

# Cabinet Supplementary Agenda



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## Croydon Best Start

(Pages 3 - 158)

Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning, Councillor Alisa Flemming

Officer: Interim Executive Director of Children, Families & Education, Debbie Jones

Key decision: yes

*Reason for urgency: The urgency arises to meet the procurement deadline of November 2021 after initial consultation was delayed from January to May 2021 due to the consultation on the Croydon Renewal Plan and approval of Council.*

Asmat Hussain  
Executive Director of Resources and  
Monitoring Officer (Interim)  
London Borough of Croydon  
Bernard Weatherill House  
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Victoria Lower  
020 8726 6000 x14773  
020 8726 6000  
victoria.lower@croydon.gov.uk  
www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> <b>26 July 2021</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Croydon Best Start</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Debbie Jones, Executive Director</b> <b>Children, Families and Education</b> <b>Shelley Davies, Director of Education</b> <b>Bianca Byrne, Head of Service</b> <b>Commissioning &amp; Procurement (Corporate)</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Alisa Flemming</b> <b>Children, Young People and Learning</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b>	
<p>Croydon Best Start Children’s Centres deliver child development and school readiness services as part of a wider Best Start programme for children under 5 years. To enable Best Start services to support children and families more consistently across the borough and make sure we work in partnership to engage with and support our most vulnerable families, the council has considered how best to deliver services so young families most in need get the right help.</p> <p>Best Start has always placed parents at the heart of the programme, and actively involves parents in reviewing services and listening to what families need. Council proposals for a Children’s Centre Hub and Spoke model will work together with other Best Start partners and the voluntary and community sector to welcome families wherever services are, and build relationships that support child development, positive and resilient parenting and good health outcomes for very young children.</p> <p>Respondents to the consultation identified the value of Children’s Centre services in supporting their child’s development and also the importance for parents and carers in being able to attend services locally. Children’s Centres have been “a lifeline” to many parents seeking support for their child through targeted services or support and advice in relation to family life. The Council have heard through the consultation, that there will be a significant impact on communities in the South of the borough and the Shirley ward if the proposed model is agreed. In response, the Council has revised its original proposals and this paper presents a 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes Children’s Centre model which will now include both Purley Oaks and Shirley Children’s Centres as Children’s Centre Spokes.</p>	

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Supporting children and families, particularly those who are most vulnerable remains a priority for Croydon. Improving school readiness outcomes, particularly the acquisition of speech and language continues to be a focus across the Early Years. Involving parents and carers is key. Listening to what they say and taking their views into account in the development of the new service model demonstrates the Council's commitment to involve residents' in decision-making and ensures the right investment in services which best meet their needs.

### **PRIORITIES AND NEW WAYS OF WORKING /POLICY CONTEXT**

#### **Croydon Renewal Plan**

These services are aligned to the council's new priorities and ways of working in which we will:

- Live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents
- Focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough
- Follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic justice
- Focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford.

The proposals in this paper meet the criteria for essential expenditure in accordance with the financial guidance.

#### **Policy Context**

The *Best Start for Life, Early Years Review Report* (March 2021) sets out a new requirement for local authorities to demonstrate how they will improve support for children and their parents during the first 1000 critical days and how they intend to achieve new national goals.

#### **Legislation**

Under the provision of the Childcare Act 2006 and Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, the Council has a statutory duty for the provision of early childhood services. The Act requires the Council to:

- Make arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner, to facilitate access to those services and maximise the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children
- Ensure that such consultation is carried out before making significant changes
- Ensure sufficiency of children's centre provision to meet local need.

**Croydon Best Start**

Croydon Best Start is a partnership approach in delivering statutory early childhood services to support families from pregnancy until their child starts school. Across the partnership, midwives, health visitors, children's centres, early years and the voluntary sector work together to deliver prevention and early intervention to improve children's outcomes, particularly for those most in need.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Proposals in this paper includes the Procurement Strategy for new services. If agreed, the Council would be committing to invest an aggregate value of £3.436m over the full term of the contracts (1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024) to improve the outcomes for children aged 0-4years.

In the Renewing Croydon proposals Best Start Children's Centres were asked to deliver the model within a budget of £3.46m. The target savings achieved are therefore £535,000 with a further £660,000 proposed as part of the MTFs savings programme. This represents a reduction of £1m from the original budget for Best Start Children's Centres and a further £195,000, reducing the budget for Parent Aspirations and Parenting Skills services, delivered through a new model consulted on with relevant users of the service.

The financial impact incorporates:

- The outcomes from the consultation on the proposed Children's Centre Hub and Spoke model.
- A further budget reduction of £195,000 to Parenting Aspirations and Parenting Skills services to minimise the impact on Children's Centres should the full effect of the total savings be applied. The model for delivering these services remains the same.
- The new budget for Best Start services is £1,431,533 pa.
- New contracts for services would be brought in line with the Council's financial year budget setting cycle. Contracts would be let for 2 years and 4 months, terminating March 2024.
- Funding for these Contracts would be met from the Council's General Fund.

**FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO: 3721CAB**

This is a Key Decision as defined in the Council's Constitution. The decision may be implemented from 1300 hours on the expiry of 5 working days after it is made, unless the decision is referred to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee by the requisite number of Councilors.

**REASON FOR URGENCY:** The urgency arises to meet the procurement deadline of November 2021 after initial consultation was delayed from January to

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May 2021 due to the consultation on the Croydon Renewal Plan and approval of Council.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below:

### 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to

- 1.1 To approve the re-design of the Best Start Children's Centres into a 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes locality model to provide greater efficiency and co-ordination of service delivery within a reduced budget. This recommendation has been informed by public consultation.
- 1.2 To note that the Director of Commissioning and Procurement as Chair of the Contracts & Commissioning Board has approved the Procurement Strategy contained in this report and a number of waivers in accordance with Regulations 19.2 of the Council's Contracts and Tender Regulations. The Procurement Strategy will potentially result in Contract awards for a maximum value of £1,431,533, of which for Lot 1, Child Development and School Readiness services is £1,162,533 and for Lot 2, Parent Aspirations and Parenting Skills services is £269,000. Contracts will be for a term of 2 years and 4 months.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 In May 2021 the Council consulted on a proposed redesign of Children's Centres into a 3 Hubs and 6 Spokes service model. The proposal identified:-

- Ceasing funded services at Purley Oaks Children's Centre
- Closing Shirley Children's Centre and,
- A new delivery point at PIP House to service families in the North East of the borough

2.2 The content of this report has been endorsed by the Contracts and Commissioning Board.

CCB ref. number	CCB Approval Date
CCB1680/21-22	21/07/2021

2.3 Residents were asked their views on the proposed 3 Hubs and 6 Spokes delivery model and their views on the impact of services to inform future

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delivery. The Council received 1365 responses from residents and other stakeholders to the consultation.

- 2.4 Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree that the proposed 3 Hubs and 6 Spokes model for Children’s Centres would provide the right services, in the right places. Of the 936 responses to this question:

- 725 (53.2%) said they ‘disagreed or strongly disagreed’
- 77 ( 5.7%) said they ‘agreed or strongly agreed’

- 2.5 Significantly, 408 (29.9%) of respondents said they would be directly affected by the proposal to cease services at Purley Oaks Children’s Centre, and 182 (13.3%) said they would be directly affected by the proposal to close Shirley Children’s Centre.
- 2.6 Key concerns for residents were in relation to accessibility, reduction in services, loss of support, impact on children’s development and impact on mental health and wellbeing. In addition, respondents raised concerns that there are Council proposals to reduce library services, and the proposed closure of Purley Leisure Centre. The combination having a disproportionate effect on families with young children.

A few comments are included below for illustration:

*“... I look forward to going each week, taking any worries with me and knowing I can share them while being helped to bond with my baby. And on the days when getting out the house feels hard, knowing the location is just a walk away makes all the difference. “*

*“I understand cuts have to be made but I worry that reducing the amount of children’s centres would lower the amount of people who get access to their services”*

*“I can easily walk to Shirley Children’s Centre but have no easy access to any of the other centres as I do not have a car. Also Shirley library considering to be closed which also offers a space and activities for young children and parents, so Shirley will be losing 2 essential free local services.”*

- 2.7 In addition to the online survey, a number of engagement events took place with community groups and Headteachers. The Council also received 90 letters from pupils at Purley Oaks Primary school voicing their concerns with the proposal to cease funded services from Purley Oaks Children’s Centre, written responses from one councilor, one MP and from current parents who use services delivered by the Children’s Centre.
- 2.8 The Council needs to ensure it prioritises the right services for its residents. The consultation raises significant concerns regarding accessibility and reduction in services, particularly in the South of the borough and in Shirley

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Ward.

- 2.9 Children's Centres provide universal services and are a gateway to more targeted support for families. Access to provision is critical, particularly for the most vulnerable, who would have been more impacted by the pandemic and lockdown restrictions.
- 2.10 The consultation response, has allowed the Council to consider a different approach to delivery and to ensure ease of access to services. The Council is recommended to retain Purley Oaks and Shirley Children's Centres as part of a coordinated Children's Centre 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes delivery model for Croydon.
- 2.11 Members are asked to note this report also outlines the agreed Procurement Strategy for new Contracts for services.

## 3 DETAIL

### 3.1. Background

3.1.1 A key finding in the recent report (*Best beginnings in the early years: Technical report one, July 2020*), the Children's Commissioner highlighted that 'Children with lower attainment at EYFS<sup>1</sup> are more likely to have worse academic and non-academic outcomes, even after taking into account their baseline characteristics'. And her final report (*Best beginnings in the early years: A proposal for a new early years guarantee to give all children in England the best start in life, July 2020*) suggests the following "Essentials for the early years":

- Loving, nurturing relationships with parents and carers
- A safe home free from stress and adversity
- The right help to develop good language and other cognitive skills
- Support to manage behaviour and regulate their emotions
- Good physical and mental health and access to healthcare

3.1.2 The *Best Start for Life* policy paper outlines the Government's vision for local authorities working with local partners, to publish their *Start for Life offer* providing universal and universal+, health and care services that meet the needs of specific community groups.

3.1.3 Croydon's vision and ambition is that all children and young people will be safe, healthy and happy, and will aspire to be the best they can be. The future is theirs. To achieve this, the Council continues to ensure every child and young person can access high quality education and youth provision, starting in the early years.

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<sup>1</sup> Early Years Foundation Stage

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974907/EYFS\\_framework\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)



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- 3.1.4 The local authority has a duty under the Childcare Act 2006, to provide early childhood services in an integrated manner that is sufficient to meet local need. Croydon Best Start and Children's Centres is the model adopted to deliver these statutory services, providing a pathway into targeted support when it is needed most. Best Start is integral to the Croydon Partnership Early Help Network to improve outcomes for children in the borough.
- 3.1.5 As reported to Cabinet by the Director of Education (March 2021) despite Croydon's level of Good Levels of Development (GLD) remaining above national figures, improving school readiness outcomes, particularly the acquisition of speech and language remains a focus across the Early Years. Areas for development identified for the Early Years are to:
- Reduce the attainment gap between the average and the lowest achieving pupils in language and literacy
  - Further narrow the gap between children eligible for free school meals and those not eligible
  - Ensure the Integrated 2 Year Old Review is fully embedded across the Borough
  - Improve the health of children under 5 years by reducing the number of children at age 5 classed as 'overweight' or obese'
- 3.1.6 In addition, Ofsted data as at 31.8.20 showed that the proportion of Croydon childcare providers on the Early Years Register judged to be good or outstanding was 95%. This is in line with the London average of 95% and slightly below the national average of 96%.
- 3.1.7 A Partnership Early Years and Childcare Strategy is currently in development and will contribute to the Council's Vision for children and young people.

## **3.2 Croydon Best Start**

- 3.2.1 Croydon Best Start was launched in April 2016 following Cabinet approval in December 2014 (Min.A112/14). Best Start brought together providers delivering services for babies, children and their families from pregnancy to school; to work in partnership and maximise resources to meet the needs of babies, children and their parents and carers as early as possible.

Croydon Best Start offers a range of services to support children's health and development, and school readiness outcomes, along a pathway of early learning into early education and Reception (see picture below):



3.2.2 Recognising not all families wish to access services in this way, a targeted outreach programme is delivered from Libraries and community venues in partnership with local community groups. Best Start services include:

- Child development and school readiness activities
  - Baby massage
  - Stay and play early learning sessions
  - Speech and Language Chatterbox groups
  - 1 to 1 family support
- Parent Infant Attachment
- Parenting Aspirations and Parenting Skills services
  - Community capacity building
  - Peer to Peer groups
  - Peer to Peer home visiting
  - Peer led parenting programmes
  - Employability support
  - Group support for parents with children who have social communication difficulties

3.2.3 An integrated outcomes framework brings together statutory and key performance data to evidence outcomes and the impact services are making for children and their parents (see below):

Best Start long term outcomes	Best Start medium term outcomes
Children, young people and their families enjoy greater independence & financial stability	Parents/carers are self-reliant and have strong and supportive social networks Parents/carers can access employment and training
Children and young people enjoy improved educational attainment	Children are prepared and ready for school
Children, young people and their parents/carers enjoy emotional wellbeing	Children are emotionally well Parents/carers are emotionally well
Children, young people and their parents/carers enjoy physical wellbeing	Children are healthy and physically well Parents/carers are healthy and physically well
Services are more responsive and consistent	Children are safe and protected from harm Practitioners are confident and skilled and work together to deliver high quality and inclusive services

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- 3.2.4 Implementation of the *Best Start for Life* policy paper will identify new national goals at which point the Best Start Outcomes Framework will be reviewed.
- 3.2.5 In addition to hosting the delivery of commissioned services, Children’s Centres host the delivery of other services in a partnership approach with midwifery, health visiting services, parenting practitioners and early learning providers; fulfilling the core service offer as set out in the Sure Start Children’s Centre statutory guidance for early childhood services. Key partners delivering this work include health services, the voluntary community sector (VCS) and Council services.
- 3.2.6 Croydon Best Start services fulfil the essential spend criteria in accordance with the financial guidance.

### 3.3 Proposed redesign of Best Start Children’s Centres

#### 3.3.1 Current Model

There are 9 designated Children’s Centres and 11 Service Access Points where either Children’s Centre services are delivered, or from where 2 year old (2YO) funded places are offered to families (see picture below):

Current Children’s Centre Service model with 9 Designated Children’s Centres			
Children’s Centre	Service Access point (Children’s Centre Delivery)	Service Access point (2YO Funded Provision)	Service Access point (Health Delivery: Midwifery and Health Visiting)
<b>North Locality</b>			
Kensington Avenue	Ecclesbourne Winterbourne Thornton Heath	Norbury Manor Thornton Heath	Winterbourne
<b>Central Locality</b>			
Crosfield Shirley Selhurst Aerodrome Purley Oaks	Malling Close Woodside Canterbury Road Peppermint	Tunstall Canterbury Road Peppermint	Selhurst Aerodrome
<b>South Locality</b>			
New Addington Woodlands Byron	Castle Hill Sanderstead	n/a	Castle Hill Byron

- 3.3.2 Under the current model of Children’s Centres, and pre-Covid, a programme of services were delivered from each designated Children’s Centre, from Service Access Points and other community outreach venues. Services have had to scale back due to the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. Services have evolved into a hybrid model of bookable face to face and virtual sessions. Best Start services are currently delivering in accordance with a Covid recovery plan, which is regularly reviewed with the service and commissioners.

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### 3.3.3 Proposed 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes model

The Council has considered the views of its residents and these responses have allowed us to consider the model of delivery of services. The new proposed Children's Centre model will include all 9 pre-existing Children's Centre locations, into a 3 main Children Centre Hubs and 8 Spokes managed by the main Hub service model. Shirley and Purley Oaks Children's Centres will be retained as Spokes, with the latter identified as a Spoke in South Locality.

Proposed new Children's Centre Service 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes Service model			
Children's Centre Hub	Children's Centre Spoke	2YO Funded Provision	Health Delivery (Midwifery and Health Visiting services) will continue to be delivered from either a Children's Centre Hub or Spoke
North Locality			
Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne PIP House	Norbury Manor Thornton Heath	
Central Locality			
Selhurst	Crosfield (Malling Close) Shirley Aerodrome	Tunstall Woodside Canterbury Road Peppermint	
South Locality			
Woodlands	New Addington Purley Oaks Byron	Castle Hill	

### 3.3.4 Impact of the new proposals

- Reducing the budget for service delivery to fund costs for the additional Children's Centre Spokes, to give greater access to services for local families
- De-designate 6 of the current Children's Centres but retain them as Children's Centre spokes continuing to deliver services under the leadership of the main hub
- Introduce a new site in the North East Locality (PIP House) improving access for residents
- Retain pre-existing 2YO provision ensuring links with Children's Centre Locality Hubs to promote Best Start services to families
- Recognise Purley Oaks as a Spoke serving families in the South of the borough.
- Continue to work across the Best Start partnership and VCS to optimise services to identify and meet the needs of the locality
- Within the new model, services will be delivered from 11 different sites, the three Children's Centre Hubs and 8 Spokes under the leadership of a locality Hub.

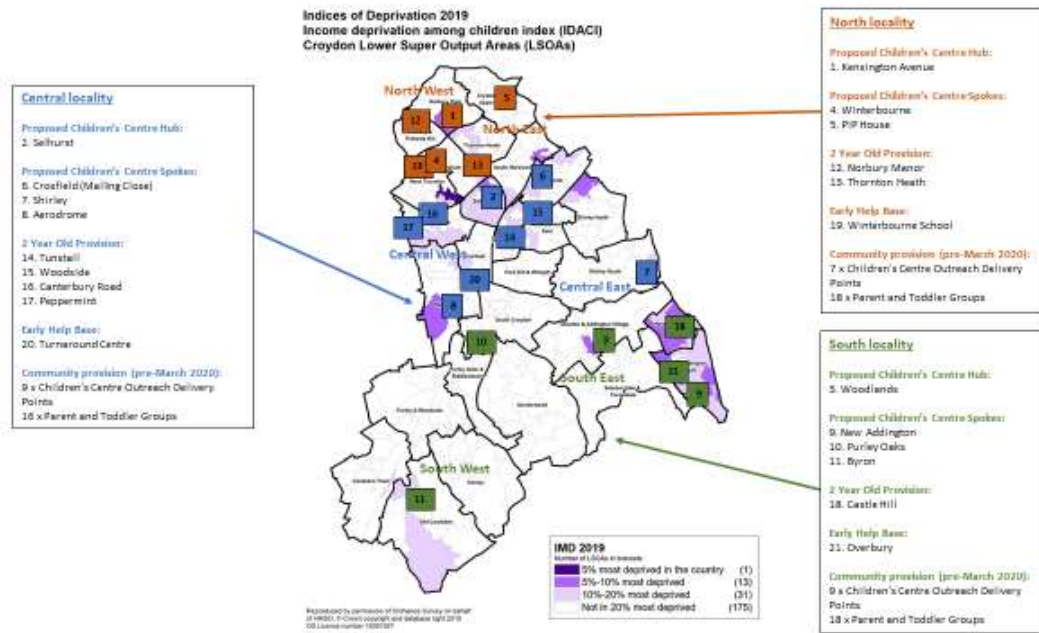
3.3.5 The picture below illustrates how Children's Centres work in partnership:

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The services work across the Best Start partnership delivering the Best Start programme and with midwifery and health visiting services to enable families to access health services more easily.

- 3.3.6 Links with the Early Years community will be maintained, and partnership working improved and optimised to offer families the full range of Best Start services.
- 3.3.7 Each Children's Centre Hub will deliver a full programme and also manage services from each Spoke.
- 3.3.8 An Outreach programme run in partnership with the voluntary and community sector will ensure families who choose not to access Children's Centres, still have access to support. A rotation of Parenting Aspirations and Parenting Skills services will maximise accessibility across the locality, for example Baby and Us or group support for parents with children who have social communication difficulties. Midwifery and Health Visiting services will continue to be based in the areas with the greatest need.
- 3.3.9 We will work with Schools to identify alternative use of the building when not used as a Children's Centre Spoke, for services to improve outcomes for children and families, in accordance with the criteria as set out in the Sure Start Capital Grant. These sites will no longer be designated as Children's Centres, however may still provide related services that benefit children and the local community.
- 3.3.10 The proposed model provides opportunities for Children's Centre providers to develop partnership working with community and voluntary sector partners. By developing sustainable partnerships across the borough it is possible to develop a vibrant and thriving offer for families, sharing resources and venues as well as developing outreach. The picture below illustrates a community of provision for early years:



3.3.11 The agreed Procurement Strategy will seek to strengthen and enhance partnerships and improve integrated working across the Partnership Early Help Network to improve outcomes for children and reduce inequalities.

### 3.4 Proposed Procurement Route

#### 3.4.1 Options considered:

a) **Direct Award all Contracts – Rejected**

This option would not meet the requirements of the Council's Tender and Contracts Regulations (TCR) or Public Contract Regulations to procure the best value Contracts available in the market.

b) **Open adapted procedure for all Contracts – Rejected**

This option was considered suitable for most Contracts with the exception of Parent Infant Attachment services.

The Parent Infant Partnership delivers therapeutic and key worker support to secure good parent infant attachment for new born babies, parents, carers and babies up to 24 months. This service is delivered as a partnership between Croydon Council (employing staff) and Croydon Drop In (commissioned to provide operational management and clinical supervision).

c) **Agree to Direct Award for Parent Infant Attachment services – Recommended**

This option will ensure the continuation of the partnership arrangement between Croydon Council and the current incumbent provider to deliver operational management and clinical supervision for the Parent Infant

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Partnership service. For this reason, as per the proposals in this report, CCB approved the waiver of TCR Regulation 11.2.1 to run a mini competition for Parent Infant Attachment services.

The Parent Infant Partnership is a specialist service to young babies and their parents during the first 1000 critical days. Croydon Drop In hold the relevant qualifications for this specialism, ensuring the integrity and evidence base for this intervention.

A full review of the current delivery model for this service needs to be undertaken to inform the best procurement route for new Contracts. There will be a direct award report for this service for a term of 2 years plus 4 months. This report will be taken to the Contracts and Commissioning Board in August for approval.

d) **Open adapted procedure for Best Start Child Development and School Readiness services and Parent Aspirations and Parenting Skills services – Recommended**

This option is considered suitable as these services fall within the scope of “social and other specific services set out within Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015). Consequently the so-called ‘Light Touch Regime’ will apply to this procurement.

3.4.2 For this procurement, the Council will utilise the flexibility available by virtue of the Light Touch Regime and will be using an adapted open procedure to procure new services. The Contract value over the aggregated lifetime of the Contract is above the PCR 2015 threshold for Light Touch services (currently £663,540) and a Find a Tender Service (FTS) Contract Notice will be posted. The opportunity will be advertised on the London Tenders Portal, Contracts Finder and the Council’s website.

3.4.3 1 Contract would be offered, split into 2 lots as per below with individual service specifications:

Lot 1 - Child Development and School Readiness services (£1,162,533)  
(3 Sub-Lots, 1 Sub Lot for each locality [North, Central and South])

Tenderers will be able to bid in for 1, 2 or 3 Sub-lots

Lot 2 – Parent Aspirations and Parenting Skills services (£269,000)  
(6 Sub-Lots for each service within the offer)

Tenderers will be able to bid in for 1 or more Sub-lots

3.4.4 The rationale for 1 Contract split into Sub-lots is considered as the most efficient route to further develop partnership working and transform delivering services in a more integrated way. Joint partnership key performance indicators will hold Best Start commissioned partners to greater accountability in meeting its statutory duty for these services.

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- 3.4.5 This approach will provide a mechanism for contract managing partnership working with interdependent key performance indicators across the commissioned contracts for Best Start services. A locality community of practice approach will facilitate the development, effective partnership working, identification of local needs and joint locality service planning.
- 3.4.6 The current model of individual Agreements and Contracts do not provide a mechanism to effectively challenge where partnerships are ineffective and do not achieve the best outcomes for children and families. Ineffectual partnerships hinder services from being responsive leading to inconsistencies and inequity of provision.
- 3.4.7 The recommendation in this report for the new service model, if approved by Cabinet, the procurement process for the new services will commence on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. The new Contracts for the services will start on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

### **3.5 Contract Terms and Conditions**

- 3.5.1 The initial term for the Contracts will be for a period of 2 years and 4 months from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 up to March 2024. Contracts for new services will be in line with approved budgets and the MTFS savings programme.
- 3.5.2 All Contracts will be based on Croydon standard terms and conditions and will be reviewed by legal prior to publication.
- 3.5.3 The Contract value split into Sub-lots with individual providers are of relative low value and usually held with local charities and social enterprise companies who depend on payment in advance to cover operational costs. Tenders will have the option to join the Premier Supplier Programme where an early payment levy will mitigate paying invoices in advance.
- 3.5.6 The integrated outcomes framework and refreshed evaluation approach incorporates Best Start Community of Practice meetings held each term, to facilitate effective partnership working, service planning and delivery across the locality. This approach will ultimately improve Contract performance and give best value to the public purse.

### **3.6 Procurement Timeline**

- 3.6.1 Recommissioning Best Start services has been delayed due to the consultation on the Croydon Renewal Plan, approval of Council budgets and Pre-election Period relating to the Mayoral and local elections. The statutory duty to consult in the event of any significant change to inform Cabinet decisions could not take place until after the elections. With insufficient time to meet procurement deadlines and avoid a gap in service provision Cabinet approved the proposals to extend contracts for a further period of up to 4 months (to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021).



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Due to the potential impact on the budget available for the new services and in order to meet the commencement date of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021, the procurement timeline is very tight.

### 3.7 Evaluation

#### 3.7.1 Tender Evaluation

3.7.2 To ensure new Contracts deliver services efficiently, within the available funding envelope and in support of the Council's New Ways of Working, the Chair of CCB has approved the waiver from Regulation 22.4 Standard Evaluation criteria split to Price 50% and Quality 50% to be applied to the evaluation criteria. The rationale for this recommendation is to ensure the Tender evaluation achieves the best value for residents without compromising quality.

3.7.3 The Best Start Contracts have an established record of delivering tangible Social Value outcomes, therefore Cabinet is asked to note a waiver from Regulation 22.5 Social Value criteria from a minimum of 10% to a maximum of 5% has been agreed, redistributing the remaining available scores for sufficient focus on the Service Plan and Covid recovery.

3.7.4 Best Start delivers a high return of social value through its contracts for residents. Examples of volunteering opportunities, successfully attracting external funding and maximising the benefit for Best Start families or through offering staff training for council employees and community groups on digital skills and digital safety.

3.7.5 The Evaluation panel will include members across Health services, Commissioning, Education and Children's Social Care. Members from service user groups will represent parents, carers and the voice of the child.

3.7.6 Compliance with the Council's mandatory requirements and minimum quality standards will be specified in the eligibility and Tenders will be evaluated using a 4 stage process:

**Stage 1:** Supplier Suitability – Economic and financial standing, GDPR, technical and professional ability, modern slavery, London Living Wage and additional questions.

**Stage 2:** Method Statements (50%)

- Service Delivery – 10%
- Service Plan – 10%
- Business Continuity – 5%
- Workforce – 5%
- Safeguarding – 5%
- Quality Assurance – 5%
- Social Value – 5%
- PSP – 5%

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Tenderers are required to secure a minimum average score of 3 on the method statement criteria and a minimum score of 3 for both safeguarding and service delivery.

**Stage 3:** Price (50%): Completed Pricing Matrices

**Stage 4:** The Council will reserve the right to undertake site visits and/or invite Tenderers to attend clarification meetings with the Evaluation panel if required.

### 3.7.7 Financial evaluation

The financial assessment of prospective suppliers will be conducted to determine their financial viability and stability to deliver the service in line with the budget allocated.

This will be assessed as part of the overall economic and financial standing of Tenderers by a methodology set out by the Finance Service.

## 3.8 Procurement Timeline

- 3.8.1 In order to meet the commencement date for the new services (1<sup>st</sup> December 2021), there may be a requirement to request a Leader's delegation to approve the award of Contracts to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Financial Governance

Indicative Date	Activity
<b>Stages 1 - 3</b>	
31 <sup>st</sup> August 2021	Tender opportunity is available on the London Tenders Portal.
19 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Closing date for initial tenders
21 <sup>st</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Evaluation of Tenders and Moderation
<b>Stage 4:</b>	
September 2021 to October 2021	Internal approval of proposed successful bids
October 2021	Internal approvals and processes for contract award
November 2021	Mobilisation and implementation
1 <sup>st</sup> December 2021	Anticipated contract start date

3.9 Risks

Risk	Impact	Mitigation	Rating
<p>Gap in service at the end of the current contract term if these proposals are not approved</p>	<p>Council will be exposed to significant risk of challenge due to lack of provision for families, particularly those most in need, leading to political fallout and complaints. In addition, staff eligible to TUPE rights following procurement for new services.</p>	<p>The agreed Procurement Strategy would mitigate these risks and allow for a smooth transfer of service over to the new contractors.</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Risk of lack of suitable bidders responding to the Invitation to Tender</p>	<p>Lack of provision in corresponding locality reach area, leading to disjointed delivery and inequality for families in scope to receiving help and support.</p> <p>Additional provider negotiation required to agree a feasible delivery model covering the borough.</p> <p>Staff may need to be TUPE'd into the council to continue delivering service, and then TUPE'd</p>	<p>To be clear of the Council's vision for Best Start we have undertaken a public consultation to set out the proposed delivery model, available budget and areas with the most need.</p> <p>If after procurement, all areas of need are not covered by commissioned providers, the Council would need to consider the option to deliver these services directly.</p>	<p>Medium</p>

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	back out to a new provider when awarded.		
Risk of delay in awarding new contracts by 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2021	The full contract extension period will need to be utilised, impacting on the available budget for procuring new services.	There may be a requirement to seek a recommendation from the Leader of the Cabinet to delegate the decision to approve the contract award to the Lead Member of Children, Young People and Learning in consultation with the Nominated Cabinet Member for Finance.	Medium
Risk to re-procurement budget if extension up to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021 is fully utilised	If the full extension is needed, the remaining budget would be insufficient to tender for full service provision.  Additionally, there is a risk to the service achieving FY21/22 savings should additional budget for new services be required.	There may be a requirement to seek a recommendation from the Leader of the Cabinet to delegate the decision to approve the contract award to the Lead Member of Children, Young People and Learning in consultation with the Nominated Cabinet Member for Finance.	Medium

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<p>Risk that the 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes Children’s Centre model is unaffordable for the Market</p>	<p>Gap in service as alternative solutions are explored.</p> <p>Additional pressure on the budget if current contracts need to be extended further</p>	<p>The new service model has been informed by residents who were concerned about Children’s Centres being accessible to the local community.</p> <p>Residents recognise savings need to be made therefore keeping services local to meet the needs of children and families has been prioritised.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Pressure on commissioning budget due to financial year overlap and required savings.</p>	<p>Unable to deliver to the proposed model due to further budget restraints.</p> <p>Financial or employment liabilities will need to be considered, agreed and mitigated if the service is to achieve its MTFS savings in FY21/22.</p>	<p>To look to additional funding sources for one off additional budget for 2021/22</p>	<p>Medium</p>

**3.10 Performance Monitoring**

3.10.1 The Best Start integrated outcomes framework supported by a refreshed performance dashboard, will measure whether outcomes are being achieved and the impact on children and families. New national indicators resulting from the Best Start for Life policy paper will be included once these

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have been published. Partnership key performance indicators will be introduced.

3.10.2 Robust Contract monitoring will continue at regular intervals along with quality assurance visits to ensure quality of provision and practice. A new Best Start Locality Partnership self-evaluation process will be implemented and will contribute to the improvement agenda for Council and Early Help Partnership Board.

## 4. CONSULTATION

4.1 In May 2021 the Council held a consultation with residents to inform the proposal to redesign Children's Centres into a 3 Hubs and 6 Spokes locality model.

4.2 There were significant concerns about accessibility, reduction to services and in particular proposals to cease funding services from Purley Oaks and Shirley Children's Centres.

4.3 As a result of further consideration of the proposals following consultation the Council recommends including Purley Oaks Children's Centre and Shirley Children's Centre as 2 additional Spokes, identifying Purley Oaks in the South locality (see table below):

Locality	Children's Centre Hub	Children's Centre Spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North West
		PIP House	North East
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central East
		Shirley	Central East
		Aerodrome	Central West
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South East
		Byron	South West
		Purley Oaks	South West

4.4 The consultation was primarily online due to the current restrictions and social distancing measures. A web based survey was created on the council's website and paper copies and accompanying information were available through a dedicated phone number.

Information regarding the consultation was shared through

- Ward Councillors
- Children's Centre Leads and Universal Services Coordinators
- The Croydon Council website, Social Media and Your Croydon
- Croydon Best Start Facebook Page
- Children's centre websites, social media pages and posters within the centres

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- Croydon Council intranet and internal bulletins
- Partner agencies
  - Health Visiting, School Nursing, Family Nurse Partnership, Midwifery.
  - Speech and Language teams
  - Croydon Best Start delivery partners
  - CCG and Croydon GP network
  - BME Forum
  - Asian Resource Network
  - CVA
  - Early help and social care teams

4.5 An Equalities Analysis was undertaken and identified that mothers who may have recently given birth or who have young children or with a disability, would be more impacted by the proposals to reduce the number of Children's Centre buildings. Retaining Purley Oaks and Shirley Children's Centres as Spokes in the new proposed service model, will enable greater access to purpose built, child and family friendly buildings to access provision.

4.6 At the mid-point of the consultation, it was agreed to extend the consultation deadline by a week to allow more time for residents to participate.

4.7 A summary of demographics for respondents to the consultation is shown in the tables below:

### Respondents by Gender

Gender	Responses	%age
No information	641	47.0%
Any other gender	2	0.1%
Female (including male-to-female transgender women)	632	46.3%
Male (including female-to-male transgender men)	46	3.4%
Non-binary (for example, androgenous people)	3	0.2%
Prefer not to say	41	3.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Respondents by Age

Age	Responses	%age
Under 18	1	0.1%
18-30	81	5.9%
31-40	469	34.4%
41-50	115	8.4%
51-60	28	2.1%
61-70	11	0.8%
71+	7	0.5%
Prefer not to say	30	2.2%
No information	623	45.6%

## For Publication

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
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### Respondents by Disability

Disability	Responses	%age
No information	601	44.0%
No	636	46.6%
Prefer not to say	43	3.2%
Yes, limited a little	55	4.0%
Yes, limited a lot	30	2.2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Respondents by sexuality

Sexuality	Responses	%age
No information	640	46.9%
Bi-Sexual	22	1.6%
Gay/Lesbian	5	0.4%
Heterosexual/Straight	644	47.2%
Prefer not to say	54	4.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Respondents by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Responses	%age
<b>White</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>39.1%</b>
Any other White background	64	4.7%
White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	450	33.0%
White Irish	20	1.5%
<b>Black</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
Any other Black background	6	0.4%
Black African	20	1.5%
Black Caribbean	20	1.5%
<b>Asian</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Any other Asian background	17	1.2%
Bangladeshi	6	0.4%
Indian	23	1.7%
Pakistani	6	0.4%
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	17	1.2%
White and Asian	11	0.8%
White and Black African	3	0.2%
White and Black Caribbean	25	1.8%
<b>Other</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
Arab	1	0.1%
Chinese	6	0.4%
Other	4	0.3%



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<b>No Information</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>48.8%</b>
<NULL>	618	45.3%
Prefer not to say	48	3.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## 5 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to consult where there is to be a significant change to Children's Centres. The views of residents have been taken into account and a new service model is proposed, retaining both Purley Oaks and Shirley as Children's Centre Spokes.

## 6 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Croydon Best Start fulfils the statutory duty on local authorities to provide early childhood services, with the Best Start services funded from the General fund. The proposed procurement strategy is expected to cost the Council £1.432m per annum and for the remaining 4 months for 2021/22 this will be pro-rata, with a full budget available for the 2 years 2022/24.
- 6.2 The budget for Best Start services has been reduced as part of the Croydon Renewal Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings programme (CFESAV09). A budget of £1,432m has been approved by Council for Contracts for new services.

The following table presents the revenue consequences on the available budget to fund these proposals. There is no Capital spend associated with this paper.

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### 6.3 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) - 3 year forecast	
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Revenue Budget available</b>	1,529	1,529	1,529
Expenditure	1,288		
Income			
<b>Effect of decision from report</b>			
Expenditure	477	1,432	1,432
Income			
<b>Remaining budget</b>	<u>(236)</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>97</u>

#### 6.4 The effect of the decision

The above table presents the financial implications to be considered in line with these proposals which show the remaining budget for this financial year and subsequent years. The service has identified substitute savings to mitigate the financial risk in full from other budget streams for a one-off alternative savings for this financial year.

There could be a further increase in costs for this financial year if we do not commence the new Contracts on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021. This will be due to the existing Contracts that will need to remain in place until 31<sup>st</sup> December (end of Contract term).

#### 6.5 Risks

Due to costs to fund the current contractual commitments and this new commitment this will create a risk to the deliverability of the agreed MTFS savings programme by reducing the 2021/22 budget available to fund a revised delivery model from either December 2021 or January 2022.

This risk only materialises in the 2021/22 financial year if there is a delay to the implementation of the new model and the full year effect of the proposed savings (£660k) will be realised from 2022/23 as that model will be operational prior to the commencement of the next financial year. The quantified risk to the delivery of the current savings is approximately £220k if we do not commence new Contracts on the 1<sup>st</sup> December and £127k if

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we do, based on the estimated monthly operational cost of the proposed delivery model.

A risk assessment for the service is included at paragraph 3.9, above.

### **6.6 Options**

Other options considered are included in section 13, below.

### **6.7 Future savings/efficiencies**

Despite operating in a financially challenging climate, service improvement, efficiency and the delivery of good outcomes for children and their families remain at the heart of the Best Start contracts for services.

Robust contract monitoring will continue, identifying further efficiencies where possible.

If additional savings are required from this budget, this would have such an impact on contract spend and allocation to providers, that this would likely render this procurement unviable. If that was to happen, we would need to develop an alternative model of delivery.

Approved by: Kate Bingham (Interim) Head of Finance - Children, Families and Education)

## **7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 The authority to approve the Procurement Strategy in this report which has a value below £5million has been delegated to the Chair of the Contracts and Commissioning Board, pursuant to Regulation 11.3.1 of the Council's Tenders and Contracts Regulations.

7.2 The Council is taking due regard to the consultation undertaken in redesigning the delivery model for the Croydon Best Start programme and as required by Section 5D of the Childcare Act 2006.

7.3 The Council will consult with the Department of Education regarding the de-designation process with due cognisance of its statutory duty under the Childcare Act and the Sure Start children's centre statutory guidance.

Approved by: Nigel Channer, Head of Commercial and Property Law on behalf of Doutimi Aseh, Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

8.1 This report makes recommendations involving a service provision change which is likely to invoke the effects of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) 2006 Legislation (amended 2014). Where the activities of the new service are "fundamentally not the same", TUPE may

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not apply, as provided for by the 2014 amendments to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) 2006 Legislation.

- 8.2 The application of TUPE would be determined by the incumbent and any new service provider, for which the Council is the client in most cases. However, the Council also employs some of the Children Centre staff directly. On that basis, the Council will work with incumbent and any new service providers to help facilitate the TUPE transfer process, and ensure that due process is followed in relation to Council staff.
- 8.3 Where TUPE applies, the affected staffing group would transfer to the new service provider on their existing terms and conditions of employment. The appropriate TUPE protocols must be followed; particularly the duty to consult with the recognised trade unions and affected staff. HR advice should therefore be sought throughout this process.

Approved by: Debbie Calliste, Head of HR, Children, Families and Education on behalf of the Director of Human Resources

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1 A new Equalities Analysis (currently in draft) has been completed to reflect the feedback from the consultation and ascertain the potential impact on groups that share protected characteristics.
- 9.2 The proposed service redesign will meet the Council's obligations in ensuring equity of access to provision, particularly for those with protected characteristics. The approved Procurement Strategy will ensure families with children under five can access the services and support they need, reduce inequalities and improve their life chances.
- 9.3 Equalities is a standing item and part of the contract management process. Regular monitoring allows for the early identification of any potential adverse impact on groups that share protected characteristics, enabling opportunities to intervene and avoid any unlawful action and improve outcomes.

## **10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 10.1 It is considered that there are no increased or decreased negative environmental sustainability impacts, from the proposals contained in this report.

## **11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

- 11.1 Supporting families through these services contributes to building resilience and community connections, with the intention to avoid people becoming

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involved in crime and disorder. Best Start services and partners work together to support children and families exposed to sexual violence and domestic abuse.

- 11.2 It is considered that there are no increased impacts on children and families in these proposals.

## 12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 12.1 The budget for Best Start Children's Centres has reduced and services will need to be delivered differently to meet the available funding for services.

- 12.2 The proposed 3 Hubs and 8 Spokes model enables statutory services for the children and families of Croydon; 1 in North locality, 1 in Central locality and 1 in South locality, each delivering a full programme of services. Each will also coordinate a reduced programme of activities from other buildings, in partnership with Best Start providers to ensure coverage of the locality.

## 13. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

### 13.1 Other options considered

Consideration was given to other models but later discounted for the following reasons:

- **Option A:** 3 Hubs delivering a full service with 6 Spokes delivering reduced services. This model proposed the ceasing of services at Purley Oaks and Shirley Children's Centres – **Rejected**

**Resident feedback through the consultation on this proposal has been taken into account therefore this proposal has been rejected.**

Accessibility and ease of transport links were key concerns for parents and carers who rely on Children's Centre services and support. The impact on families with young children from this proposal would be compounded further by proposals to close other community resources, i.e., Libraries and Purley Leisure Centre.

- **Option B:** Retain one hub centre delivering a full service with six spokes delivering reduced services – **Rejected**

This option may result in families not having access to local services and support when they need it. Children's centre services work closely with other services in the localities including the local early years settings, local community and voluntary sector partners, early help, health visiting and midwifery services. This model would not be able to achieve this.

## For Publication

Children's centres need to be visible and welcoming in their local area to enable families to take up and engage with services. We know from the consultation on the Croydon Renewal Plan how highly valued children's centre provision is by families with young children and of the concern of losing valuable support and resources. Availability of children's centres would be reduced to a level where families who are facing difficulties may find it difficult to access support, through capacity of the service and the distance from their home.

- **Option C:** Retain three hubs and stop services from six designated Children's Centres – **Rejected**

As with option A, this model would not provide enough access to services to meet the needs of Croydon families. It would result in people having to travel too far from home for services therefore increasing the risk of them not using the services.

- **Option D:** Retain the current model of nine designated children's centres with a full service delivery – **Rejected**

Due to the council's financial position it is not financially possible to continue the current model with the reduced budget.

## 14. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

### 14.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

YES

### 14.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

YES

*The Director of Social Care and Education Law comments that a DPIA has been completed and currently under review with legal. The outcome of the DPIA will be included in the Tender documents.*

Approved by: Louise Edwards, Information Management on behalf of the Director of Social Care and Education Law

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**CONTACT OFFICER:** Sharon Hemley, Early Help Commissioning Manager  
Sharon.hemley@croydon.gov.uk

## APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

- Appendix A – Best Start Children's Centre Consultation documents
- Appendix B – Presentation to the BME Forum

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- Appendix C – Equalities Analysis

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- The Best Start for Life, The Early Years Healthy Development Review Report, 2021
- Best beginnings in the early years: Technical report one, July 2020
- Best beginnings in the early years: A proposal for a new early years guarantee to give all children in England the best start in life, July 2020
- Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, March 2021

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## Children's centres consultation – May 2021

### Introduction

Croydon children's centres are part of Croydon Best Start, Croydon's partnership delivering services for children aged 0-5. The partnership includes families, health visitors, midwives, GPs, early learning practitioners and children's centres working together to ensure babies and children under-five have the best start in life.

The role of children's centres, as set out in the Sure Start Children's Centre statutory guidance is to support;

- child development and school readiness
- parenting aspirations and parenting skills
- child and family health and life chances

The council's financial challenges mean it has to make savings and this means changing the way it delivers some services and reducing others. Services for parents and carers with young children remain a priority and in our recent savings proposals consultation you told us how important the valuable support and resources our children's centres provide is. We are committed to providing the right Croydon Best Start services, in the right places, with the budget available.

Since 2016 the budget for children's centre services has remained at £2,162 million and as part of Croydon's renewal plans and associated savings, <https://news.croydon.gov.uk/croydon-outlines-budget-proposals-for-sustainable-financial-future/>) the council is proposing to reduce the budget to £1,162million, meaning we need to look at delivering services differently.

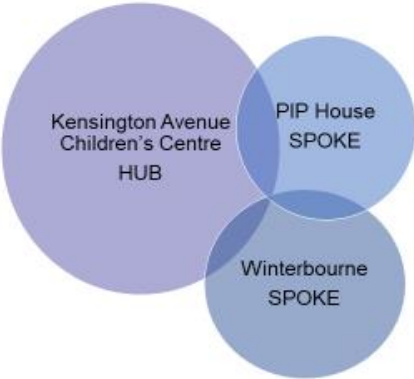
Our proposed new model for the service is set out below. In designing this model other options have been considered (please see 'other options considered' document) and we have carried out an equality impact assessment, which will be reviewed and updated during and after the consultation.

### Proposed new model

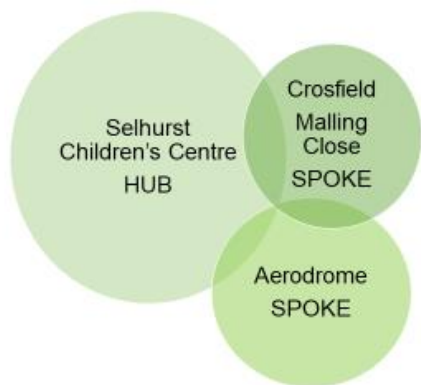
A three hub and six spoke is our preferred model for children's centre provision. It provides a dedicated hub in the north, central and south of the borough with services also available from six spokes, ensuring access to services across the borough. Services will be informed by the consultation findings and will vary so they meet the needs of local families.

Area	Children's centre hub	Children's centre spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North West
		PIP House	North East
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central East
		Aerodrome	Central West
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South East
		Byron	South West

North Locality Children's Centre Hub and Spoke



Central Locality Children's Centre Hub and Spoke



### South Locality Children's Centre Hub and Spoke



#### **The hub and spoke model would mean:**

- Having three children's centre 'hubs', one in each area, north, central and south, each delivering a full programme of services
- The hubs will also will coordinate a reduced programme of activities from two other children's centre buildings (spokes)
- One management team for each locality overseeing the service and employing the children's centre staff
- Closing Shirley Children's Centre (central east) and stopping services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre (central west), but providing outreach services in these areas
- Stopping delivering services from Ecclesbourne and Woodside Service Access Points (these are venues that have provided provide children's centre services on a part-time basis)

## Proposed Children's Centre Hubs and Spokes Map

Proposed Model 3 Children's Centre Hubs and 6 Spokes	Locality	Locality
<b>Kensington Avenue</b> Winterbourne PiP House	<b>North East</b> North West North East	Provider 1
<b>Selhurst</b> Malling Close Aerodrome	<b>Central West</b> Central East Central West	Provider 2
<b>Woodlands</b> New Addington Byron	<b>South East</b> South East South West	Provider 3



A larger version of the map is available in Appendix 2.

### How we designed the hub and spoke model

The new proposed model has been designed using the following data:

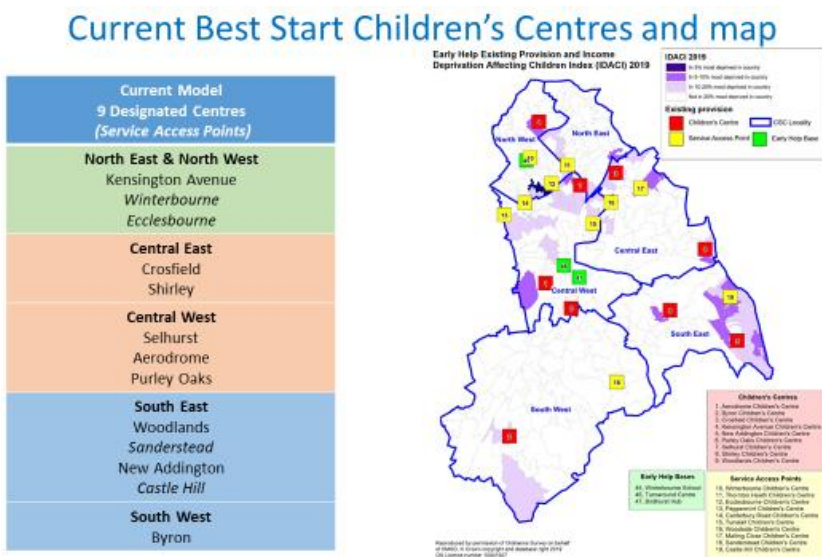
- Borough profile - where do children 0-5 and families that would benefit the most live
- Geographical location
- Ease of access for local families
- Transport links
- Facilities and accessibility within the children's centre buildings to enable continued working in partnership with health colleagues to deliver the Healthy Child Programme

Find out more about this data in the 'how we designed the hub and spoke model' document.

## Current model

Currently Croydon has nine children’s centres each delivering full range of services (see list and map below):

- Stay and play provision (e.g. Babbling Babies, Little Explorers, Now I am Two) Speech and Language Support groups (such as Chatterbox)
- Adult and Family Learning/ employability support
- Health Services (antenatal/ postnatal clinics, Well Baby Clinics, developmental checks with the Health Visitor)
- 1-2-1 family support;
- Parenting programmes and parent support
- Support to families in crisis through advice appointments



A larger version of this map is available in Appendix 1.

Read more about current access to services in the ‘access to services’ document.

### **A Vision for the 1001 Critical Days**

The government has recently published a new document - The Best Start for Life, A Vision for the 1001 Critical Days. This document <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-best-start-for-life-a-vision-for-the-1001-critical-days> is part of the early years healthy development review and outlines six areas for action to improve health outcomes of all babies in England:

- Seamless support for families
- A welcoming hub for families
- The information families need when they need it
- An empowered Start of Life workforce
- Continually improving the Start of Life offer
- Leadership for change

The proposals aim to ensure that centres are available support the aims of the Best Start for Life vision, including enabling services to be co-located wherever possible making it easier for young families to use services and get advice.

### **Tell us what you think**

We want to hear your views on our proposal for children’s centres. We’re keen to understand whether the proposed spoke sites are the right locations, and ideas you may have for how we can provide services locally. Final proposals will inform the council cabinet decision in the summer 2021 prior to tendering for new contracts, the consultation report will inform service development and delivery.

### **How to have your say**

- Complete the online survey before midnight, 13 June 2021
- Request a paper copy of the survey be sent to you by calling 020 8760 5453, and return it by 13 June 2021
- Request the survey and consultation information in a different format or language by calling 020 8760 5453



- Speak to staff at your local children's centre

If you would like to talk to somebody about taking part, please contact us via the Croydon Best Start Facebook page or email Croydon Best Start [croydonbeststart@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:croydonbeststart@croydon.gov.uk) and we will respond to you.

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## Children’s Centre Consultation Report July 2021

### Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
The Current Model.....	4
The Proposed Model .....	5
Considerations arising from the consultation.....	9
Future Service Delivery.....	10
Legislative Context .....	12
Croydon Provision.....	13
Drivers for change.....	14
Our proposals .....	15
Factors considered .....	17
Alternative options .....	18
Consultation objectives .....	18
Who we consulted.....	19
How we consulted.....	19
When we consulted .....	20
Responses to the consultation.....	20
Summary of responses .....	21
Who responded to the survey?.....	21
Proposal to Stop Services at Purley Oaks Children’s Centre .....	25
Proposal to close Shirley children’s centre .....	26
Themes arising from the consultation responses .....	28
Summary of demographics.....	29

## Executive Summary

Croydon Best Start Children's Centres deliver child development and school readiness services working alongside partners as part of the Best Start programme for children under 5yrs.

### Children's Centre Core Purpose

The core purpose focuses on three areas of support:

- Parenting skills and aspirations
- Child development and school readiness
- Child and family health and life chances



Services provided through centres include child development and school readiness activities such as

- Baby massage
- Stay and play early learning sessions
- Speech and Language Chatterbox groups
- 1 to 1 family support

To enable Best Start services to support children and families more consistently across the borough to engage with and support our most vulnerable families, the council has been considering how best to deliver services so young families most in need get the right help wherever they chose to access services in the borough. This includes developing partnership working to ensure a thriving Best Start offer across the borough.

Although the budget for children's centre services has decreased, the delivery model must ensure that we have children's centre services that work together with Best Start and Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) partners to welcome families where ever they choose to access services, building relationships that support child development, positive and resilient parenting and good health outcomes for very young children.

The council has consulted on the model proposed - to move to a three hub and six spoke delivery model with one hub and two spokes within each locality, North, Central and South.

Proposed Model 3 Children's Centre Hubs and 6 Spokes	Locality	Locality
<b>Kensington Avenue</b> Winterbourne PiP House	<b>North East</b> North West North East	Provider 1
<b>Selhurst</b> Malling Close Aerodrome	<b>Central West</b> Central East Central West	Provider 2
<b>Woodlands</b> New Addington Byron	<b>South East</b> South East South West	Provider 3

The proposed model included stopping services running from Purley Oaks children's centre and closing Shirley children's centre. A spoke in North East Croydon, the PIP House (located at All Saints Primary School) Upper Norwood, was proposed in the North East of the borough. This is a significant change in the way services are delivered currently, therefore the Council is required to undertake a public consultation.

The public consultation began on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and was due to close on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021, however it was extended by a further week, as a response to feedback from the community, and closed on 20<sup>th</sup> June. The responses were also reviewed at the mid-point to ensure the consultation was reaching all families who would like to respond and informed the communication strategy for the remainder of the consultation.

Details of the consultation were shared with;

- Ward Councillors
- Children's Centre Leads and Universal Services Coordinators
- The Croydon Council website, Social Media and Your Croydon
- Croydon Best Start Facebook Page
- Children's centre websites, social media pages and posters within the centres
- Croydon Council intranet and internal bulletins
- Partner agencies
  - Health Visiting, School Nursing, Family Nurse Partnership, Midwifery.
  - Speech and Language teams
  - Croydon Best Start delivery partners
  - CCG and Croydon GP network

- BME Forum
- Asian Resource Network
- CVA
- Early help and social care teams

The consultation was primarily online due to the restrictions and social distancing measures in place. A web based survey has been created on the council's website, paper copies and accompanying information are available should they be preferred through a dedicated phone number. The Croydon Best Start email address [croydonbeststart@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:croydonbeststart@croydon.gov.uk) was provided should residents wish to contact us about the consultation.

1365 responses were received via the Get Involved engagement platform from residents, practitioners and other stakeholders. Emails from parents giving personal accounts and experience of children's centre services were received, these are greatly appreciated and have informed this report throughout. Additional responses received and considered as part of the consultation include;

- Year 5 Children, Purley Oaks Primary School
- Sarah Jones MP
- Councillor Redfern
- Current providers
- CVA
- BME Forum

The consultation will inform the Council Cabinet decision in relation to:

- a) the final delivery model and,
- b) inform future delivery of services, with the information will be available as part of the procurement process.

### The Current Model

There are 9 designated Children's Centres and 11 Service Access Points where either Children's Centre services are delivered, or from where 2 year old (2YO) funded places are offered to families:

Current Children's Centre Service model with 9 Designated Children's Centres			
Children's Centre	Service Access point (Children's Centre Delivery)	Service Access point (2YO Funded Provision)	Service Access point (Health Delivery: Midwifery and Health Visiting)
<b>North Locality</b>			
Kensington Avenue	Ecclesbourne Winterbourne Thornton Heath	Norbury Manor Thornton Heath	Winterbourne
<b>Central Locality</b>			
Crosfield Shirley Selhurst Aerodrome Purley Oaks	Malling Close Woodside Canterbury Road Peppermint	Tunstall Canterbury Road Peppermint	Selhurst Aerodrome
<b>South Locality</b>			
New Addington Woodlands Byron	Castle Hill Sanderstead	n/a	Castle Hill Byron

## The Proposed Model

The proposed hub and spoke model is outlined in the table below

Area	Children's centre hub	Children's centre spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North West
		PIP House	North East
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central East
		Aerodrome	Central West
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South East
		Byron	South West

The proposal identifies

- stopping funding children's centre services at Purley Oaks children's centre which falls in the central locality, the centre however serves families living in the South of the borough.
- closure of Shirley Children's centre located in the central locality
- the proposal in the North would be to add the PIP House which will serve families in the North East of the borough.

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree that the proposed new model for children’s centres will provide the right services, in the right places

Q11 - View on our Proposals	Responses	%age
Strongly agree	38	2.8%
Agree	39	2.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	81	5.9%
Disagree	211	15.5%
Strongly disagree	514	37.7%
Not sure	53	3.9%
<NULL>	429	31.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

1365 responses to the survey were received, of the respondents that completed this question 983 (72%) were current or past users of children’s centre services, with 74 (5.4%) respondents planning to use children’s centres in the future

Central Area	275	24.7%
North Area	50	4.5%
South Area	258	23.2%

Of the responses received 467 (34.2%) were from users or past users of Purley Oaks children’s centre and a further 150 (11%) from Shirley Children’s centre users, 45.2% of the total responses to the survey.

Respondents identified the range of support that has been provided and parents have provided very personal experiences, demonstrating the importance of access to a centre and the expertise available across the children’s centre offer. Email accounts have also been considered. Responses represented families in all localities, North, Central and South.

#### *Local support for parents in Central*

*“... Absolutely invaluable, building connections with other parents and experience for the children. Just somewhere to be where your child can play and be stimulated that's not home”*

*“...For my first child I was extremely isolated and not enjoying motherhood at all. The children's centres enabled me to meet other parents and make lifelong friends. ...The drop in sessions casual structure and supportive staff were literally my lifeline. ....Without this interaction being available to me and the network of support it enabled me to build I probably would have got very depressed.”*

6



Local support for new mothers in the south,

*“... I look forward to going each week, taking any worries with me and knowing I can share them while being helped to bond with my baby. And on the days when getting out the house feels hard, knowing the location is just a walk away makes all the difference.”*

Support and advice in relation to child development and the opportunity to develop a network in the south,

*“I have used the centre for rhyme time, weigh ins, stay and plays and baby massage for both of my children. It was a complete god send when I felt very alone and very isolated I had somewhere to go just to get out the house and have a natter to someone that's in the same boat as me.”*

### Other changes to community resources

Respondents that use Purley Oaks have identified that the proposal is one of a number of changes that directly affect the community. Respondents that use Shirley children's centre have also identified that library services are under consultation.

The Purley leisure centre has been identified for closure and the recent libraries consultation identified Sanderstead, and Shirley libraries for possible closure, this has since been changed and there is a further consultation regarding the future of libraries. The cumulative impact of the proposed local changes has left respondents feeling that the South of the borough is disproportionately impacted, compared to the North.

If the Purley Oaks centre was to stop delivering children's centre services, the nearest centres would be the proposed spokes Aerodrome (1.4 miles) Woodlands hub (3.8 miles), or Byron spoke (4 miles).

Respondents have raised concern about the proposed closure of Shirley children's centre as the centre is located on the Shrublands estate and is a resource for families who require a range of support.

Travelling distance and time is a significant concern, Woodlands, proposed hub (3 miles) is a 10 minute drive or requires catching two buses, Malling Close, proposed spoke (2.7 miles) and the proposed Selhurst hub (4 miles) each journey requiring two buses.

*“I use Shirley children's centre its closure would be heart breaking, the other centres are harder to get to and I didn't enjoy the sessions I attended at other centres. When I was on mat leave I would be at Shirley 3+ times a week it really got me through the early months of being a new mum”*

*“Shirley children’s centre serves quite an isolated area with pockets of real deprivation. This can be seen through use of the local food bank and also free school meal eligibility in the local school. If the children’s centre is closed those families may not have money to travel to the other areas, they may need support as a drop in case and so be unable to get support quickly. The further away the other children’s centres are and the more families have to travel the less they will use them. Instead of the early intervention offered by children’s centres, more families will be in crisis and need social care intervention”*  
Practitioner

*“I don’t drive and closing the centre in Shirley will be hard for me to go to others. It was silly when you took weighting clinic from there, think of all the people that live up here it’s not going to work”*

*“I have started using the Centre when I was pregnant to see the midwife and then following the birth of my children, the health visitors. The fact that it is local to me, made my life so much easier, as travelling to the second closest one, which would be the New Addington one, with two very young children would be time-consuming and logistically difficult. Not to mention the fact that it would cost me money as I don’t drive and would have to use public transport.”*

Respondents also identified their concern that services will be moved away from a purpose built and safe centre and delivered in less suitable community spaces, health and safety issues are of concern, safe environments such as locked gates and doors and child safe and friendly environment is important, especially for those living in small accommodation with limited access to safe outside spaces.

Respondents that currently use proposed hub centres and spokes have identified they are able to access services but there is concern that there will be a strain on services due to the reduced capacity. Due to the current restrictions and sessions having to be booked, they are having difficulties accessing activities and anticipate it will be more difficult to access services and those that need them most won’t access support at all.

*“As a parent that used services with my sons, I would be happy with the arrangement as it will still support the local communities and manage the expectation of parents.”*

*“I accept that savings need to be made”*

*“I think this is the best in the circumstances but with so few centres I expect there won’t be enough services to meet the need and parents who are further away from a centre will be less likely to access the services, especially if they have to use public transport.”*

8

*“I understand cuts have to be made but I worry that reducing the amount of children’s centres would lower the amount of people who get access to their services. I also liked that the fact that it provided me with flexibility. For instance, if the schedule at Kensington didn’t work for me on a particular day then I would opt to go to Ecclesbourne instead.”*

Accessibility to services is a great concern for respondents. The need to travel with young children or a young baby is challenging, if one of you is feeling unwell or low it can be impossible. As well as the buildings being accessible, the journey, which could involve two buses and challenging walking routes also are a cause for concern.

Respondents have identified there is likely to be an increase in car use, they will drive whereas currently they walk which is healthier for families and for the environment raised particularly in relation to Croydon’s commitment to becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2030

The cost of public transport will mean that families are unlikely or unable to seek support from centres when it is needed.

Respondents have identified that the proposal doesn’t identify a hub or spoke in central Croydon which would enable easier travel.

### Considerations arising from the consultation

- Respondents would like current centres to remain as a hub or spoke retaining services in current localities even on a part time basis.
- Parents and carers want to be able to use services that are local, travel to centres further away from home presents barriers including timing, cost and ability to travel with babies and very young children.
- Parents and Carers value the local support services available to them, the loss of more local services may mean that families in need will not have *“immediate access to local services that can provide them with parenting skills, give children an exciting environment to develop their curiosity and skills and prepare them to school.”*(CVA)
- Respondents in the South of the borough feel the proposal does not provide an equitable service, changes to other community resources should be taken into account such as libraries and leisure centres. Families should be able to travel easily to benefit from services
- The proposed model provides opportunities for children’s centre providers to develop partnership working with community and voluntary sector partners, by developing sustainable partnerships across the borough it is possible to

develop a vibrant and thriving offer for families, sharing resources and venues as well as developing outreach;

- the proposed model is ...*"an opportunity for the 3 Children Centre hubs you are proposing to work more closely with the VCS, by making sure partnership work they initiate is less dispersive than before. They can do this, for example, by joining our Building Community Partnership meetings"*
- Partnership working, there are opportunities to further develop working in partnership with libraries. As the new libraries model develops there are opportunities for jointly delivered services and use of library space to meet with families. Croydon is preparing for to be the London Borough of Culture in 2023, and will be engaging with young families across the borough.
- The service offer should include outreach services and work in partnership with midwifery and health visiting services to enable families to access health services more easily, when they need them
- Children's centre hub and spokes develop further partnership working with the Family Solutions locality teams, early years SEND support such as portage to ensure families can access advice and support in a timely way should they require specialist advice.
- Ensure a blended model of delivery, with virtual or online activities alongside the in person programme. This approach has the benefit of being accessible wherever a family lives within the borough.
- Respondents identified they would be willing to pay a charge for some services and also identified hiring spaces to the community. These options need further exploration.

## Future Service Delivery

Croydon's children's centres are part of the Croydon Best Start Programme delivering the core purpose through the provision of a range of activities focusing on Child development and school readiness activities

- Baby massage
- Stay and play early learning sessions
- Speech and Language Chatterbox groups
- 1 to 1 family support

Respondents were asked:

*Question 10; which of the following activities has supported your child's development or has had the greatest impact on helping your child get ready for nursery or reception? (Respondents were able to select more than one option)*

10

Baby massage	485	35.5%
Babbling Babies/baby groups	542	39.7%
Stay & Play sessions	783	57.4%
Now I'm Two/Now I'm Three	236	17.3%
Bookstart	384	28.1%
Chatterbox	317	23.2%
Cooking Cubs	119	8.7%
Not applicable	80	5.9%
Other	122	8.9%

Children's Centre activities which have had the greatest impact on child development and school readiness are ranked below in order of responses:

Rank	Activity		
1	Stay & Play sessions	783	57.4%
2	Babbling Babies/baby groups	542	39.7%
3	Baby massage	485	35.5%
4	Bookstart	384	28.1%
5	Chatterbox	317	23.2%
6	Now I'm Two/Now I'm Three	236	17.3%
	Other	122	8.9%
7	Cooking Cubs	119	8.7%
	Not applicable	80	5.9%

The responses given suggest the children centre service delivery has a positive impact on helping children get ready for nursery or Reception. Stay & Play sessions are popular, and the ranking of activities suggest the current programme offers a progressive journey for parents and their children as they reach each developmental milestone.

#### Respondents

- value children's centre services and the impact they have for children's development and also the support for young families. New parents have identified the importance of services when having a baby, developmentally appropriate groups, networking and meeting other parents are important to respondents.
- identified the isolation they have experienced during the pandemic and the importance of services to them as they and their children have missed opportunities to use centres and receive support.
- The restrictions due to social distancing guidelines in place currently mean it is challenging for families to access services and there is concern that more

vulnerable families will not be able to access services and receive support for their child and family as there will be reduced programmes at proposed spoke centres.

- Accessing children's centre services at the proposed children's centre hubs and spokes is a significant concern for respondents, the proposed stopping of services at Purley oaks children's centre will mean travel to centres further away, with the need for travel on public transport or increased use of cars with associated costs.
- The proposed changes impact on family life particularly for families in the south of the borough and Shirley, longer journeys to centres restricts the ability to attend due to dropping and picking up siblings, travelling with a young baby or paying for travel on public transport.

## Legislative Context

Legislation in relation to Children's Centre services is contained in The Childcare Act 2006, and underpinned by Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance, which was updated in 2013: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sure-start-childrens-centres>

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.

The Statutory Guidance states that 'children's centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as about providing premises in particular geographical areas. A children's centre should make available universal and targeted early childhood services either by providing the services at the centre itself or by providing advice and assistance to parents (mothers and fathers) and prospective parents in accessing services provided elsewhere.'

The guidance defines the core purpose as being to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- child development and school readiness;
- parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and,
- child and family health and life chances.

## Croydon Provision

Croydon fulfils its duties to provide early childhood services under the Childcare Act and in line with the Statutory Guidance through 9 designated Children's Centres, 8 of the centres are commissioned through schools both maintained and academy trusts. Most of these schools are commissioned for the delivery of a single children's centre, and their access points. Crosfield Nursery School currently is commissioned to deliver services in Selhurst and Crosfield children's centres, Kensington Avenue is commissioned to deliver services through Kensington Avenue, Winterbourne and Ecclesbourne and New Addington is commissioned to deliver services in Castle Hill.

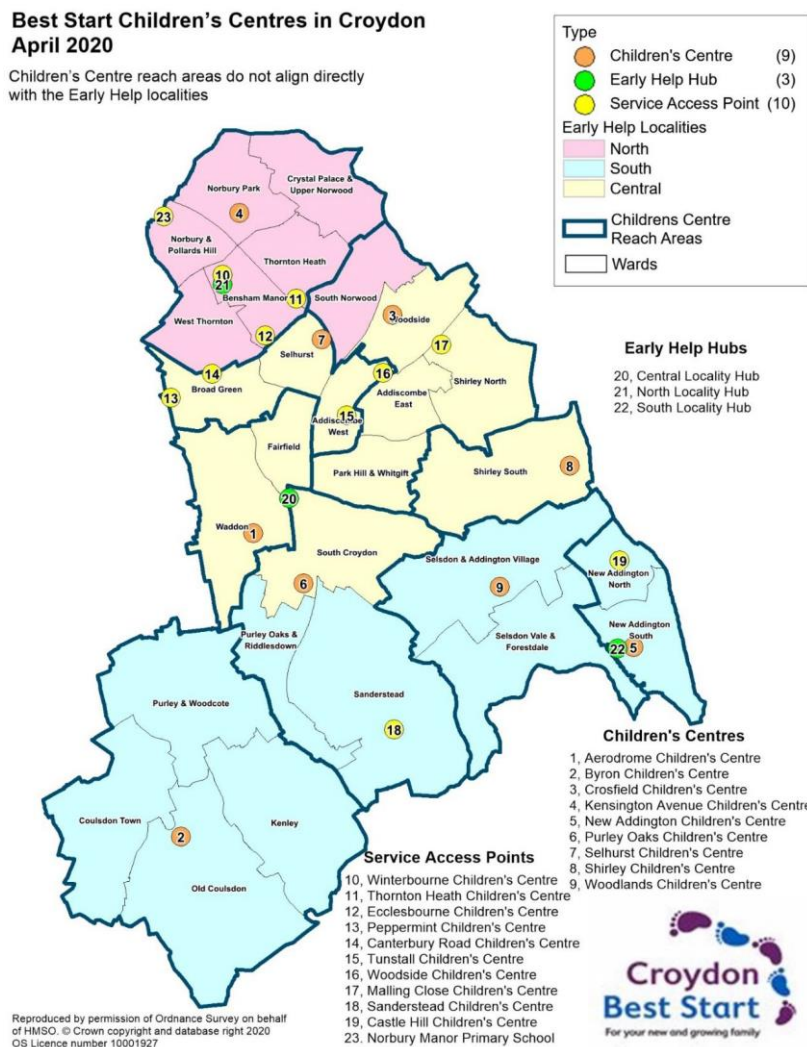
Croydon's children's centres are part of the Croydon Best Start Programme delivering the core purpose through the provision of a range of activities including:

- Child development and school readiness activities
  - Baby massage
  - Stay and play early learning sessions
  - Speech and Language Chatterbox groups
  - 1 to 1 family support
- Parent Infant Attachment
- Parenting Aspirations and Parenting Skills services
  - Community capacity building
  - Peer to Peer groups
  - Peer to Peer home visiting
  - Peer led parenting programmes
  - Employability support

- Group support for parents with children who have social communications difficulties

In addition to hosting the delivery of commissioned services, Children's Centres host the delivery of other services in a partnership approach with midwifery, health visiting services, parenting practitioners and early learning providers; fulfilling the core service offer as set out in the Sure Start Children's Centre statutory guidance for early childhood services. Key partners delivering this work include health services, voluntary community sector and Council services.

Croydon Best Start offers a range of services to support children's health and development, and school readiness outcomes, along a pathway of early learning into early education and Reception.



Drivers for change





To enable Best Start services to support children and families more consistently across the borough and make sure we work in partnership to engage with and support our most vulnerable families, the council has been considering how best to deliver services so young families most in need get the right help wherever they chose to access services in the borough. All families with children under 5 in Croydon should be able to access welcoming and supportive services, ensuring that children and families benefit from services that support their health and development.

Although the budget for children's centre services has decreased, the delivery model must ensure that we have children's centre services that work effectively together and with Best Start and Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) partners to welcome families where ever services are, building relationships that support child development, positive and resilient parenting and good health outcomes for very young children.

The council's financial challenges mean it has to make savings and this means changing the way it delivers some services and reducing others. The Croydon Renewal Plan has been developed, the proposed changes are aligned to the council's new priorities and ways of working in which we will:

- Live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents
- Focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough
- Follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic justice
- Focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford.

Services for parents and carers with young children remain a priority and in our recent savings proposals consultation you told us how important the valuable support and resources our children's centres provide is. We are committed to providing the right Croydon Best Start services, in the right places, with the budget available.

Since 2016 the budget for children's centre services has remained at £2,162 million and as part of Croydon's renewal plans and associated savings, the council is proposing to reduce the budget to £1,162million, meaning we need to look at delivering services differently.

### [Our proposals](#)

We have consulted on whether respondents agreed with a three hub and six spoke model which is our preferred model for children's centre provision. It provides a dedicated hub in the north, central and south of the borough with services also

available from six spokes, ensuring access to services across the borough. Services will be informed by the consultation findings and will vary so they meet the needs of local families.

The consultation included capturing respondents' views on the proposal to stop delivering children's centre services from Purley Oaks children's centre and to close Shirley children's centre as part of the delivery model. Space was available for respondents to be able to comment on the proposals.

The hub and spoke model would mean:

- Having three children's centre 'hubs', one in each area, north, central and south, each delivering a full programme of services
- The hubs will also will coordinate a reduced programme of activities from two other children's centre buildings (spokes)
- One management team for each locality overseeing the service and employing the children's centre staff
- Closing Shirley Children's Centre (central east) and stopping services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre (central west), but providing outreach services in these areas
- Stopping delivering services from Ecclesbourne and Woodside Service Access Points (these are venues that have provided provide children's centre services on a part-time basis)

**Proposed Children's Centre Hubs and Spokes**



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- Type**
- Children's Centre Hub
  - Children's Centre Spoke
- Children's Centre Hubs**
- 1, Kensington Avenue Children's Centre Hub
  - 2, Selhurst Children's Centre Hub
  - 3, Woodlands Children's Centre Hub
- Children's Centre Spokes**
- 4, Aerodrome Children's Centre Spoke
  - 5, Byron Children's Centre Spoke
  - 6, New Addington Children's Centre Spoke
  - 7, Winterbourne Children's Centre Spoke
  - 8, Crosfield Children's Centre Spoke
  - 9, PIP House Spoke

Area	Children's centre hub	Children's centre spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North West
		PIP House	North East
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central East
		Aerodrome	Central West
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South East
		Byron	South West

**Factors considered**

In developing our proposals we considered a number of factors about which centres should be proposed to become hub centres within each locality and which centres



proposed to be spoke centres as well as those where funding for children's centre services would stop. These factors included:

- Data about where in the borough young children aged 0-4 and their families live, and particularly where the most disadvantaged children and families live.
- Data about how young children and their families currently use children's centres,
- The distance between our children's centres, and how we could make sure that families continue to be able to use some services within a reasonable distance of their home, at a hub, spoke or outreach services.
- The ability of children's centre buildings to accommodate a full range of children's centre services. Larger buildings are better able than the smaller ones to offer a full range of services along with the ability to host health services.

### Alternative options

A: retain one hub centre delivering a full service with six spokes delivering reduced services

This option may result in families not having access to local services and support when they need it. Children's centre services work closely with other services in the localities including the local early years settings, local community and voluntary sector partners, early help, health visiting and midwifery services. This model would not be able to achieve this. Children's centres need to be visible and welcoming in their local area to enable families to take up and engage with services. We know from the consultation on the Croydon Renewal Plan how highly valued children's centres provision is by families with young children and of the concern of losing valuable support and resources. Availability of children's centres would be reduced to a level where families who are facing difficulties may find it difficult to access support, through capacity of the service and the distance from their home.

b) Other option considered B: retain three hubs and stop services from six designated children's centres

As with option A, this model would not provide the enough access to services to meet the need of Croydon families. It would result in people having to travel too far from home for services therefore increasing the risk of them not using the services.

c) Retain the current model of nine designated children's centres with a full service delivery

Due to the council's financial position it is not financially possible to continue the current model with the reduced budget.

### Consultation objectives

We consulted on our proposals to gather the views of children's centre users, Croydon residents, children's centre staff and providers, of local partners and stakeholders.

This is in line with the Sure Start Children's Centre Statutory Guidance, which places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to consult prior to:

- opening a new children's centre;
- making a significant change to the range and nature of services provided through a children's centre and / or how they are delivered, including significant changes to services provided through linked sites; and,
- closing a children's centre; or reducing the services provided to such an extent that it no longer meets the statutory definition of a Sure Start children's centre.
- The guidance also requires that Local Authorities give particular attention to how ensuring disadvantaged families and minority groups participate in the consultation process.

Throughout the consultation our objectives were to:

- Ensure that parents to be and parents of young children, and those who work to support them were aware of our proposals and the reasons why we were proposing to make changes.
- Ensure that all parties had time and opportunities to comment on and respond to our proposals
- To help us to understand whether the proposal in response to the reduction to the children's centre budget is the best option available to us or whether there is another way of delivering the service within the funding available.
- To gather views on how we can make the proposed new model or suggested alternative models as effective as we can in meeting the needs of young children and their families

### Who we consulted

We consulted past and present children's centre users, children's centre staff and providers, voluntary sector and community partners, Best Start partners, Health Visiting and Midwifery teams, allied services that support young families such as early help and children's social care, perinatal mental health team and locality partners.

### How we consulted

Due to the current restrictions in place the consultation was predominately through the online survey on the council's engagement platform Get Involved.

Proposals were outlined online with a short link to the site ([ccconsultation.gov.uk](http://ccconsultation.gov.uk)) and hard copy information which was available for children’s centres to be able to provide copies of the information, including the survey.

Posters were available in each children’s centre encouraging parents and centre users to provide their views. Due to restrictions, footfall in centres is currently restricted, centres shared the information regarding the consultation on their websites, and social media pages as well as with families in the centres to ensure centre users were aware.

A dedicated telephone number was available to request hard copies of the information and the survey, including access to translated information. Respondents were also able to email Croydon Best Start [croydonbeststart@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:croydonbeststart@croydon.gov.uk) should they wish to contact regarding the consultation or proposals.

The Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning, and the Interim Director for Education outlined proposals and heard the views of residents at an engagement session hosted by the BME forum on 8 June 2021 and also hosted a session with current children’s centre leads on 17 June 2021.

A social media campaign was in place throughout the consultation alongside information in council publications

#### When we consulted

The children’s centre consultation was open from Tuesday 11 May 2021 to Sunday 20 June 2021 inclusive (extended from the original closing date of 13 June 2021 by the Lead Member in response to resident feedback)

#### Responses to the consultation

1365 people completed the survey. 6 respondents completed a paper copy and 1359 responses were online responses.

529 (47.6%) provided their postcode, the localities they live in is outlined in the table below

Central Area	275	24.7%
North Area	50	4.5%
South Area	258	23.2%

For those that did not provide a postcode, we have identified which centre they use

Aerodrome User (No Postcode)	22	2.0%
Byron User (No Postcode)	42	3.8%
Crosfield User (No Postcode)	23	2.1%
Kensington Ave User (No Postcode)	27	2.4%

New Addington User (No Postcode)	34	3.1%
Not Sure User (No Postcode)	44	4.0%
Purley Oaks User (No Postcode)	211	19.0%
Selhurst User (No Postcode)	33	3.0%
Shirley User (No Postcode)	74	6.7%
Woodlands User (No Postcode)	19	1.7%

## Summary of responses

In response to the question *Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that our proposed new model for children's centres will provide the right services, in the right places.* Of the 936 responses received for this question;

- 77 (5.7%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed new model.
- 725 (53.2%) of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposed new model
- 

Q11 - View on our Proposals	Responses	%age
Strongly agree	38	2.8%
Agree	39	2.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	81	5.9%
Disagree	211	15.5%
Strongly disagree	514	37.7%
Not sure	53	3.9%
No Information	429	31.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Who responded to the survey?

Of the respondents that completed this question 983 (72%) were current or past users of children's centre services, with 74 (5.4%) respondents planning to use children's centres in the future. 40 (2.9%) practitioners working with families as part of the Best Start programme responded, 81 (5.9%) other practitioners responded. A further 80 (5.9%) answered other, this covers a range including grandparents, childminders and school based staff. 33 (2.4%) preferred not to say.

Q2 - Who are you?	Responses	%age
No information	74	5.4%
A future user of children's centres	74	5.4%
Best Start practitioner	40	2.9%

Other	80	5.9%
Other practitioner	81	5.9%
Parent/carer currently using children's centre services	530	38.8%
Parent/carer who has used children's centre services in the past	453	33.2%
Prefer not to say	33	2.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents were asked;

*Question 5; which is your local Croydon children's centre?*

The lowest number of respondents were those who use Kensington Avenue with 43 (3.2%) respondents, during this year the majority of services in the North of the borough have been provided at Winterbourne children's centre, further engagement with families in the North of the borough will be needed to identify where services should be delivered. It is possible that of the 230 respondents who didn't answer this question are users service access points that are not listed here.

Purley Oaks service users represent 34.2% of the responses to this question with 467 responses.

Q5 - which is your local Croydon children's centre	Responses	%age
Aerodrome	51	3.7%
Byron	97	7.1%
Crosfield	53	3.9%
Kensington Avenue	43	3.2%
New Addington	70	5.1%
Not sure	64	4.7%
Purley Oaks	467	34.2%
Selhurst	79	5.8%
Shirley	150	11.0%
Woodlands	61	4.5%
No Information	230	16.8%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Question; 6 Prior to 23 March 2020, when services were affected due to national lockdown, which children's centre(s) did you access? (multiple centres could be selected)*

Which children's centre(s) did you access?	Total Responses	%age
Aerodrome	136	10.0%
Byron	157	11.5%

22



Crosfield	85	6.2%
Kensington Avenue	52	3.8%
New Addington	104	7.6%
Purley Oaks	489	35.8%
Selhurst	122	8.9%
Shirley	164	12.0%
Woodlands	187	13.7%
Other e.g. out of borough	82	6.0%
Not sure	99	7.3%



*Question 8; how do you usually travel to the children's centre you use the most?*

1,335 respondents completed this question. 686 (50.3%) respondents currently walk to the children's centre, with 428 (31.4%) using their car. 215 (15.8%) currently use public transport and 6 (0.4%) cycle

How do you usually travel to the children's centre	Total Responses	%age
Walk	686	50.3%
Car	428	31.4%
Public Transport	215	15.8%
Cycle	6	0.4%

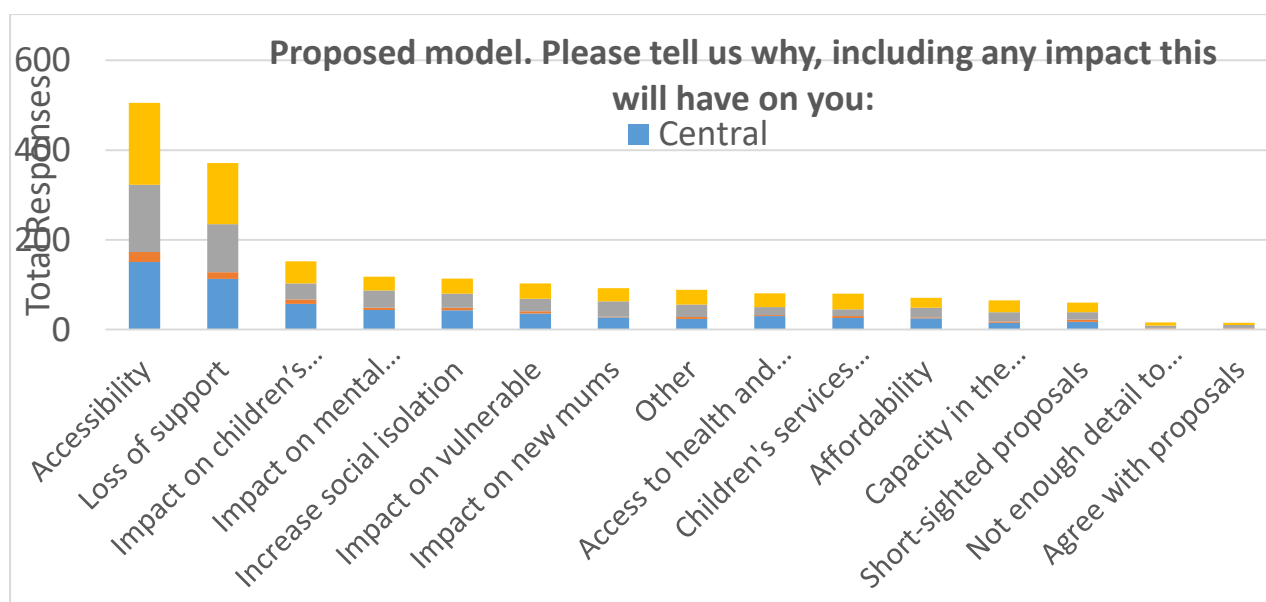
*Question 10; which of the following activities has supported your child's development or has had the greatest impact on helping your child get ready for nursery or reception? (Respondents were able to select more than one option)*

Baby massage	485	35.5%
Babbling Babies/baby groups	542	39.7%
Stay & Play sessions	783	57.4%
Now I'm Two/Now I'm Three	236	17.3%
Bookstart	384	28.1%
Chatterbox	317	23.2%
Cooking Cubs	119	8.7%
Not applicable	80	5.9%
Other	122	8.9%

Question 13; Thinking about the proposed spokes in your area, how easy or difficult is it for you to access them?

Q13 - Hubs and spokes; how easy to access	Responses	%age
Very easy	75	5.5%
Fairly easy	144	10.5%
Neither easy nor difficult	111	8.1%
Fairly difficult	228	16.7%
Very difficult	320	23.4%
Not sure	37	2.7%
No information	450	33.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents were asked to explain why you selected your response to the previous question, including other locations you would suggest:



Question 15; from the proposed model below, which spoke site are you most likely to use?

Q15 - Which Spoke?	Responses	%age
No information	508	37.2%
Don't know	81	5.9%
Kensington Avenue - PIP House	7	0.5%
Kensington Avenue - Winterbourne	29	2.1%
None of these	288	21.1%
Selhurst - Aerodrome	91	6.7%
Selhurst - Malling Close	103	7.5%
Woodlands - Byron	144	10.5%
Woodlands - New Addington	114	8.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

508 (37.2%) respondents didn't provide an answer to this question, 81 (5.9%) responded that they don't know which spoke site they would use and 288 (21.1%) responded that they would not use any of the proposed spoke sites. 491 (35.8%) respondents were able to identify a spoke centre which they would use.

### Proposal to Stop Services at Purley Oaks Children's Centre

Question 21, respondents were asked; will stopping children's centre services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre directly affect you and your family?

Will stopping children's centre services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre directly affect you and your family?	Responses	%age
No information	528	38.7%
No	343	25.1%
Not sure	86	6.3%
Yes	408	29.9%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents were then asked to explain their answer. Responses were reviewed and themed to identify the impact the proposal will have for users of Purley Oaks Children's centre. Respondents identified multiple themes, these are outlined in the table below;

Theme	Central	North	South	No Postcode or out of Borough	All responses
Accessibility	51	3	79	55	188
Loss of support	60		69	41	170
Impact on children's development	23		26	14	63
Access to health and development advice and support	14		17	12	43
Impact on mental health & wellbeing	15	1	17	9	42
Local relationships	13		11	13	37
Increase social isolation	10		16	8	34
Impact on new mums	11		13	5	29
Impact on vulnerable	12	1	5	7	25
Other	6		8	10	24
Count of Loss of facilities	6		4	9	19
Affordability	3		6	3	12
Children's services should be a priority			6	5	11
Practitioner impact	5	1	1	1	8
Capacity in the workforce	2	1	3	1	7
Short-sighted proposals			3	3	6
Loss of free support	1		3	1	5
Loss of local asset	1		2	2	5
Not enough detail to comment	1		2		3

Accessibility was mentioned within comments the most (188 responses) with loss of support also mentioned in 170 responses.

*“Access is a key issue, I would not be able to travel far. A local support system is one of the main benefits.”*

*A local centre in walking distance was vital to me. Purley oaks is so accessible and a variety of sessions from babies to toddlers it helped me get out the house after my first born and the staff have me confidence to do more out and about with my tiny babies. If I had to drive I wouldn't have used it so much.*

### Proposal to close Shirley children's centre

Question 23, respondents were asked; will the closure of Shirley Children's Centre directly affect you and your family?

Will the closure of Shirley Children's Centre directly affect you and your family?	Responses	%age

26

No information	543	39.8%
No	542	39.7%
Not sure	98	7.2%
Yes	182	13.3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents were then asked to explain their answer and responses were themed:

Theme	Central	North	South	No Postcode or out of Borough	All responses
Accessibility	41	1	6	22	70
Loss of support	29	3	9	28	69
Other	7	1	3	9	20
Access to health and development advice and support	11		1	5	17
Loss of local asset	8		3	6	17
Local relationships	7		2	7	16
Impact on children's development	8		2	4	14
Loss of facilities	8		4	2	14
Impact on vulnerable	6	1	2	4	13
Impact on mental health & wellbeing	7	1	1	3	12
Increase social isolation	5	1	1	2	9
Loss of free support	4		1	4	9
Impact on new mums	3		1	4	8
Affordability	4			3	7
Practitioner impact	3			3	6
Children's services should be a priority	1		3		4
Capacity in the workforce	1		1	1	3
Not enough detail to comment	1		1	1	3
Support some/all of the proposal				1	1
Short-sighted proposals	1				1

Accessibility was mentioned within comments the most with 70 responses and loss of support mentioned in 69 responses

*“Central East needs the Shirley Centre. People can't walk to the others.”*

*“I can easily walk to Shirley Children's Centre but have no easy access to any of the other centres as I do not have a car. Also Shirley library considering to be closed*

27

*which also offers a space and activities for young children and parents, so Shirley will be losing 2 essential free local services.”*

*“Closing the Shirley centre will make access to vital support more time consuming, difficult and expensive for Shirley residents, especially those living on Shrublands and reliant on benefits.”*

*“I use Shirley children's centre its closure would be heart breaking..., when I was on mat leave I would be at Shirley 3+ times a week it really got me through the early months of being a new mum”*

### Themes arising from the consultation responses

Concern regarding early intervention being lost for families. Respondents have identified children's centres as a lifeline, particularly the support and activities available for new parents, providing non-judgemental and friendly support and advice which includes family support/ parenting, advice and signposting to services including domestic violence services.

Less access to health support and advice has been highlighted as a concern. Respondents identified that this service is important to keep within centres or very local to families. Some respondents however have found it difficult to access health services.

Mismanagement of council funding has been identified as a concern for respondents, with young families not having access to early childhood services. Users of Purley Oaks and Shirley children's centres feel strongly that funding should be found elsewhere.

Concern for children and families who would not be able to get to hub or spoke centres

- Ability to get to centre further away if suffering from poor health
- Families won't go to centres
- The cost of travel
- The length of time it would take to travel to a centre further away
- Travelling with a very young baby and/ or toddler either walking or by one or more buses
- Proposals mean a car journey would be needed
- School or nursery drop off and pick up limits time to travel and attend session
- Concern for more vulnerable families and whether they would be able to use centres in the future if they are not in their locality.

Respondents value staff teams and the quality of the services which are identified as high quality and inclusive. Young parents have identified the staff and centre as the most important factor in enabling them to attend the young parents group.

Respondents have identified that currently activities at centres have to be booked, due to the social distancing measures in place at centres. A further reduction in provision may mean that services are oversubscribed and those most in need of them will not be able to access them

## Summary of demographics

### Respondents by Gender

Gender	Responses	%age
No information	641	47.0%
Any other gender	2	0.1%
Female (including male-to-female transgender women)	632	46.3%
Male (including female-to-male transgender men)	46	3.4%
Non-binary (for example, androgenous people)	3	0.2%
Prefer not to say	41	3.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Respondents by Age

Age	Responses	%age
Under 18	1	0.1%
18-30	81	5.9%
31-40	469	34.4%
41-50	115	8.4%
51-60	28	2.1%
61-70	11	0.8%
71+	7	0.5%
Prefer not to say	30	2.2%
No information	623	45.6%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents were asked; are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Disability	Responses	%age
No information	601	44.0%
No	636	46.6%
Prefer not to say	43	3.2%
Yes, limited a little	55	4.0%
Yes, limited a lot	30	2.2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents were asked how they describe their sexuality

Sexuality	Responses	%age
No information	640	46.9%
Bi-Sexual	22	1.6%
Gay/Lesbian	5	0.4%
Heterosexual/Straight	644	47.2%
Prefer not to say	54	4.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Responses	%age
<b>White</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>39.1%</b>
Any other White background	64	4.7%
White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	450	33.0%
White Irish	20	1.5%
<b>Black</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
Any other Black background	6	0.4%
Black African	20	1.5%
Black Caribbean	20	1.5%
<b>Asian</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Any other Asian background	17	1.2%
Bangladeshi	6	0.4%
Indian	23	1.7%
Pakistani	6	0.4%
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	17	1.2%
White and Asian	11	0.8%
White and Black African	3	0.2%
White and Black Caribbean	25	1.8%
<b>Other</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
Arab	1	0.1%
Chinese	6	0.4%
Other	4	0.3%
<b>No Information</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>48.8%</b>
<NULL>	618	45.3%
Prefer not to say	48	3.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





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# Survey - have your say

## Best Start children's centres consultation – May 2021

Before you complete this survey, please read the accompanying summary of changes that we are proposing to make to our children's centre services.

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## Data protection and consent

### Data protection statement

We're asking for your information in this survey because it tells us more about the people (like you) who use our services. If we know more about you, we know more about the way our services are used and this helps us to make improved decisions about them. It also helps us to make sure we're hearing from all our diverse communities.

When we analyse responses and report findings from our surveys, your personal details will not be identifiable. That's the same for when we ask for demographic information (like your age, gender identity, ethnicity or disabilities). We'll also make sure that you don't have to answer any questions about you, if you don't want to.

For more information about the collection of this data, please read the accompanying privacy notice.

**1) I agree for the anonymised information I am providing in this survey to be shared with council teams as part of the analysis and reporting of the consultation.**

Please tick the box below to confirm.

I Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------	--------------------------

## About you and your family

The following questions are optional. By answering them, you are helping us to ensure that a wide range of views are heard. If we know who in our community we have heard from, this will help us to make contact with groups who have not yet responded.

### 2) Are you completing this survey as a:

Parent/carer currently using children's centre services	[ ]
Parent/carer who has used children's centre services in the past	[ ]
A future user of children's centres	[ ]
Best Start practitioner	[ ]
Other practitioner	[ ]
Other	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

2.1) If "Other", please specify:

--

### 3) Do you and/or your partner have children?

Yes	[ ]
No	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

If your response is "No" or "prefer not to say", please skip to Question 4.

### 3.1) How many children do you have?

1	[ ]
2	[ ]
3	[ ]
4	[ ]
5+	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

### 3.2) Please select the age ranges of your child(ren):

Please tick all that apply.

Up to 3 months	[ ]
Between 3 months and 6 months	[ ]
Between 6 months and a year	[ ]
1 to 2 years old	[ ]
3 to 4 years old	[ ]
5 to 6 years old	[ ]
7 to 8 years old	[ ]
9 to 10 years old	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

### 4) Are you or your partner expecting a baby?

Yes	[ ]
No	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

## Your use of children's centres

The following questions are about your use of children's centres.

### 5) Which is your local Croydon children's centre?

Aerodrome	[ ]
Byron	[ ]
Crosfield	[ ]
Kensington Avenue	[ ]
New Addington	[ ]
Purley Oaks	[ ]
Selhurst	[ ]
Shirley	[ ]
Woodlands	[ ]
Not sure	[ ]

### 6) Prior to 23 March 2020, when services were affected due to national lockdown, which children's centre(s) did you access?

Please tick all that apply.

Aerodrome	[ ]
Byron	[ ]
Crosfield	[ ]
Kensington Avenue	[ ]
New Addington	[ ]
Purley Oaks	[ ]
Selhurst	[ ]
Shirley	[ ]
Woodlands	[ ]
Other eg. out of borough	[ ]
Not sure	[ ]

**7) Please tell us about parent/child activities that you use, or are aware of in your area other than children's centre services:**

--

**8) How do you usually travel to the children's centre you use the most?**

Please tick all that apply.

Walk	[ ]
Cycle	[ ]
Car	[ ]
Public transport (train, bus, tram)	[ ]
Other	[ ]

8.1) If "Other", please specify below:

--

**9) Which children's centre services did you access?**

Please tick all that apply.

<b>Stay and play provision</b> (e.g. Babbling Babies, Little Explorers, Now I am Two) Speech and Language Support groups ( such as Chatterbox)	[ ]
<b>Adult and family learning/ employability support</b>	[ ]
<b>Health Services</b> (e.g. antenatal/ postnatal clinics, Well Baby Clinics, developmental checks with the Health Visitor)	[ ]
<b>1-2-1 family support</b>	[ ]
<b>Parenting programmes and parent support</b>	[ ]
<b>Support to families in crisis through advice appointments</b>	[ ]
<b>Other</b>	[ ]

9.1) If "Other", please specify below:

--



**10) Which of the following activities has supported your child’s development or has had the greatest impact on helping your child get ready for nursery or reception?**

Please tick all that apply.

Baby massage	[ ]
Babbling Babies/baby groups	[ ]
Stay & Play sessions	[ ]
Now I'm Two/Now I'm Three	[ ]
Bookstart	[ ]
Chatterbox	[ ]
Cooking Cubs	[ ]
Not applicable	[ ]
Other	[ ]

10.1) If “Other”, please specify below:

--

## Your views on our proposals - hubs and spokes


A three hub and six spoke model is our proposed option for children's centre services. It provides a dedicated hub and two spokes in each area (north, central, south), ensuring access to services across the borough.

**11) Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that our proposed new model for children's centres will provide the right services, in the right places:**

Strongly agree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Neither agree nor disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Strongly disagree	[ ]
Not sure	[ ]

**11.1) Please tell us why, including any impact this will have on you:**

**12) If you have any ideas for how we could provide our children's centre services differently with the reduced budget available, please tell us below?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide their ideas for alternative service models under a reduced budget.

## Hubs and spokes

Each Best Start children’s centre hub will deliver a full range of children’s centre services and coordinate a reduced programme of activities from two other children’s centre buildings – the spokes.

Our proposal is for spoke sites to be open fewer days and for less hours, with opening times focused on the services needed within that area.

Area	Children's centre hub	Children's centre spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North west
		PIP House	North east
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central east
		Aerodrome	Central west
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South east
		Byron	South west

### 13) Thinking about the proposed spokes in your area, how easy or difficult is it for you to access them?

Very easy	[ ]
Fairly easy	[ ]
Neither easy nor difficult	[ ]
Fairly difficult	[ ]
Very difficult	[ ]
Not sure	[ ]

**14) Please explain why you selected your response to the previous question, including other locations you would suggest:**

**15) From the proposed model below, which spoke site are you most likely to use?**

Area	Children's centre hub	Children's centre spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North west
		PIP House	North east
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central east
		Aerodrome	Central west
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South east
		Byron	South west

Please tick all that apply.

Kensington Avenue - Winterbourne	[ ]
Kensington Avenue - PIP House	[ ]
Selhurst - Malling Close	[ ]
Selhurst - Aerodrome	[ ]
Woodlands - New Addington	[ ]
Woodlands - Byron	[ ]
None of these	[ ]
Don't know	[ ]

**16) Which services would you like to be able to use at that site?**

Please pick your top three from the list below.

Please answer each column.

	<b>1st choice</b>	<b>2nd choice</b>	<b>3rd choice</b>
<b>Stay and play provision</b> (e.g. Babbling Babies, Little Explorers, Now I am Two) Speech and Language Support groups ( such as Chatterbox)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Adult and Family Learning/ employability support</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Health Services</b> (antenatal/ postnatal clinics, Well Baby Clinics, developmental checks with the Health Visitor)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>1-2-1 family support</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Parenting programmes and parent support</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Support to families in crisis through advice appointments</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

**17) Which would be the preferred days and times for you to access this site?**

Please tick all that apply.

Please answer each row.

	<b>9 - 11am</b>	<b>10 - 12pm</b>	<b>1 - 3pm</b>	<b>3 - 5pm</b>
<b>Monday</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Tuesday</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Wednesday</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Thursday</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>Friday</b>	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

**18) Are there any other days or times that would be more suitable?**

Please specify below:

## Your views on our proposals - providing outreach services

As part of our proposed new model we are looking for ways we can provide more services within existing community venues. We would like to hear your suggestions for where you would benefit from accessing services and any other venue ideas you may have.

**19) Where do you think we could deliver outreach services in your area?** This might be delivering children’s centre services from different community spaces such as community halls, parks, health centres or schools.

Please specify below:

--

**20) If you would prefer to receive any of the following services from a different venue, such as a health centre, please tell us where:**

	Name of venue
Stay and play provision (e.g. Babbling Babies, Little Explorers, Now I am Two) Speech and Language Support groups ( such as Chatterbox)	
Adult and Family Learning/ employability support	
Health Services (antenatal/ postnatal clinics, Well Baby Clinics, developmental checks with the Health Visitor)	
1-2-1 family support	
Parenting programmes and parent support	
Support to families in crisis through advice appointments	



## Stopping children's centre services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre

21) Will stopping children's centre services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre directly affect you and your family?

Yes	[ ]
No	[ ]
Not sure	[ ]

If your response is "No" or "Not Sure", please skip to Question 22.

21.1) If yes, please tell us the reasons why:

21.2) What can we do to address the reasons you have given?

**22) If you have any suggestions for where we could deliver Best Start services in the area if we stop providing services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre, please tell us where below:**

## **Closure of Shirley Children's Centre**

**23) Will the closure of Shirley Children's Centre directly affect you and your family?**

Yes	[ ]
No	[ ]
Not sure	[ ]

If your response is "No" or "Not sure", please skip to question 24.

**23.1) If yes, please tell us the reasons why:**

**23.2) What can we do to address the reasons you have given?**

**24) If you have any suggestions for where we could deliver Best Start services in the area if Shirley Children's Centre was to close, please tell us where below:**

## About you

The following questions are optional. By answering them you are helping us to ensure that a wide range of views are heard. If we know who in our community we have heard from, it helps us to make contact with groups who have not yet responded.

### 25) What is your full postcode?

### 26) How would you describe your gender?

Male (including female-to-male transgender men)	[ ]
Female (including male-to-female transgender women)	[ ]
Non-binary (for example, androgenous people)	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]
Any other gender	[ ]

26.1) If you prefer to self-describe, please specify below:

### 27) Please tell us your age range:

Under 18	[ ]
18-30	[ ]
31-40	[ ]
41-50	[ ]
51-60	[ ]
61-70	[ ]
71+	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

**28) How would you describe your sexuality?**

Heterosexual/Straight	[ ]
Gay/Lesbian	[ ]
Bi-Sexual	[ ]
Any other sexual orientation	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

28.1) If you prefer to self-describe, please specify below:

--

**29) Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?**

Yes, limited a lot	[ ]
Yes, limited a little	[ ]
No	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

If your response is “No” or “Prefer not to say”, please skip to question 30.

**29.1) If yes, in what way(s)?**

Please tick all that apply.

Visually Impaired	[ ]
Hearing Impaired	[ ]
Mobility disability	[ ]
Learning disability	[ ]
Communication difficulty	[ ]
Hidden disability: autism (ASD);	[ ]
Hidden disability: ADHD	[ ]
Hidden disability: asthma	[ ]
Hidden disability: epilepsy	[ ]
Hidden disability: diabetes	[ ]
Hidden disability: sickle cell	[ ]
Other	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

29.2) If "Other", please specify:

--

**30) How would you describe your ethnic origin?**

White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	[ ]
White Irish	[ ]
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	[ ]
Any other White background	[ ]
White and Black Caribbean	[ ]
White and Black African	[ ]
White and Asian	[ ]
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	[ ]
Indian	[ ]
Pakistani	[ ]
Bangladeshi	[ ]
Chinese	[ ]
Any other Asian background	[ ]
Black African	[ ]
Black Caribbean	[ ]
Any other Black background	[ ]
Arab	[ ]
Other	[ ]
Prefer not to say	[ ]

30.1) If "Other", please specify below:

————— END OF SURVEY —————

Thank you for completing this survey.

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Date: 14 May 2021

Dear

**Best Start Children's Centre Consultation – May 2021**

Thank you for requesting a copy of the Children's Centre Consultation survey, please find a survey enclosed along with a prepaid, addressed envelope for you to send back your response

**You can also respond by**

- Completing the online survey before midnight, 14 June 2021
- Speaking to staff at your local children's centre

Please allow plenty of time for your completed survey to reach us, we need to receive it by Monday 14 June 2021

Debby MacCormack  
Service Manager, Children's Centres, Parenting and Parent Infant Partnership



## Children’s centres consultation - communications

March 2021

### Key messages

Despite the financial challenges the council are facing, services for parents and carers with young children remain a priority and we are committed to providing Best Start services, making sure the right services are in the right places within the budget available.

- To reduce costs to the service we are proposing to change the way we deliver children’s centre services in Croydon.
- You can get involved by completing the online survey or call us and we’ll send you a copy of the questionnaire.
- For a hard copy of the survey, or a version in other formats or languages, call us on 020 8760 5453.
- Findings from the consultation will inform final proposals going to cabinet for a decision in the summer, changes would come into effect in the autumn.
- We want to hear your views on our proposal for children’s centres and ideas for how we can provide services locally.

### Branding

Assets to promote the consultation will display the council logo, see example below.



### Key dates

Date	Activity
14 May	Consultation opens

13 June	Consultation closes
**20 June	**extended end date

Consultation dates: 11 May – midnight 13 June

Date	Activity	Channel	Audience	Lead
14/05/21	Launch consultation details and survey	Getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk Croydon.gov.uk – all children’s centre pages from <a href="https://new.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/find-support/support-directory/best-start-service-childrens-centres">https://new.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/find-support/support-directory/best-start-service-childrens-centres</a>	All	KE
14/05/21	Promote consultation to media	Press release and story on news.croydon.gov.uk	All	KE to confirm
14/05/21	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and survey and details of end date	Social media (corporate and Best Start, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)	All	KE
From 14/05/21	Poster to promote consultation	Poster in children’s centres	Centre users	KE/DM
Every Friday till end	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and survey and details of end date	Your Croydon weekly bulletin	All	KE
From 14/05/21	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and survey and details of end date	Schools bulletin	Schools	KE
Every Friday till end	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and survey and details of end date	Business newsletter	Businesses	KE
TBC	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and	Emails/phone calls to centre stakeholder lists	Known centre	Service

Date	Activity	Channel	Audience	Lead
	survey and details of end date		users	
From 14/05/21	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and survey and details of end date.	Community networks including CVA, BME forum, ARRC (digital and flyers*) business newsletter	Community networks	KE
14/05/21	Promotion of consultation, link to more information and survey and details of end date	Intranet and Our Croydon	Staff	KE/LH
Midpoint review	Targeted promotion aimed at groups identified as not responded to the consultation so far	Email to community groups Social media	All	KE
12/06	Promotion of week-long extension to consultation	Press release Social media Internal comms Email to community groups	All	KE

## Evaluation

Get involved interactions - 2396 hits to the consultation project page.



10 posts with an overall average engagement rate of 3.34% average engagement rate.

The first option for calculating your Instagram engagement rate is **to divide your total number of likes and comments by your follower count, and then multiply by 100 to give you a percentage.**

20 June 4209 followers.

(between 1 – 5% is a good rate)

<b>Reach</b> is the total number of people who see your content.	<b>Impressions</b> are the number of times your content is displayed, no matter if it was clicked or not.	Engagements (like, comments, interactions etc)
443	471	13
425	459	6
389	426	14
396	437	12
485	535	10
454	491	13
354	394	9
<b>552</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>16</b>
483	513	12
537	581	36
<b>4518</b>	<b>4899</b>	<b>141</b>

**Top post: 552 reach, 592 impressions, 16 interactions**

### Twitter

11 tweets with an overall 1.22% average engagement rate which is rated as 'great'\*.

\*Engagement rates tend to be lower for Twitter than for Facebook. Most would consider **0.5%** to be a good engagement rate for Twitter, with anything above 1% great.

Top tweet 2805 impressions

<https://twitter.com/yourcroydon/status/1400003032100786179>

Our children's centre consultation closes 13 June. If we've sent you a copy of the survey, please be sure to send it back to us ahead of the close date.  
[getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/project/692](http://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/project/692)








9:15 AM · Jun 2, 2021 · Hootsuite Inc.


Tweet	Reach
<p><b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon Jun 20</p> <p>...ast chance to have your say on proposals for our children's centre service. Link to survey in our bio. ...onsultation closes at midnight tonight. !Croydon lead more</p> 	<p>443</p>



<p><b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon Jun 18</p> <p>Our children's centre consultation closes this Sunday. Make sure you've had your say <b>**link in bio**</b> #Croydon #Childrenscentres #Haveyoursay</p> 	425
<p><b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon Jun 16</p> <p>We've extended the end date of our children's centre consultation so we can hear from more people. Survey now closes this Sunday, 20 June. Link in... <a href="#">Read more</a></p> 	389
<p><b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon Jun 12</p> <p>There's now more time to have your say in our children's centre consultation - we've extended the closing date to 20 June. Find out about the... <a href="#">Read more</a></p> 	396

<p><b>CROYDON</b> <b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon Jun 11</p> <p>Have you had your say on our children's centre consultation?</p> <p>If you use, or have used one of our centres, make sure to find out about the proposed...</p> <p><a href="#">Read more</a></p> 	<p>485</p>
<p><b>CROYDON</b> <b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon Jun 9</p> <p>Croydon Dads! We're proposing changes to our children's centres - find out more and have your say. Consultation closes this Sunday, 13 June. <a href="#">Link in...</a></p> <p><a href="#">Read more</a></p> 	<p>454</p>
<p>We want to hear your views on our proposal for the children's centre service in Croydon, and ideas you may have for how we can provide services...</p> <p><a href="#">Read more</a></p> 	<p>354</p>

<p><b>Croydon Council</b> @yourcroydon May 24</p> <p>We're making changes to our children's centre services; find out more and tell us your ideas for where you'd like to access these valuable...</p> <p><a href="#">Read more</a></p>  <p>Consultation closes 13 June</p> <p>Help shape our children's centre service</p> <p>Croydon Best Start CROYDON</p>	<p>552</p>
<p>Are you a parent to a child under 5, or are you expecting a baby?</p> <p>We want to hear the views of parents and expectant parents about our proposal to...</p> <p><a href="#">Read more</a></p>  <p>Consultation closes 13 June</p> <p>Help shape our children's centre service</p> <p>Croydon Best Start CROYDON</p>	<p>483</p>

<p><small>Croydon and Surrey</small> May 14</p> <p>Today we're launching a consultation on the future of our children's centre service in Croydon. We want to hear your views on our proposal and ideas...</p> <p><a href="#">Read more</a></p>  <p>Consultation closes 13 June</p> <p>Help shape our children's centre service</p> <p><small>Croydon and Surrey</small> <b>CROYDON</b></p>	<p>537</p>
	<p>4518</p>

# Appendix 1

## Best Start Children's Centres in Croydon April 2020

Children's Centre reach areas do not align directly with the Early Help localities



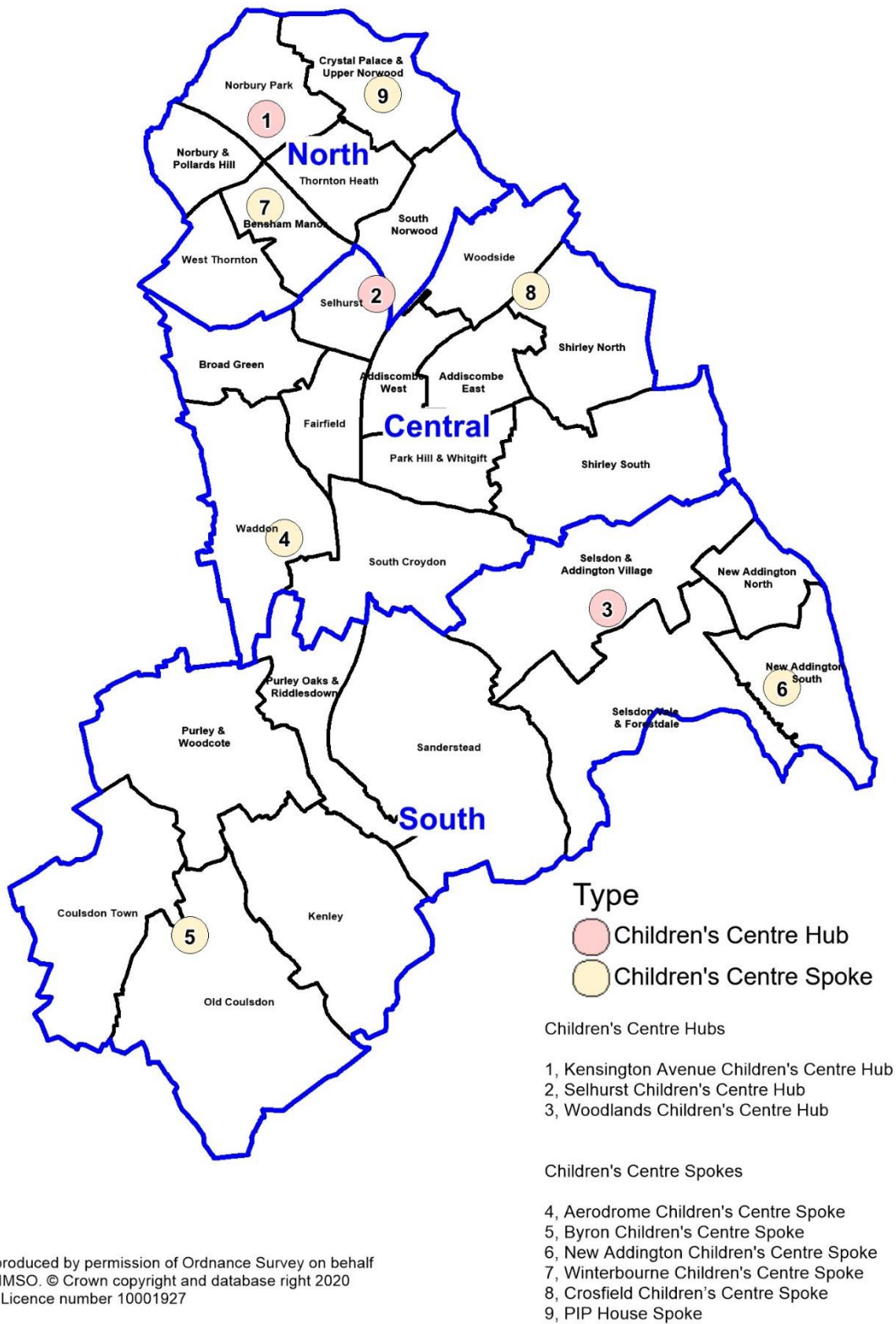
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## Appendix 2

### Proposed Children's Centre Hubs and Spokes



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## How we designed the hub and spoke model

### Borough profile

- In Croydon, 25% of population are aged 0-17, of which 7.2% (27974) are aged 0-4 (Source : ONS MYE<sup>1</sup> 2019)
- Over the past 4 years Croydon has become relatively less deprived compared to other local authorities (IMD<sup>2</sup> 2019), however, 37% of children aged 0-4 live in 30% most deprived area of the borough (IDACI<sup>3</sup> 2019)

The table below gives a breakdown of children aged 0-4 in each locality:

Locality	Under 5 population	% living in 30% most deprived	Number
North	8385	37%	3092
Central	11882	41%	4909
South	7707	29%	2234
Total	27974	37%	10235

Source: Mid 2018 Under 5 population by locality, ward and 2019 IDACI band

- In Croydon, 75% of children achieve a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2018/19) (Source: DfE LAIT, data released October 2019)
- 17% of children live in relatively low income families in 2018/2019 (Source : DWP, Table 1. Percentage of Children (Aged Under 16) living in Relative low income families, by Local Authority)

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<sup>1</sup> The Office of National Statistic, Mid-year Estimates (ONS MYE)

<sup>2</sup> The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England.

<sup>3</sup> The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (*IDACI*) measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families. It is a subset of the Income Deprivation Domain which measures the proportion of the population in an area experiencing deprivation relating to low income.

## Geographical location, accessibility and transport links

We have identified the centres in areas of Croydon where young families with low incomes live and also have transport links. It is important that there are services that serve North, Central and South of Croydon. One hub centre and two spokes are proposed in each area (Please refer to the map for the proposed locations). As funding is reducing and maintaining buildings is expensive it will not be possible for services to run from all current children's centres, however they can be delivered through other spaces and venues in the community.

It is important to ensure the main hubs are well situated in each locality and are easily identified by families and are accessible through transport links and the building itself. For this reason, whilst Woodlands (South East) is not situated in the area of the locality with the most deprivation, due to the span of the South Locality from east to west, it offers a good strategic location and is well served with transport links.

## **What changes are we proposing?**

### Current Provision and map below

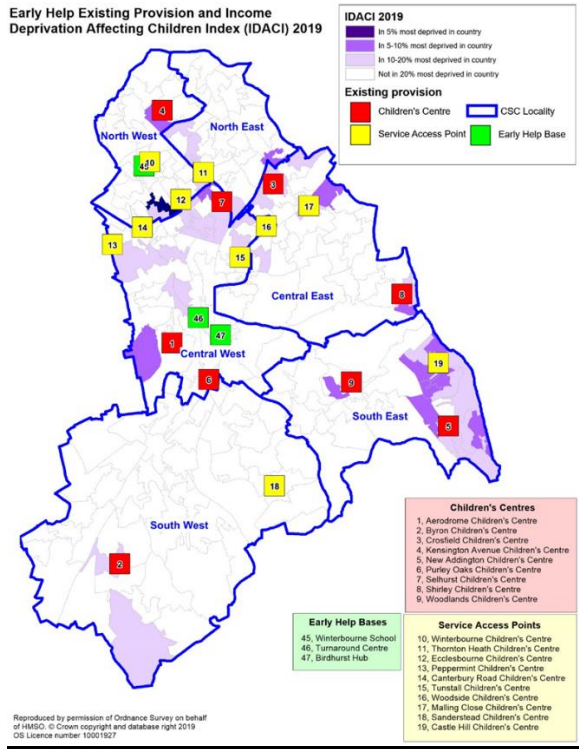
Locality	Children's Centre	Service Access Point	Two year old Early Years Provision*
North	Kensington Avenue	Ecclesbourne Winterbourne	Thornton Heath Norbury Manor
Central	Crosfield Shirley Selhurst Aerodrome Purley Oaks	Malling Close Woodside Canterbury Road	Tunstall Peppermint
South	New Addington Woodlands Byron	Castle Hill Sanderstead	

\*No changes are being proposed to these early years settings

Children's Centre Hubs and Spokes



Early Help Existing Provision and Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) 2019



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## Other options considered

In designing our preferred model, other models were considered, but not found suitable for the following reasons:

- a) Other option considered A: retain one hub centre delivering a full service with six spokes delivering reduced services

This option may result in families not having access to local services and support when they need it. Children's centre services work closely with other services in the localities including the local early years settings, local community and voluntary sector partners, early help, health visiting and midwifery services. This model would not be able to achieve this. Children's centres need to be visible and welcoming in their local area to enable families to take up and engage with services. We know from the consultation on the Croydon Renewal Plan how highly valued children's centres provision is by families with young children and of the concern of losing valuable support and resources. Availability of children's centres would be reduced to a level where families who are facing difficulties may find it difficult to access support, through capacity of the service and the distance from their home.

- b) Other option considered B: retain three hubs and stop services from six designated children's centres

As with option A, this model would not provide the enough access to services to meet the need of Croydon families. It would result in people having to travel too far from home for services therefore increasing the risk of them not using the services.

- c) Retain the current model of nine designated children's centres with a full service delivery

Due to the council's financial position it is not financially possible to continue the current model with the reduced budget.

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## **Outreach services**

Where it is proposed to stop delivering children's centre services from Shirley and Purley Oaks children's centres, and Ecclesbourne and Woodside Service Access Points, we are looking into other ways of providing support in the areas, these might be:

- Delivering outreach services from different community spaces such as community halls, health centres, schools , pop up events in parks and playgrounds Working alongside services such as community groups led by volunteers, parenting groups and peer support groups provide families with access to activities close to their home to ensure families are able to access children's centre services
- Continue working with midwives and health visitors to meet parents at antenatal, postnatal and well-baby clinics

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## Access to services

Children's Centre services are vital assets in the community and are highly valued by families, enabling parenting confidence and enhancing child development and school readiness, both being essential stepping stones for securing good educational attainment.

In 2019/20 over 10,000 children and their families used services provided by children's centres. These figures are unique which means that families/children are only counted once in the period, irrespective of how many times they attended. The table below shows how many families from each ward accessed services regardless of which centre they attended:

Unique families seen with children under 5			
Children's Centre	Ward	Families Seen in 2019/20	Baseline (Census 2011)
Kensington Avenue	Bensham Manor	415	1,045
	Norbury	406	914
	Thornton Heath	445	1,131
	Upper Norwood	303	994
	West Thornton	492	1,209
<b>North Locality Total</b>		<b>2,061</b>	<b>5,293</b>
Aerodrome	Fairfield	681	1,173
	Waddon	586	1,140
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,267</b>	<b>2,313</b>
Crosfield	Addiscombe	646	1,075
	Ashburton	301	705
	South Norwood	430	1,153
	Woodside	555	1,143
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,932</b>	<b>4,076</b>	
Selhurst	Broad Green	599	1,440
	Selhurst	645	1,385
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>2,825</b>
Shirley	Shirley	301	717
<b>Central Locality Total</b>		<b>4,744</b>	<b>9,931</b>
Byron	Coulsdon East	255	554
	Coulsdon West	323	546
	Kenley	237	779
	<b>Total</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>1,879</b>
New Addington	Fieldway	340	895
	New Addington	305	692
	<b>Total</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>1,587</b>
Purley Oaks	Croham	567	986
	Purley	322	784
	<b>Total</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>1,770</b>
Woodlands	Heathfield	375	639
	Sanderstead	226	529
	Selsdon and Ballards	240	416
	<b>Total</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>1,584</b>
<b>South Locality Total</b>		<b>3,190</b>	<b>6,820</b>
<b>Total Families Seen (unique)</b>		<b>9,995</b>	<b>22,044</b>

Unique children under 5 seen			
Children's Centre	Ward	Children Seen in 2019/20	Baseline (ONS mid-year 2015)
Kensington Avenue	Bensham Manor	416	1,369
	Norbury	403	1,189
	Thornton Heath	427	1,361
	Upper Norwood	300	1,224
	West Thornton	489	1,571
<b>North Locality Total</b>		<b>2,035</b>	<b>6,714</b>
Aerodrome	Fairfield	657	1,711
	Waddon	670	1,497
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>3,208</b>
Crosfield	Addiscombe	568	1,424
	Ashburton	271	952
	South Norwood	409	1,549
	Woodside	531	1,424
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,779</b>	<b>5,349</b>	
Selhurst	Broad Green	595	1,938
	Selhurst	599	1,738
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>3,676</b>
Shirley	Shirley	303	843
<b>Central Locality Total</b>		<b>4,603</b>	<b>13,076</b>
Byron	Coulsdon East	302	744
	Coulsdon West	356	791
	Kenley	266	1,001
	<b>Total</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>2,536</b>
New Addington	Fieldway	354	1,012
	New Addington	350	837
	<b>Total</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>1,849</b>
Purley Oaks	Croham	612	1,315
	Purley	348	1,044
	<b>Total</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>2,359</b>
Woodlands	Heathfield	417	867
	Sanderstead	255	659
	Selsdon and Ballards	262	532
	<b>Total</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>2,058</b>
<b>South Locality Total</b>		<b>3,522</b>	<b>8,802</b>
<b>Total Children Seen (unique)</b>		<b>10,160</b>	<b>28,592</b>

We also know that services have a positive impact on children's outcomes.

In November 2019, of the 1065 families attending services during Best Start survey week (18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>), 99% of families accessing a children's centre, agreed the service met their needs, and 96% were 'very satisfied' with the serviced they used.

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# Croydon Children's Centre Consultation

# Children's Centre Core Purpose

The core purpose focuses on three areas of support:

- Parenting skills and aspirations
- Child development and school readiness
- Child and family health and life chances



# What can children centres offer families?



### **Employability Training**

My OutSpace deliver employability training, budgeting skills, CV workshops and digital skills training.

### **Community Builders**

Supporting and nurturing the interests of local parents, helping them set up small projects.

### **Health Visiting and Breastfeeding Support**

Specialist community public health nurses whom provide expert advice and support to families with children from the antenatal period to five years old.

### **Midwifery**

Antenatal care and postnatal care for up to 14 days for low risk families and up to 28 days for those requiring enhanced care.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

Provides targeted support in relation to communication development for local families.

### **Early Help and Children's Social Care**

Working in partnership with all relevant agencies so that families are assisted to help themselves and are supported as soon as a need arises.

### **Parent Infant Partnership**

Working with parents-to-be and parents of babies up to 24 months to build stronger bonds and positive relationships with their babies.

# **Working in Partnership**

### **Home Visiting Service and Parent's Champion Programme**

Homestart provide a 1:1 home visiting service and a parent's champion programme. This provides advice and guidance to community groups

### **Family Nurse Partnership**

For those aged 19 years or under and going through their first pregnancy. Provides dedicated support to parents to ensure that new families get the best start.

### **Childcare Sufficiency Team**

Responsible for updating childcare information and promoting and administering early years funding for 2, 3 and 4 year old children.

### **Social Communication Delay Support Groups**

The Prism consortium deliver these groups which includes the National Autistic Society, and Jubilee Parenting

### **Parenting Peer Led Support Groups**

South London & Maudsley NHS Trust deliver 'Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities' peer led support groups which aim to share tips on managing children's behaviour and how to communicate positively.

### **Nursery, Pre-School & Childminder Support**

The Early Learning Collaboration Professional provides development opportunities for early years practitioners

### **Parenting Courses**

Programmes are offered by commissioned Best Start partners for example 'Being a Parent' as well as the Supports and Intervention Team who deliver 'Triple P', 'Teen Triple P', 'Mellow Parents' and 'Mellow Bumps'.

# Best Start Children's Centres - Current delivery model

- There are Currently 9 designated children's centres in Croydon.
- 2 centres are managed by a federated maintained nursery school, 5 by primary academies, 1 by a maintained primary school and 1 by the local authority

Page 127

Children's centres run services on site, from service access points, and from community outreach venues.

# Best Start Children's Centres and map

<p><b>Current Model</b> 9 Designated Centres</p>
<p><b>North East &amp; North West</b> Kensington Avenue</p>
<p><b>Central East</b> Crosfield Shirley</p>
<p><b>Central West</b> Selhurst Aerodrome Purley Oaks</p>
<p><b>South East</b> Woodlands New Addington</p>
<p><b>South West</b> Byron</p>

## Best Start Children's Centres in Croydon April 2020

Children's Centre reach areas do not align directly with the Early Help localities.



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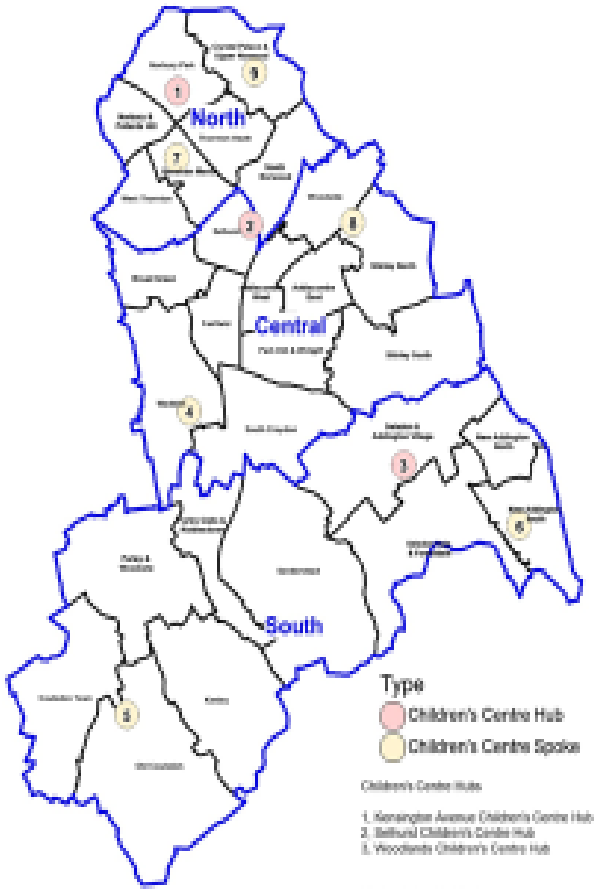
# Best Start Children's Centres - proposed new delivery model

- A three hub and six spoke is our preferred model for children's centre provision.
- It provides a dedicated hub in the north, central and south of the borough
- services will also be available from six spokes, ensuring access to services across the borough.
- Services will be informed by the consultation findings and will vary so they meet the needs of local families

# Proposed Children's Centre Hubs and Spokes Map

Proposed Model 3 Children's Centre Hubs and 6 Spokes	Locality	Locality
<b>Kensington Avenue</b> Winterbourne PiP House	<b>North East</b> North West North East	Provider 1
<b>Selhurst</b> Malling Close Aerodrome	<b>Central West</b> Central East Central West	Provider 2
<b>Woodlands</b> New Addington Byron	<b>South East</b> South East South West	Provider 3

Children's Centre Hubs and Spokes



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# Best Start Children's Centres - proposed new delivery model

Area	Children's centre hub	Children's centre spoke	Area covered
North	Kensington Avenue	Winterbourne	North West
		PIP House	North East
Central	Selhurst	Malling Close	Central East
		Aerodrome	Central West
South	Woodlands	New Addington	South East
		Byron	South West

# Best Start Children's Centres - proposed new delivery model

The hub and spoke model would mean:

- Having three children's centre 'hubs', one in each locality, north, central and south, each delivering a full programme of services
- The hubs will also will coordinate a reduced programme of activities from two other children's centre buildings (spokes)
- One management team for each locality overseeing the service and employing the children's centre staff
- Closing Shirley Children's Centre (Central East) and stopping services from Purley Oaks Children's Centre (Central West), but providing outreach services in these areas
- Stopping delivering services from Ecclesbourne and Woodside Service Access Points (these are venues that have provided provide children's centre services on a part-time basis)

# Best Start Children's Centres - proposed new delivery model

## How we designed the hub and spoke model

The new proposed model has been designed using the following data:

- Borough profile - where do children 0-5 and families that would benefit the most live
- Geographical location
- Ease of access for local families
- Transport links
- Facilities and accessibility within the children's centre buildings to enable continued working in partnership with health colleagues to deliver the Healthy Child Programme

# Best Start Children's Centres - proposed new delivery model

## Tell us what you think

- We want to hear your views on our proposal for children's centres.
- We're keen to understand whether the proposed spoke sites are the right locations,
- ideas you may have for how we can provide services locally.
- Final proposals will inform the council cabinet decision in the summer 2021 prior to tendering for new contracts,
- The consultation report will inform service development and delivery

# Best Start Children's Centres - proposed new delivery model

## How to have your say

- Feed back from tonight's event
- Complete the online survey before midnight, 13 June 2021
- Request a paper copy of the survey be sent to you by calling 020 8760 5453, and return it by 13 June 2021
- Request the survey and consultation information in a different format or language by calling 020 8760 5453
- Speak to staff at your local children's centre

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**Best Start  
Children's Centres  
Equality Analysis  
July 2021**

## 2. Proposed change

Directorate	Children, Families and Education
Title of proposed change	Redesign of Best Start Children's Centres
Name of Officer carrying out Equality Analysis	Sharon Hemley and Debby MacCormack

### 2.1 Purpose of proposed change

The Croydon Renewal plan sets out to align services to the Council's new priorities and ways of working in which we will:

- Live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents
- Focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough
- Follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic injustice
- Focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford.

The proposed change and redesign of Children's Centres will bring essential spend on early childhood services in line with new reduced budget of £1,162m.

Best Start Children's Centres play a pivotal role in both the delivery of Child Development and School Readiness Services as part of a wider Best Start programme. Children's Centres work in partnership with other services to enable families to access services to support their child's development and ensure parents and carers have access to support they need, for example, antenatal care, child health services, parenting skills and employability support services. Children's centre services are delivered through one of nine designated centres.

Croydon Best Start is a partnership approach to delivering services for expectant mothers and children under five. Maternity and health visiting services; children's centres, early years, parenting, and the voluntary and community sector work together to provide services for very young families identify any emerging issues and ensure support is in place through introduction to services. It is a holistic approach to early intervention and prevention to ensure babies, children, mothers, fathers and other carers receive the support they need as early in a child's life or as concerns emerge.

#### Proposed model

The proposed change would see a new 3 hub and 6 spoke Children's Centre model, 1 hub and 2 spokes in North, Central and South localities. The proposed model would cease funded services at Purley Oaks Children's Centre and Shirley Children's Centre closing.

Consultation on the proposed model was undertaken with residents during May and June 2021. 1365 responses were received

Themes arising from the consultation responses:

- Concern regarding early intervention being lost for families.  
Respondents have identified children's centres as a lifeline, particularly the support and activities available for new parents, providing non-judgmental and friendly support and advice which includes family support/ parenting, advice and signposting to services including domestic violence services.
- Less access to health support and advice has been highlighted as a concern.  
Respondents identified that this service is important to keep within centres or very local to families. Some respondents however have found it difficult to access health services.
- Users of Purley Oaks and Shirley children's centres feel strongly that funding should be found elsewhere.
- Concern for children and families who would not be able to get to hub or spoke centres:
  - Ability to get to centre further away if suffering from poor health
  - Families won't go to centres
  - The cost of travel
  - The length of time it would take to travel to a centre further away
  - Travelling with a very young baby and/ or toddler either walking or by one or more buses
  - Proposals mean a car journey would be needed
  - School or nursery drop off and pick up limits time to travel and attend session
  - Concern for more vulnerable families and whether they would be able to use centres in the future if they are not in their locality
- Respondents value staff teams and the quality of the services which are identified as high quality and inclusive. Young parents have identified the staff and centre as the most important factor in enabling them to attend the young parents group.
- Respondents have identified that currently activities at centres have to be booked, due to the social distancing measures in place at centres. A further reduction in provision may mean that services are oversubscribed and those most in need of them will not be able to access them

### Population

Croydon is a diverse borough with 51.7% of residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds (Corporate Plan 2018 – 2022) with over 100 languages spoken. 82.6% of residents have English as their main language.

There are 27974 children under 5 living in Croydon. Mid-year population estimates and Income Deprivation Affection Children Index (IDACI) are used to target services where there is most need. The table below gives a breakdown of the number of children living in the children's centre the most deprived areas of the borough, ranging from 5% most deprived (A, lower limit) to more than 30% (E, upper limit).

Mid 2018 Under 5 population by children's centre reach area and 2019 IDACI band

	A	B	C	D	E	Total
Aerodrome	0	132	385	839	1442	2798
Byron	0	0	213	0	3112	3325
Crosfield	0	405	747	680	2857	4689
Kensington Avenue	164	110	886	1144	4566	6870
New Addington	0	877	791	0	69	1737
Purley Oaks	0	0	0	0	2939	2939
Selhurst	0	131	1125	947	1657	3860
Shirley	0	193	113	0	247	553
Woodlands	0	112	0	241	850	1203
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>4260</b>	<b>3851</b>	<b>17739</b>	<b>27974</b>
<b>% children</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Service Priorities

In addition to mid-year population estimates and levels of deprivation, services are targeted to those with additional vulnerabilities. For example, children known to Intensive Early Help or Children's Social Care, children with speech and language difficulties and SEND. In addition, young parents, parental mental health, families affected by domestic abuse, poverty and homelessness.

### Registration for services

Best Start is a consent based services where families are encouraged to register to enable service planning; response and improvements. Families are not required to register in order to receive services and reserve the right to refuse. Best Start utilises a partnership approach to encouraging families to register from the first point of accessing Best Start, be that during a maternity booking appointment or a family new to the borough. Early Help and Children's Social Care practitioners are encouraged to introduce families to Best Start and Children's Centre services.

The Council has a clear commitment to improving the lives of all its residents and has clear objectives in the Croydon Renewal Plan to tackle ingrained inequalities and poverty in the borough; follow evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship and provide core services that keep the most vulnerable residents safe and healthy.

### 3. Impact of the proposed change

**Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact**

#### Context

This Equalities Analysis considers all residents in scope to accessing Best Start and Children's Centre services and includes a summary of demographics from respondents who completed the consultation survey referred to above. 1365 people completed the survey.

#### Summary of demographics

Of the 1365 people who completed the survey the table below gives a breakdown, including those with protected characteristics:

#### Respondents by Gender

Gender	Responses	%age
No information	641	47.0%
Any other gender	2	0.1%
Female (including male-to-female transgender women)	632	46.3%
Male (including female-to-male transgender men)	46	3.4%
Non-binary (for example, androgenous people)	3	0.2%
Prefer not to say	41	3.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### Respondents by Age

Age	Responses	%age
Under 18	1	0.1%
18-30	81	5.9%
31-40	469	34.4%
41-50	115	8.4%

51-60	28	2.1%
61-70	11	0.8%
71+	7	0.5%
Prefer not to say	30	2.2%
No information	623	45.6%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Respondents were asked; are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?**

Disability	Responses	%age
No information	601	44.0%
No	636	46.6%
Prefer not to say	43	3.2%
Yes, limited a little	55	4.0%
Yes, limited a lot	30	2.2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Respondents were asked how they describe their sexuality**

Sexuality	Responses	%age
No information	640	46.9%
Bi-Sexual	22	1.6%
Gay/Lesbian	5	0.4%
Heterosexual/Straight	644	47.2%
Prefer not to say	54	4.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Respondents by Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	Responses	%age
<b>White</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>39.1%</b>
Any other White background	64	4.7%
White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	450	33.0%
White Irish	20	1.5%
<b>Black</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
Any other Black background	6	0.4%
Black African	20	1.5%

Black Caribbean	20	1.5%
<b>Asian</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Any other Asian background	17	1.2%
Bangladeshi	6	0.4%
Indian	23	1.7%
Pakistani	6	0.4%
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	17	1.2%
White and Asian	11	0.8%
White and Black African	3	0.2%
White and Black Caribbean	25	1.8%
<b>Other</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
Arab	1	0.1%
Chinese	6	0.4%
Other	4	0.3%
<b>No Information</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>48.8%</b>
<NULL>	618	45.3%
Prefer not to say	48	3.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Page 143

### Impact of Library proposals

It should be noted that Best Start services work closely with community providers and resources, the impact of library closures alongside a decrease in Children’s Centre services will impact young families’ ability to attend activities in their community and using resources at no cost.

The Covid-19 Lockdown from 23<sup>rd</sup> March and which began to ease from 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 had a significant impact on delivering children’s centre services to families. During this time vulnerable children and families were identified and offered weekly contact to provide essential family support. As restrictions eased, children’s centres were able to offer more services in line with government guidelines, culminating to a current blended offer of online virtual sessions, bookable one to one use of play rooms and gardens and small bookable groups, i.e. baby massage and Chatterbox groups. Delivery is regularly reviewed in line with guidance, centres are flexing the offer dependent on the restrictions in place. The ability to reopen with Covid-19 secure measures in place has been welcomed by parents, enabling respite, parent and family support and much needed social interaction.

Recent research has shown the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on children’s social and emotional development; babies born during Lockdown, toddlers ready to start exploring their environment and 2 year olds due to start nursery .The ongoing restrictions are placing

considerable strain on young families. The stay at home guidance requires whole families to remain at home managing home schooling, there are additional costs to ensure children have meals and connectivity to enable home schooling, whilst there is support for this, many families still do not have adequate resources. In these circumstances babies and young children may be missing out on much needed attention, in order to develop, babies need social interaction. The effects of the pandemic on young children can be described as the invisible cost. There has been an increase in parental isolation, parental conflict, we know witnessing conflict and abuse impacts healthy child development. <https://www.wavetrust.org/what-are-adverse-childhood-experiences>

Children of low income families are disproportionately affected by the restrictions, further widening the attainment gap. Social isolation and lack of access to services including children’s centres and health visiting services and GPs mean that babies and young children are not being seen routinely, identified in the Babies in Lockdown report <https://parentinfantfoundation.org.uk/our-work/campaigning/babies-in-lockdown/#fullreport>

As a consequence, whilst the savings reduction will impact resources and service delivery, the full impact is mitigated by the on-going restrictions due to the pandemic and the emerging blended approach to service provision. Given the evidence the focus should be to target resources to those most in need and those with protected characteristics, particularly those groups found to be disproportionately impacted by Covid-19.

Protected characteristic group(s)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Source of evidence
<p>Age</p>	<p>Recommissioning and refocusing services will attract new families, and interest from professionals, which could enable an uptake from more vulnerable families, increasing engagement leading to more positive outcomes due to support and early intervention in the local community .</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities’ Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>Families with children pre-birth to 5 can use children’s centres. Service design will necessarily</p>	<p>The nature of services will be to focus resource to support vulnerable families, there is a risk that universal services will not be so available in the local area</p> <p>Less families may be inclined to take up provision due to distance, change in staff, and change in service.</p> <p>Change in service may lead to referring professionals not having correct information, leading to families not being referred. Children may therefore miss activities at key stages that support development</p>	<p>eStart record management system</p>



	<p>be focused to ensure that children and families that are vulnerable and there will be a partnership approach to identifying and enabling support including referral by targeted services.</p> <p>The Partnership will be supported to work together to establish social and community networkers including peer led groups, utilizing children's centre resources and buildings, thus providing support that can flex to meet the needs of families in the local community.</p> <p>Partnership and targeted services can be delivered from children's centre venues, supporting vulnerable families to access children's centre services where they would be beneficial</p>	<p>Services may be too far away from home for families to be able to access.</p>	
<b>Disability</b>	<p>Data collected from the consultation responses will inform commissioning and contribute to continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p>	<p>Access to centres may be difficult if centre access points are reduced</p> <p>Reduction in staffing could impact on the learning experiences of families where additional interaction and support isn't available</p>	eStart record management system

	<p>We have limited understanding at present due to the generic data captured on the Best Start registration form.</p> <p>By refocusing services and proactively engaging with more vulnerable families, services will reach families living with disability.</p> <p>By working with partner providers and the community and voluntary sector, services delivered within centres and through outreach will be informed by families who are living with disability. The development of online delivery will supplement face to face delivery, including offering family support and parenting digitally.</p>	<p>Over reliance on digital delivery leading to isolation</p> <p>Services may be too far away from home for families to be able to access.</p>	
<b>Gender</b>	<p>Data collected from the consultation responses will inform commissioning and contribute to continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>Service changes will affect both genders and all who are carers of children under 5.</p>	<p>Access to antenatal and services for pregnant women may be less accessible if children's centre access points are not available</p> <p>Emerging needs of new parents may not be identified early and supported potentially leading to more intensive or specialist interventions</p>	<p>eStart record management system</p> <p>Information is not routinely recorded to identify single parents although where they are receiving additional support this will be known to services. . This will be considered within the consultation on the new model for delivery</p>

<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b> This data is not collected for families accessing services as we did want to put families off from registering their details and putting them off from accessing services.</p>	<p>Data collected from the consultation responses will inform commissioning and contribute to continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p>		
<p><b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> This data is not collected for families accessing services as it was felt not relevant in the provision of services were every adult attending is viewed as a Carer.</p>	<p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p>		
<p><b>Religion or belief</b></p>	<p>Data collected from the consultation responses will inform commissioning and contribute to continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p>	<p>Families may consider attendance at outreach sessions may not be appropriate due location, e.g. church halls. Planning of locations must take into account the local community.</p>	<p>eStart record management system</p>
<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p>Data collected from the consultation responses will inform commissioning and contribute to continuous service improvement.</p>	<p>Reduction in centre staff, or different staff may mean the centre does not reflect the cultural make-up of the local area.</p>	<p>eStart record management system</p>

	<p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>Centre and outreach delivery should reflect the ethic and cultural make-up of the local population. There are opportunities to support community groups to lead or support sessions.</p> <p>Children's centres have a key role supporting all families with children under 5 to ensure they have access to services and support.</p>		
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b> This data is not routinely collected for families accessing services as we did want to put families off from registering their details and putting them off from accessing services.</p>	<p>Data collected from the consultation responses will inform commissioning and contribute to continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p>		
<p><b>Pregnancy or Maternity</b></p>	<p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities' Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p>	<p>Access to antenatal and services for pregnant women will be less accessible if children's centre access points are not available</p>	<p>Commissioning intentions Directly delivered parenting support</p> <p>Ensure strategic decisions are holistic and consider the key partnership who contribute to the Children's Centre Core Purpose</p>

	<p>Services will support vulnerable families, especially times of transition.</p> <p>Services that support women in pregnancy and new parents will be prioritised e.g. Parent Infant Partnership, Mellow Bumps and Mellow Parents, Baby Massage, delivered through internal and commissioned teams alongside Children's centre practitioners</p>	<p>Children's Centre support services provide health and family support for pregnant and new mothers, a reduction of access points will directly affect services near to their home</p> <p>Maternity services will be compromised in their ability to deliver Better Birth outcomes</p> <p>Opportunities to introduce families and register for services may be missed</p>	<p>Consideration regarding availability of premises with partners to enable an economic solution to maintaining community delivery</p>
<p><b>Important note:</b> You must act to eliminate any potential negative impact which, if it occurred would breach the Equality Act 2010. In some situations this could mean abandoning your proposed change as you may not be able to take action to mitigate all negative impacts.</p> <p>When you act to reduce any negative impact or maximise any positive impact, you must ensure that this does not create a negative impact on service users and/or staff belonging to groups that share protected characteristics. <b>Please use table 4 to record actions that will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact</b></p>			

### 3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

**Table 2 – Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change**

<p>If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table. Please use the table below to describe any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposed change. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:</p>		
Additional information needed and or Consultation Findings	Information source	Date for completion
Consideration regarding availability of premises with partners to enable an economic solution to maintaining community delivery	Maternity Services / host schools / Croydon Estates Team through Children's centre consultation	<b>31.8.21</b>
Consultation to be undertaken to seek the views of centre users in relation to the proposed model of delivery	Consultation – Get involved platform	<b>31.8.21</b>
Review of responses to ensure they are proportionate and represent the views of users that are most affected by the proposed changes	Analysis of responses at mid-point of consultation	<b>31.8.21</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families with young children 0-5, including mothers, fathers and carers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pregnant women and new mothers and fathers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Consider responses against the demographic/ population in the locality Consider responses in relation to centre users	
Set up consultation events, drop ins for underrepresented groups in the responses so far.		Midway point of consultation

For guidance and support with consultation and engagement visit <https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/communications/consultation-and-engagement/starting-engagement-or-consultation>

### 3.3 Impact scores

#### Example

If we are going to reduce parking provision in a particular location, officers will need to assess the equality impact as follows;

- Determine the Likelihood of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the likelihood of impact score is 2 (likely to impact)
- Determine the Severity of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the Severity of impact score is also 2 (likely to impact )
- Calculate the equality impact score using table 4 below and the formula **Likelihood x Severity** and record it in table 5, for the purpose of this example - **Likelihood (2) x Severity (2) = 4**

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

Severity of	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6

	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
<b>Likelihood of Impact</b>				

**Key**

Risk Index	Risk Magnitude
6 – 9	High
3 – 5	Medium
1 – 3	Low

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**Table 3 – Impact scores**

<p><b>Column 1</b></p> <p><b>PROTECTED GROUP</b></p>	<p><b>Column 2</b></p> <p><b>LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT SCORE</b></p> <p>Use the key below to <b>score</b> the <b>likelihood</b> of the proposed change impacting each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group.</p> <p><b>1 = Unlikely to impact</b>  <b>2 = Likely to impact</b>  <b>3 = Certain to impact</b></p>	<p><b>Column 3</b></p> <p><b>SEVERITY OF IMPACT SCORE</b></p> <p>Use the key below to <b>score</b> the <b>severity</b> of impact of the proposed change on each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group.</p> <p><b>1 = Unlikely to impact</b>  <b>2 = Likely to impact</b>  <b>3 = Certain to impact</b></p>	<p><b>Column 4</b></p> <p><b>EQUALITY IMPACT SCORE</b></p> <p>Calculate the <b>equality impact score</b> for each protected group by multiplying scores in column 2 by scores in column 3. Enter the results below against each protected group.</p> <p><b>Equality impact score = likelihood of impact score x severity of impact score.</b></p>
Age	3	2	6
Disability	3	2	6
Gender	3	1	3
Gender reassignment	1	1	1
Marriage / Civil Partnership	1	1	1
Race	1	1	1
Religion or belief	1	1	1
Sexual Orientation	1	1	1
Pregnancy or Maternity	3	2	6



## 4. Statutory duties

### 4.1 Public Sector Duties

Tick the relevant box(es) to indicate whether the proposed change will adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties in the Equality Act 2010 set out below.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups

**Important note:** If the proposed change adversely impacts the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out above, mitigating actions must be outlined in the Action Plan in section 5 below.

## 5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

**Important note:** Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact identified in Table 1. Attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc:

**Table 4 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts**

Complete this table to show any negative impacts identified for service users and/or staff from protected groups, and planned actions mitigate them.				
Protected characteristic	Negative impact	Mitigating action(s)	Action owner	Date for completion
Disability	Access to centres may be difficult if centre access points are reduced  Reduction in staffing could impact on the learning experiences of	Needs analysis and engagement with parents/ carers and stakeholders to ensure that universal and targeted services including outreach are accessible, includes buildings and distance	Debby.MacCormack	31/08/21

# Equality Analysis

Page 154

	families where additional interaction and support isn't available  Over reliance on digital delivery leading to isolation	Partnership working with early years services and partners to support specific delivery  Practice standards for children's centre routinely identify and support families with additional needs, including disability, families offered enhanced support where their child or parent care has additional needs		
Race	Reduction in centre staff, or different staff may mean the centre does not reflect the cultural make-up of the local area.	Safer recruitment processes and policy followed. Staff learning and development in place to support culturally appropriate and inclusive practice. Development of partnership with local community groups to ensure families have a cultural network which can flourish within centres and the wider community	To be monitored through Service Lead and contract management processes  Debby MacCormack/ Sharon Hemley	31/08/21
Sex (gender)	<b>n/a</b>			
Gender reassignment	<b>n/a</b>			
Sexual orientation	<b>n/a</b>			
Age	The nature of services will be to focus resource to support vulnerable families, there is a risk that universal	Keep abreast of community and locality resources available through	Debby MacCormack	31/08/21

	<p>services will not be so available in the local area</p> <p>Less families may be inclined to take up provision due to distance, change in staff, and change in service.</p> <p>Change in service may lead to referring professionals not having correct information, leading to families not being referred. Children may therefore miss activities at key stages that support development</p> <p>Services may be too far away from home for families to be able to access.</p>	<p>partners to refer and signpost families to.</p> <p>Identify opportunities to enhance children’s centre services through community providers in the short term</p> <p>Young children need to be brought to services by their parent/ carer. Development of outreach, engaging with partners and services that support young families will be developed to enable families to engage. The intention is to take services to families in local communities as much as possible and in response to need</p>	<p>Debby. MacCormack</p>	
<p>Religion or belief</p>		<p>Safe recruitment processes and policy followed.</p> <p>Staff learning and development in place to support culturally appropriate and inclusive practice.</p> <p>Development of partnership with local community and faith groups to ensure families have a cultural network which can flourish within centres and the wider community</p>	<p>Sharon Hemley/ Debby MacCormack</p>	<p>31/08/21</p>

Pregnancy or maternity	<p>Access to antenatal and services for pregnant women will be less accessible if children’s centre access points are not available</p> <p>Children’s Centre support services provide health and family support for pregnant and new mothers, a reduction of access points will directly affect services near to their home</p> <p>Maternity services will be compromised in their ability to deliver Better Birth outcomes</p> <p>Opportunities to introduce families and register for services may be missed</p>	<p>Risk identified with the strategic partnership to identify how families can be supported in the community, through continued use of buildings that have health rooms.</p> <p>Working closely with midwifery services to enable referrals to children’s centre services – develop a programme of support on a locality basis that flexes to the needs of new parents</p>	<p>Debby MacCormack (Service) / Sharon Hemley (commissioning)</p>	<p>31/08/2021</p>
Marriage/civil partnership				

**6. Decision on the proposed change**

Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter **X** in column 3 (**Conclusion**) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.

Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
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# Equality Analysis

Page 157

No major change	Our analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. <b>If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision.</b>	
Adjust the proposed change	We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. <b>If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form</b>	x
Continue the proposed change	We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. <b>If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.</b>	
Stop or amend the proposed change	Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.	
Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting? e.g. Contracts and Commissioning Board (CCB) / Cabinet		Meeting title: Date:

## 7. Sign-Off

<b>Officers that must approve this decision</b>		
<b>Equalities Lead</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

# Equality Analysis

	<b>Position: Equalities Manager</b>	
<b>Director</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
	<b>Position:</b>	

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