

Section 4

Equality

Analysis Toolkit

Children and Family Wellbeing Service v5

For Decision Making Items

November 2018

Question 1 - What is the nature of and are the key components of the proposal being presented?

To make savings of £1.25m to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service by ceasing service delivery from a number of settings, including some school based settings.

The proposal follows on from a Cabinet Report submitted in January 2018 where it was agreed that £1.25 million savings would be made from the Service's budget.

The Children and Family Wellbeing Service in Lancashire identifies as early as possible when a child, young person or their family needs support, helping them to access services to meet their needs, preventing any problems getting worse and reducing the demand for specialist support services. Working together with key partners, they make sure that they have maximum impact on achieving positive outcomes for families. The Children and Family Wellbeing Service prioritises vulnerable groups, individuals and communities, based on assessed levels of need under the following themes:

- Safeguarding and supporting the vulnerable;
- Supporting family life;
- Enabling learning;
- Preparing for work;
- Improving community safety;
- Promoting health and wellbeing;
- Developing healthier places.

The Service works with the people they support in different ways and places like:

- One to one support between a worker and a family
- Group based sessions held in different community buildings, like a village hall
- Outreach in places like homes, at school or a local café
- Their work with young people can even be on the streets.

The Service needs to identify the most effective and efficient use of buildings to support their service delivery.

In developing this proposal, the Service has looked at evidence of how it has made a difference to children, young people and families and how the service could become more effective. The Service have focussed on how they could provide support direct to people in their home settings where possible and delivering in community settings where best. This would enable them to become more people focussed rather than buildings based. By doing this, the Service plans to reduce the number of buildings where they are based and work more flexibly in the community.

As part of this proposal the Service also intend to commission a 12-19 years youth offer through the voluntary, community and faith sector to support our delivery of services to young people across Lancashire.

Question 2 - Scope of the Proposal

Is the proposal likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected?

It is proposed that going forward the Service will retain service delivery at 57 settings. It is proposed to cease delivering the service from 19 buildings, although this includes putting into effect decisions to no longer use premises taken in the 2016 Property Strategy alongside proposals to no longer use other identified buildings to deliver the children and Family Wellbeing Service.

The proposal will affect each District of the county but specific buildings have been proposed to no longer be used for delivering the Children and Family Wellbeing service. These settings/buildings have been identified after consideration of a range of criteria including:

- How easy it is to get to the buildings;
- How much need there is for our services in different places;
- How much each buildings is used and what it is used for;
- How suitable the buildings are for delivering our services;

- Each building's running costs and condition;
- What other Services are provided in the building;
- The likely impact on the local community.

The advantages and disadvantages of not using each building have also been considered in light of this.

The buildings proposed to cease delivering the Children and Family Wellbeing service at the beginning of the consultation and any possible nearest alternative provision identified are:

- Lancaster - Halton Children Centre (alternatives Lune Park Centre approx. 2.8 miles or White Cross approx. 3.3 miles away);
- Lancaster - Appletree Children Centre (alternatives White Cross approx. 1.9 miles or Lune Park Centre approx. 2.2. miles away);
- Wyre - West View Children Centre - The Anchorage, Fleetwood (alternatives Flakefleet approx. 0.8 or The Zone, Milton Street approx. 1.5 miles away);
- Wyre - Kemp Street Children Centre, Fleetwood (alternatives Flakefleet approx. 0.8 miles or The Zone, Milton Street approx. 0.4 miles away);
- Preston - Star Young Peoples Centre, Ashton, (currently no realistic alternatives as Moor Nook is approx. 4.1 miles away and building alterations would be needed for 12-19+ provision at Riverbank Children Centre 0.5 miles away);
- Preston - Cherry Tree Children Centre, (alternative Preston East Children Centre approx. 1.7 miles away);
- Preston - Sunshine satellite Children Centre, New Hall Lane, (alternative Stoneygate Children Centre approx. 1 mile away);
- West Lancashire - St Johns Children Centre, (alternative The Zone, West Lancashire approx. 2 miles away);
- Hyndburn - Fairfield Children Centre, (alternative The Zone in Accrington approx. 1.2 miles away);
- Ribble Valley - Ribblesdale Children Centre, Ribble Valley (alternative The Zone in Clitheroe approx. 0.5 miles away);

- Ribble Valley - Willows Park Children Centre, Ribble Valley (alternative Longridge Young Peoples Centre approx. 0.3 miles away);
- Rossendale - Whitworth Children Centre, (alternative Whitworth Young Peoples Centre approx. 0.3 miles away);
- Burnley - Whitegate Children Centre, Burnley (alternatives Padiham Young Peoples Centre approx. 0.7 miles or Ightenhill Children Centre approx. 1.6 miles away);
- Burnley - Chai Children Centre, (alternatives Reedley Hallows Children Centre approx. 0.6 miles or Stoneyholme and Daneshouse Centre approx. 0.5 miles away);
- Pendle - Earby Community Centre, Pendle (alternative at Barnoldswick Young People Centre approx. 2.7 miles away is unlikely to be realistic due to public transport availability);
- Pendle - Walton Lane Children Centre. (alternative The Zone, Nelson approx. 0.7 miles away).

In the assessment process, consideration was also given to alternative settings which could potentially be available to people, young people and children we support and those identified/prioritised are listed above, along with opportunities for mobile and outreach service delivery.

Question 3 – Protected Characteristics Potentially Affected

Could the proposal have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

And what information is available about these groups in the County's population or as service users/customers?

In broad terms, the protected characteristics most likely to be affected by the proposal are:

Age – particularly children and young people given the scope of the service. Specifically 16 of the settings proposed to cease delivering service include provision for 0-11 year old children and four premises include provision for 12-19+ young people (Earby Community Centre has 0-19+ provision).

Pregnancy and Maternity – Children Centres provide support services for women who are pregnant or on maternity leave so the proposal will affect people from this protected characteristic group. The service provides a range of "parent to be" courses for targeted pregnant mums, particularly teenage parents to be and a range of support services for parents/carers of babies and toddlers.

Disability – disabled young people can potentially use the Young Peoples service until their 25th birthday so may be more adversely impacted than other groups. The service has a specific service offer for children with special educational needs and disabilities providing **at minimum** two group based opportunities per week dedicated to children and young people with SEND, in each District area, once focussed around children (0-11 years) and a second focussed on young people (over 11 years and to 25 years). Of those premises specified in the proposal, Ashton Young People's Centre (Star Centre in Ashton) hosts a young disabled persons' session at present.

As part of the services' targeted early help offer each district will also deliver a parenting programme opportunity (lasting 10-12 weeks) dedicated to parents and carers of children and young people with SEND at least once a year, in addition to the one to one targeted family support and group based programmes which are accessible to all parents and carers.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment – the service provides a range of support to LGBT young people. The focus group element of consultation/engagement has identified that the POUT

group for LGBT young people is, however, the only local authority provision for their community across Lancashire and it is running at full capacity and couldn't accommodate any new members, though they felt with support they could set up more local groups. They were also concerned that there is no provision for 11-12 year olds who were increasingly vocal in questioning their sexuality.

Sex/Gender – the service provides some boys only and girls only sessions for the 12-19 (25) age group which focus on issues such as health and relationships. Culturally, single sex groups can be welcomed by some communities.

The service also provide Dad's Only groups where fathers and children can engage in activities together, particularly where the fathers are the primary carers.

Race/Ethnicity – English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are run from a number of centres with this element being commented on in relation to the proposal for Fairfield Children Centre in Hyndburn. However, for some communities the availability of 1 to 1 support at home is seen as removing a potential barrier to use of the service – e.g. for communities close to the Chai Centre. In Preston there is a Polish Group supported by the Service, where members of the Polish community can come together socially for help, support and advice.

The Children and Family Wellbeing service also has a long tradition of being inclusive and of supporting young people – e.g. who are LGBT - and of raising awareness and understanding of equality and cohesion issues across its service delivery and workforce.

Question 4 – Engagement/Consultation

How have people/groups been involved in or engaged with in developing this proposal?

The proposal was subject to an 8-week public consultation which ran from 6 June to 3 August 2018.

For this consultation paper copies of the questionnaire were made available in buildings where Children and Family Wellbeing services are delivered. An electronic version of the consultation questionnaire was available at www.lancashire.gov.uk. In addition a series of focus groups/consultation workshops with people and young people we support took place in July 2018 facilitated by the organisation Creative Exchange. 569 stakeholders with an interest in the Children and Family Wellbeing service were alerted to the consultation and how they could participate in it by email at the start of the consultation period.

The consultation questionnaire outlined the proposal for the Children and Family Wellbeing service and then identified by district the 57 buildings proposed to continue delivering Children and Family Wellbeing services and the 19 buildings proposed to no longer deliver Children and Family Wellbeing services.

In total 729 completed questionnaires were received, 271 paper questionnaires and 458 on-line.

In terms of the demographic breakdown of respondents who responded to these questions:

- 89% of respondents were residents of Lancashire;
- 78% of respondents were female and 19% were male. Although county council consultations often have more women respondents this is a comparatively high response and significantly higher than the county's gender profile. This probably reflects the nature of the service and of the facilities at some premises included in the consultation.
- 1% of respondents identified as being Transgender, which is a slightly higher response rate than for many other consultations where this protected characteristic is included in demographic questions.
- In terms of age: 3% of respondents were aged under 16, 2% were aged 16-19. 40% were aged 20-34 and 47% were aged 35-64. 5% of respondents were aged 65-74 and 1% were aged over 75. Given the nature of the service, the age profile of consultation respondents is not unexpected.

- 6% of respondents identified as having a disability or being a Deaf person which is a little lower than for other consultations and might have been expected to be higher given the nature of the service offer. However, 11% of consultation respondents said they had disabled children or young people in their household which is higher than the 2% figure recorded in many other service consultations.
- 3% of respondents had no children but were expecting, a slightly higher level of response than for many other service consultations. 50% of respondents had children aged under 5 in their household which is higher than in many consultations but reflective of the children centre element of the service. 24% had children aged 5-8, 19% had young people aged 12-16 in their household, 17% had children aged 9-11, 9% had young people aged 17-19 in their household and 16% of respondents had no young people in their household.
- 85% of respondents to the consultation were White, 9% identified as Asian or Asian British, 1% identified as Black or Black British, 1% identified as Mixed Race/Ethnicity and 1% as Other. The percentage of respondents who are Asian or Asian British is higher than for many other service consultations whilst the percentage of White respondents is lower. The response rate is also slightly different from the Lancashire population where in the 2011 Census 92% of the population was identified as White and 7.8% as from BME communities.
- 9% of respondents also identified as being Muslim in the religion or belief protected characteristic question, a higher figure than in many service consultations and as recorded in the 2011 Census. The percentage of Christian consultation participants was lower than in many other service consultations and the percentage who had no religion was slightly higher, other religions were represented in broadly similar terms to other service consultations where this question is included.
- 2% of consultation respondents identified as being bisexual which is slightly higher than in many other service consultations. Other response rates for this question were broadly in keeping

with many other service consultations where the sexual orientation question is included.

- 20% of respondents identified as being from Pendle, 15% from Burnley, 14% from Lancaster and 12% from Preston of those who answered this question. The lowest percentages of respondents were from South Ribble (2%), Wyre and Fylde at both 3% and Chorley at 4%.

About 55% of respondents said that they go to a building to use a Children and Family Wellbeing service about once a week or more. 21% of respondents never go to a building to use a Children and Family Wellbeing service.

Of those who had used a building, 62% of those who had used a service in the last 12 months had used baby, toddler or child activities or groups, 43% had used information, advice or support and 34% had used family and parenting support. Other items of relevance to this analysis include 22% of respondents had used groups and activities for young people, 21% had accessed individual or group support around emotional health and wellbeing for a parent or their children, 13% had accessed specialist support for families with children with disabilities and 11% accessed help with work, education, training or welfare benefits.

Respondents were asked if they had used any of the buildings in the last 12 months which the service proposes to continue using. 55% of respondents had used these buildings and 40% had not used any of these buildings.

Similarly respondents were asked if they had used any of the buildings in the past 12 months which the service proposed to no longer deliver its services from. 51% of respondents had used these buildings and 46% of respondents had not.

About 14% of respondents said that if the proposal happened they would go to a Children and Family Wellbeing service building less often than they do now and 22% said that they would not go at all. About 14% of respondents said they would go to a building to use a Children and Family Wellbeing service more often than they do now if

the proposal happened, and 39% of respondents said they would go about as often as they do now.

When asked how the proposal would affect them, if it happened, 50% of respondents said it would be more difficult/impossible for people in the local area to access Children and Family Wellbeing services and get the support they need and 29% said that the centre is important for the local community. 14% of respondents said the proposal would have no effect on them, 11% of respondents said they would lose their jobs whilst 10% said it would free up space in the building to be used in other ways.

About 27% of respondents agree with the proposal and 54% said that they disagree with it.

When asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal 47% of respondents said that centres provide valuable support to local communities and their family, 16% supported the merging or consolidating of centres to improve the utilisation of facilities, 15% said the proposed changes will make it difficult/impossible to access these facilities, 15% said it will negatively impact on the most vulnerable families and 14% felt it would have a negative impact on other services provided within the building (e.g. nursery) possibly leading to their closure and job losses. Other responses with a particular equalities reference included 8% of respondents who said the proposals will reduce access to services supporting young childrens' education and development, 6% said SEND children are well supported currently/will lose access to support/change will be difficult, 5% said that budgets should not be cut for services to children and young people, 4% of respondents said that the proposal will mean that children will not get their free early years entitlement and 3% said that closures will lead to more anti-social behaviour and other negative impacts.

Finally respondents were asked if there was anything else we needed to consider or that could be done differently. 22% of respondents said that money should be found from elsewhere in the county council's budget to keep the centres open/invest in them, 18% said people may miss out on the support they need, 17% said that the future impact of the closures should be considered, 17% said stop closing centres as

we need more of them and 16% said find alternative uses/options for the buildings rather than merging/closing them. Other responses with a specific protected characteristics element included 12% of respondents who said the centres/service provides a support network for single parents/new mums; 7% said the existence of these centres helps prevent anti-social behaviour, 5% said the local centre is easily accessible especially for those without their own transport or with mobility issues and 2% who said consider the impact on those that require help/support (vulnerable/disadvantaged, etc).

A number of responses mentioned some centres specifically but this analysis must exercise some caution in using this information as although, for example, 92 respondents mentioned Walton Lane Children Centre and 38 mentioned Willows Park Children Centre, the numbers of specific mentions alone may not fully reflect the value placed on any individual centre. However, comments included in the consultation report referring to a specific building which have a specific relevance to protected characteristics are summarised below:

Walton Lane Children Centre – many respondents felt that removing the service may leave the nursery at risk of closure, that the centre supported a high number of children with special educational needs and disabilities and that other centres/providers in the area may not be able to meet the needs of children using the centre.

The Chai Centre Children Centre – this is felt to be positioned in the heart of the community and to be easily accessible by those without their own transport. Respondents noted that the centre supports minorities and those with disabilities.

Sharoe Green Library and Cherry Tree Children Centre – respondents noted the good parking facilities and that the combination of a library and children centre in one building works well.

Fairfield Children Centre – respondents were concerned that removing services from this centre might leave the nursery and other services at risk of closure. There was also a feeling that other services in the area may not be able to meet the needs of the children using this centre with children with disabilities and those who speak little English given

as examples. Many people who use the centre walk to it and the alternatives are not a comfortable walking distance away so people may not be able to use them.

Appletree Children Centre – respondents commented that the alternative suggestion of White Cross is in the centre of a business park that isn't easily accessible for any part of the community and isn't close to the retail centre whereas there is an "abundance" of parking near the Appletree centre and a number of other services can be accessed at the building.

Willows Park Children Centre – a number of respondents, though not all, supported the proposal to move services to Longridge Young Peoples Centre.

Other responses have been received from borough and parish councils, an MP, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust which provides services in a number of the Children and Family Wellbeing service's buildings, and other organisations and individuals. Many expressed concerns about the potential impact on services of withdrawing from the buildings listed in the consultation or other service buildings which respondents also identified. A number of the individual email responses identified the importance of support for "new mums" from the centres and peer support from meeting people at "stay and play" or other sessions. The ability to access locally health provision and clinics was also identified, along with breastfeeding support, access to dads' groups and the help such groups can be to the mental health of some of those attending. Others mentioned that it brought parents together from all backgrounds who were experiencing similar situations/concerns or anxieties and the centres helped new parents and others feel less isolated.

The focus group element of the consultation sessions were held in each of the 12 Districts and additional sessions were held for specific targeted groups, e.g. young people, LGBT young people and parents of families of children and young adults using the SEND service. All were held in accessible premises and at times when service users were more likely to be able to attend. Attendance did vary, it was suggested this was possibly because some areas may be more

affected by the proposals than others. The report identified that those who attended were passionate about and very interested in the service.

Some of the themes of most relevance to this analysis are:

Positive Outcomes from services – people mentioned a growth in confidence, self-esteem and the ability to communicate with others for both parents and children; improved mental health and support in coping with stress – making a huge difference to families; help in identifying health and mental health problems such as depression; information and advice about parenting; creating and strengthening bonds between parents and young children; the opportunity to share problems in a non-judgemental setting and to help each other find solutions, particularly for parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities; access to skills for employment such as interview and CV skills; referrals and signposting to other services such as debt and benefits advice, cooking and healthy eating, health clinics, foodbanks, housing and eviction advice, sleep challenges, etc; the ability to take up employment opportunities; breaking down social isolation, providing opportunities to socialise and making long-lasting friendships that continue beyond the centre for parents and children; building trust through friendships and communities, between parents and amongst children and young people; increasing educational attainment at school; preparing children for school and spotting educational development needs at an early stage of a child's life; facilitating access to further and higher education opportunities; access to physical resources and facilities such as messy play, sensory rooms, IT equipment, safe outside play space, etc; safe space for children to develop including in holiday periods and respite and time to breathe for parents.

Negative Aspects of the service – many of these were specific to individual buildings but some of the more general themes which have an equalities element included the lack of fit for purpose baby changing facilities and disabled young people's changing facilities; lack of clarity about opening hours of buildings and what services are on offer across all locations and opening hours that sometimes didn't

match users' needs particularly for young people who were in full time education.

The impact of the planned closures – comments on the impact of the proposed withdrawal of service delivery in the proposed settings with an equalities theme/relevance included: increased isolation and deteriorating communities; declining mental health and increased strain on already overstretched mental health services; an increase in health problems in parents and children, particularly relevant to Lancashire which has one of the highest infant mortality rates in England it was said; a drop in the number of people using the service because of transport difficulties; a lack of diagnoses and early interventions to address problems such as speech and language development; a knock on effect on employment with some parents having to give up work or find new jobs to fit around pick up and drop off times/patterns; reducing use of other services such as neighbouring nursery schools which could in turn endanger their sustainability; reduced educational attainment by the children whose parents can't adapt to the service changes and a knock on effect on schools and other pupils; loss of supportive relationships;

Mitigating the negative impacts – suggestions made included providing transport for groups, including possibly the loan of car seats (although the limitations of group travel were also acknowledged); subsidising transport costs, for example by providing free day tickets for the bus; identifying other local venues that are more convenient for existing users; or offering outreach sessions in communities where buildings might be closing.

It is not anticipated that formal staff consultation will be required as many of the premises identified provide sessional services delivered by staff who are based elsewhere.

Question 5 – Analysing Impact

Could this proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way? This

pays particular attention to the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of protected characteristics;
- To advance equality of opportunity for those who share protected characteristics;
- To encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life;
- To contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not/community cohesion;

The Service has emphasised throughout that it will continue to deliver services in areas where buildings are proposed to no longer be used, although the service may be delivered in a different way or at a different location or time. It is the view of the Service that there was no suggestion of, and there was no intention to, close the majority of these buildings. Only a small number of the buildings included are solely used by the Children and Family Wellbeing Service – e.g. Ashton/Star Young Peoples Centre, – and these buildings may close.

In the majority of cases other services also use the buildings. It is the service's view that any other services delivered in these buildings should not be unduly affected by this proposal. Some consultation responses and consultation workshop feedback may not have fully appreciated this or fully reflected this position and have perceived that services will cease and buildings will close entirely in all cases.

It also appeared that some respondents had not recognised that the service already delivers services through outreach work in places like individual's homes, at schools or in local cafes, etc as alternative venues. This may allay some concerns about having to travel to or other barriers to using alternative settings.

There will remain a level of universal service available to those assessed as at Level 1 on the Lancashire Continuum of Need in the form of information, advice, and guidance and signposting only. This

will include libraries and other venues, some of which are adjacent to or near buildings which the service proposes to no longer use for its service delivery.

Other recent budget decisions concerning staffing have meant the service stretching to maintain reach and statutory universal commitments as part of the children centre core offer becoming extremely difficult with this level of capacity reduction. Therefore suggestions for promoting the Children and Family Wellbeing service more widely in order to increase usage, cannot be taken forward. The service targets and prioritises children, young people, parents and families most in need, particularly where it thinks that early help will make the biggest difference, so wider promotion to the public would not be appropriate. The new structure of the service in terms of its buildings delivery will allow the service to function more efficiently with teams no longer being split between different buildings.

Those assessed as being on Level 2 of the Lancashire Continuum of Need, are prioritised with a greater level of support being available to them. Included amongst the prioritised groups are those with disabilities or SEND, those affected by domestic abuse, groups such as Travellers, asylum seekers or refugees – these groups represent those with the disability, ethnicity and sex/gender protected characteristics.

The service will deliver 1 to 1 support, often at home, for those who live in areas affected by the proposal who require it. In a number of cases this will benefit individuals, and particularly in some communities – e.g. those of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage in the east of Lancashire – this has been a positive way to remove barriers to accessing the service and so contributes to advancing equality of opportunity for those individuals. More widely, the vast majority of casework for individuals is carried out on a one to one basis in the person's own home.

Potentially the greatest impact of the proposals may be on the group work element of service delivery. Although there will be an outreach service delivery offer, some parents/families, children and young people the service supports may face increased travel time to use

building based group work services and some may be unable to use them due to the time or cost of reaching an alternative venue. The service has noted that the maximum journey to an alternative building to access group work services (of those building proposed for cessation of CFW services) is less than 3 miles, with the majority being less than 1 mile. Those who are heavily pregnant or with very young babies may be particularly affected by this, as could young people and those who have disabilities where travelling independently may present increased difficulties.

Some group work sessions are already over-subscribed and potentially increased demand on a smaller number of children centres or other resources may exacerbate this difficulty and impact on some people's ability to participate in some activities. As parts of the service assist with developing skills for parenting, employability, etc this may impact people's equality of opportunity and ability to participate in public life adversely. A number of consultation responses and comments within the focus groups referred to this concern.

There were also comments that the service contributes to a range of education related activities such as identifying some developmental issues for young children, helping children become school ready and encouraging parents to access further or higher education and other types of training. Employment related help such as CV writing or interview skills training are also available. Should this become less easily available to individuals, this may also impact adversely on the advancing of opportunity PSED general aim and its related aim of encouraging participation in public life.

A reduction in buildings used by the service and any subsequent impact on access to group work sessions, may increase social isolation particularly for the more vulnerable service users, coupled with the loss of peer support, mixing with people from different backgrounds and social status and the value of resources and support/help/advice. Outreach sessions may assist people to access services in small numbers but potentially it may not fully replace the larger group or peer support sessions currently available locally. Mixing with people from different backgrounds and/or social status contributes towards community cohesion and fostering good relations

between communities. Some consultation respondents, focus group members and email comments received have referenced this point and spoke of how trust had developed between individuals and different communities in some areas.

Conversely, where people now need to access services at a different location there may, at least initially, be concerns about building up relationships with people from different parts of a town/district, or from different ethnic or social backgrounds which may make some people reluctant to use or anxious about using alternative provision. There may also be possibilities that staff people work with might also change and it may take time to build up rapport, relationships and confidence with them. If groups are larger because there are fewer buildings offering these sessions, this might also create anxiety for some people.

The possibility of increased anti social behaviour resulting from the proposed changes, was raised by a small number of consultation respondents. However, any rise in anti social behaviour can have an adverse effect on fostering good relations or community cohesion particularly if there is a perception that a particular protected characteristics group or part of a group is responsible for these activities.

Consultation respondents and consultation workshop respondents highlighted the importance of some facilities such as centres having sensory rooms or other activities and that services such as ESOL classes were available. These have particular significance for some protected characteristics groups – e.g. children and young people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority communities – and can contribute to advancing equality of opportunity and assist in improving participation in public life.

A number of respondents referred to concerns about reductions in or the loss of service for SEND children and young people, their parents and families. The service believes that in most cases the proposals will not affect the current SEND offer delivered by the service. 1 to 1 family support for families of children and young people who are SEND is often delivered at the family home. The proposal would also not affect the linked SEND offer (FEE) to children aged 2-4 which some

educational establishments provide. The proposal would mean that the SEND group currently meeting at Ashton Young Peoples Centre would no longer be able to meet there, currently the proposal is to transfer this group to Riverbank Children Centre. This group may be adversely impacted as although travel and the ability to respond to change may vary amongst its members, all will need to become used to a different building where facilities might also be different from those they have been used to.

Whilst a number of potential alternative service buildings have been proposed and identified as being in pram pushing or walking distance of those which will no longer be used, some building adaptations may be required to the alternative venues. This may, at least initially, have an impact on use of the buildings and the range of services on offer within them.

Question 6 –Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of this proposal combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

This proposal comes within 2 years of the Property Strategy which resulted in the ceassation of similar facilities from other service centres. Some users of Children Centres and Young Peoples Centres may have already had to travel further to use the service following on from the Property Strategy's implementation and may now need to use different buildings at different times. Whilst it cannot be said that this will adversely impact all parents, children and young people we support and will require them all to travel further, it may affect some who use the service. This proposal would also see the Property Strategy's proposals to no longer use Great Harwood Young Peoples Centre, Colne Young Peoples Centre and Coppull Children Centre put into effect.

Over recent years the support given by the county council to subsidise non-commercial bus services has changed and has been focussed on

retaining support for weekday services. The reduced support for evening bus services which are not commercially viable could affect the ability of young people to attend alternative buildings where they are reliant on buses to travel there.

The Children and Family Wellbeing service are also currently looking to commission a 12-19 years youth offer through the voluntary community and faith sector to support our delivery of services to young people across Lancashire.

In regards to proposals to no longer use Ashton Young Peoples Centre in particular, this should be viewed alongside the recent decision not to go ahead with the Preston Youth Zone project. This may increase the impact for young people and young disabled people in Preston as the Youth Zone project was proposed to offer a very accessible and inclusive venue.

Lancashire Care Foundation Trust in its consultation response had highlighted the potential impact on the delivery of some of its services which may result from these proposals. Other health service providers may have similar concerns as the children centres were identified as hosting a range of health related support and services or as services which were signposting people to other health related services. There was also a concern that the future viability of some premises – e.g. the Chai Centre – could be in doubt as a result of the proposals. Although it is not anticipated that this should be the outcome of the proposal, the possibility of an impact on other services cannot be entirely dismissed.

Question 7 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of the analysis has the original proposal been changed/amended, if so please describe.

A Task and Finish Officer Group was established to review comments made about specific buildings and the proposal overall. In relation to specific buildings the following responses have been provided:

Walton Lane – there are other SEND services provided by Children and Family Wellbeing Service, e.g. Colourful Voices – and 12-19 SEND support and other support services for SEND children and young people provided by other agencies – e.g. charities;

Willows Park – responses are broadly supportive of the proposal to move services to Longridge Young Peoples Centre;

The Chai Centre – there are currently 3 centres within a mile of each other. Both the remaining buildings are within walking distance of the Chai. Many services are already delivered to people in their own homes rather than using the Chai Centre in response to addressing cultural barriers to service use. The Chai centre will not close as it provides other services and will continue to serve the community.

Sharoe Green library will remain open and offers a universal children's offer. There is a regular bus service/bus route from Sharoe Green library to the alternative facility at Preston East.

Fairfield Children Centre – services will be available at the Park in Accrington and at New Era in the town centre, which are both on bus routes. There are also 0-11 and 12-19 SEND group provision delivered by Children & Family Wellbeing service at New Era and there are other SEND services available in the area provided by other organisations.

Appletree Children Centre - alternative centres are available within walking distance at Lune Park and White Cross Education Centre, White Cross is within walking distance of Lancaster Town Hall. There have also been issues with parking at Appletree Children Centre.

It has been emphasised that the county council does not anticipate any other services withdrawing from the identified buildings or them closing as a result of this proposal in most cases.

Arising from these considerations for 76 buildings it is now proposed that:

- The service will continue to be delivered from 50 buildings.
- The Children and Family Wellbeing Service will no longer be delivered from 12 buildings. These are: Coppull Children Centre,

Colne Young Peoples Centre, Great Harwood Young Peoples Centre, Fairfield Children Centre in Accrington, Appletree Children Centre in Lancaster, Halton Children Centre, Earby Children and Family Wellbeing Centre, Sunshine Children Centre in Preston, Cherry Tree Children Centre in Sharoe Green, Preston, St John's Children Centre in Skelmersdale, The Anchorage Children Centre in Fleetwood and Kemp Street/Fleetwood Children Centre in Fleetwood.

- The proposals are clear on the future of 62 buildings
- There will be further consideration of the future of 14 buildings. Of these the following were included in the original proposal: Whitegate Children Centre, Burnley; The Chai Centre, Burnley; Willows Park Children Centre, Longridge, Ribble Valley; Ribblesdale Children Centre, Ribble Valley; Star/Ashton Young Peoples Centre, Preston; Walton Lane Children Centre, Pendle and Whitworth Children Centre, Rossendale. Their futures will be considered alongside neighbouring buildings which are: Stoneyhome and Daneshouse Centre, Burnley; Padiham Young Peoples Centre; The Zone in Pendle; Riverbank Childrens Centre, Preston; The Zone in Ribble Valley; Longridge Young Peoples Centre; and Whitworth Young Peoples Centre with the possibility of further specific and targeted consultation as to which buildings in the area should no longer be used to deliver the service.

Question 8 - Mitigation

Will any steps be taken to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of the proposal?

The county council does not anticipate any other services withdrawing from the identified buildings as a result of this proposal. There was no suggestion of, and there is no intention to, close most of the buildings which will no longer deliver the Children and Family Wellbeing service. It is also the view of the service that any other services delivered in these buildings should not be unduly affected by these proposals.

Where appropriate, alternative uses will also be sought for the space currently used by the service. It is accepted, however, that a small number of the buildings – e.g. Ashton Young Peoples Centre – do not have other services within them and may close.

The service will continue to be delivered through sessions at buildings and locations which suit best the children, young people and families it supports. This includes:

- The availability of detached, mobile and outreach services as part of the Children and Family Wellbeing Service Offer. The outreach work the service offers takes place at individuals' homes, schools, local cafes or other alternative venues, which should mitigate for many concerns about having to travel to or barriers to using alternative settings. The vast majority of 1 to 1 casework is already delivered in peoples' homes and for some communities the availability of this option has removed potential barriers to accessing the service.
- Group work sessions will be available at remaining buildings and where required the service will support individuals to attend them such as by supporting them to travel to the new location, learning the route or helping them integrate into the new group for an agreed time, where these issues are a barrier to individuals.
- Ensuring services are accommodated in a way that meets the diverse needs of children, young people, and their families which includes implementing safeguarding arrangements as appropriate;
- Centres will continue to be equipped to meet the needs of the service provided in them and some will offer increased flexibility wherever possible such as extended opening hours, meeting rooms, areas for group work and private rooms for interviews and consultations. In some cases these facilities are not available at the buildings identified for closure and this has informed the proposal. In other cases this will involve some minor alterations to existing premises but these will be carried out and the feasibility of doing this has been included in considerations.

- The use of alternative community venues or outreach services is actively being considered for those areas where it is proposed to no longer deliver services from a current centre. This could include finding an alternative venue for the SEND group which meets at Ashton Young People's Centre, where transferring the group to Riverbank Children Centre is being considered.
- Where alterations are required to alternative venues, the service will either seek to continue delivery from existing venues until work is completed where this is practicable or to find an alternative "work around" to ensure services are available.
- Funding for SEND places in nurseries is separate and should not be affected by the outcome of this proposal. The proposal will not affect the linked SEND offer (FEE) to children aged 2-4 which some educational establishments provide.

There should be no substantial changes to staff arising from this proposal as most work across their district area and should continue to work from their current location or one which is close by.

Question 9 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

This weighs up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of the analysis.

The budget option to reduce £1.25million from the Children Family and Wellbeing service budget must be seen in the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy which has forecast a shortfall of £135.3 million by 2022/23 in the county council's revenue budget, based on expected reductions in government funding, increased costs and increased demand for statutory and other services.

The Service is firmly of the view that it will continue to deliver services in the areas where buildings currently used will cease to deliver it and that overall the service will be delivered more efficiently. Use of other buildings or using different methods of service delivery such as

outreach or one to one work will deliver the service more effectively. It is also of the view that any other service delivered in those buildings should not be unduly affected by this proposal.

It is acknowledged, however, that the proposal could adversely impact some members of various protected characteristics groups. Children and young people, disabled young people and those who are pregnant or on maternity leave and other protected characteristics groups who access services at those buildings/settings which will cease to deliver the Children Family and Wellbeing service offer may be the most disadvantaged as they may need to travel to new locations to use services or may find it is no longer practical to access the service in the same way. This is most likely to impact on those who access group work or peer support activities

There may also be an impact on users of other Children and Family Wellbeing service buildings where there may be "knock on" effects of larger groups for group sessions, changes in the composition of groups or those attending sessions and a need to build up rapport with different staff.

It is anticipated that those who have one to one support in their own home will be largely unaffected.

Mitigation measures will be put in place including:

- The availability of detached, mobile and outreach services as part of the Children and Family Wellbeing Service Offer. The outreach work the service offers takes place at individuals' homes, schools, local cafes or other alternative venues, which should mitigate for many concerns about having to travel to or barriers to using alternative settings.
- Group work sessions will be available at remaining buildings and where required the service will support individuals to attend them such as by supporting them to travel to the new location, learning the route or helping them integrate into the new group for an agreed time, where these issues are a barrier to individuals.
- Ensuring services are accommodated in a way that meets the diverse needs of children, young people, and their families which

includes implementing safeguarding arrangements as appropriate;

- Centres will continue to be equipped to meet the needs of the service provided in them and some will offer increased flexibility such as extended opening hours, meeting rooms, areas for group work and private rooms for interviews and consultations. In some cases these facilities are not available at the buildings identified to no longer be used, and this has informed the proposal. In other cases this will involve some alterations to existing premises but these will be carried out and the feasibility of doing this has been included in considerations.
- The use of alternative community venues or outreach services is actively being considered for those areas where it is proposed to no longer deliver services from a current centre. This could include finding an alternative venue for the SEND group which meets at Ashton Young People's Centre, where transferring the group to Riverbank Children Centre is being considered.
- Where alterations are required to alternative venues, the service will either seek to continue delivery from existing venues until work is completed where this is practicable or to find an alternative "work around" to ensure services are available.
- Funding for SEND places in nurseries is separate and should not be affected by the outcome of this proposal. The proposal will not affect the linked SEND offer (FEE) to children aged 2-4 which some educational establishments provide.

However, these may not eliminate or reduce the impact for all users with protected characteristics – e.g. children and young people, disabled young people and those from the pregnancy and maternity protected characteristic groups in particular.

There should be no substantial changes to staff arising from this proposal as most should continue to work from their current location or one which is close by.

Question 10 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is the final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

For 76 buildings it is now proposed that:

- The service will continue to be delivered from 50 buildings.
- The Children and Family Wellbeing Service will no longer be delivered from 12 buildings. These are: Coppull Children Centre, Colne Young Peoples Centre, Great Harwood Young Peoples Centre, Fairfield Children Centre in Accrington, Appletree Children Centre in Lancaster, Halton Children Centre, Earby Children and Family Wellbeing Centre, Sunshine Children Centre in Preston, Cherry Tree Children Centre in Sharoe Green, Preston, St John's Children Centre in Skelmersdale, The Anchorage Children Centre in Fleetwood and Kemp Street/Fleetwood Children Centre in Fleetwood.
- The proposals are clear on the future of 62 buildings
- There will be further consideration of the future of 14 buildings. Of these the following were included in the original proposal: Whitegate Children Centre, Burnley; The Chai Centre, Burnley; Willows Park Children Centre, Longridge, Ribble Valley; Ribblesdale Children Centre, Ribble Valley; Star/Ashton Young Peoples Centre, Preston; Walton Lane Children Centre, Pendle and Whitworth Children Centre, Rossendale. Their futures will be considered alongside neighbouring buildings which are: Stoneyhome and Daneshouse Centre, Burnley; Padiham Young Peoples Centre; The Zone in Pendle; Riverbank Childrens Centre, Preston; The Zone in Ribble Valley; Longridge Young Peoples Centre; and Whitworth Young Peoples Centre with the possibility of further specific and targeted consultation as to which buildings in the area should no longer be used to deliver the service.

Question 11 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

What arrangements will be put in place to review and monitor the effects of this proposal?

The Children and Family Wellbeing Service has an extensive range of review and monitoring arrangements already in place which can be used to measure the impact of the changes which are implemented.

Equality Analysis Prepared By Jeanette Binns

Position/Role Equality and Cohesion Manager

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Line Manager and/or Service Head

Debbie Duffell (Service Head: Childrens Family and Wellbeing Service)

Decision Signed Off By

Cabinet Member or Director

For further information please contact

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