

APPENDIX J

Early Help Services consultation information events**Purpose of the consultation information events**

As part of the consultation, a series of consultation information events were held. These meetings were held to provide an opportunity for local residents and service users to hear about the proposals in person from Early Help Service managers and provide an opportunity for people to ask questions and make comments about the proposals for the Early Help Service. One consultation information event was held in each of the 7 districts at a suitable and accessible local venue.

Promotion

The consultation events were promoted via the County Council website, via posters at Children's Centres and other Early Help venues as well as through press releases and via community contacts, including Parish Councils.

The consultation information events

- Each meeting was attended by a lead facilitator (chief executive's department), various Children & Family Services managers, a note taker (transformation unit) and the Lead Cabinet Member, Mr Ivan Ould (replaced by Mr Pendleton for the meeting in Coalville)
- Each meeting included a presentation with an overview of proposals for the Early Help Service and its constituent elements. The presentation broadly followed the same structure as the consultation document.
- Following the presentation, there was extensive opportunity for attendees to ask questions and make comments, with Service managers and/or the lead facilitator answering questions where possible.
- Attendees were reminded and encouraged to complete the main consultation survey by the consultation deadline.

Hard copies of consultation documents and surveys were available for delegates to take away.

A total of 61 people attended the events. Attendance per event was as follows:

Information event	Date (6.30 start time)	Attendees
Roman Way Community Centre, Market Harborough	13/03/2018	0
Beauchamp College, Oadby	19/03/2018	1
Marleine Reid Centre, Coalville	21/03/2018	1
Leysland College, Countesthorpe	09/04/2018	4
Melton Theatre, MeltonMowbray	11/04/2018	5
Green Towers, Hinckley	17/04/2018	20
Rosebery St.Peters Community Centre, Loughborough	18/04/2018	30

Data Collection and Analysis

This report of the consultation information events feedback is based on analysis of a record of the notes taken by Lead facilitators immediately following each event of key points raised in relation to the key elements of the consultation, alongside the notes of the questions asked and comments made at the event.

Key feedback from the consultation information events with regards to the proposals

Views expressed about proposal / situation in general & rationale behind change

Strong feelings that proposals will lead to higher costs for statutory provision later down the line as service will be less effective in reaching people early on.

Views that proposals will therefore end up costing more than they save.

Concerns that future (housing/population) growth has not been taken into account in the proposals.

Views expressed on the principles for an integrated 0-19 Family Support Service (incl whole family approach, targeting)

Concerns that targeting will reduce number of families that will receive support.

Strong feelings that the 'universal' offer should continue to be maintained / supported in future by working closely with volunteers / communities involved

Concerns that the cuts are protecting targeted services provided by SLF at the expense of the universal services provided at / by Children's Centres.

Some concerns about skills required for staff to be able to deal with supporting wider age ranges & related wide range of potential issues.

Views expressed about the way the service would be delivered in future (drop-in sessions, group support, family support)

Feelings this approach would be missing the crucial 'walk-in' service that Children's Centres currently have.

Strong concerns over loss of 'universal' services (volunteer-led) and (public) health services due to reduction in children's centres

Concerns about how volunteer-led activity fits into this model. Views that volunteer-led activity should be supported to continue – including in (some) centres that are proposed to close.

Views expressed about the general approach to using 15 hubs and centres alongside using community venues

Strong disagreement re closure of children's centres and views that as many children's centres as possible should be retained.

Some concerns that remaining hubs would not be able to cope with demand – especially as they will also cater for wider age-range.

Views that community venues cannot always accommodate the kind of activities that are offered at a Children's Centre.

Views expressed on the preferred location of services

Strong views that a centre in Barwell would continue to be needed – but not at the expense of centres in Earl Shilton or Hinckley.

Comment that deprivation in South Wigston is higher than in Wigston

Views that Huncote is not a very accessible location for

people in rest of Blaby.

Views that preferred location in Melton (Venture House) is not a suitable venue.

Views that Shelthorpe and Cobden (Loughborough) should remain as they are areas of most need – and Regent Street too far for Shelthorpe residents and burdened by historical stigma of being a centre where ‘bad parents’ were sent.

View that there is no suitable alternative in new model for Mountsorrel.

Views expressed about (the future of) particular Children’s Centres

General concerns about health services currently provided at these centres.

General concerns about ‘universal’ support (volunteer-led activity) and how that could be continued in future.

Specific concerns about the future of The Cove (Melton) once LCC withdraw services.

Views expressed about accessibility of services

Views that service is not very accessible as it is.

Concerns that reducing number of hubs will disadvantage people without (access to) a car and that remaining centres will not be accessible for everyone currently able to access services.

Views expressed about potential impact of service change on current/future users

Strong views that changes will lead to people’s needs going unmet, leading to escalating issues for those people and ultimately higher costs to the public purse.

Concerns in particular for post-natal mothers.

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