Because we have a fab one that doesn't need changing
- The proposal would leave Northwood and Northwood Hills with no local centre. Harefield, Coteford and South Ruislip are all difficult to get to and this would deter many, especially those without cars. We also have made local friends and support networks through the children's centre and this would be lost to future parents.
- To ensure continuity for an ever growing environment and population
- I disagree with the closing of two centres
- Public spending should be spent on services for families & be more accessible via family support worker
- There is nothing for Northwood and Northwood Hills
- This will make the centres harder to access, less friendly and the parents that need the support will not be able to access it like they do now
- Nice to have local centres nearby
- I think this will become too 'corporate' an approach to child care and development. As previously stated, each children's centre has a unique approach which has been developed through years of working with the community. A 'hub' system will prevent individual children's centres from listening to their particular residents' needs rather than being told what to do by the council who may have carried out research and thought a certain approach is best for all under a blanket cover without understanding the needs of the local residents.
- When you close centres local to me where and how will I get to the other centres
- Because it would mean losing centres which provide an invaluable service to families that need it
- You will be creating centres that will be difficult to access, reducing the numbers is not the answer and as a family member you have been using these we strongly disagree with the proposal
- It hasn't worked well in other boroughs
- Existing service is working better
- It's cutting back. Stretching the short resources already in place. We need all the staff at our children's centre
- I am living in Northwood Hills. So Hillside Children Centre where I am taking my kid, is at a walkable distance from here. As per the new changes that may be in effect, it might be difficult for me to drop my child

to the children's centre that is proposed, which is too far away for me. So I might stop taking my child to the children's centre in future.

- with not having a manager in the centre they will not be able to monitor the service being delivered.
- The children's centre I have been visiting has been invaluable during an extremely anxious time in many mums' lives. It was so devastating to think these services wouldn't be available if I had another child or for new mums in the area.
- The staff cuts will mean that the services provided will lessen and you will have to either travel to the hub or wait until late the required staff are in your local children's centres. The managers and staff at these centres are part of the community and losing any of them will result in less opportunities for children in the borough.
- If it's not broke why fix it
- closing down two children's centres which are vital to that area in supporting vulnerable young adults is going to have a big affect
- It is vital to have many children's centres. These are fundamental for children's development and support networks for parents. I cannot and wouldn't have coped without a
- need more support for vulnerable families
- The Centre's would become less accessible for many families due to travel difficulties, this will marginalise some families
- Service is well run at the moment
- All the children's centres offer different things on different days which we like to attend at our convenience. Also travelling to these hubs could be a lot further away which makes it more difficult to use the centres.
- Hillside is great, and convenient don't close it
- Each centre should have its own manager, and run according to requirements of specific centre
- I believe each centre needs a manager it's a lot of work as it is at the moment. I don't see how only having one hub manager will benefit. also the jobs that will be lost
- I am apprehensive it will become a "one size fits all" approach. The children's centres have helped me incredibly after a difficult post-natal experience. Please don't mess with a good system.
- I disagree with the closing of Hillside children's centre. it has been a lifeline for me, especially as I am new to the area with a new baby. I've received help there with many aspects of childcare and especially breastfeeding. Whenever I've been to Coteford the staff there are very nice but extremely busy and it's hard to get the advice and attention we need.
- The children's centres are spread across a good range of locations. Closing so many would mean new parents not having access to something near to them.
- If Early years staff are sent to other centres then there is no consistency. Families and children need consistency to see the same faces all the time. Not see different staff everyday. If different staff everyday children will be unsettled and crying and upset and not be able to develop healthy relationship for themselves. Same consistent staff can watch and observe children's development and build relationship with the families and we can come in anytime to see them for any issues or questions. I get



a lot of support from this Yeading centre and the services. that how my son's speech and language delay was picked up. And my daughter has her confidence building up and mine too.

- The closure of Hillside, for example, will severely impact on local parents in Northwood and the surrounding area, especially those who do not have access to their own car and cannot easily travel outside of the local area.
- In reality this will mean less services in individual centres and families will miss out on the consistent support available at the moment.
- Not sure how 'linked' 11 centres could be to 5 hubs.
- Firstly, I'd like to point out that the children's centre's currently running under the local authority are some of the 'worst' in the borough. South Ruislip, Uxbridge, Barra Hall and Pinkwell are all 'requires improvement' on their most recent Ofsted and any of the other local authority centres i.e. Belmore and Cowley had their last Ofsted before 2012 and therefore under different guidelines. So how can you justify moving children's centres that are currently performing well under schools and move them to the local authority which is proven time and time again that it's not working? The only anomaly here is Nestles and this is purely down to the good management of [Redacted] and teachers like [Redacted]- something that many of the local authority children's centres desperately lack. To add to this, some of these children's centres that are failing to meet the needs of children and families, are becoming the hub centres and should effectively be the source of best practice to disseminate to the linked centres. As an example, you plan on making South Ruislip as a hub centre, but the centre has not only got requires improvement for its Ofsted, but is marred by staffing problems and poor feedback from families who attend there. From July to December 2015 the centre lost all of its key members of staff and then [Redacted], the manager, retired, and has been running using agency workers ever since (it's now down to only one). Feedback from some parents is that they travel out of the area to attend another children's centre or have stopped attending sessions at all. Sessions over the summer practically ceased due to poor numbers, but agency staff were still being employed. How is this helping make positive impacts on the local community? How are agency staff, who are given no training, expected to run sessions and evaluate effectively? How are evidence of aims and outcomes effectively recorded and that information used to adapt services when the teams aren't consistent, cohesive and well trained and the managers are overwhelmed, and frankly unprepared for the role they are undertaking. Not to mention the fact that really good managers, with a lot of experience and passion for the job, like [Redacted] at Belmore are relegated to 'co-ordinator' positions, when their experience could be utilised in a setting like South Ruislip where the management team is currently not at the standard it should be for local authority centres. Under this new model effective management needs to be the highest priority and put in place immediately. To have Hub managers and then coordinators in each centre would be ineffective to say the least, there needs to be an experienced manager who understands the need of the family in the area, in each setting with the freedom to act as needed to plan to meet the needs of our service users: i.e. plan for our own settings, order own resources, make own timetable as we know what works and what will not.
- wwe need more help and services
- Reducing the staffing levels and closing sites will not improve services.

- I think there should be more of those
- Will result in congestion on already existing service
- Unnecessary
- Each of the children's centre's need a manager onsite to offer support and direction to staff. With managers not being around there is a concern that standards will slip and the quality of services that are delivered could deteriorate.
- Families on a budget and the most vulnerable, require support within easy access, more so for parents with depression, whom are difficult to engage with, when accessing groups. Children's centre that aren't in close proximity for these families would sadly miss out, which would further impact in their recovery.
- More centres are better as it means more people can attend them. Fewer centres may have better facilities but many people won't be able to make use of them
- There need to be children's centres within easy reach of communities. Within walking distance wherever possible.
- closure of services is not an answer but the council should seek to improve the existing services
- Coordinating efforts is a good idea, however closing down centres like hillside is horrible for people of northwood as this centre is providing such excellent service. In the last 1 year my daughter has benefitted so much from attending activities there
- Clubbing an existing centre to a hub creates more confusion in a local area where it existed. To be more flexible and accessible new centres can be created and linked to a hub which can provide families with all the information required.
- The reason behind this is to save money, cut jobs and services and reduce the expenditure as a whole for the children centres. I do not believe this consultation has very little to do with actually improving the services of the centres.
- Local community served by Hillside will be at a huge disadvantage
- Hubs are just a money saving exercise. They mean that fewer services are available from local sites and travelling is more required by parents who may not be able to afford transport. Raising children in Hillingdon is expensive and with universal services disappearing at centres it gets tougher especially for single dads like myself
- HGarefield need to retain its position as a lead centre with the other two underneath it. Harefield has a proven track record being top of the game, South Ruislip has a failing record and need the strength Harefield can provide.
- access to a universal service will be impacted.
- Each centre is a vital support centre for expectant, new and other parents. It is inevitable that such coordination of the existing centres will lead to closures however, after using and heavily relying on various centres for the past eight months it is clear that centres are stretched however, they strive and currently manage to offer essential services.
- The services at Hillside were incredibly helpful for me. All of Coteford, South Ruislip and Harefield (which would be the next closest to me) are quite far away and could not be easily reached from my house at all on public transport. Hillside serves a large community and additionally is close to the border with other boroughs/councils. I once tried to go to an event and Three Rivers (with a friend who lives in

Rickmansworth) and was turned away as they were full and I was not from within the same Local Authority. It is very important that Hillside remains open as the other Hillingdon provisions are not close enough.

- There is no evidence that there is a shortage of demand. Indeed, quite the contrary.
- Really like personal touch know the managers well and they know my children and I think this would be lost
- The Uxbridge Children Centre one of the closest to my home and how made a good relationship with the staff and other families. The children's centre have provided very good feedback and advice for family over the last few years and furthermore i feel you are missing the bigger picture with this centre in particular, this centre is next door to Uxbridge College and a doctor's surgery and therefore would be missing out on the opportunities to support families old and new on how to help the career or guide them when registering at doctor surgeries. My son recently his health review at the children's centre and even health visitors will now struggle to arrange and organise meetings and events for families. I think it is an absolute disgrace. Considering a purpose built nursery was here before the centre and now you taking it away. I think it is wrong, why shut an children's centre down when they have received a well deserved GOOD rating from OFSTED?!
- Uxbridge College Children's Centre is very close to a local nursery where I am the manager and have built up very good relationships with the the staff there and would be a shame for the centre to close on the grounds in which you stated. The Children's Centre has worked very hard in maintaining a high standard and receiving a very GOOD rating from OFSTED.
- think the current model works effectively
- Hillside children's centre has been my location for midwife appointments, with 2 babies under 2 years of age, the close proximity of the centre is valuable to me & others and the centre helps with other well being activities
- Again the detail of proposed changes is unclear. The reasons are subsequently unclear. The changes seem unnecessary in terms of the good of the community
- the centres already work well collaboratively and the new proposals will not deliver improvements, especially in the north of Hillingdon where one centre will close.
- The loss of any children's centres will have a large impact on families in the area.
- When you have small children you want ease of travel & flexibility. This would be reduced by reducing the number of centres
- They are meant to be local centres to everyone. Hillingdon is a big area and 5 centres would not be enough to deal with the capacity and deliver the local friendly service they current provide
- Closing Hillside is an appalling decision for that part of the borough. They offer fantastic and valuable staff and services
- it is perfect the way it is. Very much needed and appreciated by local community
- It's ridiculous to expect new mothers to travel so far for key sessions which will be over subscribed and not efficient for both the staff and their young children. The key sessions attend by local families will stunt key information being relayed but also not allowing the child benefit from the facilities
- No basis and no clear benefit of the proposal

- By moving to 5 hubs it will reduce the support available for staff, it will most likely in the future reduce services which ultimately then reduces services for the residents of Hillingdon
- Shutting down centres is going to cause trouble for families who are in that area who cannot necessarily travel to the next centre. It also means that each centre no longer may feel like a 'unit' - instead leads will be taken from a hub that may not necessarily understand the families or children enough to run that centre!
- Not all changes are for the better. Some people who attend take a long time to build trust with professionals and changing how centres are structured could severely impact that trust.
- Very unhappy 2 good centres are closing. When services run effectively out of most centres why change the system
- I prefer coming to this centre.
- I think the children's centres should stay as they are
- It will be crowded and we will be unlikely to get a space. At the moment it is flexible and we can walk in but it may affect us in the future.
- Unsure of what the changes mean
- The centres work well at the moment.
- I like the way the centre currently runs
- Staff are good in the centre it will not be good to have less staff
- The key element of Sure Start was that it was in pram pushing distance
- compromised safety of children at risk
- there might not be managers in every centre, there might not be family support workers in every centre, staff that know local families really well might lose their jobs, families might have to travel further for certain sessions
- Again, that means closing centres so more travel involved
- The Loss of an educational facility in Northwood Hills
- school involvement is important and closing the centres as proposed reduces services for families in those areas
- Disagree with the closure of hillside, next nearest centre is too far away
- Local community will not benefit from this
- Some families are unable to travel and it also limits the number of families that can access services.
- Childrens centres need to work for the communities in their area . Outcomes for children are likely to be undermined by this model .
- The current model works. Less services from children centres.
- I believe that cc provide a very strong support network for families and it provides families with a family face in the community who they can get to know and feel comfortable to approach. From using cc myself I really enjoy attending different sessions and being with the same staff members
- As a new parent I wanted to stay as near to my home as possible. I used my local centre for weighing and advise. As i became more confident i ventured out to other centres and groups, and this continued to help develop my confidence. Had i needed to go to a centre unknown to me, i would not have gone.
- Its taking away the individuality of the centre and personal touch away

- I am also a user of Denham Gerrards cross & I have found since having my son 4 years ago services have been reduced. Now I have my daughter & have found I can hardly use the center now for my daughter as limited activities and less availability. this is really upsetting as I am a payer of council tax now I have had to pay for music classes for my daughter. I do not want other parents to go through this
- because it weakens the service if co-ordinated by a hub. local centres are geared for their clients not what someone miles away deems it to need
- If that's mean that some of the existing Centers will be closed that it will not be helpful for a lot of families.
- There will no longer be a local CC in Northwood / Northwood Hills. This would be a serious detriment to those living in these areas. Hillside has built community in this area and, speaking personally, is the only children's group I have attended that has truly brought together parents from all social backgrounds. It would be a great loss.
- Parents need to be able to access the support they need locally with staff they are familiar with and trust.
- What does 5 Hubs and 11 somethings actually mean ????? for me and parents that have a basic or no understanding of english would find this completely confusing and parents and families that don't quite understand what the impacts will be for them. The Centres work as they are!
- Staff at the centre have explained this to me however there is nothing truly set in place as to what and who will change so. Its all very confusing and i like the centres as they are . They have offered me so much support and guidance.. and has helped me from antenatal to my child now 2 years!!
- The Oak Farm CC is a wonderful building and local to all residents.
- Research demonstrates the value of local services for local people. People do not travel with young children and the effectiveness of the service will be weakened
- The centres currently work well within the schools. People want to travel to their nearest centre to fit in with their family commitments and the school run.
- This would not have worked for me! I was isolated and afraid to go out. I went to my local centre. I got to trust the staff and they helped me with my son. My local centre was my life-line. God know's what would have happened without them. Thanks to them and their support, my son settled well, I was able to get over my anxiety and I am now in employment!
- We need this children centre
- The centres should stay as they are
- It underestimates the value of locally run centres which understand the needs of their immediate community
- I have seen how stretched the existing childrens centres are and think that a hub and spoke approach will increase administration and impact on delivery
- The children's centre is managed well as part of the school
- keep it localized please
- Too many centres will be centrally managed.
- Services could be taken away from a childrens centre which would have a negative impact on the children. Whilst it's beneficial to introduce a new structure, changing existing ones aren't beneficial.

- Removal of facilities in north of borough seems wrong especially one that is accessible to public transport.
- The local touch is misplaced and the value of confidentiality to the needs of the local will diminish drastically.
- this would mean moving around the borough I'm guessing which isn't viable for most young mums. Also some of the people I met at the groups were incredibly shy and it took a great deal of courage for them to turn up to the groups and for them to have to move around the borough would completely isolate these families I know that for a fact!
- Will lose personal touches
- Oakfarm children center very close to my house
- The children's centres are better off operating independently.
- Concern that delocalising service will impact on communities.
- There is such diversity that the hubs will not represent the local community around each centre. Local management at each centre with local staff means consistency for centre users and helps those who are often already in challenging and vulnerable situations
- Having worked as a support worker within a Hillingdon children's centre I know first hand the crucial role they play in supporting communities and vulnerable families. The links with schools help to forge good relations and when you can walk to your local centre helps promote healthy living and a cleaner environment. The locality children's centres are a
- It will worsen the services and it will cost more money in the long run
- As stated before creating hubs will just mean that staff based at centres are not consistent and that families and children become just a number and not given the same level of care and intervention. It is such a valuable service and a part of the community. Diluting this service will lead to families and children suffering both short and long term and just end up creating more pressure on other already overstretched services, e.g. social services, CAMHS, health visitors, maternity, G.P.'S, adult mental health services. The proposal is extremely short sighted and dismissive of the amazing work children's centres do.
- I worry that many people will lose their jobs and local communities will lose centres that are highly valued and needed.
- It will mean that it is no longer managed by someone who interacts with the people daily and I believe it is a bad idea
- It works well the way it is
- I found the local children's centre a life line for parents and children. Moving these to 5 larger centres would stop parents who don't have adequate transport or time to commute further be able to use them. Plus they would make them too busy and put people off from using them.
- This centre already caters to a large community and if closed would make the services fewer and further to go
- Because with both of my children I visited my local children's centre regularly at Oak Farm school. I have no family living near to me and the children's centre was a huge life line for me, having that support when you have a new baby is invaluable and I met lots of new mums feeling the same way as me. I

was able to walk to the centre which was great for me and baby as this would encourage me to get out more with baby in the pram instead of going every where in my car. Why change something that doesn't need change, probably cut back just like every where else . Mum's need local support not some newly fangled hub probably thought up by someone who due a promotion

- 1. the service we are having is perfect. 2. the distance is very close and that plays a big part of our life as well. 3. offers a wide range of activities for children.
- As per previous question. Consistency in staff members and support programs
- Remain the same.

**Question 3: If you currently use Hillside or Uxbridge College (Hayes) Children's centres, do you have any suggestions for alternative ways in which families can be supported in these areas?**

- No
- Keep them open
- N/A
- n/a
- no
- N/a
- To keep the centres open. They are a huge part of our lives and very beneficial
- dont close them
- A more hoined up service could be achieved if deemed necessary through better communication across existing centres
- No
- Harefield
- Don't close the Children's Centres or look for alternative venues in this areas.
- Open a new Center
- remain open
- Need access to all of the services that they offer
- I can only speak about Hillside as I'm not familiar with Hayes. As a non-driver, I elukd have struggled to make use of alternative CC locations when I and my family were using the service.
- No because the current set up works well
- Have a new children's centre in Northwood
- Keep the children's centre in both areas...it seems to be fine and Hillside is always busy every time I go and I have been visiting for a year now.
- Keep hillside children's centre. Pinner children's centre has already been closed
- Parents will attend other local centres but these centres are already supporting a huge amount of families and will father be stretched over their capacity
- I assume the other schools in the area were already looked into?
- Keep all the others separate
- No these centres are needed by the communties they serve

- Keep hillside open
- Northwood high street could have a centre there
- By keeping them open!!! We need this hugely vital and important service
- Do not close the centre, it is a vital asset to the community. I have relied on hillside for 2 years since my son was born. I do not drive and had issues after birth that I would not have overcome if I didn't have hillside. This suggestion of closing the centre will seriously negatively impact a lot of people's lives.
- Yes by keeping the centres open.
- An alternative location in northwood for this children'S centre to be set up
- Northwood station is currently being redeveloped can part of the development include a purpose build children centre to service communities. Being close to bus routes and tube , might be beneficial to some families. There are two libraries, are these council owned, can parts be used for children centres? Ideally I would love to see hillside live on
- Don't close them!
- No. That's the problem - even they barely offer the required services
- One of the most amazing sessions run here is the breast feeding cafe. Hundreds of mothers a year would miss out on this support if this centre closed and the sessions weren't available in a location close to the centre.
- No I think the centre should be kept open . As it offers great facilities for all parents and children.
- Keep Hillside open! There are so many vulnerable families in Northwood that access the centre along with those families who get great deal of support from the staff that work there. Coteford is to much of a journey and harefield is hard to access by transport
- I can't see how would the council alternatively support families in Northwood and Northwood Hills area by splitting the services that at the moment are all together.
- We love the Hillside Children Center, and find it very useful. But would like to have more activities available weekly, more weekly sessions for toddlers during the week.
- More services at other local centres
- No, services and venues are limited nearby me
- More services need to added to hillside. Parents wait outside in the freezing cold from 10.30 when the class doesn't start until 11 just to ensure they have a place. I am always being turned away from groups here because they're so busy. More classes and more staff are needed to meet the needs of the community
- I use Hillside centre which is within walking distance of my home and provides support throughout Northwood and Northwood Hills. It is always busy and I can't see any alternative ways in support the local families if the facilities are removed.
- No the existing centres are needed. There is no other local centre for the hillside residents, therefore thus will make access to services harder not better. Families will not be better supported.
- No - the services at Hillside Children's Centre are invaluable to local parents. We need access to breast feeding support, baby groups, the weaning/separation anxiety workshops, baby massage etc (in addition to the midwife sessions and adult education courses). We must not lose these in the local area.
- Finding another premises in Northwood



- Hillside has been highly beneficial to all that have used it with outstanding staff and is truly an asset to the community
- I think the should be kept open.
- We need them to stay open for our families
- Leave it open.
- Another venue for the same services to be run out of
- It is invaluable to keep these children's centres open. If it is purely down to a renew of the lease then an alternative site, very close to the original, should be found.
- Free bus to reach other centre
- Keep it open, and look for savings elsewhere, there is already little support for children below 3years and too little for kids above 3, and what do the council do, take further help away,
- Na
- Please dont stop functioning of hillside children centre.
- Every area needs a cc
- No. We rely on hillside
- We need to keep the childrens centre it's vital. Especially now I have moved my daughters school. Northwood is a very isolating area. Parents and children alike will suffer without it
- Don't close the childrens centres!
- Continue to keep Hillside open so it can support families.
- Open another centre, where are we meant To go?
- I think Northwood Hills needs a bigger children's centre.
- Keep centres as they are
- I would suggest to keep the services the same - Hillside is great because it offers an experience on a smaller scale to Coteford for example. It better suits some people.
- encourage to use other centres nearby.
- Can the funding for the leases here not be used to lease other buildings in the immediate area to simply relocate the service at these two centres?
- Perhaps place family support worker in the nearest clinics where health visitors are accessed. Having a family support worker in a clinic can only prove to be of imense value.
- Close coteford instead
- No. Without access to a local centre such as Hillside, families in the local area will struggle and may not seek alternative centres. This could potentially jeopardise the well-being of newborn babies and place undue stress on new parents as they feel they are not supported. The children will miss out on key learning skills if they are not exposed to the classes held by the centre.
- some parents will have to travel much further to access services. Both centres are in needy areas with families who may not be able to affor bus journeys. They will probably opt out rather than travel.
- Perhaps you could fins another venue in those areas?
- Ensure the surrounding centres having excellent management teams in place- families that were accessing Hillside are likely to access coteford, south ruislip, or harefield instead. Ensure it's worth their

while to attend and that the timetable, services and staff and management teams in these settings are running as effectively as possible.

- keep hillside. i use it
- Don't Use it
- Hayes is in a key location and families in this area are some of the most disadvantaged in the area. Lease negotiations should either be continued or sourcing of another suitable location in the immediate area. Clearly officers have not fully pursued securing premises.
- Through local schools and social services
- We need a centre here. If I didn't have this one, I wouldn't have been able to continue breastfeeding, my son wouldn't have been able to develop in a social aspect
- No, keep the children's centres in these locations.
- renew the lease for at least another 5 years and in the meantime look for other venue within the local area so the families can continue using this vital services.
- The best way is to NOT close these centres
- A new children centre can be created somewhere nearer.
- There are no other similar local services - therefore families will be unsupported
- It's fine
- I can use Coteford
- No, I really do think Hillside made a huge difference to me after having my child. In particular, [Redacted] were both very helpful. [Redacted] helped considerably when I was struggling to establish breastfeeding and was very kind, following up with a phone call to check my progress. [Redacted] seminar on weaning was very helpful for me and taught me a lot of principles that I have applied every day since my baby turned 6 months and I weaned her. I really do feel there is something special about the centre, as well as the staff, however. It is approachable. It is much better than certain alternatives, such as having the services in a doctors or other similar provision (which would be too formal and would not encourage people to come forward with issues like mine), like the home environment (Hillside encouraged me to leave the house and get out when I was feeling low and intimidated after the birth of my first child) or to another centre (as mentioned, there are none that are close enough to this area). Northwood has been an area with more older people but there are more young people moving to the area and now is absolutely not the right time to make a cut to this service.
- Cannot see any alternatives to support the families in the area that are independently supported
- Please see previous comments in regards to the children's centre.
- To ask people's views before closing Centres down
- Perhaps run the centre on a part time basis so key services can still be provided to local residents
- i do not use these.
- No. Keep Hillside open. Hillingdon has one of the youngest populations in London and the services offered there are so valued. As money saving decisions go this is a poor one. The borough should be investing more in children's centres. Scrap the unwanted youth centre planned for Harefield and reallocate that money

- Keep Hillside open, it's has fantastically trained staff, numbers are perfect to enable parents and children to thrive. The breastfeeding sessions, weaning sessions as well the activites work so well and really help families to embed positive lifelong habits. Do not squeeze this necessary facility out of the community.
- Do not use them but they should not be closed
- Unfortunately no! They will miss out with this change
- that enough services need to be provided in other nearby centres as there will be extra children using centres and no space in sessions
- Not closing them
- Identify where services can be delivered for exisiting services being delivere dat these Centres currently
- Hillside should remain open, the service they offer is invaluable and the remaining centres won't be able to cope with the additional burden. It is also not fair to ask pregnant women/new mums to travel further to access support eg midwifery care, breastfeeding support
- Continue to provide the essential services they provide .
- It is a real shame that these familes are missing out on such wonderful support and advice.
- Activity centres for more age groups
- Hillside din't want to close
- The location of UC Ch.Centre is the reason we use it. If you must close it down due to lease issues, please, find premises as close as possible to the current Centre.
- Keep the Centre open
- Keep the centres open. The other centres are already full. The other centres will have difficulty meeting the demands of the local commnuity, especially with the increasing population in the area!
- Keep them open.
- The suggestion would be to have left the centres as they were for their valued services.
- Keep them open as they are excellent centres
- No, as the fundamental issue is the closing of a centre that is local to parents.
- I do not use these 2 centres
- No leave the centres as they are - families need this local provision!!
- Don't close the centre's!!!!
- I don't use these centres
- Keep it as it is
- 1. by having new children centres. 3. helping the existing children centres financially.
- Not really!!!
- continue as is - oak farm have a fantastic set up
- Keep the Centres open
- Should have more places available
- Don't use those
- This question is not properly formulated. Which areas? Alternative in what sense?
- Retain the Children's centres
- More funding

- No. Keep Hillside open it's the only way to support us families in the area that use that children's centre.
- more staff, more localised services, no to consolidation
- They support me a lot being disabled. Their groups are so much better than other centres in borough too.
- I don't use either but know I would be devastated if my local closed. Accessibility is key.
- Don't close them down. These services are invaluable.
- No. keep them open.
- no it needs to keep going
- No as Hillside serves a huge part of the community and it's loss would be a great loss to many
- I use hillside and there won't be any service close by to me therefore I won't be accessing other hubs as they are to far to travel
- No - keep the important children's centres
- keep the centres open!
- Keep the hillside children centre
- Take away this unnessessary Ridiculously unfair proposal.
- More interesting and interactive groups with specialist early years leaders/professionals from schools
- No. Nothing can replace Hillside and the staff at the centre.
- Not using those centres at the moment
- Children's centres need to stay open so they are easily accessible to all for help, support and guidance. More funding for children's centres to assist with child development and parent and child bonding.
- Do not close Hillside, in fact it should be expanded as there is nothing else close by.
- Parents who live close to the centres will have to go further to access local services
- Hillside Northwood needs to have another site made available to them as it is not always possible for young mothers with young babies to get to the other two children centres these mothers need
- keep each centre open. Add more staff and promote the centres, Hayes is due to grow with the opening of Crossrail.
- It will be beneficiaries to keep them open as our children need them.
- These centres should stay open. All CC's should be asked to share the cuts and provide LBH with the savings they need.
- Don't close the centres
- You need to give much more funding to the other centres-especially the ones nearest to these two centres so they can manage the extra families.
- I do not use these centres but I am concerned about the pressure that closing them will put on the remaining children's centres which are already very busy and many sessions over subscribed.
- Do not use them
- Keep it open!!!!
- I'm not an expert in children's services. However as a consumer I value the accessibility and services that I currently able to use there. Other children's centres are not walking distance, and so I, and many others will be cut off from these services.
- Go to other childrwn centre but they all fully booked

- not applicable
- Keep the centre open
- keep the centres open
- There are no alternatives. Hillside provides my family with resources and activities that I can't find elsewhere without having to travel.
- Don't know
- No keep them open
- I do not use these children centers as they are far from where I stay
- Yes keep the centres open. Both Hillside and Uxbridge College strenuously deny the claims by the council that they will not renew the lease.
- No - don't close the current centres. It is important that children and parents in these areas are supported.
- Do not use these centres, but where will the parents (and young children) go??
- The support is there already with the established Childrens' Centres so the obvious answer is not to close them down.
- Having more sessions
- Don't shut them down.
- Families in these area are already at a disadvantage. Having access to centres in the area is still the best option.
- Agree new leases with the landlords to continue to provide services from these centres. It is clear that both landlords object to the closure of services at these centres.
- If you are indeed putting residents first, the current arrangements are the only way in which services can be provided which will be both accessible and effective
- Continue or replace
- I am not a user of either centre, but feel strongly about the closure of two centres. This will lead to many residents having to travel significant distances to access services in the North of the authority. I am in disagreement in the reasons given by the LA to close the centres and feel that residents have been misled by members in the press. The agenda is clearly one of cost saving.
- More sessions
- I am not using either Centre
- dont colse
- don,t close them
- Do not close them
- Do not close children centres
- Keep them open.
- DONT CLOSE
- Either keep the existing Hillside Centre open or open a new centre within Northwood that is as equallyaccessible as the existing centre.
- keep closest centres to those closed open so families can access these

- Cut back on services which aren't popular but don't close the centres as they are crucial for mothers and pregnant women to get support from.
- I feel this will be so hard for all families in this area as they may not have means to travel KEEP them open would be the best think
- The Hillside centre provides excellent support to families currently - I do not believe an alternative would be as successful.
- No. I particularly think that there are some vulnerable mums living in the hillside area and they are the first group who would least likely travel further afield to access services and friendly support and the companionship of other young new mothers. Closing the Hillside Childrens centre is set to isolate groups of young mothers.
- more kids and family activities
- Don't use these centres
- not using these centres
- Hillside school is willing to sign the lease for the council to use the current facilities - which are purpose built. Just rent the building from the school and continue to use it. Or run at least a couple of sessions a week and the midwife appointments and courses in the Health Centre. At least that would still be local. It just isn't local and accessible for Northwood mums, especially with 2 small children, to get on a bus to go to CoteFord or Harefield. It would mean at least a local meeting hub, so that the community of parents and children's centre workers isn't ripped apart by the closure.
- I can't see any other way - there needs to be a place mothers can go to.
- More spaces available subject to health and safety
- There is need to open more children centres to meet the growing needs of the population.
- Negotiate with the primary schools over leases and have open discussions with staff to find solutions.
- No I think more children centres should be available
- No it's very good at the moment
- WE NEED HILLSIDE OPEN AS THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WITH CHILDREN IN THAT AREA AND THERE ARE WAITING LISTS FOR COURSES IN THE OTHER CHILDREN'S CENTRES. IT IS A SHORT SIGHTED DECISION TO CLOSE HILLSIDE CHILDREN'S CENTRE.
- The closure of the centres will be a devastating loss to the local community as the next nearest local children's centres are already very busy with local families and would not be able to cope with the large population influx from the Pinner/Northwood region. There is a high number of families in Pinner/Northwood and not having a local Children's centre would be a big loss and inconvenience to the local community.

#### **Question 4: Do you believe these proposals will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?**

- By taking away a big area of development and socialism to both children and parents.
- It made the world of difference having the team at hillside's support when i was pregnant and as bew parents. I wouldn't have received this support if i had to travel to another centre and other families will be the same
- Overcrowding!
- Because they are used frequently and more strain will be put on surrounding centres
- You are destroying childhood for children
- As a parent who lives in the North of the Borough and one who uses Hillside Children's Centre - I now have nowhere to go to get the support me and my family needs. The other Centres are too difficult for me to get to my bus. What happens to families like me now?
- Children's centres are there for everyone and it is important they can be flexible in delivery and innovative in how they meet their immediate communities needs
- may not meed individual needs
- People don't get the needed help
- it would not necessarily meet my needs
- The same as before having less places to get to easily and seeing the faces that I have gained trust in with them and my son
- Removing preventative and early intervention facilities and support services for families will not save money. Instead cut bureaucracy and invest in early programmes which will save money in the long run.
- Less local centres, less staff to help
- The children's centre I use are amazing and couldn't emagine it ran any other way. My family and I would be very different without it
- AS BEFORE
- travelling further to access a centre. New unfamiliar staff
- Local residents not having information and resources, help and advice to hand, lengaging in activities and classes locally, improving my child's development
- the new places may not be a convenient place
- Myself and many others will have to travel further for support groups and there are few other places that are free and local that offer the same services
- Northwood and Northwood Hills are home to a broad mix of social and ethnic groups. Schools may have a lower % of disadvantageded pupils than in some other parts of Hillingdon but for those families that need the services offered locally it is important to support them whatever ward they live in. Hillingdon has a responsibility to support all of its residents, not just those in particular areas. As someone who is not disadvantageded I recognise the valuable community with services offered to all families, such as the getting ready for school sessions that helped my youngest son. I don't see how this proposal can do anything BUT disadvantage the residents in Northwood/Northwood Hikks and those currently using the Hayes CC. Other Hillingdon council tax payers will have a local CC, we will

not. We will all continue to pay council tax at our current rates though, despite the loss of services for just some of us.

- With young children the hillside centre is perfect in every way
- Northwood residents would lose out on a local close by children's centre. When you are pregnant or with small children you do not want to travel far for support and classes. Closing centre and centralising means this.
- Transport links, also coming to a children's centre ( as I have no car) is very useful, it has got me out the house, it has helped me overcome post natal depression, the thought of having to travel further would make some people not even bother going, especially if you turn up to a session and you get turned away as the session has the maximum amount of people.
- People who do not drive will be unable to attend harefield. Coteford is already over subscribed now pinner children's centre has closed
- Not enough local services for those that might find it hard to travel to other areas of the borough
- Hillside was already getting busy during certain sessions. This will increase strain on Coteford.
- The centres will be run by Local Authority and we all know how badly that's run!
- The centres currently allow people to have free access to services they may not be able to afford or have the courage to seek elsewhere it seems ridiculous to close them
- As previously said people that live in northwood this centre is so easily accessible to the residents of northwood and northwood hills and alot of parents can walk without having to rely on a car
- Lose the Northwood spirit just a great hub as it stands now
- Families in the areas of hillside Children's centre and Uxbridge College will no longer have support in their communities. They will receive less support than families living in other areas/will have further to go. Every family will receive a lower quality service because the existing centres will be more stretched.
- When you are a new mum, you need immediate local help. You don't have the energy to travel to some faceless clinic or centre. You build support through those local to you. We need LOCAL centres, not hub locations. Hillside provides vital support, knowledge, courses, clinics and services. There is nothing in the locality which will replace it
- It's a local service so people in these areas will need to travel
- The advice for new mothers is invaluable, where would they go?
- I will become isolated. I cannot travel to further centres. My child will become less social.
- Do not cut any centres. They are so valuable to my daughter's learning.
- As stated before....I believe Northwood is fab and relied on it heavily. Have a second daughter now and will do the same. Wouldn't want to go to an alternative outside of Northwood
- Every morning there are scores of mothers and fathers pushing prams to hillside. Normally the biggest event of the day. A baby sensory class or story and rhyme sing a long. This centre brought me and so many mothers together. The biggest saviour in my life was the breastfeeding clinic. I needed the advice and support. A new mum learning a new skill was a huge change in my life and I needed hillside. It saved me and my relationship with my daughter.



- Like I said earlier Hillside children centre is used by many families and it's in a very convenient location between Northwood Hills and Northwood. Lots of children will lose an opportunity to socialize with other children
- Closing such vital services in any area will have a negative impact on the ever growing population. The most in need families will not disappear!
- Families benefit from having a local team who they get to know and it encourages them to keep using the services
- Again, there needs to be a local center, available and accessible
- Moving the services to other centres will make them inaccessible to many families
- People like myself, who live close to a Children's Centre which is prepared to close, will have to travel farther to get the support they need. It's not easy getting to sessions on time in between baby naps; if I had to catch a bus, I might never make it to a session and my feelings of isolation and depression would get really bad.
- Breastfeeding mothers who go to this centre for support would miss out on this convenient location. Also mothers who live in walking distance it's usually their opportunity to get out and get fresh air on their walk to the classes - very important for new mothers!
- As previously mentioned, the closure of hillside will disadvantage me greatly as I will have nowhere to go at all. All other centres are too far away from where I live and don't have good transport links for me to get there, or would cost too much on public transport.
- People like myself with anxiety problems wouldn't feel comfortable going to somewhere busy or out there area
- So many families will not take a longer journey to another centre after having their local one closed. I enjoy Hillside they run great sessions throughout the year I have attended the others and do not like them
- Disadvantaged families find it hard enough to trust local authorities as it is. People see children centres as life lines. Take them away and you're taking away more than a building is people's lives
- Because people that are struggling financially and have no transport will have difficulties to get the right support if the services will be scattered around.
- The families that use the individual centres at times of crisis come there as they are comfortable with the staff there and don't want to be sent to some 3rd party as the first contact. Also the services will then not be structured to the needs of the families at each centre
- We rely on the services provided by hillside which are the best in the area
- There is no other children centre in walking distance in Northwood so families would need a car to be able to access another centre - public transport with buggies is very difficult and will be an added expense to them
- Parents who use hillside children's centre love the place. I've never felt as welcome in any other centre as I do at hillside. Closure of this centre will cause great upset to the parents and children who have become settled with regular use of the centre and friendships made will be lost
- See my last answer

- Northwood and Northwood Hills parents will not have equal access to a children's centre even though we pay council tax the resources in this area are being closed...this is wrong...there are needy families in this area as well
- Lack of accessibility to local services
- As mentioned, the hillside residents will be hugely disadvantaged as they will have to travel significantly further to access services and when children are involved, it makes this more difficult. Northwood families are being disadvantaged.
- Because you are taking away local knowledge and becoming a useless lip service
- Northwood residents would not have local provision
- location is key and population in the borough continues to grow
- Closing two centres when the population is growing and the need is very strong is madness
- Children's Centres are vital source of information and support to those most in need
- Not everyone is mobile and travelling by public transport with 2 and more children in bad weather is a chore hence mothers opt to stay at home. There must be something local.
- The parents will have to travel further, which some may not be able to do the community feel will not be there where parents go to meet and make friends and support their child's developmebt
- Harder to access groups and resource
- parents and carers having further to travel for support.
- It is with great concern that I have learnt of the proposed closure of Hillside Children's Centre. I have found the services provided by this particular Children's Centre to be invaluable, not only as a new mother but now as a mother of a toddler needing to develop and experience new activities. It can be very lonely and isolating having a new baby. Many of the mothers who have attended Hillside Children's Centre do not have any family or friends living locally to provide assistance or company. Hillside provided me with a community, providing friendly helpful staff to discuss problems, provide activities for my baby and suggestions for activities at home and also to provide an opportunity to meet other mothers in the same position. Every mother I have spoken to has been horrified at the idea that Hillside Children's Centre will be closed. I, and many of the mothers I have met through Hillside, plan my week around the activities provided by the centre. The activities and classes are so popular that the parents are queuing outside to get a place. If this centre is closed this will mean more overcrowding at other centres leading to disappointed parents and children. It is more difficult to meet people in larger groups and staff have less time for individuals. I am considering having a second child but am very worried at the thought of it without the support of Hillside. Also, the breastfeeding support provided by Hillside was invaluable and outstanding. The time taken with each mother was masses more than any midwife at the hospitals or home visits. Midwives are over stretched and can only check on the mother for 5-10 minutes to see if the feeding is going well. This is not enough to check that a whole feed is successful. Without this breastfeeding support, I would have been very unhappy trying (unsuccessfully) to feed by baby. Finally, many of the mothers I know who use Hillside do not drive. They walk to the Children's Centre (up to 30 minutes). Relying on public transport is not a reasonable suggestion for this sort of service. Having to get one or more buses with a new baby or small child to another children's centre further away will be difficult and may be prevented if other prams are already on the bus. Having

to wait for another bus while a new baby is screaming for a feed can be incredibly stressful and could dissuade a mother from going out altogether. It is therefore important to have this local service.

- Ut is local and familiar and safe and we have to start all over again settling ourselves and children and re building rapport with new staff we do not know.
- The families most at need that need contact support through children's centres will get lost
- I can walk to the centre and have a small number of facilities near by, moving them to a location where I will need a car or public transport is not sustainable
- We rely so much of our well being in the centres
- It will greatly disadvantage residents
- Parents rely on children's centres. It can feel so isolated as a parent
- There will be staff that will lose their jobs. The children will be the ones that will suffer from not having a centre that is focusing on the needs of the families that they serve.
- The area around hillside has many new families, this support on your doorstep is essential. If this service was to be removed it would be a great loss for the local community.
- The mangers participate in the services provide and support the community. Not having one will lead to loss of services
- To meet your forecasted budget jobs will be lost
- We have no car and live walking distance from hillside. It would be a problem not having hillside for my current and subsequent children
- there are lots of young mums, dads, families who have gained confidence and built a repore with these children centres and there staff Alot of people feel they are safe places go to and interact with other people in the same situation as them. If they feel its a safe place where else are they going to go and have to rebuild their relationships agian
- Children and parents will miss out on the support they need. Other children's centres will be bookable only sessions and over crowded. This is not feasible. I personally need support from the children's centres and have participated in many courses.
- not enough support
- Service is well run at the moment
- These centre are brilliant for us mums to meet one another, learn about the best way to support our babies and to realise we're not alone. They really helped with my PHD.
- It means parents will have to travel further for services and so the community feel will be lost
- Removing 2 safe places families have to take their children. Some only have these places to go to get help and socialise their children
- Having to travel further to a different children's centre or not being able to go to one at all.
- All the children and parents who are using the centres will suffer. For many families this is their only means of socialising in a comfortable and safe environment
- The proposal for South Ruislip centre covers a huge area and with losing hillside parents will struggle to access local services in that immediate area plus it will put a strain on the remaining centres. It is already difficult to enrol on courses and groups within this area and losing a centre will just exacerbate this problem. As a new Mum I relied on the support and information from these classes and found the

stress of juggling the limited spaces or enrolment procedures with the chaos and dent to my self esteem as a new Mum quite difficult - your proposal will make this worse and potentially alienate less confident new mums.

- If families have to travel further i dont think they will use the centres as much
- I have found Hillside was better suited for my needs because it is smaller and therefore quieter.
- Women need to access these children's centre
- Families who aren't able to get to another centre won't have access to all the wonderful work that Hillside does. Even if those families can travel to another centre, they're already very busy and wouldn't be able to cope with even more children and families.
- Residents will be most disadvantaged in the south. There is a lot of need in the Hayes town area and it is highly populated. With the closure of Uxbridge college it will put more pressure on the nearby children's centres to accommodate these families, who are already under staffed and have no family support workers.
- People won't be able to access children's centres near to them
- People will struggle to travel for other centres. Then stuck at home. Childrens development and chances will go down.
- Parents who cannot travel further out will feel that the programme is now inaccessible to them. Also the staff at these centre, many of whom are Hillingdon residents will either lose jobs or have to relocate, disrupting their lives and causing someone else to lose a job somewhere down the line.
- For those who live close to the centres that are closing, easy access is being removed
- While I think that the role of the family support worker is inmy opinion not replaceable, I have witnessed the use of the centres threatened with closure and the families that are not able to provide quality toys, ideas to engage with their little ones and even down to having the use of a garden is vital. These centres provide all of that. One could say that parks are available where families have no garden. Parks tend to accommodate youths in groups nowadays and there foul language as well as unsociable behaviour from young people puts families off from using these valuable services.
- Hillside is more accessible and the staff are much more friendlier
- Please see my answers to the previous questions. In addition, if there are fewer centres in the locality, they may be over-subscribed.
- Hard to reach families might opt out and the children we need to reach may become more vulnerable. The costs to Socail Care and other services may go up as the parents and childrens needs won't be met.
- The borough is big and has a vast range of varying needs of the residents accross it, so in some areas, ESOL classes would be well received but in others it may not be necessary, in some areas a respite creche would be very valuable but in others it may not. So I'm not sure if making them all managed in the same way by fewer managers and making them 'consistent' is actually going to improve the Children's Centres and therefore their effectiveness.
- Getting families into the children's centre is a difficult task in some circumstances and in adding more obstacles you will inevitably alienate some families in the most northern parts of the Borough. Staff will

need to work hard to entice families to attend in other 'nearby' centres by going out and meeting with key groups e.g. childminders,RAF families etc.

- i cant travel
- Disadvantaged families are unlikely to travel to other locations- this is much of the rationale for delivering key services in the community. Moving services will mean that those children that benefit most will probably miss out.
- By closing two of the centres, parents who use the services on a regular basis may find it difficult to continue going often to the centres. They're incredibly beneficial. There should still be the personal touch which I find the centres have- hopefully this will continue with the proposed changes.
- locating an appropriate place
- location, travel. not easy to access
- Families need a local children's centre and like the idea of being able to walk to the nearest one. If some are closed, this will not be the case for some families and they may disengage with services altogether.
- As previously stated, children's centres are a major asset to the community, and the most vulnerable of families, for which the staff provide an excellent service.
- the next closest centres require a drive. If you do drive, there is no parking, whilst if you take the bus, the bus stop is a 15 min walk. I guarantee less mums will take their children's to the sessions as it will be so long and difficult to get to the centre.
- i wouldnt like to see the prepose children centre models be put under strain because of children centre closures
- It will remove later local and easy access to midwifery teams, ante natal classes, baby groups, breastfeeding support, adult education etc. Families should not have to drive or use public transport to reach centralised children's centres, they should be a local resource.
- this will create inconvenience in travelling to far places, if this closure goes ahead, there will not be enough places to admit families as other centres will be overcrowded
- The activities and staff at Hillside are just so wonderful and going there has been so beneficial for me and my daughter right from midwife appointments to story& rhyme sessions. It will be a big loss for children in the Northwood neighbourhood. The centre is so well maintained and welcoming
- Families enrolled in these children's centre may find the new centres to be less fitting or accommodating.
- Residents will have to travel to another children centre to use their facilities, this will not be within walking distance. For those residents who do not drive would have to pay for public transport so financially will affect them and whether this would deter residents from using another children centre. Many residents walk with babies in prams for various classes/events and for some new mums who use the breastfeeding support classes or wish to see a midwife or health visitor (if suffering from post natal depression) would not wish to travel a lot further to another centre if a local one closes.
- Families local to Hillside will no longer have local access to family support
- Children centres are part of the community. Social integration and well- being is already struggling across Hillingdon and with less services locally based services this widens the gap and means

disadvantaged families are unlikely to access a centre if it is further away. Local children centre staff are part of the local communities. I also worry that staff will not know the areas they serve as they get more centralised to save money.

- Families in Harefield will lose out if Harefield is no longer a lead centre,
- universal services will be impacted as staff are redeployed
- Having access to local centres is key to people using them. Having further to travel may put people off using services.
- See above. It will be a huge disadvantage to lose the provision. Hillside services genuinely touched and changed my life after the birth of my child. When I was in a post partum state, I would not have travelled as far as the alternative centres. I really would ask the Council not to close the centre. It would have made a huge difference to me if the provision had not been there, in that particular environment.
- Cuts will affect the service
- Familiarity of staff, trust gained to enable them to attend centres, one to one support to end
- Families rely on the support here
- As a local nursery we have worked very closely with Uxbridge College Children's Centre and have attended events in which has increased our occupancy by 15% as the centre supports families to find nurseries taking on the Government funding scheme.
- May have to go too far to alternative facilities offered
- Lack of midwifery care that is accessible to me locally as well as other services that support my families well being not being available
- our children need to have a social life and fun
- Closing the centres will mean that new parents currently close to the centres will have to travel which is often impossible or extremely stressful for a new mum. The closure will result in people feeling isolated. The centres have proven invaluable to my family and closing local services will lessen the community spirit and some people will feel isolated
- There will be fewer facilities overall. QED.
- Without Hillside the 3 remaining centres will struggle to provide a good level of service that will make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable families. Families who live near Hillside will struggle to reach Harefield and will find it hard to "walk" to Coteford and Ruislip
- I have received excellent support from my local children's centre since having my son. I suffer from anxiety and without the help and support of the children's centre I would be in a very different place right now.
- The current children centre has waiting lists for activities. By combining the centres these waiting lists would be longer
- Because the service they provide is exceptional and something that every parent needs a great support
- Scrap unwanted vanity projects like the Harefield youth centre in Ash Grove that people neither want or need. Keep services for younger children and parents. Breastfeeding support services are essential for mothers
- Children centre provides so much help support, it is better than gp

- I live minutes from Hillside, I have taken my daughter from birth to this centre where she has thrived and I have had such fantastic support from mums who live nearby. This had helped me form neighbourly relationships and build networks which are lifelong. By removing this centre you will be disintegrating the local community and making new mums not have the support they require in a local venue.
- Reduced and poor services following proposed changes
- Services will be reduced. The current service works well and it will be the families who miss out at the end of the day. People who are not involved in the everyday running of the centres are making these decisions. Let's see if they do decide to actually listen to the residents of Hillingdon!!
- Less services available as centres will be dictated to on what to offer but the management won't know the clients
- More families using the other centres. Quality staff no longer at these 2 centres. What a waste of resources
- They will not have their local centre to go to
- They will have to find somewhere else to go
- They will be wanting to use other centres which will reduce spaces and we will not be able to get in
- Parents will have to travel further to go to activities.
- They will have to travel further to access any sessions
- They will have to travel
- Not nice for them, it will be too far for them to travel. It will also not be good for people to pick up their children from school
- The parents there are receiving high quality tailored service in their own community in a specially designed centre with trained staff. They also have other services there - e.g. employability - where else will women get this - JCP won't support people not on active benefits.
- fewer options for safe places to bring young children to play and develop
- making it more difficult to access services
- Not closing those
- In areas of deprivation- Uxbridge CC- families are less likely to travel further for services
- closing those centres means there is nothing in those areas for families
- Fewer resources means less support
- a number of families will not have access to services
- Some children will no longer benefit from services putting them at a disadvantage.
- All the centres are providing vital services for families many of whom would not have the means to access them in any other way. Potential problems in families or with mental / emotional health issues need addressing with young children, before school age. The link with school is essential and cannot be replaced by council control.
- There is so limited funding already and puts more stress on other children centres
- Harder to access services
- people may not have internet access to gain information as to where different sessions are held, if people have to travel further they may not be as interested to attend a higher number of sessions

- When my son was born, there were so many things I was unsure of. Talking to the staff and other mums at these groups helped me to see that these things were in fact normal, and i could hear how others overcame these things.
- These centres need to be enhanced for more age groups
- some people will be disadvantaged from services
- Children centres should be within pram walking distance
- Those local to the closures will have to travel further
- Those who do not have access to a car will find it difficult to get to other children's centres.
- Some families that need additional support may go under the radar. Some families take a long time to build up a relationship where they feel confident enough to ask for help, or in some cases acknowledge difficulties that they or their child have.
- I have met so many mummies where it has taken a lot to get out and get involved in Centres. These parents have built relationships with staff members and are feel their children are safe and happy too. They will have to use public transport and this will be at a cost... The other centres will become overcrowded or unlikely to get booked onto sessions.. parents will not bother to travel further for different sessions that they are not used to.. Vulnerable families that find it hard to access these services will become more secluded and isolated.
- Sure all these parents will now need to travel further and it costs so much money to travel now days and will probably be late for sessions or not be able to get booked on as other centres will have to take all the families from Uxbridge and Hillside! Such a bad idea!
- poor families they will now use the centres i use and i wont be able to get booked on.. or session will become overcrowded
- Parents will have to travel far meaning they might not be able to get help or use their services.
- The location of UCChC is a key reason as well as the great facilities and staff. If it was closed down me and my child wouldn't go to a different centre due to the distance and time it takes to get there. Also, my child has been attending the centre since a couple of months old and is used to and feels safe in the Centre's environment and friendly staff. If that all would be gone she would likely miss out on a great deal of good early years development and activities as we would visit nearby centres less often if at all.
- Local residents will not be able to access the essential services
- There will not be enough centres, offering the 'appropriate' service to meet the needs of the local community. Our families are often on low incomes and cannot afford to travel across to other locations to access services. Also, it takes time to build up trust with people. People are more likely to access services when they feel safe and secure in the environment and with the people they know
- It will cost me money, which I do not have, to travel to these centre. It will take me too long to pick up my other child.
- The other centres will not be able to meet the demand with the increasing number of people moving into Hayes. Groups become booked up very quickly. People can't get onto groups at Barra Hall as there is already too many people using this centre.



- We are very happy with the services provided by our local children centres and happy with the way it runs. Instead of helping with more funding for them to provide more support. You are trying to apply a proposal that is a disadvantage to the residents
- childrens centres work well because the small teams know the locality in which they work and this means that users of the centres get to know the team and I believe for vulnerable families the consistent team is of utmost importance
- As mentioned before they need to be linked with the school so the nursery staff and Childrens center can communicate easily
- If they cannot easily access the centres.
- Possible cutting of staff and services will certainly affect all who attend. Relationships and trust is something that takes a child time to build. Consistency is positive and important for a child.
- Removing facility at Hillside leaves north of borough under resourced and alternatives difficult to access. From Northwood/Northwood Hills you are not likely to go to Harefield or South Ruislip for support and Coteford is not on public transport route. Demand at Hillside was always strong when I used (5 years ago) and perhaps promoting it would be better than closing it to get full use.
- If a system works and meeting most importantly the urgent duty of care of residents, then why change it?.
- Fewer local centres. For school bases centres, less integration with schools.
- It would completely isolate. For me I have used the baby group, the massage group, baby sign group and being able to have [Redacted] to talk to when I needed to was invaluable.
- Keep them open
- Very far
- the uxbridge college childrens centre is in my opinion the best childrens centre in the area. It is clean, new and the staff are fantastic. The snack time offered isnt offered in many childrens centres. I have been to almost all th childrens centre in hayes and yeading and they do not compare. I find it astounding that after just 5/6 years of a brand new centre being open it is being closed down. What a waste of money and resources! I alongside many other mums am able to walk to the childrens centre as i dont drive and i will be upset to loose this convinience.
- If families need to travel across the borough for specific support there is a strong likelihood they will not attend and eventually the services will cease to exist
- Removing centres or reducing services cannot help but imoact on residents. Those who use childrens centres are already many of those who have very limited resources and can't afford to travel to alternative centres. These changes imoact the most vulnerable in our community who can't afford alrernatives.
- By disadvantaging local families and vulnerable parents and their very young children. As a Social Worker I understand first hand how supporting young parents, those with mental health, those whose 0-5 year old children are child in need plan or child protection register can be monitored and moved on to achieve successful outcomes. Research has highlighted that the 0-5 year aged children are the most vulnerable and without this provision families will suffer!!
- Why hit the children, hit your pockets instead

- It will create a further pressure on all other services in the borough. Those that access those particular services may not be able to travel to other centres because of physical or mental health or a disability. They may be suffering domestic abuse and have no access to money or support to travel leading to further isolation. Children will miss opportunities to attend sessions and learn to socialise with others. New mums may not be able to travel to other centres losing valuable support for breastfeeding, post natal depression and opportunities to meet other mums. Parents of children with difficulties or disabilities will become further isolated from services.
- Lots of people, especially young mothers rely on having these services locally.
- I have seen how the children's centre has help many families with young children
- As I stated above in my previous comments
- If people don't have a local children's centre they will have to go further to get the support but won't and therefore making it harder for local schools as the support isn't there

**Question 5: Do you have any suggestions for how the council can continue to improve children's centre services in the future?**

- I believe they already work well
- No
- By keeping up the good work and offering as many groups as possible.
- Do not close any
- Keep them as they are
- keep them open. provide funding for more activities and staff to be paid well and trained well
- Consider working mums
- Stop making cuts - the staff and services are fantastic, but I fear that less families will be able to benefit from the brilliant service that Children's Centres give.
- Provide more resources and ensure other agencies are integrated from a sharing of information perspective
- U need to go into families that need help and offer more longer service
- tailor each to the individual community
- Leave things as they are
- Perfect as they are
- Keep them open. Allow the best performing centres to lead the others, not those who require improvement to lead those that are good/outstanding. Ask the staff for their suggestions. don't waste money on new databases that are not better than the old. Introduce specialist centres - families will travel for those. Allow chargeable services for those who can afford it to pay for the services for those who can't.
- Leave ALL staff in their current positions, cost cut elsewhere
- Keep Children's Centres connected to schools and Churches as much as possible - children's centres need to be kept separate as much as possible from the council politics and let those with good experience and more focus on the children in the area

- More classes available. Perhaps centres should do a catchment area for mothers and babies to attend as some are full and taken up by others farther afield
- Yes leave the childrens centre as they are (i.e. don't shut any) & ensure that they deliver services for children up to 19. You can not expect the centres to take on more services with less staff & centres
- Keep them open!
- Increase number of places that are available in sessions
- First of all I would welcome an honest explanation of the reasons these centres have been selected. I gather the council has explained it is due to their leases not being renewed, but my understanding is that this applies to more than 2 of the CCs so seems to be an inadequate explanation of the closure plans. Transparency is essential to show that the decisions are based on proper examination of the impact of any closures. At the moment I am left wondering if such an exercise had been undertaken, or if it is a more cynical judgement that you can get away with closing certain centres as the political ramifications will be less severe.
- More options for families with several different aged young children at present is very age orientated with little for multiples
- Perhaps initiate a process where parents don't get turned away from a session with their baby after making the journey on a bus! It would be a wasted effort.
- Stop closing centres. Keep offering programmes that benefit new parents.
- Improving budgets so staff don't have to limit the services that they provide. Keeping centres open and keeping managers in each centre and letting them manage their own timetables
- Weekend dad activities
- Leave them to run themselves. Don't destroy what has been built well without LA help
- Put the money into the centres that do work and offer a comprehensive service
- Put more money and don't close the centres!
- More sessions and different classes to teach skills to different age groups
- More staff, more training in specialist areas such as autism support and speech and language, a more varied and consistent programme of service delivery, having qualified and committed staff in centres every day, more joint working and usage of centre services
- By keeping them open!!!
- Supporting the children's centre instead of making changes and cuts will continue for families to access this vitally important services they provide!!!!
- Don't close the centre! New mothers need more support, not less.
- Create more centres, not less!
- Joined up services
- Some are good some not so good. Colham Manor is the best by far
- By keeping sufficient centres open to accommodate the needs of the growing population in Hillingdon and not reducing the centres.
- More courses and play time

- Improve,,, no. It's here , amongst residence , they run so many classes and of a huge variety. They run educational workshops. They bring parents and children together. I wish they were just bigger. Open all day
- Put more resource in not out. All families are entitled to support, early intervention and be able to choose which service. Over stretched services means not all those most in need will be reached
- don't close any children's centres!
- Provide more nurses around for consultation and careful follow up on babies' development, including measuring hight and head circumference, and closer followed up on developmental stages.
- Continue to provide services in the busiest areas
- I don't disagree with the new hub and spoke model, just please don't close Hillside or Uxbridge College
- More classes
- Keeping them easily accessible - provide more parking - keep a variety of classes for different age children - keep the support for parents classes going and the educational programs for parents with a crèche so they can go if they don't have child care.
- Keep hillside open. Stop trying to save money by cutting services that people need.
- Don't keep closing them . Don't try and fix something that is not broken to line your pockets
- Review each Childrens centres timetable to see what centre provides more services and visit each centre before this stupid decision even gets thought off
- More funding!
- Do not close them down. Work with the staff and community to see what services are needed and perhaps ask to raise funds for the centres if money is the issue.
- Have more classes during the week for toddlers, that are suitably timed as well.
- Allow each centre to offer the services/groups that they will run. and be that personal point of contact
- Have more centres open
- Not cutting sessions
- Stop trying to save money in these areas full stop. Children's centre services are second to none and are very much needed and appreciated
- More staff and more classes at hillside
- The work and support children's centres provide young families is amazing and has long term benefits in creating happy stable and supported families
- More qualified staff
- Continue to run the existing ones and look at the services offered and how best to optimise them for the service user.
- Using very qualified staff to run the centres and having speech and language services more involved in the programme designs, having health care visitors at hand every day to advise and support families
- Further promote the use of EHA and EI services, supporting families from a younger age, with staff being reminded that EI services are available
- I implore you to keep Hillside Children's Centre open.
- Put the money into the ones that deliver the services

- Keep investing in its current services and advertise them better. Children's centre are a wonderful and invaluable resource
- Multi-sourced members of staff - already facilitate services on what they've got - good use skills on tight budgets already!
- More staff
- Put some more money in the budget for such centres and less for housing benefits etc.
- extra funding. Nice to have something open at weekends. Maybe have them open on a rota
- Keep all the centres open they offer a fab service to us parents the support is amazing put the children first
- services running throughout the year for children and their families.
- Ensure that the local centres remain open to provide support to the community.
- Separate from schools, secure the grounds so schools can not take and leave them open!
- Keep them and more funding is needed in this area
- Invest in them so they can grow stronger,
- Leave them in tact
- Don't cut back. Let the children centres have some control over their centres. It's not an area to cut back. We- parents need these centres, I'd be lost without mine (cherry Lane) it's run so well, I feel I can have an input. Don't take this away from us!
- Each centre needs to be the first point of contact for services as this is were we as families feel safe and comfortable.
- Let the highly experienced staff of the centres and schools leadership teams who over see them do there job instead of letting the staff at the council whom are not qualified to lead these services
- They are better being run by schools as they sre available
- Do not close hillside
- More Adult run classes to support parents in learning a new skill
- Stop closing them. Let us fundraise to help with costs as clearly that's all that matters.
- by keeping the children centres opened and accessible for vulnerable parents and children
- Open longer & more of them
- Provide further funding to support growing and young families accessing these centres.
- Keep them open and offer a range of classes and support. Coteford one is a fantastic example
- Continued support and varied activities for children to participate in
- More free classes, education for parents, drop in clinics to be open at children's centres.
- Several different timings for classes. If using a hall, make sure it is clean so small toddlers do not pick it up and put in their mouth, i.e. canteen food crumbs, after school pen lids, rubber, etc.
- Not close them! And have more courses available . I have been waiting months and months for baby massage
- Offer a bigger range of support, advice and support for children from 0-5
- Do not look at closing or cutting funds, and where necessary allow fund raising to avoid cutting present services

- Perhaps run same classes at other council owned locations - more library sessions for example. The key is more classes on more days and more times - juggling life, naps and feeds make some classes just impossible to attend without an alternative so the child misses out.
- Maintain the investment in them - for example, at South Ruislip there was a Zumba class with a creche (one of the few exercise classes you can take a baby to) and yet this has now been scrapped due to a lack of funding. I have missed my opportunity to go this class as I only heard about it after the last block had finished. Such a shame.
- Keep hillside open!
- Family support workers are needed in childrens centres
- Yes. Better parking facilities for families. More childcare courses at levels 1 to 4 in daytime when children are at school not evenings. I come here to Yeading for all types of support, family, childrens development, education, voluntaring and community information and find out about services.
- make sure centres are open on Saturdays like libraries. that is sometimes the time when families most need them. also a good time for dad's groups.
- There needs to be a unified and consistent way in collecting feedback from service users in each individual centre to find out what their needs are, rather than a different multiple choice questionnaire every other week.
- By meeting the needs of the individual areas and not forming a patterned opinion to say that one style will suit all. In some areas there is a large traveller community. Other areas have large Somali communities. Others have Polish or Afghanistan families. Therefore it is in my opinion that children's centres should be tailored to the needs of the local families.
- Friendlier staff with good academic background. No booking required like hillside
- The current system and availability of centres seems to work well. My suggestion is therefore that you do not change the status quo and close any centres.
- Quality trained staff. Staff who know the local areas well. Family support workers based at each centre. Good leadership to the centre and beyond to make strong links locally. Children's centres work closely with the schools and are able to support families prior to school. A shared knowledge base can pre-empt any local issues for families. To continue to be unique in our delivery model provides a high standard of services to residents - this may be compromised with the new and cheaper model.
- Offer more funding, training and resources.
- 1. Social media team within the civic centre- it's 2016 we should be able to advertise our services on Facebook groups and Twitter, it's the fastest way to get information across to people and most young parents will see it. 2. Highly trained staff are needed in all centres, if the management teams are ineffective they need to be changed. 3. Links with schools need to be kept as close to they currently are. Transitions should be as easy as possible. 4. Have a team of children's centres workers as a panel/group to address issues and out them to managers at civic centre. We are early years practitioners, not civil servants! It's easy for people in an office to decide on policies when they aren't on the ground every day with children and families. 5. Remove unnecessary bureaucracy from day to day running of local authority centres. For example, only being able to order from one catalogue that has extortionate prices, or having to wait for MITIE to come and fix a small issue when there is a caretaker

or worker onsite at our schools or centres already. We have insurance to cover them doing the work and in regards to pay, that's what invoices are for!

- To restore funding levels to 2011 levels and continue to use centres as a key vehicle to support families.
- asking the real parents what their needs are, rather than sitting in round table and sipping their warm coffees in the council offices
- Fund local services
- as long as there is sufficient budget for these services to actually act and work on
- Better online booking facilities and being able to access and view the current timetables online. The online part of these services is extremely lacking!
- by expanding infrastructure
- working with the local health visiting teams is very useful so families can see the health visitor there
- incorporate more joined working with other health professionals
- Investment in staff, and their development
- Would like Children Centres to be open on weekends as sessions are held on weekdays only so cannot access any services that the Children Centres offer.
- Yes, by not closing them.
- Run more sessions of the same type as children can sometimes miss out if that time is a nap time or lunch time
- by keeping them open as they are a lifeline for many families for advice and support
- More funding not less.
- organise public consultations and invite the local people to bring suggestions, include to look ways to utilize the existing services
- By not closing down centres and let them carry on the wonderful work they are doing for our children
- To ensure all children's centres provide the same level of services, the council can manage them without merging them to hubs and changing their working model. A support worker and a council member together can manage the centre to ensure that the centre is a trusted and accessible place for the local area people.
- Publicising their programmes and schedules of events locally within the community. Offering services for working parents (outside of Monday - Friday 9 - 5pm hours) Even just for a few hours Saturday morning or one late evening a month so that working parents also benefit not just stay at home mums or part time parents.
- Open for longer hours
- Keep them local to each community
- Spend money on it, invest in youth devices and stop spending money on plant displays and bloom awards. Early years and youth services (not just youth centres) save the council and NHS money in the long term.
- Still perfect
- no
- Reduce staff costs
- by maintaining funding at inflation levels

- to offer a universal service that supports all families
- As a minimum, continue to fund these vital centre. Perhaps, to ensure consistency over the classes and courses which are offered by the centre.
- by opening later in the afternoon -up to 18:00hrs would be useful to some working mothers
- none
- Keep them open! More information about their services from the hospital might be useful (my baby was born out of the area though and so maybe I would have otherwise received that).
- It is not "continuing to improve" centres. That comment is post-truth.
- By asking for people's views before closing Children's Centres and review all the hard work the colleagues have done to maintain a high standard of running them.
- Keep the centre open and allow them the chance to expand and improve
- flexible with serices and times
- Leave the facilities where they are
- Perhaps run on a part time basis
- provide equipments and leaflets
- Make it easier to book. More news about their services online. Make sessions easier to book at short notice.
- Keep offering different play and activity groups that children of all ages from baby to school can attend. Parents need opportunities to get out and meet other parents just as children need opportunities to get out of the house, meet other children and learn new skills.
- Look at the centres which have already got a good Ofsted rating to see what is working well. Talk to staff and professionals who are working in the centres. Keep a manager in each centre so that services can be managed effectively and be truely reactive to the needs of the local community.
- Yes stop Hillingdon from spending money against a Third Runway, also stopp Clr Puddifoot and the rest from increasing their allowances year on year, this money would be better spent on the services provided to either children or the elderly.
- Advertising more voluntary roles.
- Reduce waiting list
- Continue with employing lovely staff, provide stay and play groups, information courses as I think they all do an amazing job
- Keep them open! They are constantly in use and provide a range of services.
- Coteford children centre must stay. Too much depends on it
- By not changing a children's centre that works so well!
- Support current model
- Do not change how the service is being delivered. I would like to highlight here that it is bring proposed to move to the local authority where the current centres under the la have been graded as requires improvement in their most recent ofsted. The ccs that are under the schools management have received good!
- Continue to deliever support for families, development for children and support the staff!



- More spaces in popular classes, more advertising, better option for families with siblings that differ in ages
- Leave alone
- Meet with parents that use the centres and hear what they say. You did meet families but seem to have misunderstood the message.
- I am happy with the current service. Would like to see one more session added to the programme in the week that I can attend.
- I am happy with how things are
- Currently have morning sessions that meet our needs, it will be nice to see messy play in the morning so my child can use it. Change around of sessions each term would be better. Offer sessions on other days too for example stay and play on a Thursday.
- We are happy with the centre we use and the activities provided. Happy with how it runs at the moment.
- No suggestions
- Happy with how it runs at the moment
- Not really I like how it runs, my daughter use it and she is now 6 and my son uses it and he loves it.
- Investing in the young saves as they get older. Supporting women to work helps improve the whole community
- keep childrens centres that are already linked with schools as they are
- the should have more children center
- extend activities
- Ensure current services can be delivered in a corrdinated way, identifying sites for services to deliver where there are closures
- Don't close any more children's centres. Open some more!
- Schools are the hub of the community. Children Centres should work closely with schools not away from the schools.
- Keep all centres open.
- Listen to the schools , staff and families . Get out there and talk to them instead of doing surveys that most families don't have the time or inclination to answer . I'm deeply concerned and I'm already losing interest in this badly designed survey !
- Yes have staff that know what they are taking about !!! Instead of from a book or a course they have done !!!!!
- Maintain or establish links with infant schools where ever possible
- More funding to individual centres
- Local services and familiar professionals to build relationships with
- Offer services and activities for more age groups
- have service near the clients so all can access and less travel new children are hard as it is than having to travel
- leave ours as it is because it works
- do not delete Hayes Uxbridge campus and Hillside
- more clsses / options

- Have linked services like social services have either drop in surgeries or based at the centres
- Clearly some centres are used better than others. Are they closely monitored. Can staff share their expertise without losing consistent staff and services for each children's centres. If some centres are less effective what can the council do to support them. A lot of money has been spent on setting up the children centres that will have been wasted if proposals take place.
- Keeping quality highly trained staff. Good to keep the line maangement underneath the school umbrella. Services for Family Support to remain within centres to allow close work with schools , health visitors and social workers. Speech and language therapistas. Encourage Health to share their data with Children centres to help centres work more effectively. To keep current sessions running at the centres as attendance and demand is high. To keep children centres as they are !!!
- Keep them how they are.
- They are fine as they are.
- Allow Centres to have their own budget and run autonomously
- Leave them as they are. More investment. Continue to encourage centres to work together.
- Better investment
- Keep them as they are!
- Stop trying to close them and provide the funding where they can provide more services. The centres centres provide excellent support.
- A more coordinated approach can be achieved by continued dialogue and more strategic planning by the managers of the Children's Centres
- keep them as they are
- Keep them managed by locals schools.
- I would suggest continuing to provide the excellent service it's currently providing. I attend Colham Manor and the staff of all various roles provide excellent support to parents and the future of the children.
- Offer a wide choice of classes for pre-school age and parent support during day; make use of centers in the evenings for older children support; make available to external clubs to use facilities so that create income in evenings - they have large "meeting" style room that many groups could use.
- Put the Residents First

## **Appendix C: Comments from additional correspondence**

*(comments have not been edited, however any references to information that could be considered confidential have been redacted).*

I am a regular user of Cherry lane children's centre and I would like to reflect on the Council meeting on 19th January.

Having been there in the public gallery I felt like councillors representing us the users of the centres spoke very passionately about this matter and painted the real picture of the problems centres are facing if the proposed changes go ahead.

It will cost Council more money in the long run, as the changes will put a lot of pressure on the schools. I felt like the "for" decision had already been made by the opposition therefore some councillors did not pay much attention to what has being said.

Some of them continuously talking and laughing, not realising this is a big issue for many families.

As I said before the only way for the best solution is for both sides to hear each other, not only "Listen". I feel the sides were very divided, and the opposite side had very little understanding of what the real heartache is. It is clear only few who were fighting this matter really do understand.

Would the council consider us users paying for using the centre? Many families I spoke to said they would be very happy doing so if of course it means leaving the centre unchanged.

Also there is a big difference to be physically involved with children centres rather than to start making decisions from the council office without getting the real picture and the real feeling of the need of children's centre.

I would agree with some points mr Simmonds had said however, I would disagree regarding that the services should only be focused for the ones in most need. Yes they should be priority but not the only ones to be catered for.

It is very sad for us taxpayers in the middle not to have anything in return. The nurseries are very expensive, and the ones on the low income get funding for nurseries from age of 2 and what about us? As usual we pay into the system but get nothing in return.

Hillingdon Council is always promoting "Putting our residents first"

-Do we come first ?

-Can we come to some kind of mutual satisfactory solution?

-This seems like some kind of competition, it should not be, it should be a teamwork for the best interest of our children.

Thank you

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I am writing to respond to the so called Consultation being carried out on line regarding Children's Centres. I had tried to respond on line but had difficulties. Please accept this as my response.

I totally disagree with the proposals for the following reasons.

The Townfield Children's Centre is a much valued resource for children

and their families who reside in the ward. It is a place that offers services that are heavily used and much benefits the Residents and also the Council.

Due to many of the staff being local, knowledgeable and accessible parents trust the advice given and children and families thrive.

Young mums and sometimes dads as well who might otherwise be isolated go along learn social skills and greatly improve their parenting skills which ensures that our children get the best start in life. I have lost count of the number of residents who have sung Townfield Children Centres praises and I am sure those who use Hillside feel the same.

We have a deprivation within the ward as you all well know and this Centre does a lot to encourage parents to gain skills to get better jobs to support their families and lift them out of poverty. Something the Council should be doing all it can to hold on to.

Who do you presume is going to do this work if the Children's Centre in Townfield is not there. Where will the struggling mum go for help where will the families that you have given no consideration to go to get support. Please do not be under any illusion that they will all get on a bus if they could even afford to which many cannot as many are struggling to feed their families as it is. Also the distance to the next one might not be far for a person with transport but they are not within walking distances for those with other children to be collected from schools.

Should you proceed then there will be financial costs to the Council for picking up the issues that Townfield and Hillside deal with on a daily basis. The suffering you will bring to the children and families you will be alienating cannot be exaggerated this is a fact.

To be quite blunt I do not think you have really thought this through. Why have you not taken the time to talk to the Children's Centre Managers they who have a vast knowledge on budgets etc. I am told that they have some proposals to offer if you would only take the time to enter into some meaningful discussion with them. Collectively you could come up with a solution which would not include closure of any of the Children's Centres if that is what you desire. Please do not turn your back on Townfield Children's Centre or Hillside Children's Centre. The children who use these Centres today are the adults of the future they will not forgive you for not doing all you could to give them a good start in life.

Please reconsider.

**THE FUTURE OF THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE PROGRAMME**  
**RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION FROM LOCALITY 2 ADVISORY BOARD**

**Introduction**

Our Advisory Board is responsible for 8 of the Council's current 18 Children's Centres – Barra Hall, Belmore, Charville, McMillan, Nestles Avenue, Pinkwell, Uxbridge College and Yeading. We have carefully considered the outcome of the review of the Children's Centre Programme and agreed the following comments for consideration by the Council.

**Role of Children's Centres.**

The consultation document rightly highlights the importance of Children's Centres in the physical, intellectual and emotional development of children and the value of early help and intervention in reducing the chances of future problems. In addition it recognises the significant contribution that Centres make in enhancing parenting skills and improving child and family health. To this could be added the part they play in tackling isolation, building self-confidence and assisting parents and carers into employment. On top of that is their contribution to community cohesion by bringing together people of different backgrounds and ethnicities.

We accept that the Council is faced with a very difficult challenge in balancing its budget but we strongly believe that expenditure on Children's Centres is an excellent investment for the future. We note that the consultation paper fails to include a financial appraisal but we know from the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecast that it is proposed to reduce spending on Children's Centres by £284,000 between 2017 and 2019 with a further cut of £744,000 in 2019/20. In our opinion this is a totally false economy and the consultation paper provides no justification for reductions of this magnitude. It is worrying to note that in reply to one of our questions on the document we were informed that "No plans or proposals have been developed or agreed re. the 2019/20 figure".

The response demonstrates the lack of a clear vision of what the Council wishes Children's Centres to deliver in the future. In reality this should be the starting point for any review with organisational issues following later. We are aware that the Government has been promising a national review for some considerable time and that it has recently announced that this is now about to commence. Until the review is completed the Council is proceeding without the full facts.

**Proposed closure of Uxbridge College Children's Centre**

In our view the document provides no rational basis for the closure of any of the Borough's Children's Centres and the criterion used for the selection of the Uxbridge College and Hillside Centres lacks credibility.

The January/February edition of Hillingdon People informed the public that Council Tax would again be frozen in the coming financial year and made a very clear statement that there would be no facility closures. This is totally at odds with the proposal to close the Hillside and Uxbridge College Centres. The Council is rightly proud that it has avoided the wholesale cutting of facilities seen in other Boroughs. In the light of this the proposed closure of any Children's Centre is perverse and should be withdrawn.

It is stated in the consultation paper that these two particular Centres were selected for closure because the Council has been unable to conclude lease negotiations but it is common knowledge that there are other Centres where leases have yet to be signed. In the case of Uxbridge College we understand that their reluctance to complete the lease was because of a draft clause that would have given the Council the absolute right to decide on the use of the premises in the event of the building ceasing to be a Children's Centre at some point in the future. That is a very understandable position for them to take as no landowner would want to have the use of their premises determined by a tenant with no say at all.

We are also aware that the Governing Body of Uxbridge College has formally resolved to object to the proposed closure. In our view there are excellent grounds, even at this late stage, for the Council to re-open negotiations with the College with the aim of trying to achieve a mutually acceptable lease.

### **Alternative provision**

The consultation paper states that on the assumption that the closures go ahead the Council will be looking at alternative ways in which residents can continue to be supported in the areas affected. No details are given of what the alternative provision might be. In answer to one of the questions we posed to the Council we were told that “the lead Centre for each locality would be charged with developing a collaborative programme to service the locality as a whole and to be flexible and creative as to how and where support may be provided in association with partners.” The answer also says that once the new model of working has been agreed there will be further consultation with programme staff to refine the model and service delivery details.

This statement of intent is fine as far as it goes but it provides no reassurance to the users of the Uxbridge College Centre who are being asked to comment on the closure of their local service with absolutely no idea of what they will be offered in its place. The principles of good consultation as laid down in various court cases require that those consulted should have sufficient information to make informed comments on what is proposed. In our opinion the total closure of a facility is so final that the users of this Centre have a legitimate expectation to be told about the alternative provision in advance and to be given the opportunity to comment. The absence of any detailed alternatives to the present provision renders the consultation fundamentally flawed.

It seems likely that one form of alternative provision would be to direct users to other Children’s Centres at Barra Hall and Yeading in particular. Increased numbers at those Centres could have implications for other users and for staff. In the absence of an impact analysis it is impossible to know but it is submitted that this exercise should be done before a final decision is taken to close the Uxbridge College Centre.

### **Proposed new model**

The consultations with service users as part of the review of the Children’s Centre Programme raised a number of very relevant issues such as the need for local and accessible support, the significance of a single point of access and the importance of consistency of service. All of these observations have validity but none of them explains or justifies the proposal in the consultation paper for the Council to assume direct responsibility for managing all Children’s Centres.

At first sight the present managerial structure certainly appears rather strange with a mixture of direct provision and management by schools plus management in one case by a voluntary sector provider. This pattern is largely a product of history but that does not render it invalid. For example the Centres managed by schools have benefited from considerable managerial input and commitment from Heads and senior staff and also the support of Governors. None of this is recognised in the consultation paper. Perhaps more important is the fact that there is no mention about how these managerial functions will be taken over by staff at the Civic Centre who are already under considerable pressure. In the interests of the effective and efficient operation of Centres currently attached to schools we would therefore like to know how it is proposed that these tasks will be carried out under the new model.

### **Vulnerable children**

It is important to emphasise that Children’s Centres are open to all children and not just vulnerable children or those from so-called ‘problem families. We understand that in the debate at the Council meeting on 19 January there was much emphasis on the fact that not sufficient numbers of vulnerable children are being reached under the current set-up. That is a statement of fact which has been consistently highlighted in consecutive OfSTED

reports. However there are two things that need to be made clear. The first is that those vulnerable children known to Children's Centres receive excellent support and demonstrate good development. Secondly the main reasons for not reaching more vulnerable children are the failure of the Council and its partners to introduce and implement proper information-sharing protocols and procedures. This Advisory Board has consistently drawn attention to the need to resolve these problems but only limited action has been taken.

More to the point in relation to the consultation paper is that the proposals it contains give no indication as to how the position with regard to vulnerable children will be improved by the introduction of centralised management, the closure of two Centres and the reduction in the budget by around a million pounds. We would submit that the position of vulnerable children will be worsened as a result of the latter two factors.

### **Advisory Boards**

The introduction of five hubs in place of the current three localities will clearly have implications for the three existing Advisory Boards. It is true to say that having as many as 8 Centres under our Board has proved challenging, particularly for lay members and parent representatives. We are assuming that if the new model is agreed there will be changes to the structure of Advisory Boards and we would like to be consulted on the details since our experience may be useful.

### **Timetable for implementation**

At the briefing in December for Children's Centre Managers, Head Teachers, Governors and others there were questions about the timetable for implementation. It was stated that the plan was to bring the management of all Centres in-house from March this year and that a review of staffing would then be carried out between April and June. There were concerns expressed that it might take well into the latter part of the year before everything was completed and in place. We would like to endorse that concern.

All the good work that goes on in Children's Centres is down to our Managers and staff and it is well known that one of the worst things for staff morale is uncertainty. We therefore request that subject to the proposals being approved by the Council everything possible is done to speed up the process without, of course, compromising the rights of individuals to be consulted.

### **Advisory Board Locality 2**

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I'm writing to you regarding the proposed closure of Hillside

Children's Centre, Northwood. I am the mother of a 6-month-old and a

nearly-three-year-old, and have used the services provided at Hillside

Children's Centre with both of my children. I would be very sorry to

see it closed.

I believe that Hillside Children's Centre is vital for social

integration. Northwood and Northwood Hills are areas with extremes of

wealth; the children's centre provides the only activities I have attended that are truly open and accessible to all parents, regardless of social background, nationality, age or status. I've made friends through Hillside that I would not otherwise have made. Unlike other baby and toddler groups, the sessions are free, and run through the school holidays, which provides a vital lifeline for members of the community who would otherwise be isolated at what is often a difficult time - having a baby or small child at home.

I understand that service users will be directed to children's centres in Harefield and Eastcote; however, these are not particularly easy to get to for those without access to a car.

Hillside Children's Centre is a successful centre. The sessions are always popular and there are waiting lists for the courses that they run. I cannot understand why Hillside is listed for closure when other Centres could learn so much from the service provided there. As well as receiving most of my antenatal midwife care at Hillside, I've attended countless drop in sessions where I've learnt how to play with my children, received breastfeeding support including one-to-one advice, attended seminars run by the Children's Centre staff on a range of topics, but most importantly grown in confidence in my own parenting skills through the support that I've received. Hillside Children's Centre provides a wonderful service - and it is vital that this service remains local and accessible for parents in the Northwood and Northwood Hills area.



I therefore urge you to resist the closure of Hillside Children's

Centre.

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I am devastated that my local Children's Centre is earmarked for closure. I understand this is a council decision but, despite the reorganisation of the service being presented as the reason, it is clearly the result of cuts to local government budgets made by the Conservative government.

The council is obliged to provide a local and accessible Children's Centre service, which it will not do when it closes Hillside. For mothers without cars, it is going to be difficult to get to the next nearest centres. A 30 minute bus ride sounds easy, until you have to wrangle 2 children under 3 to the bus stop, wait, board, hope that there is space for your pram, keep them occupied on the journey, walk at the other end and hope you aren't late so that the session you are going to isn't already full and you have to take 2 disappointed children straight home again.

Now I have a car, and I know that makes a huge difference - I am lucky. But my experience of having a local centre is that it saved me from falling into post natal depression, because it provided a local community, a place of support and enrichment for my son and for me in my parenting skills. Motherhood is very isolating. A children's centre enriches the lives of families by supporting mothers and children's development, and the positive effects are felt for years to come.

I feel that the Conservative answer is - mothers go back to work as soon as possible and put your children in full time nursery. Certainly that is what the financial incentives point to. Full time nursery care is fine for some very young children, but for many it causes anxiety because of separation from their main caregiver, which often manifests as aggression in male children. For mothers taking care of their children at home for all or part of the week, a local children's centre is not a luxury, it is a lifeline.

I wrote that I was devastated, at the start of this email, which may seem over-dramatic. However, it is a huge loss not just to me and my child, but to many many families in Northwood.

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I believe Hillingdon council's proposals for the restructuring of the children's centres to be a thinly veiled cost saving exercise rather than a well thought out long term plan. The centres are such a valuable part of the community with fantastic staff and resources, they offer a lifeline supporting positive mental health for parents raising their young children and lay firm foundations for future family success. Whilst this plan is pitched as a new way of making resources available consistently across the borough, it is incredibly short sighted in terms of basic numbers. The current provision is going to be stretched too thinly across far too many families and more government money will ultimately be spent rectifying situations in the future. For example, supporting people who end up living with, or near to someone with, severe depression that could have been supported and possibly prevented early on. Alternatively, families could develop costly health problems from poor eating habits as they knew no better because there were no spaces on the various healthy living courses available. Children and young adults could have a lifetime affected by poor relationships with their close relatives following a breakdown in communication between members of the family. I firmly believe all these situations are improved with the support offered by the current system.

Hillside has been identified as one of the Children's Centres for closure and it is proposed that its families be served by Coteford and Harefield instead. In my personal experience, since having my first child last summer, all

the local children's centres are in great demand and there are waiting lists for many of the sessions. They simply do not have the capacity to take in all the displaced families following this closure. Merely calling it a 'borough-wide' approach does not make things available to people. In the case of Hillside, the proposal is that a total of 8 areas/wards be covered by just three centres so the 'local and accessible support' will no longer be available to many residents of Northwood and Northwood Hills. How will 'child development and school readiness' be supported by taking future students further from the area they are resident in? 'Promoting good physical and mental health' is not achieved by requiring new parents to travel further to get support. If someone were to be in a situation where they need to reach out for help having to struggle to get there will isolate many. Wonderful services are available currently but you are making geographical accessibility much more of an issue. A 15 minute car journey is the best case scenario for those fortunate enough to drive and have a car, although you now have to pay to park in Harefield's main car park so that introduces further cost and the stress of clock-watching to ensure you are not caught out by the pay and display ticket system. If you do not have a car then Harefield is even more inaccessible thereby isolating lots of parents who do not live in the immediate area.

The proposal to offer expertise across the borough is good in theory but to combine that with the closure of two centres is senseless and will only reduce provision in certain areas. Leases with those centres would have been entirely possible if negotiations were to have been held openly with the centres and their linked schools. Perhaps it may seem that the children's centres do not work together but if the local children's centre have not been able to offer something they have referred me on to others so I have always felt that they all have an awareness of what each other are doing and share best practice amongst themselves.

I found it incredibly reassuring to have an antenatal appointment which was an opportunity for me to find out what services were available to my husband and I. My mother suffered from very severe postnatal depression after I was born and I feared the same may happen in my life. As well as being exciting, my husband and I have found parenthood very challenging and every member of staff we have engaged with has supported us on our journey.

Whilst I do agree that some aspects of postnatal care would benefit from more coordinated practices I feel you have identified the wrong areas for review. More focus should be put on the processes following a new mother's discharge from other nearby hospitals. As a Hillingdon resident who gave birth at Northwick Park Hospital I discovered that it is common for the community midwives to not be made aware of the baby's birth when it is out of borough. Despite having just been discharged from special care with my premature baby I did not receive a home visit for a full week and this was only after the health visitor made me aware I should have had one. This is a very real need that is not always being met and is also worth your consideration.

Thank you for taking the time to read my views along with those of many other Hillingdon families,

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I am a resident living in Northwood Hills. I moved to the area in 2013 and had my first child in 2014. Hillside Children's Centre has been an excellent pillar of support for me from midwife appointments to breastfeeding advice and now toddler sessions. I do not feel I would have coped as well without the help of the wonderful staff and the close proximity of the Children's Centre. If I had to travel further afield to Coteford or Harefield, I may not have attended so readily. Harefield is more difficult to get to and Coteford is already so busy that courses and classes often get fully booked before I even have a chance to call!

There are lots of families with young children in the Pinner/Northwood area as there are many good state and private schools and Hillside Children's Centre captures this large cohort who would be lost if the Children Centre were to close.

I urge you to do everything in your power to please help Hillside Children's centre to remain open. I hope to have another child soon and the thought of not having a children's centre locally makes me very sad and anxious.

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I would like to object to the proposal on the following grounds;

**1) Lack of evidence base and rationale:**

Page 3 of the consultation document refers to a review of children's services in 2016 and lists the ten priorities which emerged. The proposals that are listed on page 4 only address two of these priorities (consistency of service and partnership working across services). The rationale for the proposals is completely unclear, and there is no reference to how the other eight priorities will be addressed. Indeed the proposals, which include closing two children's centres will directly contradict some of the priorities – for example "Local and accessible support" and "making the best use of local assets". I would like to request that Hillingdon publish the review that is referred to in the consultation so we can better understand the balance between the priorities that emerged.

**2) Discrimination:**

These proposals will disproportionately affect women, who are overwhelmingly the main caring parent. It will also disproportionately affect lower income families as they will be unable to afford access to private services to compensate for the reduction in services caused by this proposal. Whilst this doesn't affect us directly, we are also concerned that the proposals will discriminate against parents whose children with disabilities, for example those with Autism (sessions provided at Coteford Children's Centre).

These free services provide significant support for children and their families, supporting child development and parenting skills – the rationale for state support is fully referenced in page 2 of the consultation. We understand that resources are restricted but these proposals appear to discriminate against women, lower income families and those with disabilities.

Creating a hub and spoke model is in any other name reducing the number of centres. This will mean greater numbers and pressure on services that remain, reducing quality of provision for our children.

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I am writing this email regarding the proposed changes to the children's centres throughout the borough. In my all honesty when the news hit me I felt very disappointed and sad. I am the tax payer and the user of the Cherry lane children's centre in West Drayton.

**If you are willing to listen to us parents I would like to point out everyone would be more than happy to pay more besides from our taxes for using the centre services and playgroups if it would mean keeping the centres unchanged. Please consider this as it would mean so much to us all.**

Firstly, it seems like the council will enforce the changes regardless what the users, parents, families, school and children centre staff, and most importantly tax payers think about it.

Earlier last year about May time there was a meeting between local families and [Redacted] seemed good. However we did not get any kind of feedback from them regarding the survey (0-19) they were doing and the same one which was paid by our taxes.

Secondly the children's centre is there for the local families, if you are not willing to listen to all of us how do you know what is best for everyone?

The children's centre is very important bridge between the children, parents and the school. It feels like second home to me.

Yes there are nurseries which are extremely expensive, there is funding for nurseries for people on benefits, and what about us who fall in the middle?

There is not much options for us. Also the nurseries are so much different then children's centres. I can not compare the services. The children's centres support which is always available,the lovely community and always happy and very trusting staff.

Thirdly do you think by making such a drastic changes it will not affect the users and the quality of the services? Many families relay to the centre. The centre works closely with school and they also offer nursery transition for the children in need to take the pressure of the schools.

Fourthly where are you going to redirect the money you cut from the children's centre?

There is an interesting article in Hillingdon people magazine on page 11. Saying Council tax frozen and NO service cuts. Wow?!? No service cuts ?! So how do you call cuts to children's centres?

I would like to ask you please do listen to us users of the centres,DO NOT approve proposed changes, it will put more pressure on schools and it will hurt many families especially children. The Cherry lane children's centre is one of the best things in Hillingdon for children under 5.

The heart of our Local community for services Health visitors, Midwifery, Adult education will be gone irrevocably damaged. It takes away our local management and is clearly designed to save money. It won't achieve this because the massive preventive work and community action that take place will be lost and the Council will **pay more to pick up the pieces.**

**Don't give the management of my children centre to a faceless council officer. Put the local people first leaving the centres to be run by the people with a track record who have proved they have the community's interest at heart.**

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In regards to the consultation process, It is paramount that local residents are engaged in a process of consultation with Hillingdon council that is both clear and transparent, allowing local residents to make an informed choice in regards to the services provided for our children and the wider community.

The online consultation that Hillingdon is doing is not objective in any way and is designed only to get a pre-determined response!

It is shocking that Hillingdon Council have chosen not to give the local residents the full information and reasons for the changes and have instead decided to start the online consultation with I quote

**“To what extent do you agree that children’s centre services would benefit from being more consistent; delivering a more coordinated and flexible service?”**

It is clear from this question that Hillingdon Council have already decided to go ahead with the proposed changes to the Children’s Centre Programme and do not believe in or understand what consultation is.

Its not for bureaucrats to make decisions in regards to what services would benefit the local community. As residents, parents and council tax payers we should be given all the information, so we are able to make an informed choice in regards to our welfare, our children’s welfare and the welfare of the wider community.

The effectiveness of the Sure Start Centres has improved over time with increasingly better home learning environments, greater changes in positive life satisfaction for mothers and a greater decrease in the workless household status, in turn putting more money back into the local community.

Sure Start Centres have already become community hubs and the demand for their services is constantly high. Yet the Centres have already suffered severe cuts in their budgets, leading to hundreds of Centres being forced to close, merge with other Centres or stop providing fundamental services, such as childcare.

Hillingdon need to explain what the impact of the proposed changes will be for staff working in the Children's Centres and what the impact would be for families currently using the services.

What cuts will be made in regards to staffing?

What cuts will be made in regards to services already provided by the Centres?

How much money would Hillingdon be saving by implementing the proposed changes?

The answers should be given in a clear and concise way that is easy for all to read and understand.

Historically the Hub & Spoke model for centres has not proved to be more consistent or provide a more co-ordinated and flexible service, in fact in the Ofsted reports the majority of centres operating under this model failed to provide an adequate service and scored very poorly.

What makes Hillingdon believe that utilising this model now, will improve the service currently offered?

As a local residents we demand that this shambolic approach to consultation is stopped with immediate effect and that an open and honest consultation process is started, providing us with all of the information and logic behind the proposed changes. We will then be in a position to make an informed choice.

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Messages from local press , online etc are a little confusing as to whether Hayes and Hillside are closing due to a LA decision or landlords not prepared to renew a lease . I'm now wondering about the accuracy of other plans being made for the future of children's centres in the borough . Why are they being removed from schools as line managers ? Which services will be cut as a result ? Will the jobs of managers and other staff be affected in the long or short term ?

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## Minutes

**Petition Hearing - Cabinet Member for Education  
and Children's Services  
Wednesday, 1 February 2017  
Meeting held at Council Chamber - Civic Centre,  
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**



	<p><b>Members Present:</b> Councillor David Simmonds CBE (Chairman)</p> <p><b>Officers Present:</b> Tom Murphy, Head of Early Intervention Services Nikki O'Halloran, Interim Senior Democratic Services Manager Anisha Teji, Democratic Services Officer</p>
1.	<p><b>TO CONFIRM THAT THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN PUBLIC</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That all items be considered in public.</b></p>
2.	<p><b>HILLINGDON CHILDREN'S CENTRE PROPOSAL PETITIONS</b></p> <p>Although not present at the meeting, Councillor Duncan Flynn had provided a written statement in relation to the Hillside Children's Centre petitions. He stated that the Council and the local community in Northwood Hills and the wider area would need to continue to work closely together in order for high quality early years support to continue to be provided in the local area.</p> <p><i>Concerns, points and suggestions raised at the meeting included the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Hillside Children's Centre had provided parents and their children with a lifeline. It was a warm and welcoming place that provided support to many families and which had provided early interventions to improve life chances to vulnerable children;</i></li><li>• <i>Hillside Children's Centre had strong links to four primary schools and 13 nurseries in the area, sharing crucial information in relation to children that were deemed to be 'at risk'. Petitioners were concerned that, if the Centre closed, many of these vulnerable children would slip through the net and could lead to their issues escalating as adults;</i></li><li>• <i>Each year, 100 families attended Hillside Children's Centre, 360 women received 1-to-1 breastfeeding support, 300 women attended Watford midwifery clinics and 500 women attended Hillingdon midwifery clinics. The Centre was currently managed really well with good relations between the Governors and the schools' Headteachers;</i></li><li>• <i>As there were no Children's Centres in Hillingdon (other than Hillside) that were within walking distance for residents of Northwood and Northwood Hills, parents would need to use public transport or a car to visit an alternative site. However, many residents in the area were unable to easily afford to travel elsewhere and concern was expressed that a greater distance to travel would prevent mothers who had had a caesarean section from attending, which could</i></li></ul>

result in an increase in newborn hospital admissions for dehydration and weight loss;

- *Parenthood could bring with it a sense of isolation and a lack of support. It was suggested that the closure of Hillside Children's Centre could result in an increase in mothers in the area experiencing postnatal depression and might also contribute to the gradual erosion of community values;*
- *The north of the Borough had the highest concentration of under 5s in Hillingdon and a higher proportion of children with low development, single parent families and parents in receipt of workless benefits;*
- *The closure of Hillside Children's Centre would put additional pressure on the Children's Centres in Coteford, Harefield and South Ruislip;*
- *On 25 February 2016, Councillor Simmonds had stated that there would be 'no Children's Centre closures'.*
- *Hillside School had refuted the Council's claim that it would not sign a lease and had highlighted the fact that other Children's Centres had not yet signed a lease either and were still in negotiations but were not being closed down;*
- *Hillingdon residents had been advised that, despite there being no increase in Council tax, there would be no cuts to services either. Residents felt betrayed as this was a very clear cut to services which would lead to a reduction in the staff who delivered services, support, advice and hope at the Children's Centres;*
- *Many residents had found the online consultation undertaken by the Council to be inaccessible or complicated, confusing and restrictive and had been, in essence, a tick box exercise. It was suggested that residents had been deliberately misinformed, misled and manipulated into supporting a proposal which was not fit for purpose and, as such, the consultation process had been flawed;*
- *The Children's Centres in the Borough had felt that the consultation had been done to them rather than involving them. They also felt that there had been no transparency in the process which should have involved and taken account of the expertise of staff and service users;*
- *It appeared that the Council was putting its desire to have all Children's Centres in the Borough under its control ahead of the needs of residents. Although the Council believed that efficiencies protected services, there had been no evidence to support this;*
- *The six local authority run Children's Centres in Hillingdon had been rated as 'requires improvement' by Ofsted. The school run Centres had received higher Ofsted ratings, were more cost efficient, had more freedom to hire permanent staff and could procure new equipment/building work at the lowest market price;*
- *The closure of Children's Centres was a failure to deliver essential services to many of the youngest Borough residents at the most crucial stage of their development;*
- *Parents using Children's Centres tended to build relationships with the Centre staff and they needed and valued this continuity of support;*
- *A review of Children's Centres had been undertaken between March and June 2016 but, although a summary had been shared, the full findings had not been disclosed to the Centres or residents. Subsequently, the decision had been made to cut services;*
- *It was suggested that the level of cuts would be devastating at the Cherry Lane*



*Children's Centre and would result in the closure of the Saturday playgroup. Hillingdon was a Borough of extremes and Children's Centres needed funding to help them continue;*

- *Charville Primary Academy School had worked in partnership with Charville Children's Centre for many years;*
- *Petitioners felt that the children affected had not been given any support;*
- *Residents' needs had increased over the years with staff delivering a huge range of initiatives in a one stop shop. Although the local authority could develop and improve services, petitioners doubted that this would happen;*
- *It was understood that cuts were coming but petitioners were concerned that cutting the Children's Centre budget by 41% would have a devastating effect on the services that they provided;*
- *Volunteers invested a lot of time at Harefield Children's Centre and regularly reviewed the impact reports produced. The work undertaken here was impressive and there was clear evidence of a solid track record of helping vulnerable families. All of the staff were familiar with the families so were able to identify those that needed to be targeted with specific interventions;*
- *Concern was expressed that the proposals would eradicate the current levels of prevention and support provided to families and that this would prove more costly for the Council in the longer term;*
- *It was suggested that the significant time contribution made by volunteers would be lost as a result of the proposals and that this would have an impact on the effectiveness of Children's Centres;*
- *Although it was an opportunity to share expertise, concern was expressed that the new hub and spoke model was based on locality even though the three Centres proposed as hubs all required improvement. Petitioners felt that, given this poor performance, they were unable to trust the local authority to maintain the children's development and not run the Children's Centres into the ground;*
- *A meeting, held in December 2016 to discuss the proposals, advised that many aspects of the decision would be non negotiable. Furthermore, there appeared to be no clear idea of how the new structure would be managed. However, the Council did appear to have a specific budget requirement;*
- *Petitioners felt that Headteachers were in the best position to manage Children's Centres as they worked with children through SATs and beyond;*
- *It was suggested that the 'Have Your Say' facility was not fit for purpose;*
- *Coteford Children's Centre had provided many residents in difficult situations with support and guidance. This Centre was an integral part of the school and petitioners could not understand the logistics of how it could be run by the Council. Concern was expressed with regard to implementing staff vetting procedures to ensure that children were safeguarded and the procedure for splitting utility bills with the school;*
- *If Uxbridge Children's Centre closed, petitioners questioned where the existing users would be able to go as well as those families that moved into properties on the new St Andrews Park development;*
- *Although joined up services were thought to be a good thing, parents were either unable or didn't want to have to travel a significant distance;*
- *Parents using Children's Centres had built up relationships with the staff and were anxious about job losses as these relationships would be affected;*
- *Colham Manor Children's Centre had many positive stories regarding the*

- services that it had provided to combat loneliness, anxiety, depression, etc;*
- *It was suggested that many of the programmes that evolved from studies were not an effective use of funding; and*
  - *Petitioners thanked staff at the Children's Centres for the support that they had provided.*

Councillor Simmonds listened to the concerns of the petitioners and responded to the points raised. It was noted that the points made by petitioners would be included in the analysis of the responses received in relation to the consultation that closed on 25 January 2017.

The Cabinet Member noted that the Council was looking to standardise services at Children's Centres across the Borough in the same way that every service provided by the Council needed to be reviewed to ensure that it was as financially efficient as possible. Consideration would be given to the impact on residents but also to the provision of better service delivery.

With regard to the safeguarding issue raised, Councillor Simmonds reassured petitioners that existing staff would continue to work at the Children's Centres. Furthermore, all Centre staff were vetted in the same way as school staff.

Councillor Simmonds acknowledged that there were good and bad programmes. However, he was involved with a national programme of research which included the early intervention work undertaken at Warwick University Centre. When funding was limited, it was important to concentrate on programmes that had proved effective in addressing issues such as deprivation.

Councillor Simmonds advised that he would look into the review that had been undertaken between March and June 2016. He thanked the petitioners for their comments and reiterated that these would be taken into account as part of the consultation process.

**RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services:**

- 1. noted the petitions received and listened to the views of petitioners; and**
- 2. consider the views offered by petitioners as part of the proposal consultation process.**

**Reasons for recommendations**

To receive, consider and listen to the views of petitioners.

**Alternative options considered / risk management**

None at this stage.



HILLINGDON  
LONDON

## Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment

### STEP A) Description of what is to be assessed and its relevance to equality

**What is being assessed?** Please tick ✓

Review of a service ▪ Staff restructure ▪ Decommissioning a service ▪

Changing a policy ▪ Tendering for a new service ▪ A strategy or plan ▪

Other ✓

The introduction of a new delivery model for the Children's Centre programme Hillingdon from April 2017.

The proposed new children's centre model sees the programme delivered through 16 children's centre sites, with 5 lead children's centres (hubs) co-ordinating 11 other linked centres. The purpose of the hubs will be to lead and coordinate services within a defined geographical area, ensuring the distribution of activity and staff according to need. Taking this approach means that services can be delivered directly in the community across a wide range of settings to provide services flexibly in response to need.

The satellite centres will not include the children's centres located at Uxbridge College Hayes Campus and Hillside Primary School, Northwood. These premises are not council-owned and the landlords have failed to agree leases with the council. Therefore we are planning alternative options for delivering services for residents in those areas.

Who is accountable? E.g. Head of Service or Corporate Director

Tom Murphy, Assistant Director of Children's Early Intervention Services

Date assessment completed and approved by accountable person

Tom Murphy 08/03/2017

Names and job titles of people carrying out the assessment

John Wheatley, Senior Policy Officer  
Vicky Trott, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities and Diversity

A.1) What are the main aims and intended benefits of what you are assessing?

The Local Authority has a duty to improve the wellbeing of young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them, as well as a duty to make arrangements to ensure 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.

The Children's Centre programme in Hillingdon is both directly delivered by the Council and also commissioned via 11 different providers, including schools and voluntary organisations, operating from 18 different settings with a combination of 18 Centre Managers or Coordinators and 18 teams of early years practitioners and family support staff; the programme provides a range of family support services for families with children pre-birth to 5 years.

The current Children's Centre programme incorporates a range of premises and external providers. The initial step in re-configuring the provision of services through Children's Centres is to bring the service in-house. The remodelled service will apply an approach that is informed by the need to enable family access to support, and as a consequence does not limit its planning and delivery to the current children's centre estate. The planned intention is to assess need in each given locality and develop a creative and flexible service in response, which includes targeting the most vulnerable and in need of support and will continue to provide services for families with young children in line with the duties of the Local Authority.

The proposed revised model envisages services provided within localities with the aim of sharing resources within each area. Each locality will have a hub centre and a number of satellite centres to support programme delivery. Hub centres will lead and coordinate services within each locality ensuring distribution of activity and staff according to need.

The revised delivery model will deliver service efficiencies through reconfiguring the current provision to ensure services are effectively prioritised and targeted and provide support in flexible ways which meet the needs of residents more effectively.

The new model uses only premises where lease arrangements are in place or significant progress has made towards completion of a lease agreement, and is

predicated on the creation of five distinct localities. Hillside Children's Centre and Uxbridge College Children's Centre operate from sites that are not council owned. The Programme will not continue to be delivered from these centres as a consequence of lease negotiations with the two providers in question not being concluded due to their failure to agree terms. As a consequence the council does not have the surety of access required to plan for the delivery of services going forward. Therefore, alternative options for re-providing services in these areas are being considered.

A.2) Who are the service users or staff affected by what you are assessing? What is their equality profile?

**Staff**

Equality data is not being considered for staff as part of this assessment as those employed within the seven directly managed centres are already employees of the Local Authority. This is also the case with six of the nine centres run by schools - where the local authority is also the employer. There are five centres where the employer is an external body where the proposed changes will be achieved through a TUPE transfer of staff to the Council.

**Service Users**

Equality data held on the users of Hillside and Uxbridge College is presented in appendix A and will be considered as part of this assessment given the intention to discontinue delivering the programme from these locations. It is important to note that this data is based on new registrations from 1 April 2016 to 6 March 2017 and is very limited in that it is only as accurate as the family is prepared to disclose; for ethnicity, the data for half of all new registrations is unknown and is constantly changing.

The data for the other children's centres is not being considered as part of this assessment as the provision is not directly affected by the proposals.

A.3) Who are the stakeholders in this assessment and what is their interest in it?

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Parents/carers of young children in Hillingdon	To ensure they are able to access high quality services based on their needs.
Staff of Children's Centres in Hillingdon	To ensure the provision of high quality services for children and families based on targeted need.
Providers of services in Children's Centres in Hillingdon	To ensure the provision of high quality services for children and families based on targeted need.
Assistant Director of Children's Early Intervention Services	To ensure the provision of high quality services for children and families based on targeted need.
Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate	To ensure the provision of high quality

Director of Residents Services	services for children and families based on targeted need.
Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services	To ensure the provision of high quality services for children and families based on targeted need.
Leader of the Council and Council Cabinet	To ensure the provision of high quality services for children and families based on targeted need.

A.4) Which Protected Characteristics, Human Rights or Community Issues are relevant to the assessment? ✓ in the box.

Age	✓	Sex	✓
Disability	✓	Sexual Orientation	
Gender reassignment			
Marriage or civil partnership		Carers	✓
Pregnancy or maternity	✓	Community Cohesion	
Race/Ethnicity	✓	Community Safety	
Religion or belief		Human Rights	✓

## STEP B) Consideration of information; data, research, consultation, engagement

B.1) Consideration of information and data - what have you got and what is it telling you?

### **Staff**

There are no immediate impacts on staff from the initial phase of the changes. An equality impact assessment will be completed on any future proposed changes.

### **Service Users**

The data shows that at Hillside there were 943 new registrations, 36.8% of which were from BAME groups, 26.8% were White British. There were 327 young people

aged 0-5 and 571 aged between 16-99 registered. Of the 530 identified as from priority and excluded groups, 20% were on a low income and 11.3% were children with additional needs.

The data shows that at Uxbridge College there were 334 new registrations, 44.2% of which were from BAME groups, 6.7% were White British. There were 107 young people aged between 0-5 and 193 aged between 16 and 99 registered. Of the 178 identified as from priority and excluded groups, 64.6% were on a low income and 2.8% were children with additional needs.

## Consultation

B.2) Did you carry out any consultation or engagement as part of this assessment?

Please tick ✓ NO ✓ YES ▪

No consultation was carried out directly as part of this assessment however in developing the new service proposals, full account has been taken of the findings of the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme Business Improvement Delivery review - during which resident parents and carers had an opportunity to express their views on the wider provision of early childhood services.

Consultation was undertaken during the summer of 2016 with the following groups.

- Children's Centre managers and coordinators
- Partner agencies
- Parents, through focus groups and online survey
- Children and Young People
- Health Visitors
- School Nursing
- Schools

Further consultation will be undertaken on the proposed changes with service users and staff as required.

B.3) Provide any other information to consider as part of the assessment

### Legal context

The council has a public duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations (Equality Act 2010).

The Statutory guidance<sup>1</sup> in this area states:

"A Sure Start children's centre is defined in the Act as a place or a group of places:

- which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way;
- through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and
- at which activities for young children are provided "

#### Financial implications

Since 2010, the Business Improvement Delivery (BID) programme has driven transformation across the Council, reducing costs and improving efficiency to ensure we continue to deliver high quality services that put residents first. During this period over £84m of savings have been achieved.

Through sound financial management, the Council remains in a very strong financial position. However, going forward, we will continue to face very tough financial challenges with funding from Government being significantly reduced year on year, making the savings increasingly harder to achieve.

The move to a hub and spoke model later in 2017, will enable the service to contribute to a Medium Term Financial Forecast part year saving of £404k (£215k of which is already included in the 2016/17 base budget, with a further £189k identified in 2017/18), increasing by a further £95k in 2018/19 reflecting the full year effect of the proposed implementation of the new hub and spoke delivery model.

## C) Assessment

C.1) Describe any **NEGATIVE** impacts (actual or potential):

Equality Group/Human Rights	Impact on this group and actions you need to take
Young people who use the Children's Centres at Hillside and Uxbridge College	The discontinuation of programmes from these 2 centres may have a potentially negative impact on the young service users. In order to mitigate against this, they will be supported to access alternative provision and signposted to other local services during the service transition process to a fully established new delivery model.

<sup>1</sup> Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance for local authorities, commissioners of local health services and Jobcentre Plus, April 2013



Priority and excluded groups including young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) who use the Children's Centres at Hillside and Uxbridge College	The discontinuation of programmes from these 2 centres may have a potentially negative impact on those service users who are from priority and excluded groups including young people with SEN. In order to mitigate against this, they will be supported to access alternative provision and signposted to other local services during the service transition process to fully establish the new delivery model.
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C.2) Describe any **POSITIVE** impacts

Equality Group/ Human Rights	Impact on this group and actions you need to take
All	The proposed changes will have a positive impact on all children and families as the new service will be focussed and based on targeted need.

**D) Conclusions**

The assessment shows that whilst there may be some potentially negative impacts on some service users during the transition to the new service, they will be signposted and supported to access other local services until the new provision is in place.

The proposals for the new service will ensure the distribution of activity and staff according to targeted service user need, in a defined local area. Services will be delivered directly in the community across a wide range of settings providing greater flexibility in approach.

**Signed and dated:**..... *Tom Murphy*                      *08/03/2017*

**Name and position:**..... Assistant Director of Children's Early Intervention Services

## Appendix A

### Hillside

Ethnicity		
Ethnic category	Number of registrations with this ethnicity	% of total registrations
Afghan	8	0.8%
African Asian	7	0.7%
Albanian	9	1.0%
Any Other Asian Background	25	2.7%
Any Other Black Background	0	0.0%
Any Other Ethnic Group	0	0.0%
Any Other Mixed Background	3	0.3%
Any Other White Background	7	0.7%
Arab Other	1	0.1%
Asian and Any Other Ethnic Group	0	0.0%
Asian and Black	0	0.0%
Asian and Chinese	0	0.0%
Bangladeshi	4	0.4%
Black - African	21	2.2%
Black - Nigerian	0	0.0%
Black - Somali	2	0.2%
Black and Any Other Ethnic Group	1	0.1%
Black Caribbean	13	1.4%

Black European	0	0.0%
Chinese	6	0.6%
Egyptian	0	0.0%
Filipino	6	0.6%
Greek	0	0.0%
Greek Cypriot	2	0.2%
Gypsy / Roma	0	0.0%
Indian	230	24.4%
Iranian	3	0.3%
Iraqi	0	0.0%
Japanese	0	0.0%
Korean	0	0.0%
Kurdish	0	0.0%
Latin / South / Central American	0	0.0%
Lebanese	0	0.0%
Malaysian Chinese	0	0.0%
Moroccan	7	0.7%
Nepali	1	0.1%
Other Asian	5	0.5%
Other Black	0	0.0%
Other Ethnic Group	0	0.0%
Other Gypsy/Roma	0	0.0%
Other Mixed Background	3	0.3%
Other White British	2	0.2%
Pakistani	58	6.2%

Portuguese	1	0.1%
Roma	2	0.2%
Sri Lankan Other	15	1.6%
Sri Lankan Sinhalese	0	0.0%
Sri Lankan Tamil	0	0.0%
Taiwanese	1	0.1%
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0	0.0%
Turkish	3	0.3%
Vietnamese	0	0.0%
White - British	226	24.0%
White - English	19	2.0%
White - Irish	8	0.8%
White - Welsh	0	0.0%
White and Any Other Asian Background	7	0.7%
White and Any Other Ethnic Group	1	0.1%
White and Asian	5	0.5%
White and Black African	0	0.0%
White and Black Caribbean	3	0.3%
White and Chinese	3	0.3%
White and Indian	0	0.0%
White Eastern European	78	8.3%
White European	19	2.0%
White Other	7	0.7%
White Western European	31	3.3%

Information Not Yet Obtained	16	1.7%
Refused	0	0.0%
<Unknown>	512	54.3%

Age and Gender					
Total Number of registrations					
Male	Female	Male 0-5	Female 0-5	Male 16-99	Female 16-99
412	507	158	169	254	338

Priority and Excluded Group (POE)		
POE Category	No. of POEs	% of total POEs
Child with Additional Need	60	11.3%
Eligible / Claiming Income Support and/ or Job Seekers Allowance	77	14.5%
Large Family (4+ children / 3 under 5 yrs)	24	4.5%
Lone Parent	50	9.4%
Low income (household income less that £20,000 pa)	106	20.0%
Member of the Armed Forces	31	5.8%
New arrival to UK (less than 12 months)	51	9.6%
Parent/Carer with Additional Need	66	12.5%
Receiving Child Tax Credit at the	50	9.4%

Higher Rate		
Teenage Parent	13	2.5%
Traveller	2	0.4%

### **Uxbridge College**

Ethnicity		
Ethnic category	Number of registrations with this ethnicity	% of total registrations
Afghan	1	0.2%
African Asian	0	0.0%
Albanian	7	1.4%
Any Other Asian Background	26	5.1%
Any Other Black Background	0	0.0%
Any Other Ethnic Group	3	0.6%
Any Other Mixed Background	7	1.4%
Any Other White Background	3	0.6%
Arab Other	2	0.4%
Asian and Any Other Ethnic Group	11	2.1%
Asian and Black	0	0.0%
Asian and Chinese	0	0.0%
Bangladeshi	2	0.4%
Black - African	12	2.3%
Black - Nigerian	0	0.0%

Black - Somali	0	0.0%
Black and Any Other Ethnic Group	0	0.0%
Black Caribbean	0	0.0%
Black European	0	0.0%
Chinese	2	0.4%
Egyptian	0	0.0%
Filipino	0	0.0%
Greek	0	0.0%
Greek Cypriot	0	0.0%
Gypsy / Roma	0	0.0%
Indian	77	15.0%
Iranian	0	0.0%
Iraqi	0	0.0%
Japanese	0	0.0%
Korean	0	0.0%
Kurdish	0	0.0%
Latin / South / Central American	0	0.0%
Lebanese	0	0.0%
Malaysian Chinese	0	0.0%
Moroccan	0	0.0%
Nepali	5	1.0%
Other Asian	0	0.0%
Other Black	0	0.0%
Other Ethnic Group	2	0.4%
Other Gypsy/Roma	1	0.2%

Other Mixed Background	0	0.0%
Other White British	1	0.2%
Pakistani	22	4.3%
Portuguese	0	0.0%
Roma	0	0.0%
Sri Lankan Other	9	1.8%
Sri Lankan Sinhalese	0	0.0%
Sri Lankan Tamil	0	0.0%
Taiwanese	0	0.0%
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0	0.0%
Turkish	0	0.0%
Vietnamese	0	0.0%
White - British	24	4.7%
White - English	9	1.8%
White - Irish	1	0.2%
White - Welsh	0	0.0%
White and Any Other Asian Background	2	0.4%
White and Any Other Ethnic Group	6	1.2%
White and Asian	0	0.0%
White and Black African	0	0.0%
White and Black Caribbean	0	0.0%
White and Chinese	0	0.0%
White and Indian	2	0.4%
White Eastern European	4	0.8%



White European	7	1.4%
White Other	0	0.0%
White Western European	0	0.0%
Information Not Yet Obtained	13	2.5%
Refused	0	0.0%
<Unknown>	252	49.1%

Age and Gender					
Total Number of registrations					
Male	Female	Male 0-5	Female 0-5	Male 16-99	Female 16-99
140	160	52	55	88	105

Priority and Excluded Group (POE)		
POE Category	No. of POEs	% of total POEs
Child with Additional Need	5	2.8%
Eligible / Claiming Income Support and/ or Job Seekers Allowance	24	13.5%
Large Family (4+ children / 3 under 5 yrs)	0	0.0%
Lone Parent	21	11.8%
Low income (household income less that £20,000 pa)	115	64.6%
Member of the Armed Forces	0	0.0%
New arrival to UK (less than 12	1	0.6%

months)		
Parent/Carer with Additional Need	0	0.0%
Receiving Child Tax Credit at the Higher Rate	12	6.7%
Teenage Parent	0	0.0%
Traveller	0	0.0%