Children’s Centre programme consultation
Hertfordshire County Council
Children’s Centre programme consultation

Introduction
Hertfordshire County Council’s Sure Start Children’s Centre programme helps children and their families make a healthy and happy start from the earliest years of life. There are currently 82 centres in the county which are run by a range of lead agencies including schools, district councils, leisure providers, local and national private and voluntary organisations. Hertfordshire’s Children’s Centres perform very well in Ofsted inspections and we have achieved above the national average for numbers of centres rated good or outstanding.

Background
In 2012 and 2014 we asked the public for feedback on our children’s centre programme, including how it might be delivered in future and your ideas on how to reduce costs and improve value for money. The majority of responses were in favour of maintaining all 82 centres because of their community knowledge, and to allow ease of access to services. Respondents were also clear that they would like children’s centres to work much more closely with health visitors, GPs, midwives and schools as part of a comprehensive local offer of support for young children and their families.

In response to this feedback we have developed a set of proposals for the children’s centre programme after 2015, with three major elements:

• retaining all 82 of Hertfordshire’s Children’s Centres
• grouping children’s centres together
• increasing the integration between services delivered through children’s centres and those delivered by local health teams and schools.

How we propose to change the system
Hertfordshire’s Children’s Centre programme is operating well, but we know it could be even better. We have contracts in place with the lead agencies which run our centres, and our current contracts are due for renewal. The new contracts will be in place from April 2015 to March 2018. As part B contracts according European procurement legislation, we intend to award contracts through a mix of in house provision, social enterprise companies and open competition.

The new contracts must reflect the fact that, like services across the county council and the public sector, savings need to be found across central and direct costs in the children’s centre budget. A 13 per cent reduction is planned. When we spoke to centres many felt that this reduction would be manageable, and would not impact significantly on the frontline delivery of services. Moreover we remain committed to retaining all 82 centres.

Amendments to contracts will focus on the arrangements we have in place to manage the programme. In particular some of the children’s centre area boundaries can be confusing for parents and mean that professionals from partner agencies have to liaise with a number of centres.

Feedback received from the public suggests that grouping centres together would help to improve our programme. Grouping would mean that several centres operate under a single lead agency and share management and administration. However each children’s centre would still retain its identify and service delivery.

Working with other services
We have already begun to join up the work of children’s centres and health visitors, and a new agreement is now in place to support this. We are working with Clinical Commissioning Groups to see how we can support families when their children move on to school provision to enhance educational outcomes.

Other key partners that work with children’s centres include local voluntary and community groups, adult learning providers, Job Centre Plus, mental health services, Citizens Advice Bureau, and many others. By working together this provides the right support to families at the right time.
As a result of grouping:

- The lead agencies which run our centres would be able to make savings by reducing spending on managerial arrangements rather than on service provision.
- Some services will be more cost effective because they will be offered to more people across a wider area.

You can see how we propose to group centres in this document.

Importantly, the changes we are proposing would not impact significantly on the range of services offered locally. As now, the services children’s centres offer, the venues they use to deliver these and the times when they are available will vary over time, to match changes in local needs.

Our consultation about the Hertfordshire children’s centre programme

We want to know what you think of our proposals. We believe they will make the Hertfordshire Children’s Centre programme an even more effective service for families across the county, but we need your feedback. The review of our proposals will run from 23 June 2014 to 18 August 2014.

The questions we would like you to respond to are the following:

1. Does the proposal of grouping children’s centres appear to be the best way to maintain the level of current provision and achieve the required savings?
2. If not, please tell us how we could achieve this through a different model.
3. If we proceed with the groupings described, do you believe access to local children’s centre services will be improved for parents and carers?
4. If we proceed with the groupings described, do you believe it will be easier for health professionals and schools to work more closely with children’s centres?
5. If you support grouping centres, but disagree with the groups we have proposed, please tell us what you would suggest instead, and why.

How you can participate in our consultation

Throughout the consultation there will be a number of places where you can get more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public meetings</th>
<th>Ten public meetings will be held around the county.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monday 7 July, 10am-11.30am - Mill Green Golf Club, Gypsy Lane, Welwyn Garden City AL7 4TY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tuesday 8 July, 10am-11.30am - Wodson Park Leisure Centre, Wadesmill Rd, Ware, SG12 0UQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tuesday 8 July, 7pm-8.30pm - Flamstead End Hall, Albemarle Ave, Cheshunt, EN8 0EY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wednesday 9 July, 10am-11.30am - Robertson House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wednesday 9 July, 7pm-8.30pm - Mill Green Golf Club, Gypsy Lane, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 4TY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thursday 10 July, 7pm-8.30pm - Robertson House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Friday 11 July, 10am-11.30am - South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1JF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monday 14 July, 10am-11.30am - The Fairway Inn, Rickmansworth Golf Course, Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, WD3 1QL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monday 14 July, 7pm-8.30pm - Stanborough Centre, 609 St Albans Rd, Watford, WD25 9JL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tuesday 15 July, 10am-11.30am - Stanborough Centre, 609 St Albans Rd, Watford, WD25 9JL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There will only be room for a limited number of attendees at these sessions. Please book online if you would like to attend. www.hertsdirect.org/ccreview
Local meetings
We have offered support so that, should they wish, children’s centres can hold local consultation meetings. Please ask at your local centre for more information.

FAQs
We will be supplying information regarding the consultation process and proposals on an FAQ section of our website. This will be updated throughout the process. Please find this information at [www.hertsdirect.org/ccreview](http://www.hertsdirect.org/ccreview).

You can respond to our review in the following ways.

### Online

Please visit [www.hertsdirect.org/ccreview](http://www.hertsdirect.org/ccreview) to fill out the questionnaire online.

The Equalities Impact Assessment is also available online. This will be updated throughout the consultation.

### Off-line

You can return paper copies of the consultation questionnaire to:
Children’s Centre Review
Childhood Support Services
County Hall, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG13 8DF

or hand in at your local children’s centre.

You can pick up a paper copy of our consultation questionnaire at:
- your local children’s centre
- your local library
- by phoning the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4052.

If you want to contact us for more information about the consultation then write to:
Children’s Centre Review
Childhood Support Services
County Hall
Hertford
Hertfordshire
SG13 8DF

Alternatively you can email: childrenscentrereview@hertfordshire.gov.uk or phone the Family Information Service on 0300 123 4052.

**What happens next**

The review ends on 18 August 2014. The county council will then review proposals and feedback, and publish a final decision.

The final decision will be based on Hertfordshire County Council’s legal duties in relation to children’s centres and the completed Equality Impact Assessment, as well as the outcomes of this review.

**Thank you for your feedback.**

“Most daughter and I look forward to going to the sessions every week and it’s an essential part of her development.”

“The children’s centre has helped me to gain some confidence back & has been helpful to talk to someone.”

“Fantastic children’s centre, lots of activities and always someone on hand for advice and support.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Group name</th>
<th>Children’s centre name</th>
<th>Mid year estimate 2011 0-5yr population</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Bishops Stortford and Sawbridgeworth | EH3 Buttercups Children’s Centre  
EH4 Windhill Children’s Centre  
EH5 Little Squirrels Children’s Centre  
EH6 Duckling Green Children’s Centre | 870  
912  
627  
641 | 2409 |
| 2  | Royston and Buntingford          | NH1 Royston and Villages Children’s Centre  
EH1 Bramble Hill Children’s Centre | 1168  
636 | 1804 |
| 3  | Hertford and East Herts north    | EH10 Churchfields Children’s Centre  
EH2 Beane Valley Children’s Centre  
EH9 Hertford Selections Children’s Centre | 987  
569  
1216 | 2772 |
| 4  | Ware                             | EH7 Silver Birches Children’s Centre  
EH8 Ash Valley Children’s Centre | 717  
1124 | 1841 |
| 5  | Hoddesdon                        | B1 Three Parks Children’s Centre  
B2 The Ark Children’s Centre | 867  
851 | 1718 |
| 6  | Broxbourne mid                   | B3 High Trees Children’s Centre  
B4 Longfield Children’s Centre | 986  
891 | 1877 |
| 7  | Broxbourne south                 | B5 Allsorts Children’s Centre  
B6 Arlesdene Nursery School and Children’s Centre  
B7 Greenfield Children’s Centre | 668  
888  
956 | 2512 |
| 8  | Letchworth and Baldock           | NH3 Icknield Children’s Centre  
NH4 Chestnut Tree Children’s Centre  
NH5 Lime Tree Children’s Centre  
NH2 Holly Blue Children’s Centre | 792  
748  
514  
868 | 2922 |
| 9  | Hitchin and rural                | NH6 Oughton Children’s Centre  
NH7 York Road Children’s Centre  
NH8 Bluebell Children’s Centre | 939  
921  
891 | 2751 |
| 10 | Stevenage north                  | NH9 Strawberry Fields Children’s Centre  
S1 Bridge Road Children’s Centre  
S2 St Nicholas and Martins Wood Children’s Centre  
S3 Bedwell Children’s Centre | 944  
1139  
998  
920 | 4001 |
| 11 | Stevenage south                  | S4 Chells and Manor Children’s Centre  
S5 Shephall Children’s Centre  
S6 Broadwater Children’s Centre  
NH10 Barleyfields Children’s Centre | 830  
937  
818  
525 | 3110 |
| 12 | Welwyn and WGC west              | WH1 Tenterfield Nursery and Children’s Centre  
WH2 Applecroft Children’s Centre | 416  
765 | 1181 |
| 13 | Welwyn Garden City               | WH3 Waterside Children’s centre  
WH4 Oak Tree Children’s Centre  
WH5 Creswick Children’s Centre | 816  
849  
945 | 2610 |
| 14 | Hatfield                         | WH6 Howe Dell Children’s Centre  
WH7 Birchwood Children’s Centre  
WH8 De Havilland Children’s centre  
WH9 Great Wood Children’s Centre | 720  
971  
704  
558 | 2953 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Group name</th>
<th>Children’s centre name</th>
<th>Mid year estimate 2011 0-5yr population</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Hertsmere east</td>
<td>H1 PB1 Children’s Centre</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H2 Furzefield Children’s Centre</td>
<td>477</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Borehamwood</td>
<td>H3 Shenley Village Children’s Centre</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>3402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H4 The BECC</td>
<td>1394</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H5 Borehamwood Link Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1634</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Harpenden and rural</td>
<td>SA1 Lamer Fields Children’s Centre</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>3660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA2 Harpenden Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1083</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA3 Harpenden Children’s Centre at Southdown</td>
<td>1240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA4 Redbourn and Villages Children’s Centre</td>
<td>749</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>St Albans east</td>
<td>SA5 The Alban Way at Marshalswick Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1635</td>
<td>2974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA8 The Alban Way Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1339</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>St Albans west</td>
<td>SA6 St Albans Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>2638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA7 Sopwell and Verulam Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1048</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>St Albans south</td>
<td>SA10 London Colney Children’s Centre</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>2091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA9 Park Street and St Stephens Children’s Centre</td>
<td>635</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H6 Radlett Link Children’s Centre</td>
<td>593</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Dacorum west</td>
<td>D1 Orchard Children’s Centre</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D2 Little Feet Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1044</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D3 Little Hands Children’s Centre</td>
<td>777</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Hemel central</td>
<td>D4 Galley Hill Children’s Centre</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>4666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D5 Heath Lane Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D6 WorldShapers Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1048</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D7 Windmill Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1414</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Dacorum rural</td>
<td>D8 Green Lane Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>2464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D9 The Lanes Children’s Centre</td>
<td>509</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D10 Three Villages Children’s Centre</td>
<td>743</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Watford north</td>
<td>W1 Leavesden Children’s Centre</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>3823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W2 Berrygrove Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W3 Beechfield Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1246</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3R1 Abbots Langley Children’s Centre</td>
<td>593</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Watford south</td>
<td>W4 Littlebury Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1117</td>
<td>3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W5 Sunshine Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W6 Westfield Children’s Centre</td>
<td>1138</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Three Rivers west</td>
<td>3R3 Rickmansworth Children’s Centre (+61)</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>2331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3R6 Chorleywood and Loudwater Children’s Centre</td>
<td>660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3R2 Croxley Green Children’s Centre</td>
<td>750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Bushey and South Oxhey</td>
<td>3R4 Ebury Children’s Centre (-61)</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>3304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3R5 South Oxhey Children’s Centre</td>
<td>940</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H7 Bushey Mill Children’s Centre</td>
<td>809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H8 The Reddings Children’s Centre</td>
<td>787</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Does the proposal of grouping children’s centres appear to be the best way to maintain the level of current provision and achieve the required savings?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know

2. If not, please tell us how we could achieve this through a different model


3. If we proceed with the groupings described, do you believe access to local children’s centre services will be improved for parents and carers?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know

4. If we proceed with the groupings described, do you believe it will be easier for health professionals and schools to work more closely with children’s centres?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know

5. If you support grouping centres, but disagree with the groups we have proposed, please tell us what you would suggest instead, and why.


Please return your questionnaire to: Children’s Centre Review, Childhood Support Services, County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8DF or complete online at www.hertsdirect.org/ccreview
About You

1) Please select which option best describes your main interest in Hertfordshire’s Children’s Centres (please tick one box only):

☐ Parent/carer of child 0-5 years, who uses children’s centre services
☐ Expectant parent
☐ Children’s centre staff
☐ Children’s centre lead agency
☐ Children’s centre advisory board member
☐ Early years provider
☐ School
☐ Member of public/local community
☐ Partner organisation
☐ County/District/Parish/Town Councillor
☐ GP
☐ Midwife
☐ CCG representative
☐ Health visitor
☐ Voluntary/community group
☐ Other – please state: ________________________________

2) Postcode: ________________________________

3) Gender

☐ Female  ☐ Male

4) Age

☐ Under 18  ☐ 35 – 44
☐ 18 – 24  ☐ 45 – 54
☐ 25 – 34  ☐ 55 and over

5) Ethnicity

☐ White British
☐ White Irish
☐ Traveller of Irish Heritage
☐ Gypsy/Roma
☐ Caribbean
☐ African
☐ Any other Black background
☐ Indian
☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi
☐ Any other Asian Background
☐ White & Black Caribbean
☐ White & Black African
☐ White & Asian
☐ Any other Mixed background
☐ Chinese
☐ Any other Ethnic group – please specify: ________________________________

6) Do you consider yourself to have a disability (including learning disabilities)

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Prefer not to say