

Consultation on proposed changes to Early Years Services in Stockton-on-Tees

(Front Cover design on corporate swoosh style – photo led )

## **Why we are thinking about making changes to Early Years Services?**

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council currently spends £7.5 million per year providing Early Years services for families and the 12,000 pre-school children in the Borough. This money is spent on:

- Delivering a wide programme of activities through the network of 11 Children's Centres across the Borough. These activities include stay-and-play sessions, parenting classes, health visitor and midwife services, early years learning sessions and in some cases nurseries.
- Overseeing and administering the provision of 15 hours per week free nursery care for 3 and 4 year olds and the pilot free nursery programme for 2 year olds
- Providing support and guidance to childcare providers to ensure that there are enough childcare places to meet the needs of families across the Borough.
- Working with schools to support quality in early years learning and providing advisory teachers to support training and development of childcare staff
- Providing information and guidance about Early Years Services in the Borough

In December 2010 the government announced the introduction of a new grant to Local Authorities called the Early Intervention Grant. This grant replaced a number of other separate grants which were used to fund a wide range of activities including Early Years services. This new grant is 25% less than the grants it replaced and so we are looking at all the services covered by the grant to identify the best way to cope with the reduction in funding. This consultation looks specifically at the Early Years services funded from this grant.

We are convinced that a good start in life is essential for the future health, happiness and achievement of our children so we are committed to finding the best possible solution to dealing with this reduction in funding. We have looked at new ways of working that will ensure that the services are in place to help our children, and especially the most vulnerable, get a good all-round foundation in their early years.

## **What's in this document?**

We have looked in detail at the Early Years services we provide, the costs of the service and how the service is organised. We have also looked at information about the demand for early years services across the Borough. What you will find here is a summary of this work and a set of proposals that we would like your views on. We are proposing a number of changes to the service. These changes reflect 2 key principles which we think are important:

- We want to redesign our Service to target it most to those with most need
- We want to change the way we deliver the service to work more closely with voluntary organisations, community groups, schools, parents and other organisations. We want to share our resources and combine our efforts to deliver better Early Years services using local knowledge, expertise and experience.

## **How can I have my say?**

There are lots of ways to let us know what you think about these proposals:

- You can fill in the questionnaire at the back of this document and return it to the freepost address
- You can come to one of the drop-in sessions (Details are shown below)
- You can provide your comments on line at [www.stockton.gov.uk/earlyyearsconsultation](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/earlyyearsconsultation)
- You can join the discussion on facebook at [www.facebook.com/stocktoncouncil](http://www.facebook.com/stocktoncouncil)

- You can use one of the consultation points across the Borough (Details are shown below)
- We'll also be making an effort to get in touch with families with pre-school children so we'll be providing information at clinics, GP surgeries and schools

**The consultation is open from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

The following drop-in sessions have been planned. At these sessions there will be a chance to ask further questions, to express your views on the proposals and to put forward any alternative suggestions you may have.

Date	Time	Venue
Xx July	6pm-8pm	Footsteps Children's Centre

Consultation Points are available at a number of places across the Borough. These Consultation Points provide more information about the proposals and copies of the consultation questionnaire as well as a box to post your completed questionnaire.

Staff will be available at these points on the dates shown if you would like to talk to someone about the proposals.

Municipal Buildings Church Road Stockton on Tees	Xx August 2011
Thornaby Library	Xx August 2011
Yarm Library	

**What happens next?**

When the consultation is complete the Council will consider the responses made and this will feed into their final decision. A summary of the final proposals and the responses received will be published on **27<sup>th</sup> October 2011** and The Council's Cabinet will meet on **3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011** to make a final decision.

### Pages 3

#### Overview of the new approach

We are convinced that a good start in life is essential for the future health, happiness and achievement of our children so we are proposing that we will:

- Continue to co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of free nursery places for all 3 and 4 year olds in the Borough
- Make sure that there are enough childcare and nursery places in the Borough and we'll work with these organisations to make sure that they are providing the best quality of service
- Provide up to date information and guidance about all early years services in the Borough whoever they are provided by.
- Continue to provide a network of Children's Centres across the Borough – But in the future we want to do things differently:
  - We want to focus most of our funding on those in most need
  - We want to work in partnership with others to deliver things better

#### **Focussing on those in most need**

We think it is right to focus our funding to give most support to areas of most need. We will continue to make sure that information and support is available throughout the Borough but it will be concentrated to support families with the greatest needs. The Government guidance on provision of Children's Centres, issued by the Department for Education states that "a network of Children's Centres should be retained but focused much more effectively on those families which need them most" the guidance suggest that "Local Authorities should be guided by demographic factors both geographically and socio-economically" We have looked at a range of measures of poverty, educational development and health to identify the areas where we think we should target our services. A summary of this information is provided in the table below:

Area	Number of Children Aged 0-4	IDACI 2010 Overall Score (within % most deprived nationally) <b>(note 1)</b>	No of children eligible for free school meals (School Census Spring 2011)	Foundation Stage Profile (at age 5) % <b>(note 2)</b>	Fully Breast Feeding (6-8wks) (%)	No. of children who received their 2nd MMR (%)
Central East	2,010	16.6	1,301	48.7	17.0	73.4
Central South	1,785	23.2	866	55.1	10.1	77.1
Central West	1,667	18.8	949	53.2	11.5	97.6
Eastern	1,572	26.4	878	54	21.4	91.7
Northern	1,451	70.8	230	71.4	25.0	93
Southern	2,450	86.9	245	75.2	32.6	83.2
Western	1,205	72.3	252	72.4	33.6	75.7

**Note 1** The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of children (aged less than 16) that live in families that are income deprived. The measure shows where the area we are looking at falls within the national rankings eg. In the table above the Central East area of the Borough is within the 16.6% most deprived nationally.

**Note 2** The measurement of Foundation Stage Profile is made in Schools at the end of the Reception year and measures the achievement of the child against a national framework covering learning, physical, personal, social and emotional development areas. It is felt that it provides a good all-round measure of all the impacts that have affected a child up to that age and is therefore a good indicator of where more help may be needed in the Early Years stage. The % shown in the table indicates the % of children reaching the Foundation Stage at Age 5.

**Page 4**

This map of the Borough shows these 7 areas

**[Map of the Borough showing areas of need]**

[Coloured areas on map tie into the next series of pages for each area.]

More information about the criteria used to identify target areas and an electronic version of the map with links to postcodes is available on the website at [www.stockton.gov.uk/earlyyearsconsultation](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/earlyyearsconsultation)

## **New approach to delivery**

Up to now the 11 Children's Centres in the Borough have mostly been run directly by the Council. We work in partnership in the centres with colleagues such as health visitors, midwives and Job Centre Plus to deliver a wide range of services but we think we can do better. We want to expand this model of partnership working to include individuals and organisations who would like to work with us to deliver the very best Children's Centres.

Some Local Authorities have decided that the best approach for them is to get a private sector organisation to run all of their Children's Centres, others operate a mixture of privately run and Council run centres, some deliver the services themselves.

We have looked long and hard at the different options and we think that the best approach is a local partnership model where local voluntary organisations, charities, schools, parents groups and private organisations work with us and play a major role in running our Children's Centres. We want to make the most of local knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to offer our services right at the heart of the communities they serve. The Council would need to maintain a close relationship with any organisation for sharing of information and support but there would be room for a variety of different partnership models to be developed to meet particular circumstances. All Children's Centres, however they are delivered, will remain registered and inspected by Ofsted.

We think this is the best approach because:

- There is a real benefit to sharing our space to get a better reach into the communities we serve. Often local community groups and other organisations are already working with the very same people we'd like to use the Children's Centres.
- There is capacity in some of the buildings we use to share this space to the benefit of local communities. Buildings used as a base for Children's Centre activities during the day could be used for other community based or leisure activities in the evening. The buildings themselves can be of value to community and voluntary sector organisations – organisations may want to consider asset transfers.
- We have expertise and experience in delivering high performing Children's Centres - all of our Centres which have been inspected by Ofsted have been given a "good" rating. All Children's Centres, however they are delivered in the future, will remain registered and inspected by Ofsted. Whilst our direct input may be reduced in the new model as new organisations and groups take on more delivery we think we can still bring our experience to the local delivery partnerships and help build an even better service. It may be that over time we are able to step back even more as others gain experience and capacity – we would review this again in the future.
- We are particularly keen to work with local groups and we are working with Catalyst (the local third sector support organisation) to deliver taster sessions and workshops for groups who think this type of approach may suit them. Sessions are planned to look at Asset Transfer, Commissioning, and staff transfer issues. More information is available at [www.Stockton.gov.uk/communityengagement](http://www.Stockton.gov.uk/communityengagement)

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This type of approach is already happening in other areas across the country. Local groups are getting really involved in running their local centres:

4 boxes showing links and photos of different models eg. Norton Hall group in Birmingham

We also think that better delivery will come from a new approach to working with families in need and we want to recognise that support does not just have to be offered from a Children's Centre building. We want to build into our new model an increase in the number of home visiting staff who work with families in their own homes where this is best.

Insert appropriate photo of home visit in action

The following pages set out the proposals we are making for each of the 7 areas in the Borough.

## **Page 7**

### **The East**

[Page layout would include a few photos from the areas + cut out of maps for the areas in same colour as page 4.]

We would provide a full range of Early Years service for families in this area. Operating from 2 bases:

- A Council-run centre at Footsteps Children's Centre on Ochil Terrace in Billingham
- A local delivery partnership from somewhere else in the area.

The Council-run service at Footsteps would continue to operate as a Children's Centre and would also be our base for a home visiting team and administrative functions.

There is currently a Children's Centre at New Life Family Centre on Low Grange Lane in Billingham. The local partnership centre could be delivered from here or somewhere else in the area and could be in partnership with a community Group, a group of parents, a school or a private company. Organisations who currently have a base in the area which they think would make a good location for a Children's Centre could consider proposing this.

### **Central – West**

We would provide a full range of Early Years service for families in this area. Operating from 2 bases:

- A Council-Run service at the Redhill Children's Centre Redhill Lane in Roseworth (with it's linked site at Ragworth Neighbourhood centre on Dover Road)
- A local delivery partnership from somewhere else in the area

The Council-run service at Redhill would continue to operate as a Children's Centre and would also be our base for a home visiting team and administrative functions.

There is currently a Children's Centre next to Frederick Nattrass School on Darlington Lane in Norton. The local partnership centre could be delivered from here or somewhere else in the area and could be in partnership with a community Group, a group of parents, a school or a private company. Organisations who currently have a base in the area which they think would make a good location for a Children's Centre could consider proposing this.



## **Page 8**

[Page layout would include a few photos from the areas + cut out of maps for the areas in same colour as page 4.]

### **Central – East**

We would provide a full range of Early Years service for families in this area. Operating from 2 bases:

- A Council-Run service at the Sunrise Children's Centre on Yarm Road in Stockton
- A local delivery partnership from somewhere else in the area

The Council-run service at Sunrise would continue to operate as a Children's Centre and will also be our base for a home visiting team and administrative functions.

There is currently a Children's Centre operating out of 2 sites - at The Star on Bath Lane and Newtown Resources Centre in Stockton . The local partnership centre could be delivered from either or both sites or from somewhere else in the area and could be in partnership with a community Group, a group of parents, a school or a private company. Organisations who currently have a base in the area which they think would make a good location for a Children's Centre could consider proposing this.

### **Central – South**

We would provide a full range of Early Years service for families in this area. Operating from 2 bases:

- A Council-run service at the High Flyers Children's Centre on Tedder Avenue in Thornaby
- A local delivery partnership from somewhere else in the area

The Council-run service at High Flyers would continue to operate as a Children's Centre and will also be our base for a home visiting team and administrative functions.

There is currently a Children's Centre at Riverbank on Gilmour Street in Thornaby. The partnership centre could be delivered from here or somewhere else in the area and could be in partnership with a community Group, a group of parents, a school or a private company. Organisations who currently have a base in the area which they think would make a good location for a Children's Centre could consider proposing this.

Under this proposal we would cease to operate from The Family Centre on Baysdale Road in Thornaby and services would be concentrated from 2 bases in this area.

**North, West and South**

[Page layout would include a few photos from the areas + cut out of maps for the areas in same colour as page 4.]

The areas highlighted on the map as North, West and South have not been defined as target areas and therefore a different delivery model is proposed. We would

- Provide a Children's Centre in each of the 3 areas
- Seek to commission the service from an outside provider (for all 3 areas or in parts)

And

- Charge for some services at these Centres

The Children's Centres could be delivered from anywhere in the 3 areas and could be delivered by a community Group, a group of parents, a school or a private company. Organisations who currently have a base in the area which they think would make a good location for a Children's Centre could consider proposing this.

There are currently Children's Centres at:

Layfield School in Everingham Road, Yarm  
Barleyfields School Lamb Lane, Ingleby Barwick  
Beckfields Community Centre in Haresfield Way, Ingleby Barwick  
ElmTree Community Centre, Elm Tree Avenue Stockton

All the buildings are potentially available for ongoing use as Children's Centre's and could be considered as potential sites for a base in these areas.

**Tell us what you think?**

The following pages are for you to tell us what you think about these proposals. Please complete the questionnaire and return it to us by **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011**. You may post completed questionnaires to us at the following FREEPOST (no stamp required) address. Or, you could post your completed questionnaire in the 'Completed Questionnaires' box in any Children's Centre in Stockton-on-Tees.

Freepost  
Xxxx  
Xxxx  
Xxxx

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the review team on Tel.xxxx or via (email).

Details of how to receive a copy of the final set of proposals and a summary of the consultation responses are provided at the end of the questionnaire.

***Tear off page with questionnaire***

Early Years Consultation

1. Do you currently use a Children's Centre within Stockton-on-Tees?

YES

NO

If NO, please briefly say why you do not currently use a Children's Centre in Stockton-on-Tees

2. Do you agree with our proposal to focus our funding on those in need?

YES

NO

If YES, please briefly say why

If NO, please briefly say why

Any other comments?

3. Do you agree with the criteria used to identify areas of most need?

YES

NO

If YES, please briefly say why

If NO, please briefly say why

Any other comments?

4. Do you agree with the proposal to contract with another organisation to provide Children's Centres services for the North, West and South?

YES

NO

If YES, please briefly say why

If NO, please briefly say why

If YES do you have any comments about the sort of organisation you would like to see run the Centres eg. Voluntary, local , private etc.

5. Do you agree with the proposal to charge for services in the Children's Centres in the North, West and South?

YES

NO

If YES, please briefly say why

If NO, please briefly say why

Any other comments?

6. Do you agree with the proposal to seek a partner to operate in the 4 target areas?

YES  
NO

Do you have any comments about the sort of organisation you would like to see run the Centres? eg. Voluntary, local , private etc.

If NO, please briefly say why

7. Do you agree with the proposal to stop operating from the Family Centre in Thornaby?

If YES, please briefly say why

If NO, please briefly say why

Any other comments?

8. Would you like to make any other brief comments about the Early Years Services in the Borough? Please provide your answer, as appropriate, in the relevant row(s) in the table below.

Location	
Level of provision	
Type of services offered	
Variety of services offered	
Children's Centres' opening hours	
Children's Centres' days of opening	
Other	

Thank you for providing us with your thoughts on our proposals for the Borough's Children's Centres. To further support our work on this, please also answer the following 'Equality and Diversity Monitoring' questions:

<b>Age:</b> (Please indicate which age group you fall into)	
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
0 – 19 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 – 29 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 – 39 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 – 49 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
50 – 59 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
60 – 69 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
70 – 79 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
80 – 84 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
85+ years	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Ethnic Origin:</b> (Please indicate your ethnic origin)	
<input type="checkbox"/> prefer not to say	

White:

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British  
 Irish  
 Gypsy or Irish Traveller  
 Any other White background, please specify:

Black/Black British:

- Caribbean  
 African  
 Any other Black background, please specify:

Asian/Asian British:

- Indian  
 Pakistani  
 Bangladeshi  
 Chinese  
 Any other Asian background, please specify:

Other ethnic groups:

- Arab  
 Any other ethnic background, please specify:

Mixed /multiple ethnic groups:

- White and Black Caribbean  
 White and Black African  
 White and Asian  
 Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background, please specify:

Country of Birth:

Nationality:

**Gender:**  Male  Female

**Marital Status:** (Please indicate your marital status)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single            | <input type="checkbox"/> Widow         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married           | <input type="checkbox"/> Widower       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil widow   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Separated         | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil widower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced          |  |

If you would like us to provide you with a copy of the summary results from the Consultation, please tick below and provide your current contact details in the space below.

- Yes, please send me a copy of the summary results from the Consultation

Your name:

Your address (including postcode):

Your email address:

Alternatively, a copy of the report will be available on the Council Website from 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

### Data Protection Statement

By completing this survey you are giving Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council the authority to retain the enclosed information for the purpose of the 'Consultation on Proposed Changes to early years Services in Stockton-on-Tees'. The information you give in this questionnaire will be used to support the 'Consultation on Proposed Changes to early years Services in Stockton-on-Tees'. Your personal details such as your name and address will not be disclosed to anyone unless prior permission is granted by you.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. If you want to know more about the information the Authority holds about you, or the way the Authority uses that information please contact the Director of Law and Democracy, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1LD

#### **Alternative Formats Statement**

Standard box with alternative format information to be added.