



Developing a model of early help for families

Public Consultation on
Children's Centre Services



BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council



Foreword

As a council we recognise the importance of services delivered by Children's Centres, and the important role Children's Centres play in delivering support for children and their families across the Barnsley district. The quality and accessibility of service delivery to our youngest children is important to make sure they have the best possible start in life.

We know how much Children's Centre services mean to families, and we also know that we do not work with some families that need this support. We want to change this, making sure that services are integrated, flexible and meet the needs of families at the earliest opportunity, with an increased emphasis on delivering services from Family Centres, community venues and through outreach.

Even at a time when facing significant financial challenges, Barnsley Council is committed to delivering services to improve outcomes for families most in need of support and we are pleased to announce the start of consultation on the proposal to reconfigure Children's Centres into a network of Family Centres. This will result in some significant changes and we talk more about these on page 5.

We are proposing that we build on the excellent work undertaken by Children's Centres over the last decade. This will mean a change in the range of services families can access so that support is available for the whole family, including families with older children not usually dealt with through a Children's Centre. Through the Family Centre model we will increasingly target those children, young people and families most in need who will be able to get help and support at the earliest opportunity.

We would welcome your views, and strongly encourage you to take part in the consultation; this will run in two phases:

The first round of consultation will take place from Friday 30 January to Friday 27 March 2015.

The next round of consultation will take place from Monday 18 May until Friday 26 June 2015.

Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director for Children, Young People and Families

Cllr Tim Cheetham, Cabinet spokesperson for People (Achieving Potential)

Family Centres



We are proposing to reconfigure Barnsley's Children's Centres to support the creation of Family Centres so that families most in need of support can receive joined up services at the earliest opportunity.

Families will have access to the full range of current Children's Centre services, either delivered on site, through Family Centres, community venues or through outreach. Inevitably, due to the reduction in funding services for families will be prioritised to those in greatest need.

Under the new model families who are resident within the borough can register and access services at any Family Centre, so that they can continue to access services at the centre which makes most sense to them and their circumstances. We are also proposing to widen the remit of Children's Centres, into Family Centres to incorporate integrated service delivery for children pre-birth up to 19 years (or 25 years if the child or young person has a disability); however we recognise that there will need to be a continued focus on the early years of childhood, building on our current strengths and expertise.

This document proposes a change in the way Children's Centres operate and explains why the changes are needed. If a new model is agreed, implementation will take place in April 2016.

We recognise the importance of services delivered by Children's Centres and want to draw on your knowledge and gather your views on the proposed changes across the borough.





What is a Children's Centre?

Children's Centres offer a wide range of services for families caring for children under five years. Each Children's Centre is different, offering a variety of services according to the needs of local families. All Children's Centres work closely with a range of partners including health, schools, private, voluntary and independent providers and statutory partners.

The main purpose of a Children's Centre is to:

- Support children to be ready for school
- Support parents and carers to develop their parenting skills
- Support parents and carers to develop personal skills, access training and education and enhance their ability to access employment
- Support parents and carers to keep children safe
- Help children to achieve their full potential and reduce inequalities in their health and development
- Support the development of healthy lifestyles for children.

Services include:

- Information and advice on childcare and early learning provision
- Health services including pre and post natal support
- Parent/carer groups, including dads and grandparents groups
- Access to communication and early language support
- Support to childminders
- Links to Job Centre Plus
- Links to Barnsley Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Family Support Services.

There are currently 19 Children's Centres and one satellite site in Barnsley.

Why are we proposing this change?



Barnsley Council is facing unprecedented levels of budget reductions, and this means that we cannot continue to deliver the current model of delivery. By April 2016 the council is required to make a saving of £2.5 million in this service delivery area which is almost a 40% reduction in the overall budget. We spend a significant amount of our budget on overheads, building-related costs and the direct provision of sessional and full childcare on some sites. The implications of the proposal therefore are a potential reduction in the number of centres.

While the council has to ensure there is enough childcare across the borough to meet the needs of families, it is expected to do this through supporting other providers to meet this need. This means that we should only be delivering childcare in areas where the Private, Voluntary or Independent sector cannot or will not do so. As part of the review, the council will consider the sufficiency of sessional and full childcare and whether families' access to this can be met elsewhere; if so there will be a reduction in the number of childcare facilities delivered through the council.

The move to Family Centres will build on the excellent work undertaken by Children's Centres over the last decade. It will mean a change in the range of services families can access in their area, so that support is available for the whole family, including families with older children not usually dealt with through a Children's Centre. There will be a greater emphasis on families most in need of support.

Through the proposed Family Centre model, children, young people and families will be able to get early help and support at the earliest opportunity. Family Centres will build on the strengths of Children's Centre services and continue to improve outcomes for children.



What information will we use to develop the new way of working?

A range of information will be used which includes:

- Local knowledge and statistical information which tells us how Children's Centres are currently used
- An analysis of children's and families' needs in each area
- Information related to childcare and school places
- Feedback from this consultation.



Who are we consulting?

We are seeking the views of people who are affected the most by our proposals. This includes, amongst others:

- Parents/expectant parents and carers
- Local communities
- Children's Centre staff
- Children's Centre advisory boards
- Voluntary and community sector organisations
- Early years providers
- Local MPs and MEPs
- Local councillors
- Partners who share the site of Children's Centres, eg schools
- Statutory partners and stakeholders
- Stronger Families Team.

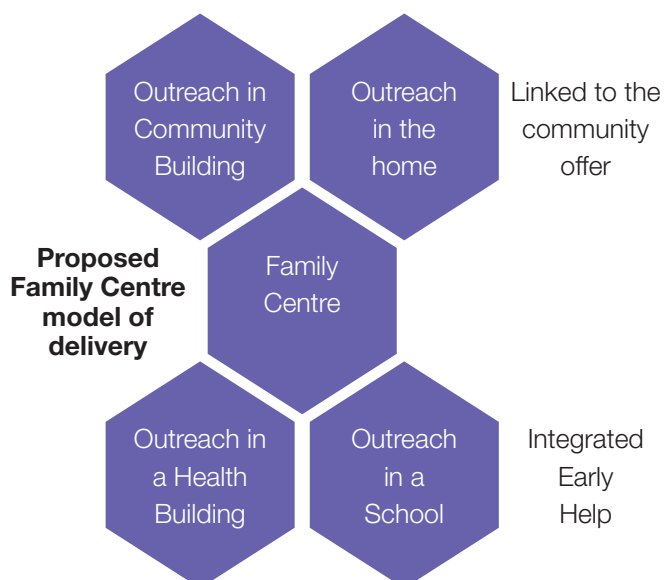
What are we consulting on?



We are consulting on a new model for delivering services for families; the new model will ensure that families will be able to access services at the earliest opportunity from pre-birth until children are 19 years old, or 25 years old if the child or young person has a disability.

We are proposing to develop Family Centres so that families can access integrated services at their earliest opportunity. As part of these developments we are proposing families will have access to a range of services, either in a Family Centre or other community venue, and where required support will continue through community outreach. Families will be able to register and access services across any centre in Barnsley.

The diagram below illustrates how access to services could be delivered and how some services will be delivered in Family Centres, community venues or through outreach.



The Consultation Process

Barnsley Council recognises the importance of services to families and that is why we know it is important to ask for your opinions on our proposals. We want to draw on your knowledge and your views.

A statutory consultation period will take place in two phases. Phase one of the consultation will be held between Friday 30 January and Friday 27 March 2015. The second phase of consultation will take place between Monday 18 May and Friday 26 June 2015.

Your views from the consultation will be considered and taken into account in further developing the proposed model. The final proposals will then be considered and agreed by Barnsley Council Cabinet members in autumn 2015. It is planned the borough's new Family Centres will open in April 2016.

How to submit comments on the proposal as part of phase one consultation

Phase one of the consultation closes at midnight on Friday 27 March 2015.

You can let us know what you think by completing a feedback questionnaire online at <http://consult.barnsley.gov.uk/portal>

Please contact your nearest Children's Centre to access this survey online or for a printed copy of the questionnaire.

If you complete a printed copy of the questionnaire please return it in the envelope provided or hand it in at your nearest Children's Centre, who will be happy to forward this on your behalf.

To find your nearest centre please go to www.barnsley.gov.uk and search children's centres.

If you have problems obtaining a feedback questionnaire or need assistance please call the Families Information Service on

0800 0345 340

If you need help understanding this document please contact the Families Information Service on 0800 0345 340.

Nëse j'u nevojitet ndihmë për të kuptuar këtë dokument, j'u lutemi n'a kontaktoni.

若您需要幫助來理解本檔，請與我們聯繫。

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