

# CONSULTATION ON THE HILLINGDON 0-19 YRS CORE OFFER TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

<b>Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Councillor Susan O'Brien
<b>Cabinet Portfolio(s)</b>	Children, Families & Education
<b>Officer Contact(s)</b>	Claire Fry - Head of Service
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix A – Draft Family Hub Strategy Appendix B - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – December 2022

## HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	<p>This report sets out the Council's ambition to improve approaches to meeting the needs of children and young people through a new model of family hubs, increasing the core service offer from 0-5 to 0-19 [up to 25 for those with SEND]. This ambitious programme is in line with government recommendations and the proposal strives for early implementation to meet the needs of Hillingdon residents.</p> <p>The report sets out the Council's intention to consult with residents, partners and stakeholders on the proposed family hub strategy and delivery model as a way of providing services for children and young people aged 0-19 and their families.</p> <p>Additionally, the report recommends that Cabinet agrees that a public consultation be undertaken on the future of the Council's directly provided childcare in early years nurseries and sets out potential options for consideration during consultation. Parents, carers, partners, organisations and all residents will be consulted on their views.</p>
<b>Putting our Residents First</b> <b>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</b>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council to:</p> <p>Live active and healthy lives</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of:</p> <p>Safe and Strong Communities Thriving, healthy Households Digital enabled, modern, well-run council</p> <p>This report supports the priorities of the Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2025</p>

<b>Financial Cost</b>	There will be some costs associated with the running of the consultation, which will be confirmed and discussed with the Cabinet Member for sign-off once quotes have been received.
<b>Relevant Select Committee</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Relevant Ward(s)</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet:

1. **Agrees that a public consultation be undertaken on the proposed Family Hub strategy and delivery model for Children and Young People aged 0 –19 (25 for SEND) and their families as set out in the report.**
2. **Agrees that the public consultation should include a consultation on the future of the Council’s directly delivered childcare in the three early years nurseries as set out in the report.**
3. **Agrees to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Services & Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education to:**
  - a. **Approve the commissioning of an independent provider to run both public consultations and,**
  - b. **Review and approve the final consultation documents for publication.**
4. **Agrees to receive a report back to consider the consultation responses and to make a decision on the strategy and delivery model for Family Hubs Services, informed by the findings of the consultation.**
5. **Agrees to receive a report back to consider the consultation responses and to make a decision in relation to the delivery of childcare in the nurseries, informed by the findings of the consultation.**

### Reasons for recommendation

#### **Family Hub Strategy and Delivery Model**

- Supporting children, young people and their families is a core component of the Council’s commitment to residents to support Thriving, Healthy Households. This aims to; ensure working with partners, including schools and the voluntary sector to deliver a range of innovative programmes that help improve the health of our residents and tackle differences in health outcomes, develop innovative ways for residents to access early advice and support when they need it, to prevent needs escalating, develop opportunities to support

children with their social skills, mental health and wellbeing at an early stage and to develop programmes that enrich the lives of young people, and support them to move successfully into adulthood. The proposed strategy for Family Hubs has been designed to support each of these commitments to residents.

- The principles of Family Hubs have been put forward by Central Government as a key part of support to children, young people, and their families. Hillingdon Council are early adopters of this model, with co-located services already being delivered in certain areas. This strategy confirms this direction of travel as not only the right approach for the residents in our Borough but puts us at the forefront of this method of delivery.
- Hillingdon Council has a strong history of sound financial management and putting its residents first when considering improvements to services. The Council Strategy 2022-2026 has confirmed these approaches under 'A digital-enabled, modern, well-run council', where, amongst other things, it states we will: promote resident engagement across all communities; continue to deliver a modern, responsive customer service; make the best use of our land and buildings; ensure value for money in the procurement and delivery of services and; continue to review and develop services to achieve the best possible outcomes for residents and communities.
- Considering the rising costs faced by local authorities due to the cost-of-living crisis, the Council is looking at options to deliver services in the most efficient and cost-effective way, including reviewing subsidies in place.
- The strategy addresses the need to ensure that early intervention and prevention approaches deliver improved outcomes for residents and that help is local and available at the right time. The proposed improved core offer would reach more residents delivering to children aged 0-19 [up to 25 with SEND] and their families, be an early point of intervention and will aim to address the needs of residents in a single point of contact.
- Family Hub services would be delivered locally, through Community Hubs utilising local buildings and community spaces to provide a collective base for these activities, rather than services having unique standalone settings. It is proposed that the Council will consult on changes to location and building type, the services delivered and how they are delivered, whilst noting that the service offer will be enhanced from 0-5 to 0-19.
- This proposal seeks to engage with parents, children, young people, partners, providers, residents and the wider public to give their views, requirements, and priorities on how the Council will ensure the needs of children and families are met in the community.

### **Early Years Childcare Provision**

- The proposal also seeks to consult with parents, carers, residents and the wider public on the proposals for the delivery model of the Councils childcare provision of 3 nurseries and how the sufficiency of childcare is best met within the Borough.

## Alternative options considered / risk management

The alternative option would be to do nothing and not consult. This would not be in the best interest of residents. The local authority should take steps to ensure that the services it delivers meet the needs of its residents and communities as they change over time.

## Democratic compliance / previous authority

Cabinet is the relevant body in the Council's Constitution to propose consultation and make any future decision in relation to any proposed changes to Council services.

## Select Committee comments

None at this stage. However, the Children, Families & Education Select Committee may consider the proposals as part of the consultation period and report their views back to the Cabinet.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Family Hub services – strategy (Appendix A)

1. In 2019, the Government formalised the intention to transform from children's centres delivery to Family Hubs, in every region, as a means of providing integrated family services via a central access point. In February 2023 the Government announced £300m for the rollout of 'family hubs' across England, Hillingdon has been ahead of the changes, and it is envisaged that there will be funding available for further development in the second tranche of awards to local authorities. As mentioned above, Hillingdon would be delivering the Family Hub concept requirements as services within the creation of its community hubs.
2. A requirement is that family hubs offer guidance and advice on issues including infant feeding, mental health support, health visiting and parenting classes. They will also offer advice on getting into work, relationship building and stop smoking services, as well as providing families with children aged **0-19 (and up to 25 for SEND)** somewhere they know they can go if they need information, advice or guidance for family, relationship, health and other issues.
3. This paper outlines a proposal to develop family hub services in Hillingdon, integrating services across the disciplines of Maternity, Health, Education and Social Care under the principle of Early Help and Intervention, to provide accessible services to families at their point of need. For the first time the proposal is to link support for the whole family where there are children and young people up to the age of 19 and 25 for those with SEND. This approach acknowledges the impact of the right support and care at the right time on the future of the lives of young people.
4. Family hub services extend and improve the services currently delivered through the Council's children's centres; services will be more family focussed and supportive across

a greater age range and will also be modelled to be able to flex in order to provide services closer to where needs arise.

5. Family hub services would enhance the current core offer of appropriate services to children, young people and their families by connecting and directing people to the right support, at the right time, in locally available settings, expanding the scope from services to those aged 0-5, to 0-19 and 0-25 for young people with SEND. The Best Start for Life strategy (March 2021) states that families need seamless support, a welcoming place to access start for life services, and information when and where they need it. The principles of Family Hubs have been put forward by Central Government as a key part of support to children, young people and their families. Hillingdon Council are early adopters of this model, with co-located services already being delivered in certain areas. This strategy confirms this direction of travel as not only the right approach for the residents in our Borough but puts us at the forefront of this method of delivery.

1. The provision of service would include:

- maternal care – ante natal and postnatal support
- 0-19 healthy child programme including health visitor appointments, breast feeding, weaning and dietary guidance, perinatal mental health support, prioritising healthy eating, oral health and supporting children to become active, healthy and resilient
- Priority access for children and young people with special educational needs via early identification, early intervention and support
- Communication, speech and language support
- Outdoor space for safe play, stay and play and forest school activities for early learning
- Access to the SEND advisory service
- Parenting workshops, supporting parents to become champions
- Advice, information, housing & debt advice
- Adult education opportunities with creche support
- In person and virtual programmes of support

2. The development of the 0-5 children's centre offer, to support the whole family from pre-birth to 19 years of age [up to 25 for those with SEND] gives greater depth and strength in the programme of support ensuring that there is no 'cliff edge ending' when a child transitions to school around the age of 5.

3. The Family Hub programme would support children and families to:

- Develop and maintain good family relationships and structures that build resilience using parenting skill development, help adults to co-parent and deal with separation
- Promote and learn about good physical and mental health, receive childhood immunisations, health advice and support
- Promote early learning and school readiness, a culture of learning
- Use a strengths-based approach to managing a healthy lifestyle including meal prep, budgeting, exercise and play, education, learning and employment
- Build and become self-reliant adults and children who have better life opportunities and chances by early interventions, preventing the need for social care involvements

- Promote early access to a range of support services for those with emerging complex needs

### **Family Hub services – delivery model**

4. It is proposed that to maximise the effectiveness of the service within Hillingdon, that the family hub services would be located within a Community Hub, a multi-purpose building, or cluster of buildings in a locality, which gives access to a wider range of Council or partner services, enabling resolution and self-help in a single point of contact, building on the Council's aspiration for resident self-service using digital engagement.
5. To ensure appropriate geographical coverage, so that all residents have access to services in the locality of where they live, it is proposed that there would be 6 Community hubs and a further 10 delivery points. These include local schools-based children's centres, leisure centres, libraries and community spaces to build on their existing offer and where necessary, these would be developed and improved to ensure they are fit for purpose. The geographical coverage across the Borough will ensure that there are a range of services available within a 30-minute walk /or 1.5-mile drive for all residents, where there is an identified need.
6. The family hub services would have an overarching core programme as well as targeted support that is identified through public health data and local health intelligence, for example where there may be a lower-than-average engagement with an immunisation programme or an identified need in obesity or oral health. The locations of the hubs and delivery points give geographical coverage across the Borough to promote easy access for residents and support the use of targeted programmes, bespoke to the needs of local communities.
7. The utilisation of local assets to deliver the core programme gives opportunities to maximise community resources that are easily accessible to the public throughout the week, promoting and creating environments where they may choose to return and use facilities to support themselves. For example, parents attending a session delivered in a library gives opportunities for parents and children to use the library on an ongoing basis for education and leisure.

### **Proposed Community Hubs**

8. The below table shows the proposed delivery model of community hubs and additional delivery points, split by geographical location. The development proposal is iterative and there is no intended reduction in service whilst the development of community hubs takes place.

Location	Proposed Delivery Space
<p><b>North</b></p> <p>Harefield</p>	<p><b>Hub:</b> Harefield Library &amp; Children’s Centre</p> <p>Community outreach including weekends at St Mary’s.</p>
<p><b>North</b></p> <p>Ruislip &amp; Northwood</p>	<p><b>Hub:</b> Ruislip Young People’s Centre, Bury Street</p> <p>This hub will offer a buildings-based Youth programme.</p> <p><b>Additional delivery points:</b>            South Ruislip Children’s Centre &amp; Wren building            Ruislip Manor Library            Northwood Hills Library</p> <p>Community outreach programme including RAF base and church playgroups.</p>
<p><b>Southwest</b></p> <p>Uxbridge &amp; Cowley</p>	<p><b>Hub:</b> Uxbridge Family Hub</p> <p>This hub offers a buildings-based youth programme</p> <p><b>Additional delivery points:</b>            Colham Manor CC            Oak Farm CC</p>
<p><b>Southwest</b></p> <p>West Drayton &amp; Yiewsley</p>	<p><b>Hub:</b> West Drayton Leisure Centre</p> <p>This hub will offer a buildings-based youth programme</p> <p><b>Additional delivery points:</b>            Cherry Lane CC            Yiewsley CC</p>
<p><b>Southeast</b></p> <p>Yeading Hayes Park</p>	<p><b>Hub:</b> The Asha Centre</p> <p>This hub will offer a mobile youth programme</p> <p><b>Additional delivery points:</b>            Yeading CC            Charville library (to be developed to incorporate the children’s centre offer)</p>

<p><b>Southeast</b></p> <p>Hayes Town</p>	<p><b>Hub:</b> Botwell Leisure Centre community hub</p> <p>This hub offers a mobile youth programme</p> <p><b>Additional delivery points:</b> Pinkwell CC</p> <p>Community outreach programme including Heathrow Villages, linked to Mobile Library and Transporter Community Bus</p>
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9. A staffing restructure implemented in 2021 redefined the role of Family Development workers, who reach into the community and support children and families. The existing structure will provide sufficient support to manage increased activity and demand with the necessary skills to develop services wider to match the demand from the increased offer to 0-19. As the service develops, there will be opportunities for synergies of co-location to be realised within the staff structures and ongoing review will be in place.

### Current Children Centre Estate

10. Most current sites are physically co-located or leased from a community partner. With the proposed changes, 6 sites would either be returned to the leaseholder or in the case of maintained schools, offered to the school to enhance their education provision. However, two sites namely Barra Hall and Nestles Avenue are degrading and are proposed to be returned to the Council for a decision on their future use or disposal.

Locality	Centre	Status	Proposed action
<i>North</i>	Coteford CC	Maintained School	Propose to close and release back to school
	Harefield CC	Maintained School	Proposed to retain until remodelled library space is available, then release back to the school
	South Ruislip CC	LBH Estate	Proposed to retain
<i>Southwest</i>	Cherry Lane CC	Maintained School	Proposed to retain
	Colham Manor CC	Maintained School	Proposed to retain
	Cowley CC	Leased from Academy Trust	Propose to close and release back to school
	Oak Farm CC	Foundation School	Proposed to retain
	Uxbridge Family Hub	Located within Civic Centre	Proposed to retain
	Yiewsley CC	Leased from Baptist Church	Proposed to retain



<i>South East</i>	The Asha Centre	Leased from Uxbridge college	New Family Hub in final stages of development
	Barra Hall CC	LBH Estate	Propose to close and return to Council for decision on future use or disposal
	Belmore CC	LBH Estate	Propose to close and offer to school
	Charville CC	Leased from Academy Trust	Proposed to retain until remodelled library space is available then release back to the school
	McMillan CC	Maintained School	Propose to close and release back to school
	Nestles Avenue CC	LBH Estate	Propose to close and return to Council for decision on future use or disposal
	Pinkwell CC	LBH Estate	Proposed to retain
	Yeading CC	Maintained School	Proposed to retain

### Childcare in Early Years Nurseries

11. The first five years of a child's life are significant; babies and young children need nurturing environments and positive relationships with both adults and peers to support their learning and development and enable them to acquire the necessary skills to be ready and able to learn when they start school and to reach their full potential.
12. Access to childcare gives parents of babies and young children the flexibility to work and/or train for employment, enabling them to participate in the workforce and play an active role in the local and national economy.
13. Demand for childcare has changed in recent years. This is in part due to the increase in flexible and hybrid working models, that mean parents can work more flexibly around their childcare needs, but also reflects parents utilising extended family to support with childcare. The pandemic, the current cost of living crisis and the cost of childcare are also factors in influencing patterns of parental demand for childcare, although demand for childcare in Hillingdon has almost returned to pre-covid levels.
14. Providers are reporting an increase in the number of young children starting nursery with speech, language and communication needs and reduced independence skills, as well as children who have had reduced opportunities for social interaction and engagement with peers and others, arising from the pandemic; specialist support is often required to enable children to thrive.

### Childcare Sufficiency

15. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of childcare 'so far as is reasonably practicable' for working parents or parents who are studying or training for employment.
16. The Families Information Service manages and maintains the information on the availability of childcare for parents to access and completes an annual childcare sufficiency assessment which considers whether there is enough childcare in the Borough

as a whole and at ward level, taking account of the following factors: the current supply of childcare, the current demand for childcare, and factors that have influenced the take up of childcare and could have an impact on both supply and demand. This information is then used to measure sufficiency.

17. Key datasets used for the assessment including population projections and percentage of economically active households, are not yet aligned to the new ward boundaries therefore the sufficiency assessment for December 2022 has been completed using the previous ward boundaries and profiles.

18. The 2021 Census data for in Hillingdon breaks down as:

Aged 0-4 = 19,880  
Aged 5-19 = 59,016  
Aged 0-19 = 78,896

19. In total there are 370 childcare providers in the Borough for children aged 0-4 years, comprising 216 childminders, 57 school nursery classes, 1 maintained nursery school, and 96 private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries.

20. Both local childcare groups comprising 2 or more settings and large commercial day nursery chains are represented within the 96 PVI nurseries, as well as many independent standalone settings. Whilst childcare providers are experiencing similar financial pressures to other areas of business and industry due to increased overheads, particularly in relation to utilities and salaries, the childcare market in Hillingdon has remained stable in recent years, with the reduction in the number of childminders being the most significant change in the availability of provision, in line with national trends.

21. In Hillingdon, there are sufficient childcare places for children aged under five years old in most wards in the Borough, compared to estimated demand (as shown in Appendix B). Based on full time places available, there is insufficient childcare in the following wards: Barnhill, Botwell, Uxbridge North, West Drayton and Yeading. However, it is important to note that children may attend for part time or full-time places, with a national trend towards part time places, as mentioned earlier in this report. In some cases, 2 or more children may take up the equivalent of one full time place; the sufficiency calculation assumes that all children will attend full time or for as many hours as the setting is open, which may mean there is greater availability than there first appears and offers levels of mitigation as well as parental choice of both setting and location.

22. The Council's SEND Advisory Service work with providers to consider how to develop their practice to be more inclusive and have the necessary skills and arrangements in place to support children with complex needs. Settings are encouraged to consider how their 'Ordinarily Available Provision' meets the needs of children with SEND. In future this information will be published enabling families to consider which setting would be most appropriate to support their child with additional needs. Further developing specialist support to providers to access funding and training would ensure that they are able to meet the equality duty by increasing their offer to Children with Disabilities and/or SEND.

## Council Provision

23. The Council directly delivers childcare for children aged 6 months to 5 years through its three early years nurseries located in Hayes (Nestles Avenue), South Ruislip, and Uxbridge. Currently, the nurseries collectively provide 102 full time childcare places, operating Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, for 52 weeks of the year.
24. Each nursery provides 34 full-time places, split between the 3 age groups: under 2s, 2-3-years, 3-5-years, as shown below in Table 1. The structure of the nurseries takes into account the required floor space and the adult-to-child ratios set out in the Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which stipulates ratios of 1:3 for under 2's, 1:4 for 2–3-year-olds and 1:8 for 3-5 year olds and ensures a higher ratio of staff for the youngest children who require a greater level of adult support.

**Table 1**

Places available	Under 2's	2–3-year-olds	3–5-year-olds	Total
South Ruislip	6	12	16	34
Nestles	6	12	16	34
Uxbridge	6	12	16	34

25. Nationally, the Free Early Education Entitlement Funding schemes provides a universal offer of 15 hours a week to all 3 and 4 years, for 38 weeks a year. In addition, 3- and 4-year-olds may be eligible for an additional 15 hours where parent(s) are working, and their earnings fall within stipulated financial thresholds.
26. Funded early education is also available for some 2 years olds, for 15 hours a week for 38 weeks a year where families are on a low income and/or receipt of certain benefits; this funding is also available to children looked after and those who have an Education Health and Care plan or are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
27. The nurseries are registered for the Free Early Education Entitlement Schemes and offer both funded and fee-paying places in varying proportions, depending on the eligibility and childcare needs of the children and families using the nurseries at the time.
28. Uptake of places varies for each nursery; however, in line with national trends there has been a reduction in the demand for full time places over recent years, with many families opting to take up part time places utilising sessional care and requiring childcare for morning or afternoons sessions only, a reduced number of full days or a combination of the two. Therefore, each nursery has a greater number of children on roll, with the large majority accessing part-time places.
29. Following the pandemic, occupancy in the nurseries gradually returned to a good level, with all three sites achieving and maintaining over 80% occupancy by summer 2022. However, the increasing operational cost of delivering the service places the nurseries in significant deficit (£532K in 2021/22), and results in a pressure on the Council's general fund.

**Table 2. In-house early years occupancy, June 2022**

Location	6mth - 2yrs	2-3yrs	3 -5yrs	Total Occupancy June 2022
Uxbridge	88%	87.5%	79%	83%
South Ruislip	90%	92%	95%	93%
Nestles	73%	73%	98%	81%

### Early Years Nurseries – current pressures

30. This provision was previously part funded by School budgets until 2018, which greatly reduced the Council subsidy pressure on this provision. Following the withdrawal of this funding, the Council undertook a variety of reviews of staffing, contract spend and income generation, over a period of several years in the hope of keeping the sites operating in their current form. However, despite these measures, the running of the 3 nurseries and providing 0-5 childcare still require considerable subsidy from the Council and Council taxpayers, which in 2021/22, was £532k, which has been further exacerbated in the current year by inflationary increases nationally.

31. The below table shows the summary costs and income of the 3 sites for 2021/22:

2021/22	Nestles	South Ruislip	Uxbridge	Combined
Staffing Costs	376,898	427,998	397,155	1,202,051
Non-Staffing Costs	92,134	134,175	96,938	323,247
Grants, Fees & Other Income	(312,664)	(329,359)	(351,314)	(993,338)
<b>Total</b>	<b>156,368</b>	<b>232,814</b>	<b>142,779</b>	<b>531,960</b>

32. The nurseries have run at an average deficit of £545k for each of the last 3 years, with a further forecast deficit of £624k at Month 10 for 2022/23 taking the cumulative deficit for the last 4 years to over £2.2m. This is financially equivalent to the annual Council Tax of 1,763 Band D properties.

33. In seeking to address this, in August 2022, the Council took a decision to cease operating its three nurseries and announced that they would close in December 2022. Following opposition from parents and a threatened legal challenge, the Council withdrew this decision. At the time of a legal challenge in November 2022 the Council undertook not to close the nurseries without prior consultation, and the nurseries have reverted to business as usual with a new intake of children settling in January 2023.

34. In line with the wider budget set for 2023/24, the Council has an overarching aim of moving where possible to a cost neutral position for all services which are not universally accessible by all residents and covered by Council tax or Central Government funding.

The Council now wishes to enter into public consultation to review the provision of childcare in the nurseries.

35. The following options are proposed to be included as part of the public consultation; these proposals are at a formative stage and the list is not exhaustive, the consultation will allow participants to make their own suggestions for consideration. This list may change to include further options prior to the beginning of the consultation.
- a. Maintain the nursery provision in its current form and review the charging structure for parental fees. However, some changes to the assets used may be required as the Nestles Avenue site is degrading, therefore, it may be necessary to seek an alternative site should it be determined that the Council will continue to provide childcare in this area.
  - b. Offer 1, 2 or all 3 sites to the commercial childcare providers as a going concern. This would mean the charging of commercial rents, or sale of the properties and would have staffing implications under TUPE regulations. Options pursued will be dependent on conditions surveys and local demand; however, it should be noted that the site at Nestles Avenue is unsuitable for the future in its current building due to age deterioration.
  - c. Close the three nursery sites and return to the Council for a decision on their future use or disposal while retaining a small core team to develop and support the childcare workforce within Hillingdon and in particular its ability to respond to the complex needs of children with SEND by bolstering the support offered to providers.

## **Financial Implications**

This proposal requests that a public consultation be undertaken to obtain views on the future of Early Years Centres within Hillingdon, and to provide feedback on the proposed Family Hub strategy and delivery model. The financial implications from any proposals arising from this consultation will be included in the subsequent Cabinet report following the completion of the consultation, wherein Cabinet will be requested to consider and approve any recommendations informed by the responses.

In terms of the consultation, external support will be commissioned to undertake the consultation and delegated approval to the Executive Director, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, is requested to approve the spend once appropriate quotes are received.

## RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

### The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

#### **Family Hubs Strategy and Delivery Model**

The proposed move to a locality based operating model is aligned with the Council's objectives and wider transformation in meeting residents needs locally. The Child and Family Development service would be working closely with other services across the Council to expand the operating model to deliver more efficient services, "putting residents first."

Other benefits include:

- Accessible services in their local communities
- Services that align with their family's needs
- A range of connected services
- Informed, knowledgeable staff who can give advice, support and signpost to solutions
- Residents become more resilient
- A very early help response to children and families with SEND
- A reduction in reliance on Social Care interventions in the future

#### **Early Years Childcare Provision at the Council's Nurseries**

The review of the Council's childcare provision in the 3 nurseries, would provide clear options for childcare at these sites and support access to childcare for children and families across the borough.

#### **Consultation**

This paper proposes a 12-week multi-channel resident and partner consultation on the development of the community hubs model for delivering the 0-19 [25 with SEND] Family Hub Strategy as well as the delivery model options for 3 early years nurseries.

The consultation will be open to all resident's and take on many forms such as:

- Online and face to face questionnaires
- Public engagement workshops
- Questions and Answers with relevant council officers
- Frequently asked questions
- Website/Social media updates
- Hard copy materials such as leaflets and questionnaires
- Engagement with partner organisations including HHCP, schools, Central and Northwest London Healthcare trust, private and voluntary sector providers and groups representing or advocating for persons with protected characteristics
- Children and young people's opinions and thoughts gathered through a range of communication aids and methods

Following a 12-week consultation period and along with subsequent analysis of the responses an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed to ensure that the impact of any proposals on those people with protected characteristics is considered appropriately.

In line with the Public Sector Equalities duty (section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010), information about the protected characteristics of individual respondents will be sought through the consultation. The consultation will also seek information on the impact of any proposals on people with protected characteristics. The information will be considered in drawing up any recommendations to be put before Cabinet and during any consideration by Cabinet of any recommendations and during any implementation of any recommendations adopted.

Following consultation, a further report making any recommendations will be provided to the Council's Cabinet for it to consider and decide whether or not to approve any recommendation.

## CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

### Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concur with the Financial Implications above, noting the recommendations to consult on the proposed Family Hub strategy and delivery model as well as the future of the Council's directly delivered childcare in the three early years nurseries, with the outcomes of these consultations to be reported back to Cabinet.

Furthermore, Corporate Finance note there will be a minor cost associated with the recommendations with the consultations to be carried out by an independent provider.

### Legal

Where a public authority chooses to consult, the consultation must be adequate and fair. There are no legal impediments to the recommendations set out within this report.

### Property

Property Services will give further advice on property implications in relation to any sites under review, following consultation and when a decision on services at such sites is made.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL