

Appendix B – Proposed Public Consultation

The future of Children’s Centre services

21 July – 13 October 2014

Foreword

Children’s centres are an essential part of delivering early support to children, young people and their families in Suffolk. We are committed to continuing to deliver high quality, effective children’s centres services to families across the county. To achieve this we have to make sure that services are delivered in ways different communities want to access them and that we make the best use of buildings we have across the county.

This may mean relocating some or all of the services currently provided by your local children’s centre to another venue. We believe that there are opportunities to stop using some buildings, make better use of other community buildings such as libraries and community centres and use some existing children’s centres for different early years services, such as additional pre-school places, where this would help support the needs within a community.

However, as with other councils across the country we have to make significant savings over the next three years at least. The changes we are proposing will ensure that children centre services are still available across the county but also contribute to the council’s overall savings total of £156million. For example, we lease some buildings in an area where there are a number of other venues where we already deliver services from, including other children’s centres. It is being proposed that we stop using some of these buildings. The information included in this booklet sets out proposals for the future of children’s centre services in Suffolk. However, before any decisions are taken we want to know what you think.

Since becoming the Cabinet Member in May, I have had the opportunity to visit a number of children’s centres throughout the county and have seen first-hand the contributions they bring to our local communities. This consultation is an opportunity for you to let us know what services you value, and how we can improve them within the financial constraints we all face. It’s about how we deliver the services you value, rather than just the buildings.

We are not proposing to make changes to every children centre. The table on page xx gives details of each children’s centre and what changes, if any, are being proposed.

If the proposals in this booklet are approved changes would be made from 2015 onwards.

I would encourage you to read the information in this booklet and give your views (details on page xx) on the proposals before the twelve weeks of consultation end on 13 October 2014.

Cllr Gordon Jones
Cabinet Member for Children's Services

What is a children's centre?

Children's centres offer a wide range of services for families and others caring for children from age 0 to 5 years. Each children's centre is different, offering a variety of services according to the needs of local families. Activities are delivered from the children's centre itself, or through a range of outreach venues such as libraries, schools and village halls or in people's homes. All children's centres work closely with health, schools, GPs and other local service providers. Services may include:

- information and advice on childcare and early learning provision
- health services including pre and postnatal support
- parent / carer groups, including dads' and grandparent groups
- access to children's communication and early language support
- links to Jobcentre Plus and adult learning
- family support, including 1:1 work with families
- Parenting programmes

There are currently 47 children's centres in Suffolk.

Who are we consulting?

We are asking a wide range of people for their views on the proposals set out in this booklet. Copies of this booklet have been made available to parents, children's centre staff, councillors, members of Advisory Boards, and other professionals and volunteers who work with and in our children's centres.

It is important that we have a wide range of views before taking proposals back to Suffolk County Council's Cabinet in December 2014.

What are the key dates?

21 July – 13 October 2014: Public consultation

9 December 2014: Cabinet

April 2015: If approved, changes would begin to be implemented

What information have we used to inform these proposals?

A range of information has been used which includes:

- Local knowledge and statistical data which has told us how children's centres are currently accessed and used
- An analysis of children's and families' needs, informing decisions on which services are needed to support families with children aged pre-birth to 11 years living within Suffolk, including the most vulnerable families
- Equality Impact Analyses

What do we know already?

- Some children's centres are used more than others
- Many families who use centres use more than one
- Many families access a range of universal services (available to everybody) as well as targeted services (specialist support)

Staffing

This booklet does not make reference to future staffing levels at children's centres. A separate review of staffing across a wide range of Suffolk County Council's children services, including children's centres is already underway. The review will consider staffing roles and levels in children's centres with formal consultation with staff expected to take place in the autumn.

How we are proposing to deliver services from April 2015?

The table below sets out the proposal for each of the children centres across Suffolk. Changes are not currently being proposed for all centres.

The table below organises centres into borough and district council areas.

Children's Centre/ Proposal

St Edmundsbury

Carousel Children's Centre St Olaves Road Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP32 6RW	No proposed changes.
Hardwick Children's Centre Steward Road	No proposed changes.

Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 2PW	
Bury Library Children's Centre Sergeants Walk St Andrews Street North Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 1TZ	No proposed changes.
Cartwheels Children's Centre Norton Road Haverhill Suffolk CB9 8LU	See On Track Children's Centre.
On Track Children's Centre Strasbourg Square Haverhill Suffolk CB9 0HR	<p>To merge On Track Children's Centre with Cartwheels Children's Centre, Norton Road, Haverhill.</p> <p>On Track's current building is mainly used as a staff base with most services for families being delivered from the nearby community centre. As a result, the number of people (including children and parents/carers) using On Track's current building is very low, around 15 people per day.</p> <p>If this proposal is agreed, services would continue to be delivered from the community centre and work would be carried out to increase the number of community venues that families can access services from including Haverhill Library (which is around 1.5 miles away).</p> <p>Cartwheels is less than a mile from On Track.</p>
Bluebells Children's Centre Stanton Primary School Bury Lane Stanton Suffolk IP31 2DE	See Jigsaw Children's Centre.

Mid Suffolk

High Suffolk Children's Centre Gracechurch Street Debenham Suffolk	No proposed changes.
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IP14 6BL	
Eye Children's Centre Grace Church Street Debenham Suffolk IP14 6BL	No proposed changes.
Robins Children's Centre Quinton Road Needham Market Suffolk IP6 8BP	No proposed changes.
Acorns Children's Centre Violet Hill Health Centre Violet Hill Road Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 1NL	No proposed changes.
Sunshine Children's Centre Hillside Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2BD	No proposed changes.
Jigsaw Children's Centre Norton Road Thurston Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3PB	<p>To merge Jigsaw Children's Centre with Bluebells Children's Centre, Stanton and make the site available for Thurston Community College.</p> <p>The current centre is small and can only offer a limited range of services to families. The centre is also in a rural location and therefore many families already access services from other locations. It is proposed in the future to deliver all services in this way.</p> <p>If this proposal is agreed work would be carried out to identify as many community venues as possible, such as the local library to use as information points for families.</p>

Babergh

Cherry Blossom Children's Centre Hadleigh Road East Bergholt Suffolk CO7 6QT	See Brett River Children's Centre.
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<p>Woodlands Children's Centre Shepherds Lane Glemsford Suffolk CO10 7PU</p>	<p>To merge Woodlands Children's Centre with Phoenix Children's Centre, Tudor Road, Sudbury.</p> <p>The number of people (including children and parents/carers) using Woodlands site is around 20 per day. The large majority of families already access services from other venues. It is proposed to develop these services further, including a possible partnership with the local library.</p> <p>The proposal is for the Woodlands building to be used mainly for early education to meet the growing demand for early years places in the area.</p> <p>The on-site pre-school would continue to provide information on services in the areas. Community delivery points such as the village hall and Glemsford Primary School would continue to operate.</p>
<p>Cornfields Children's Centre Great Cornard Suffolk CO10 0JU</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>
<p>Brett River Children's Centre Old Corn Exchange Market Place Hadleigh Suffolk IP7 5DN</p>	<p>To merge Brett River Children's Centre with Cherry Blossom Children's Centre, Hadleigh Road, East Bergholt and close the building currently used by Brett River.</p> <p>The building used by Brett River does not effectively meet the needs of families due to poor access and no parking. It is not possible to make changes to the building as it is listed.</p> <p>Brett River delivers a number of services from other community venues in the Hadleigh area, such as the Ansell Centre, St Mary's Primary School and Bildeston Clinic.</p> <p>If this proposal is agreed work would be carried out to increase the number of community venues that families can access including a potential partnership with Hadleigh Library.</p>
<p>Phoenix Children's Centre Tudor Road Sudbury</p>	<p>See Woodlands Children's Centre.</p>

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Suffolk Coastal

<p>Sea Breeze Children's Centre 26 Beach Station Road Felixstowe Suffolk IP11 2EY</p>	<p>To merge Sea Breeze Children's Centre with The Oaks Children's Centre, Grange Road, Felixstowe and close the building Sea Breeze is currently in.</p> <p>Sea Breeze is located on a busy junction with limited parking which makes it difficult for families to access the centre.</p> <p>The majority of families already attend The Oaks, with some other services being delivered from other locations close to the centre and at Langer Primary School.</p> <p>The Oaks is around one mile from Sea Breeze and has adequate on-site parking. There is also a regular public bus service.</p> <p>The Oaks is open 35 hours each week (Monday-Friday), four hours each week in the evening and four hours each weekend.</p> <p>The Oaks provides a comprehensive range of services including health visiting, midwives, specialist services, local community and voluntary groups.</p>
<p>The Oaks Children's Centre Grange Road Felixstowe Suffolk IP11 2LA</p>	<p>See Sea Breeze Children's Centre.</p>
<p>Leiston Children's Centre Waterloo Avenue Leiston Suffolk IP16 4HF</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>
<p>Meadow Children's Centre Seaman Avenue Saxmundham Suffolk IP17 1DZ</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>

Caterpillar Children's Centre 7 Cumberland Street Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 4AH	No proposed changes
Rendlesham Children's Centre Sycamore Drive Rendlesham Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 2GF	No proposed changes.
Kesgrave Children's Centre 22 Bell Lane Kesgrave Suffolk IP5 1JQ	No proposed changes.

Forest Heath

Brandon Children's Centre The Brandon Centre Bury Road Brandon Suffolk IP27 0BQ	No proposed changes.
The Lark Children's Centre Jubilee Centre, Mildenhall Recreation Way Mildenhall Suffolk IP28 7HG	No proposed changes.
Foley House Children's Centre 52 Wellington Street Newmarket Suffolk CB8 0HY	No proposed changes.

Waveney

Dragonflies Children's Centre Wisset Road Halesworth Suffolk IP19 8BT	See Reydon and Southwold Children's Centre.
The Ark Children's Centre Water Lane Lowestoft Suffolk	See Roman Hill Children's Centre.

NR32 2NH	
Kirkley Children's Centre Kirkley Street Lowestoft Suffolk NR33 0LU	No proposed changes.
Riverside Children's Centre Haverstaff Road Lowestoft Suffolk NR33 0TQ	No proposed changes.
Roman Hill Children's Centre Love Road Lowestoft Suffolk NR32 2NY	<p>To merge Roman Hill Children's Centre with The Ark Children's Centre, Water Lane, Lowestoft.</p> <p>In the last twelve months the number of people using Roman Hill (including children, parents and carers) has fallen to around six per day. This could be due to it being so close to The Ark.</p> <p>The area has a number of children who are not able to access their free early education places due to a lack of spaces available. Therefore, it is proposed to consult on using the current Roman Hill building for long term early education provision to meet this need.</p> <p>The Ark is less than one mile away from Roman Hill, is bigger and provides a full range of services.</p> <p>Community delivery points would continue to be used to provide services within the area.</p>
Uplands Children's Centre Ashburnham Way Lowestoft Suffolk NR33 8LJ	No proposed changes.
Village Rise Children's Centre Blyford Road Lowestoft Suffolk NR32 4PZ	No proposed changes.
Butterflies Children's Centre Castle Hill Beccles Suffolk NR34 7BQ	No proposed changes.

<p>Reydon and Southwold Children's Centre The Firs Jermyns Road Reydon Suffolk IP18 6QB</p>	<p>To merge Reydon and Southwold Children's Centre with Dragonflies Children's Centre, Wisset Road, Halesworth.</p> <p>Reydon and Southwold is only able to offer limited facilities and services for families.</p> <p>Over the next five years significant works would be required to ensure the building remained 'fit for purpose'.</p> <p>It is considered that to spend in excess of £60,000 would not represent the best use of money available to the county council.</p> <p>Staff currently deliver valuable services to families in their own homes. These services would continue to be delivered by staff located at other children's centres in rural Waveney.</p> <p>There is also the potential to deliver additional services from Southwold Library, Reydon Primary School and Reydon Village Hall.</p>
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Ipswich

<p>Hawthorn Children's Centre Chantry Library Hawthorn Drive Ipswich Suffolk IP2 0QY</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>
<p>Hillside Children's Centre Maidenhall Approach Ipswich Suffolk IP2 8NY</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>
<p>Willows Children's Centre Magdalene Close IPSWICH Suffolk IP2 9UX</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>
<p>East Ipswich Children's Centre Based at: Tree House Children's Centre 251 Clapgate Lane Ipswich</p>	<p>No proposed changes.</p>

Suffolk IP3 0RH	
Tree House Children's Centre 251 Clapgate Lane Ipswich Suffolk IP3 0RH	No proposed changes.
Ravenswood Children's Centre 103 Hening Avenue Ipswich Suffolk IP3 9QJ	No proposed changes.
Wooden House Children's Centre 20b Lanark Road Ipswich Suffolk IP4 3EJ	No proposed changes.
Chatterbox Children's Centre North Ipswich Children's Centre School House Copleston Road Ipswich Suffolk IP4 5HB	See Quayside Children's Centre.
Quayside Children's Centre Suffolk New College Campus Back Hamlet Entrance Long Street Off Back Hamlet Ipswich IP4 1QJ	<p>To merge Quayside Children's Centre with Chatterbox Children's Centre, Copleston Road, Ipswich.</p> <p>Quayside is currently located in a room in a day nursery at Suffolk New College. Due to its location and size the centre is not able to deliver a full range of services to meet the needs of families in the area.</p> <p>Children's centre staff already provide high quality support to families in their own homes. In addition some services are delivered from local community venues, such as the Reg Driver Centre in Christchurch Park.</p> <p>There are two other children's centres (Wellington and Chatterbox) about a mile away from Quayside which many families are already using to access services.</p> <p>If this proposal is agreed, other services would be delivered from community venues across the town centre, such as the Library in Northgate Street, all within walking distance of the current centre</p>

	location.
Meredith Children's Centre Meredith Road Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6ED	<p>To merge Meredith Children's Centre with the Wellington Children's Centre, 52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich.</p> <p>However, it is proposed that some early years services will continue to be delivered from the existing Meredith site.</p> <p>Costs relating to the current Meredith Children's Centre are around £30,000 per year. Therefore with a number of other children's centres in the area (Highfield, Bramford Lane and Wellington Children's Centres) it is proposed that the current building is no longer used as a children's centre.</p> <p>Families would only need to travel a minimum of a third of a mile and a maximum distance of a mile to access another centre. Many families who use Meredith already use other local children's centres.</p> <p>Outreach venues in the area would be used so more services can be delivered across a wider area, including rural areas where there is currently no delivery.</p>
Wellington Children's Centre 52 Chevallier Street Ipswich Suffolk IP1 2PB	See Meredith Children's Centre.
Highfield Children's Centre Chesterfield Drive Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6DW	No proposed changes.