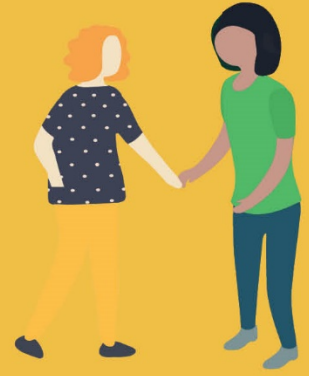


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Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead



Proposed Family Hub Service Frequently Asked Questions



achieving
for children

Q: Has the decision about the Family Hub Service already been made?

No. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) Cabinet has approved the second stage of public consultation only. We need to know your views on what we have said the model would look like in practice to shape our final proposals. These final proposals would then be considered by Cabinet in October 2020.

Q: What early help services do you deliver at the moment?

Children's centres and youth centres help us to improve the wellbeing of our children and young people and their families in Windsor and Maidenhead. This is a requirement in law. We have to ensure there are sufficient children's centres to meet the needs of our local community and that they are able to support:

- children to develop and get ready for school
- families to be the best parents they can be
- families to have good health and improve their opportunities in life

This means we need to support those families who most need our help so that they are able to lead happy and healthy lives.

A children's centre is a place, or group of places, where we deliver services for children or families, either at the centre or by providing advice and assistance to access services elsewhere. We deliver children's centre services across Windsor and Maidenhead in a range of settings. This includes bespoke centres, rooms in rented halls or outreach at other venues such as community centres, libraries and primary schools. This outreach enables us to engage with a wider range of families.

For our young people we have to make sure that as far as we can, we provide sufficient educational or leisure time activities. We currently do this through sessions or groups at centres or outreach work in specific areas.

The services we deliver in both children's centres and youth centres are either universal drop in sessions accessible for all such as play groups or youth clubs or targeted services for those most in need.

Q: Why are you reviewing early help services?

We decided to review our early help services based on national research which showed the benefits of bringing services together to create hubs based around families.

The aims and benefits of the Family Hub Service follow.

Aim	Benefit
Strengthen the focus on children, young people and families that most need support, at an earlier stage.	We want to make sure we are able to give support to those families that most need it. By targeting our support we would be able to help families to become more resilient so that they do not need statutory social care involvement. It would also reduce the time that vulnerable families have to wait for support.
Build on the success of the Healthy Child Programme by continuing to deliver a universal health visiting service that can be accessed by all families.	All families would continue to get access to universal health services. Our health visitors would support all expectant and new parents and then would be able to refer any families that are experiencing difficulties to the Family Hub Service for additional support.
Adopt a flexible approach to service delivery whereby the focus is more on delivering services where they are needed rather than at a single location.	<p>The traditional model of service delivery based around fixed sites is no longer considered effective as it requires our staff to be responsible for a considerable amount of buildings maintenance. This means they have less time to provide support to our children, young people and families.</p> <p>The move to a more flexible and responsive approach would enable us to bring services to those that need them i.e. in the community and in the home. The needs of families are not always the same and often change over time. It is therefore extremely important we deliver a service that is able to respond to these needs in a new way so that families that need support are able to access it more readily, in a location that best suits them.</p> <p>This would also mean we are in a position to set up flexible and time limited outreach services on a smaller, more local scale when intelligence suggests this is required in particular eg, work on knife crime.</p>
Support local communities so that they can develop universal provision.	The new model would provide an opportunity for local communities to get more involved in the delivery of universal provision such as playgroups or youth clubs. We would provide advice and guidance to these groups to enable them to establish provision. This could include helping them to identify possible sites to deliver their sessions or groups, potentially in any sites that we decide we no longer need to use.
Ensuring our early help services provide value for money.	The new proposed model would allow us to use our early help services budget in a way that enables us to have the most positive impact. The current delivery of services means we have to use our limited resources for maintaining buildings and staffing sites that are not fit for purpose or well used. The Family Hub Service model would enable us to ensure more of the budget is directly used to benefit children, young people and families.

Q: Are the changes just about saving money?

No. As set out above in the answer above, we believe the proposed Family Hub Service would deliver a number of benefits to children, young people and families in Windsor and Maidenhead.

The decision to review early help services was made in response to national research which has highlighted the family hub model as the most effective means of meeting the whole needs of the family.

With regards to saving money, it would enable us to ensure that we are getting the best value for money for the resources we have for our early help services, but this is not the driver behind the proposals for the new service.

Q: Would universal services be delivered through family hubs if the proposed model was put in place?

Yes. Although our universal stay and play sessions will no longer be delivered we would continue to deliver all universal health services as we do currently, which were highlighted as a really important part of our early years offer in the recent public consultation.

This would mean we would continue to deliver:

- full Healthy Child Programme, offering every family five health reviews in the first three years (crucial first 1,000 days) of their child's life and a range of support services in the community, drop in clinics, new baby groups
- school nursing service which provides support with long term conditions and universal support for pupils in school
- home visiting support for families whose child is developmentally delayed, socially isolated or living with other vulnerabilities

We will also be working with local voluntary and community sector groups, and parent groups, to identify any universal sessions that they might be able to take over and run with our advice and guidance. Some groups have already indicated that they would be interested in delivering some of the sessions that we would no longer be delivering, because our focus will be on supporting the most vulnerable children, young people and families.

Q: What youth services would you deliver if the proposed Family Hub Service was approved?

Our youth service would continue to prioritise supporting young people on a one-to-one and targeted group basis such as those that are involved with statutory children's social care services, those engaging in risky behaviours such as substance misuse, those suffering from low self-esteem or those at risk of criminality.

The service will also continue to support participation and engagement of children and young people, including those in care and those leaving care through the Children in Care Council (Kickback), and deliver parent, carer, professional workshops on child sexual

exploitation, gangs, substance misuse and online safety. In terms of universal services, we will carry on delivering sessions and workshops to pupils in partnership with our local schools.

The transformation provides us with an opportunity to move away from the traditional delivery of youth services, drop-in sessions at a centre, which have proven less and less popular over recent years, towards a more flexible approach whereby we take services to the young people. This should lead to increased engagement with those young people who most need support.

We would continue to deliver a range of different activities for these young people including sports, music, dance, art and climbing.

Given the small numbers of young people who currently engage with our universal provision, we will be in a position to engage with the young people individually to signpost them to alternative provision.

We would also look to work with voluntary and community sector groups to identify other providers that already deliver, or would be interested in delivering, universal sessions. We would work with these providers to give advice and guidance to ensure their sessions are sustainable, or help them to get started.

Q: What will happen to families and young people who access services that would no longer be delivered under the proposed model?

We would deliver the Family Hub Service in a number of different ways - not just focused on centres or buildings. This would mean we could deliver services where they are needed.

This would mean a reduction in the number of fixed sites we use for service delivery and a reduction in the delivery of universal provision (not including universal health provision which will continue as it currently does). It would however mean that we are able to deliver services that better meet the needs of our most vulnerable families.

It could also mean that families or young people whose nearest children's centre or youth centre is proposed for closure may have further to travel to visit a centre. However, it may also mean families or young people have to travel less distance as services would be delivered to them.

We would mitigate against any negative impact of these changes by:

- adopting a new, more responsive and flexible service
- providing more services through outreach at alternative venues in the community
- working more closely with community and voluntary sector groups
- signposting young people or families who may no longer be able to access universal services to alternative providers

As part of the initial consultation we have already asked users views on which services they most value and we would prioritise these when putting together the service offer for 2020/21 and beyond.

Q. What community venues would be used if the family hub model goes ahead and would these be as good as my local children's centre or youth centre?

Children's centres and youth centres already use a range of community venues such as libraries, halls and other community spaces. Staff check that such venues are suitable and safe for the activity being provided and this would continue to be a task for the Family Hub Service. We are proposing that we use more of these venues. Families have reported to the current children's centres that they like being able to access activities in these community venues as it makes it easier for them to participate.

Q. Would I have to travel to one of the centres that you are proposing to retain to access support and services?

No. The aim is to bring the services out to you and your family, making use of local spaces in the community that you can easily access as well as supporting you at home where this is helpful or necessary. We are not suggesting families would have to travel to Family Hub Service sites to get the support they need, however families can choose to do this if they would prefer.

Q: How would parents access the services and support they need if they could not drop into a children's centre?

Parents would have a contact into our early help services through our universal health service. If they were experiencing any difficulties or issues, they could be referred to our Family Hub Service for additional support. The majority of families currently receiving targeted support via a children's centre do so as a result of being referred.

We would also develop a directory of resources which will include local organisations offering universal and targeted support. We would use this to signpost children, young people and families to the support they need in the wider community. The intention would be to make the directory easy to navigate and we would seek to provide additional online resources including self-help tools.

Through the focus on outreach in the proposed model we would take services out to our families rather than relying on them coming to a specific centre.

By offering services closer to the home or in the home, we would be able to help more hard to reach families to access services, who would likely be identified through our universal health service.

Q. How is my local children's centre or youth centre affected by these proposals?

This is the second stage of the consultation which sets out which sites we propose to retain and which we would discontinue the leases for, and the reasons for this. Although we have made proposals, these may be subject to change depending on the feedback that we receive from the consultation.

Cabinet would then consider our final proposals in October 2020 and decide whether to proceed or not.

Q: Would there be the same number of staff working with families in the proposed new model? How many staff would be employed in future compared to now?

We cannot answer this at this stage as no decision will be made on the future arrangements until after the consultation feedback is considered by Cabinet. If we do proceed with our proposals we would likely review our staffing model and this may result in a reduction in the workforce.

Q: How will you ensure that everyone is able to engage in the consultation, particularly vulnerable groups?

To ensure we gather the views of as many residents as possible we will be:

- publicising the survey on the Achieving for Children and Windsor and Maidenhead Council websites, on the associated social media accounts, and via any regular newsletters going to residents during the period of the consultation
- directly emailing a link to the survey to all registered children's centre users who have provided an email address
- directly emailing voluntary and community sector organisations and any other relevant groups in the local area to ask for their help in distributing the link to the survey and asking them to complete it themselves. This will include parent groups and established support groups for traditionally hard to reach groups including those from the BAME community and children, young people and families with special educational needs and disabilities
- directly emailing all relevant Parish Councils to ask for their help in distributing the link to the survey and asking them to complete it themselves
- directly emailing local doctor surgeries and churches to ask for their help in distributing the link to the survey and asking them to complete it themselves
- asking our youth workers to individually engage with young people who use youth centres to encourage them to take part in the consultation
- including information about the survey in regular bulletin to schools to ask them to encourage their pupils to participate
- holding awareness raising sessions with key stakeholder groups such as Parents and Carers in Partnership for Windsor and Maidenhead (PaCiP), Asian Women's Group and other groups that support families that could be considered vulnerable
- asking attendees at our universal health clinics (which are due to restart in June 2020) to complete the survey

Q: What steps have you taken to address any issues that may arise in terms of the consultation during the COVID-19 pandemic?

We have decided to consult for a period of eight weeks to allow residents more time to engage in the consultation process, particularly in light of COVID-19. As set out above, we would aim to gather the views of as many people as possible by using a range of consultation methods. This would help us to account for any issues that may arise due to COVID-19 and also ensure children, young people and families are able to engage during the summer holiday period.