

Children's Services Committee

Report title:	Early Childhood and Family Service
Date of meeting:	22 January 2019
Responsible Chief Officer:	Sara Tough Executive Director, Children's Services

Strategic impact

The design of a new Early Childhood and Family Service is taking place with full regard to the Council's Norfolk Futures Strategy to transform how services are delivered, through integration, by modernising them and making them fit for purpose. Through offering a blend of targeted support for families who need extra help, support to develop community and peer led support for families with young children, alongside universal access to digital online information and advice, the future service model will reflect the four guiding principles of Norfolk Futures:

- Offering our help early to prevent and reduce demand for specialist services
- Joining up our work so that similar activities and services are easily accessible, done once and done well,
- Being business like making best use of digital technology to ensure value for money
- Using evidence and data to target our work where it can make the most difference

Norfolk Futures has a number of interrelated corporate priorities. The two main priorities guiding the design of the new Early Childhood and Family Service are:

Safer Children and Resilient Families - Our vision for Norfolk's children and young people is that they will be safe and live with resourceful and resilient families. They will live in inclusive and supportive communities, have access to high quality education and training and have opportunities to thrive in adulthood.

Local Service Strategy - The ambition for the Local Services Strategy is to join up our work with others in the public sector at a local level to make delivery seamless at the point of need. Services will be organised and delivered around the needs of the local population and the Council will have a much better understanding of the strengths and challenges facing each local community and mobilise resources accordingly.

Norfolk County Council, with its partners in accordance with the 2004 Childrens Act, has a duty to cooperate and improve the wellbeing of children from birth to age five in Norfolk and reduce inequalities between them. It also has a duty to make arrangements to ensure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner in order to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their parents. A further duty includes, so far as is reasonably practicable, a duty to ensure sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.

Executive summary

Norfolk County Council is committed to securing better outcomes for children and families in Norfolk. We want to develop a more ambitious whole system, whole family approach to help design better and more relevant provision in local communities. Our long-term ambition is to deliver fully integrated and joined up services working in partnership with district councils, early years settings, public health, clinical commissioning groups, DWP, the voluntary sector and community groups. By working together as a system, we will use our resources effectively to achieve the impact and outcomes needed for families and children.

The Council's current children centre contracts are seven years old and coming to their conclusion. The recommissioning of early years support provides an opportunity to design a new Early Childhood and Family Service that is better integrated with existing provision and targeted to areas of greatest need. The Early Childhood and Family Service will tailor its support for families to achieve the best outcomes for children and aims to take services out of buildings and instead deliver in easier to access community venues and people's homes.

Spending on the Early Childhood and Family Service needs to be viewed in the context of the Council wider £65 million spend on services for under-fives. This is without taking account of the wider system spend.

Linked to local need and national evidence and research on 'what works' we want our new Early Childhood and Family Service to contribute to the following impacts:

- Supporting children to achieve their developmental milestones
- Preventing more children aged 0-5 from experiencing neglect or emotional harm
- Increasing social mobility

This report sets out both the national policy direction, research into effectiveness and assessment of 'what works' in early years provision, as well as local drivers for change including an assessment of need across the county. It details the consultation we have undertaken to ensure the views of service users are reflected in our proposals and sets out its findings. It then sets out our revised proposals for a new Early Childhood and Families Service, taking into account the community views and our equality impact assessment, and a timetable for procuring the new service.

The key changes we have made to our proposals following the consultation are:

- Greater recognition that all families benefit from universal group activities
- Making it easier to access support
- Extending the new service to support families to connect with and make use of activities provided by local communities and partner organisations
- Keeping more buildings to reflect varying local needs in rural and urban areas
- Investing £500,000 to support local organisations and communities to use buildings, currently designated as children's centres, with a focus on services for families with children aged 0-5.

Currently only 39%, or £4m, of the £10.2m spent on children's centres is used for frontline delivery. Our proposed new service will be outcomes-based, with 60% of spend focused on front line support with enhanced outreach in families' homes and community venues across Norfolk. However, we now propose to retain 15 bases offering tailored services in the areas of highest need.

The time is right to secure a refreshed approach for early years provision for families, and improved outcomes for children through greater alignment for example with the Healthy Child Programme, Library Service, adult learning provision, support for home learning, family information and community development activity. Integrating our early years support will help ensure every child gets the best start in life.

Recommendations:

That the committee:

- 1. Notes the consultation on proposals to develop a new Early Childhood and Family Service, and the future of children's centres**
- 2. Notes the feedback from the community**
- 3. Notes the rationale for the amended proposals**
- 4. Approves amended proposals**
- 5. Approves the de-designation of specific children's centres as set out in the paper**
- 6. Approves the timetable for the transitions to new service arrangements set out in the paper**
- 7. Delegates any further decisions regarding the operational implementation of the new service to the Executive Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chair of Children Services Committee**

1. Background - National Drivers for Change

1.1 As part of our work to design a new Early Childhood and Family Service we have conducted a range of research including examining academic papers, case studies and evaluation reports as well as learning from other local authorities and engaging with the policy direction set by central government, to inform the rationale behind our proposals for a future service. A glossary of technical terms is included at Appendix 1.

1.2 National Policy Direction

The main themes from national policy direction are:

- National policy has shifted away from sufficiency of universal 0-5 provision towards a focus on social mobility, disadvantage, addressing deep rooted family challenges and reducing early years development gaps
- National programmes are moving towards a future of reduced central oversight and greater local ownership and are designed to improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged families
- Core ambitions including closing the gap in early years by focusing on reducing development gaps, especially in early language and literacy skills.
- Driving sector led improvement, in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA), to improve outcomes aged five, particularly in early language acquisition.

1.3 The government has three national programmes which include a focus on driving improvements in early years services targeted at families:

- the Maternity Transformation programme¹
- the Healthy Child programme²
- the Troubled Families programme³

1.4 Each of these national programmes is moving towards a future of reduced central oversight and greater local ownership and are designed to improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged families. The government is looking to build the evidence base for what works and help spread that evidence across the country; and are working alongside the What Works Centres⁴ – the Early Intervention Foundation⁵ and the Education Endowment Foundation⁶ – to achieve this. The government is aiming to:

- embed parental conflict support into wider services and increasing evidence-based practice
- investing to identify what works in helping families support children's early language acquisition at home
- driving sector led improvement, in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA), to improve outcomes aged five, particularly in early language acquisition.

1.5 These programmes feed into a wider central government objective to improve social mobility via education. The national plan, Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential⁷, has a number of core ambitions including closing the gap in early years by focusing on reducing development gaps, especially in early language and literacy skills.

1.6 Establishing an Early Childhood and Family System across the public and voluntary sector and within communities themselves provides the ideal opportunity to identify risk factors in vulnerable families at an early stage and offer effective support to allow families to support themselves and reduce reliance on statutory services at a later date.

1.7 Evidence around the effectiveness of children's centres and their services

Summary

- National evidence for the impact of a traditional children's centre model is comparatively limited.
- Evidence is stronger where services successfully take an integrated approach to addressing social, economic and challenges in the family home.
- The strongest predictors of child, family and mother outcomes are related to features of family background, including parental qualifications, family socio-economic status and income.
- Stay and Play and engagement in organised activities recorded positive impacts on the early years home learning environment, mother's health and levels of parental distress, suggesting that such practical activities involving parents and children may be of general benefit for those specific outcomes.
- Improved engagement with families in need should improve child outcomes.
- Greater impacts were detected for mother and family outcomes, the impact on child outcomes was harder to establish.

1.8 Investigating the effective impact of children's centres is a difficult task, as they cannot be seen as a single 'intervention'. They differ in terms of the type and mix of services that they offer in a national and local context, as well as policy changes over time which make like for like analysis harder. Establishing effectiveness is therefore not a matter of identifying a single effect but rather, identifying and summarising a range of effects, across the sample of users and centres. To understand the potential impact of children's centres other factors that influence outcomes need to be considered and weighted for. The strongest predictors of child, family and mother outcomes are related to features of family background, including parental qualifications, family socio-economic status and income⁸.

1.9 Work done to evaluate the effectiveness of children's centres at a national level has been conducted by the University of Oxford, Birkbeck College for the Department of Education, the Audit Commission and the Policy Exchange. The findings are inconclusive, with positive and negative outcomes found.

- Birkbeck noted extremely few overall main effects, however they did note parents surveyed reported less household chaos, less negative parenting including less harsh disciplining and providing a more stimulating home learning environment.⁹

- The Audit Commission evaluation focused on health outcomes and noted that little widespread improvement in health outcomes could be found. Some health indicators have worsened, for example, obesity and dental health and the health inequalities gap between rich and poor had barely changed¹⁰.
- The University of Oxford evaluation found similar conclusions to the Birkbeck study, concluding that greater impacts were detected for mother and family outcomes, which included a less chaotic family life and reduced parent-child dysfunctional interactions. The impact on child outcomes was harder to establish and for two impacts, household employment status and child's health, no statistically significant impacts were detected¹¹.
- Oxford noted that their results showed that the level of use of children's centres were significant predictors of family, mother and child outcomes. For instance, both Stay and Play and engagement in organised activities recorded positive impacts on the early years home learning environment, mother's health and levels of parental distress, suggesting that such practical activities involving parents and children may be of general benefit for those specific outcomes¹².
- Oxford also noted that families experiencing high levels of financial disadvantage showed poorer levels of development at aged 9-18 months than their affluent peers, and showed poorer health, cognitive and behavioural development at age 3¹³. The only impact on this was from those centres which were more successful at engaging financially disadvantaged families. The link found was weak but significant, however it does imply that improved engagement with families in need should improve child outcomes¹⁴.
- The Policy Exchange report argues, a targeted approach is the better one for Children's Centres, returning them to their earliest purpose around helping families in the most deprived areas. They also recognise of course, a risk that doing this could risk missing those children who are living in more affluent areas but still facing hardship, but this can be addressed by effective use of data to help with outreach, and making good use of referrals from health visitors who identify any further needs.¹⁵
- The Policy Exchange also notes that while National Evaluation of Sure Start has found some positive effects on families at a national level, government has a duty to invest in the interventions it believes can make the most difference, which may include moving funding out of children's centres and into other forms of service delivery.
- In evidence submitted by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families to the Education Select Committee: Life Chances Inquiry analysis of the correlation between new children's centre models and the disadvantage (free school meals) gap at age 5 on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)¹⁶ shows that of the six local authorities who closed the highest proportion of their children's centres (as at March 2018), four (Camden, Bromley, Oxfordshire, Staffordshire) continued to demonstrate a reduction in their disadvantage gap, while West Berkshire demonstrated considerable volatility.

1.10 Overall, the evidence is inconclusive, the children's centre model can promote better outcomes around family functioning linked to parenting. However, these

positive outcomes are weakened or negated by some of the adverse effects of disadvantage and the low engagement of disadvantaged families.

1.11 National research into 'what works'

Summary

- An integrated model which supports social mobility, education and family functioning alongside physical health, approaches that include a focus on the home environment, integration with early years education and collaboration with voluntary, community and peer support.
- The link between the differences in social groups health and wellbeing and the impact this has on educational attainment, employment, income and quality of neighbourhood.
- Local authorities should bring together health, social care and early education services to create a more holistic approach to identifying and meeting the needs of young children and their families, using a range of interventions that address particular issues early.
- The importance of early intervention in preventing adversity and responding effectively to early trauma and a lack of effective targeted support to prevent adversity in childhood.
- Advocates delivering services through wider community venues from pre-birth and throughout life, engaging with voluntary, self-help and peer support organisations, providing online support systems and creating better links with local employers and Jobcentre Plus.
- The role of the Home Learning Environment has been widely studied and its impact on child development has been documented extensively and the quality of the home learning environment is a key indicator of a child's future success.
- Importance of high quality child care on outcomes for children.

1.12 There is no one size fits all approach when it comes to early childhood services and provision has moved on from the early days of Sure Start centres¹⁷. The services provided are the pivotal part of the early help offer from councils and whether they are provided from children's centre buildings, co-located with other services in the community, or provided by outreach workers, these interventions allow families to access the help they need to handle early challenges, help tackle inequalities, and give children a healthy start in life¹⁸.

1.13 A selection of key research is highlighted below:

- We now have a widely agreed model of what is required for a young child to flourish, and a good idea of the potential consequences when key elements are missing. For instance, the Marmot Review is clear about the link between the differences in social groups, health and wellbeing and the impact this has on educational attainment, employment, income and quality of neighbourhood¹⁹. The Marmot Review is also clear about the role local government has as a pivotal partner in addressing the social determinants of health inequalities²⁰. A comprehensive overview of the evidence of the effects of adversity and trauma in childhood can be found in the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report, Evidence-based early years intervention²¹

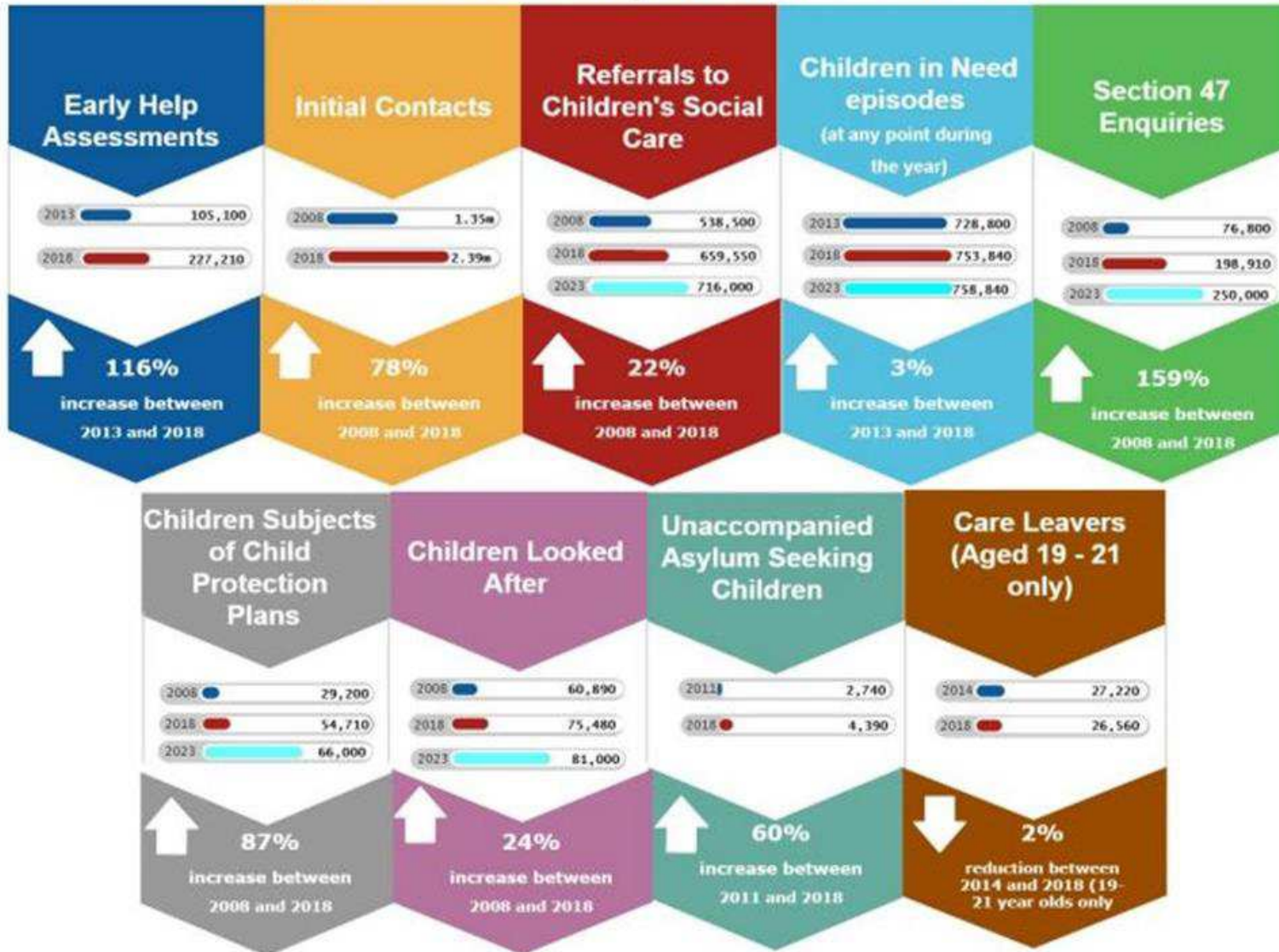
- Key policy reports of recent years, such as the Graham Allen review of Early Intervention²², Eileen Munro's reports on child protection²³, and the Special Education Need and Disability (SEND) Green Paper (DfE, 2011)²⁴ have all made the case for a holistic, integrated service for children and young people.
- The Social Mobility Commission's 2016 State of the Nation report highlights the correlation between socioeconomic status and all the following: cognitive outcomes at ages three and five, breastfeeding, postnatal depression, birth-weight, home learning environment and mother-child relationships²⁵. The Local Government Association report, A Better Start: Supporting child development in the early years, suggests that local authorities should bring together health, social care and early education services to create a more holistic approach to identifying and meeting the needs of young children and their families, using a range of interventions that address particular issues early, before they escalate into more damaging and expensive problems²⁶.
- Action for Children's evaluation work on children's centres also advocated for increased integration particularly with early years education and health visiting services²⁷.
- The Early Intervention Foundation (Getting It Right for Families)²⁸ has reviewed the evidence on integration in the early years services, across health and local authorities; the findings of this work are summarised below:
 - Increased understanding, trust and co-operation between different services
 - Better communication and consistent implementation of services
 - Less duplication of processes across agencies
 - Better access to services or increased service-user involvement
 - More cost-effective
 - Improved cognitive or school performance
 - Improved general physical health
 - Enhanced social behaviour
 - Improved parenting or family relations
- In a written submission by the Early Intervention Foundation to the Science and Technology Select Committee²⁹ it was highlighted that their research and studies led consistent and robust findings on the profound and negative impact multiple childhood adversities can have throughout the lifespan. These findings have driven an important conversation about the importance of early intervention in preventing adversity and responding effectively to early trauma. They comment that there is a lack of effective targeted support to prevent adversity in childhood and that much government-funded activity on children currently and in recent years has focused on universal provision (such as childcare) and not on targeted interventions to prevent early adversity.
- The July 2016 report produced by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Children's Centres, chaired by Fiona Bruce MP, has 12 recommendations which focus on health and development; employment support and childcare, relationship support and supporting families with complex needs. The report advocates delivering services through wider community venues from pre-birth and throughout life, engaging with voluntary, self-help and peer support organisations, providing online support systems and creating better links with local employers and Jobcentre Plus³⁰.

- The role of the Home Learning Environment has been widely studied and its impact on child development has been documented extensively and the quality of the home learning environment is a key indicator of a child's future success.
 - The home learning environment is an important factor in the development of early speech, language and communication. This not only impacts on a child's development in the early years but can persist until their GCSEs and A-Levels³¹.
 - The home learning environment is related to child social and emotional development in the early years and the benefits continue until age 16 (SEED³² and EPPSE³³).
 - The quality of the home learning environment is as important to intellectual and cognitive development as parental factors, such as occupation and education, suggesting that what parents do with their child is just as important as who they are³⁴.
 - As early as 2-3 years, the home learning environment is predictive of verbal ability and effective in differentiating both over- and under-achieving groups from children achieving at the level expected for their age³⁵.
- The report, Improving the home learning environment, is clear that targeted interventions in poorer communities that work in conjunction with existing professional and familial support networks and the voluntary sector can overcome the barriers that low-income families and communities have to create an effective home learning environment³⁶.
- Recent research from both the UK and international evaluations is clear that all children and especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit in terms of social, emotional and educational outcomes from attending non-parental childcare. However, this impact was only achieved by the provision of high quality child care, which was identified as qualified teachers and staff delivering age appropriate curriculums with a balance of play, self-regulation and pre-academic activities³⁷.

1.14 National Safeguarding pressures

Research conducted by the Association of Directors of Children's Services indicates that in the past 10 years there has been growing pressures on children and families resulting in an increase in their need for support from statutory services. Some of this increase in demand pressures can be accounted for by growth in population, but not all (see image below for national data)³⁸. These pressures have led to a reconfiguration and refocusing of early help services in order to provide improved and more targeted support to families and children³⁹.

Safeguarding Pressures: Change over the last ten years and forecasts to 2023



2.0 Norfolk context – local drivers for change

As well as having regard for the national context and policy drivers it is also important to understand the local drivers within Norfolk that inform the rationale for change and our proposed new Early Childhood and Family Service.

- 2.1 In developing our proposals, we have undertaken substantial research and analysis of the success of early childhood policies. This combined with a number of local drivers for change has informed the shape of our proposals: to take services out of buildings and into the community and to target our interventions more effectively focusing our resources on those with greatest need.

2.2 Key drivers for Norfolk are:

Local driver 1 – Securing better outcomes for children and their families
Local driver 2 – Ambition to build an early childhood system in Norfolk
Local driver 3 – Alignment with the Healthy Child Programme and Library Service
Local driver 4 – Current operating model and use of budget
Local driver 5 – Transformation and financial context

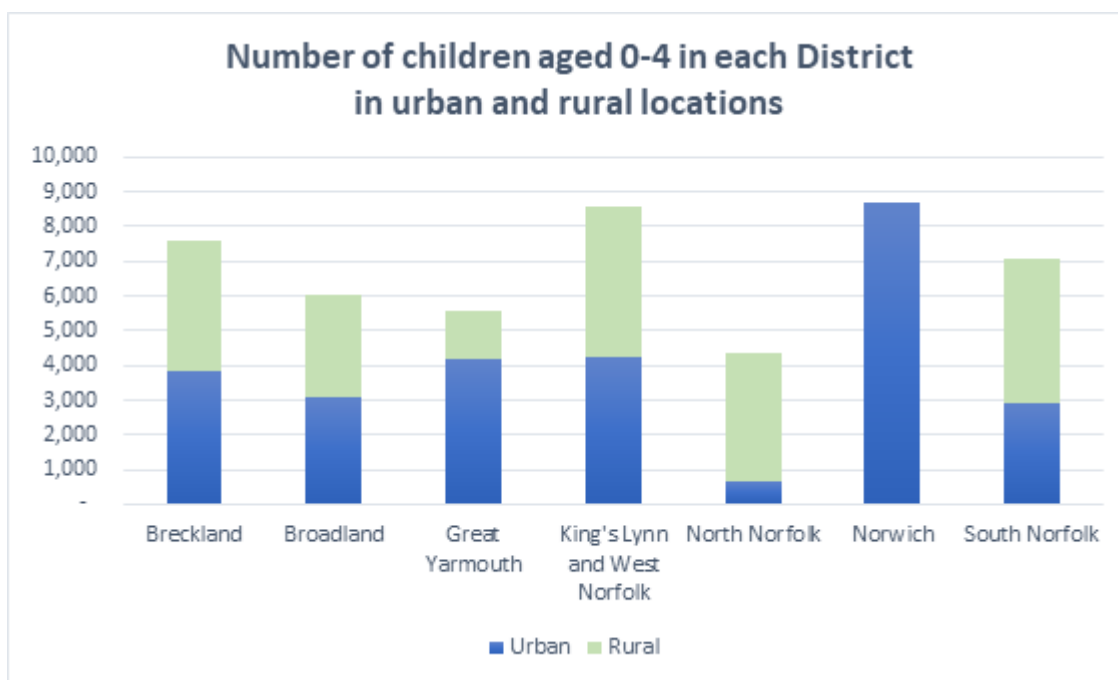
2.3 Local driver 1 – Securing better outcomes for children and their families

- We are not yet securing the impact we need for Norfolk children and need to refocus services on the right interventions for the right families to achieve a step-change in outcomes.
- In total over 1,000 children aged under 5 years old have been assessed as being among the most vulnerable in the County over the past year.
- There is a 17% gap between the children attaining a Good Level of Development in the Foundation Stage Profile between children eligible for free school meals and other children, with FSM standing at 57% and others at 74%.
- Evidence informing the Marmot Review demonstrates that this inequality gap, once established, widens over the life course and it is therefore important to address it as early as possible.
- Evidence shows this is also true in Norfolk, as 82% of children who achieved at Good Level of Development in Norfolk in 2006 went onto pass GCSE Maths and English, while 46% who did not achieve a Good Level of Development went onto pass Maths and English. For disadvantaged children these statistics fell to 65% and 30% respectively.
- The attainment of the FSM cohort varies significantly across the County. Currently the range in a Good Level of Development for FSM eligible children across children's centre areas is between 31% and 73% using three years of aggregated data.
- By understanding this variability, we can better design interventions and improvements across the system to promote equality.
- The Social Mobility Commission's State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain report shows many people living in Norfolk are amongst the least social mobile in the country.

2.3.1 Linked to local need and national evidence on what works we want our redesigned Early Childhood and Family Service to contribute to the following impacts.

- **Supporting children to achieve their developmental milestones**
- **Preventing More children aged 0-5 from experiencing neglect or emotional harm**
- **Increasing social mobility**

2.3.2 There are very significant variations in the level of need in different parts of Norfolk. Equally we clearly have some very dispersed communities and some concentrated needs in urban areas, as shown in the chart below. These differences drive thinking towards a more flexible model of delivery tailored to each community.



2.3.3 In assessing the services we currently provide across Norfolk for families with children aged 0-5 we have developed a composite measure – a Children’s Need Index – so we can look at the geographic spread of need. This looks at a variety of leading indicators that are associated with early childhood vulnerability.

2.3.4 These include measures such as numbers of teenage mothers; eligibility for free nursery places at 2 years old; assessments of children not hitting developmental milestones; numbers of lone parents; families where some type of statutory intervention has been made to protect a child and numbers of children in low income families.

2.3.5 These needs can be analysed by market town, as shown in table 1, to highlight that need varies considerable across Norfolk, hence the need to provide a mix of services and support that takes account of the local context within each district area. It is also important to recognise that not all families in need live in areas of high deprivation.

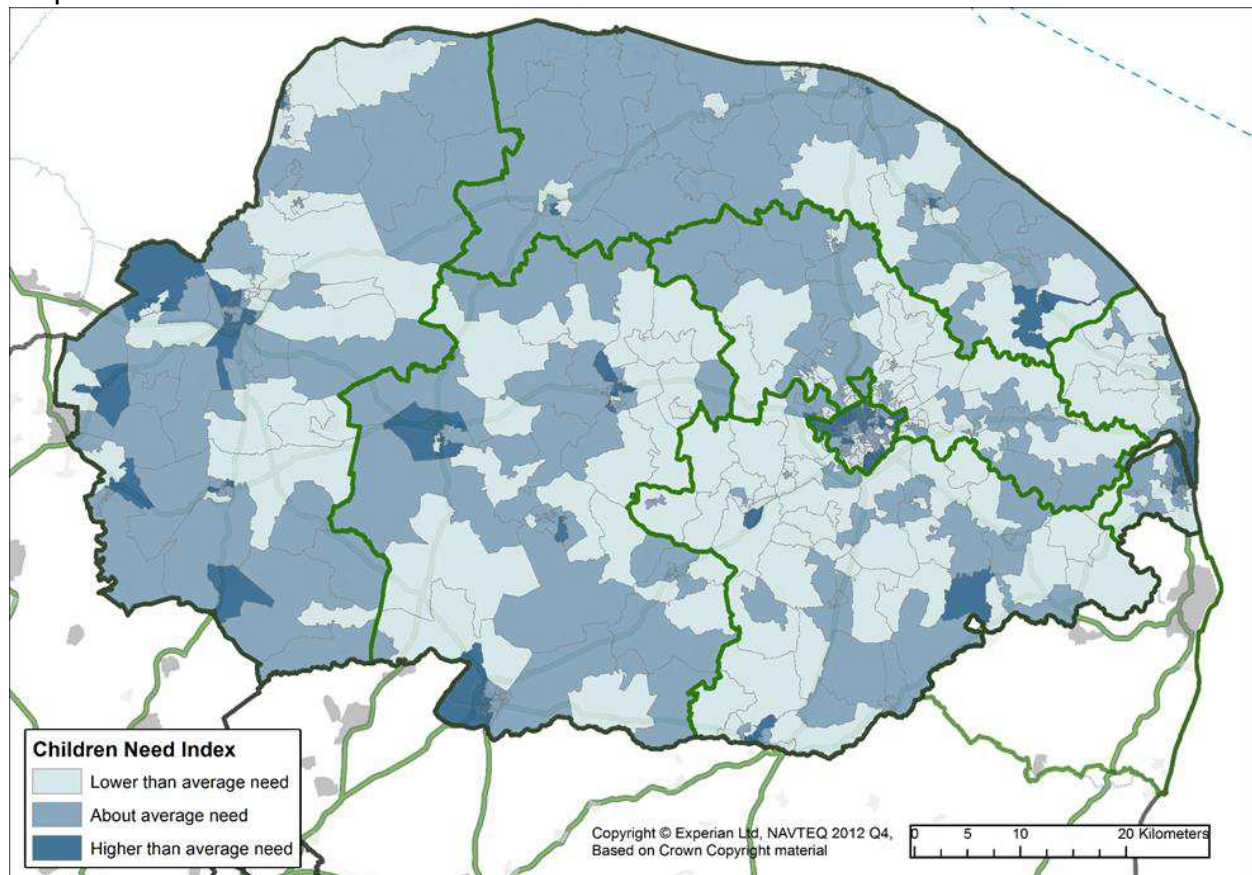
Table 1: Need markers by market town

Locality	Total under 5	% 0 to 2 year olds	% teenage mothers	% eligible 2 year olds	% Early Years Foundation Stage Profile not a good level of development	% families no qualifications	% lone parent households	% Children in Need, Child Protection or Looked After Children (under 18)	Income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI)	% under 5
Attleborough	638	3%	2%	27%	28%	7%	6%	1%	12%	5%
Aylsham	260	2%	2%	26%	32%	5%	5%	1%	9%	4%
Cromer	284	2%	4%	37%	31%	10%	4%	2%	21%	4%
Dereham	1,169	4%	5%	37%	24%	8%	7%	2%	19%	6%
Diss	502	4%	5%	25%	37%	8%	6%	2%	20%	6%
Downham Market	664	4%	7%	23%	29%	8%	5%	2%	20%	6%
Fakenham	437	3%	5%	24%	29%	8%	5%	1%	15%	6%
Gorleston	1,615	4%	7%	21%	32%	11%	9%	2%	28%	6%
Great Yarmouth	2,037	4%	9%	23%	34%	17%	10%	5%	42%	7%
Holt	154	2%	11%	42%	18%	9%	3%	1%	21%	4%
Hunstanton	128	2%	10%	58%	35%	10%	4%	2%	23%	3%
King's Lynn	3,067	4%	6%	33%	30%	11%	7%	3%	28%	7%
Loddon	153	3%	1%	44%	32%	7%	7%	2%	15%	5%
Long Stratton	120	4%	1%	35%	20%	6%	6%	1%	6%	6%
North Walsham	657	3%	9%	39%	21%	6%	6%	1%	17%	5%
North Norwich	2,717	4%	5%	35%	33%	11%	8%	4%	30%	7%
East Norwich	1,220	4%	6%	42%	34%	11%	8%	3%	32%	7%
West Norwich	2,206	4%	5%	44%	40%	11%	9%	5%	35%	6%
South Norwich	2,519	3%	3%	29%	26%	5%	5%	3%	28%	5%
Redenhall with Harleston	289	4%	3%	37%	23%	8%	5%	1%	15%	6%
Sheringham	267	2%	3%	35%	28%	5%	4%	1%	12%	4%
Stalham	132	3%	8%	45%	30%	11%	6%	0%	17%	5%
Swaffham	404	3%	4%	41%	41%	12%	6%	2%	28%	5%
Thetford	1,933	4%	4%	33%	38%	14%	9%	3%	21%	7%
Watton	413	3%	5%	23%	31%	11%	5%	1%	14%	5%
Wells-next-the-Sea	103	2%	11%	19%	24%	12%	5%	2%	21%	4%
Wroxham and Hoveton	151	2%	10%	45%	29%	7%	3%	1%	12%	4%
Wymondham	897	3%	3%	21%	19%	4%	6%	1%	11%	6%
Other	22,773	3%	3%	20%	26%	6%	4%	1%	12%	5%
Norfolk	47,909	3%	4%	27%	29%	8%	6%	2%	19%	5%

2.3.6 Alternatively, we can show the varying needs geographically. Map 1 highlights that the level of need across the county varies considerably, with pockets of high need in urban areas, some large areas with relatively high need covering rural areas, and some areas with relatively low need.

2.3.7 The map also demonstrates that a one size fits all solution is inappropriate in the county and that a locality approach based on district boundaries would better meet the needs of communities.

Map 1



2.3.8 Supporting more children to achieve their developmental milestones

Early years education is essential to ensuring children have the best possible start and are school-ready. We have tools such as the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire which help us to understand whether children are hitting developmental milestones appropriate to their age. There is a 17% gap between the children attaining a Good Level of Development in the Foundation Stage Profile between children eligible for free school meals and other children, with FSM standing at 57% and others at 74%. We need to reduce this gap by improving outcomes for those not meeting their developmental and early education milestones. The gap between those eligible for free school meals and those who are not is closing, but it is not happening consistently across the County. The attainment of the FSM cohort varies significantly across the County. Currently the range in a Good Level of Development for FSM eligible children across children's centre areas is between 31% and 73% using three years of aggregated data.

2.3.9 Comparing good level of development in Norfolk by deprivation quintile shows that a good level of development is in line with England average for both those eligible for free school meals and those who aren't for all deprivation quintiles (apart for non-eligible children from the most deprived areas).

2.3.10 However, for all the higher deprivation quintiles EYFSP good level of development is significantly lower for the free school meal eligible children. Quintile 3 stands out as the gap appears to be widening.

2.3.11 Preventing more children aged 0-5 from experiencing neglect or emotional harm

Over the last year in Norfolk, 40% of children assessed as being among the most-vulnerable and needing help from children's social care were under 5 years old; this equates to around 1,000 children. In particular we have a disproportionate and growing number of very young children experiencing neglect or emotional harm.

2.3.12 In 2017/18, 45% of children who came into our care were aged 0-4 and of these three quarters had or were at risk of experiencing of abuse and neglect. This equates to 175 children. This compares to a figure of 46% (2016) and 41% (2017) in the previous two years in Norfolk and 37% children becoming looked after in the under 5's age group nationally in 2017/18.

2.3.13 The percentages of very young children who became the subject of a child protection plan is similarly high. In 2017/18, 45% of children who had a new plan were in the 0-4 age group, and of these three quarters had or were at risk of experiencing neglect or emotional abuse. This equates to 285 children. This compares to a figure of 48% (2016) and 45% (2017) in the previous two years.

2.3.14 Of the current Norfolk children classed as children in need, 25% are aged 0-4 and of these 60% are categorised as being subject to or at risk of neglect or abuse. This equates to 258 children. This compares to figures of 28% (2016) and 26% (2017) in the previous two years and 22.5% nationally in 2017/18.

2.3.15 Increasing social mobility

Social mobility in Norfolk is poor and worsening. The Social Mobility Commission's State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain report⁴⁰ shows many people living in Norfolk are amongst the least social mobile in the country. The districts of Breckland, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and West Norfolk, North Norfolk and Norwich are amongst the worst 10% nationally. More than 120,000 people in Norfolk live in areas categorised as being in the most deprived 20% in England. These are mainly located in the urban areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Thetford and King's Lynn, together with some identified pockets of deprivation in rural areas, coastal villages and market towns.

2.3.16 The overall score for the social mobility index is driven by performance of various indicators. Our analysis indicates that the scores within the following life stages have the greatest impact on the social mobility index:

- Early Years

- Schools
- Youth
- Adulthood (working lives)

2.3.17 The table below ranks performance of districts in Norfolk against all other local authority districts in England.

	Breckland	Broadland	Great Yarmouth	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	North Norfolk	Norwich	South Norfolk
Overall score	Worst 10%	Middle 50%	Worst 10%	Worst 10%	Worst 20%	Worst 10%	Middle 50%
Early Years	Middle 50%	Middle 50%	Middle 50%	Middle 50%	Middle 50%	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Schools	Worst 20%	Middle 50%	Worst 10%	Worst 20%	Best 25%	Worst 25%	Middle 50%
Youth	Middle 50%	Best 25%	Worst 20%	Worst 10%	Worst 20%	Worst 20%	Middle 50%
Adulthood	Worst 10%	Middle 50%	Worst 20%	Worst 20%	Worst 10%	Worst 10%	Middle 50%

2.3.18 Norfolk has several “cold spots” of concern in remote rural or coastal areas such as Great Yarmouth, with weak labour markets, a greater share of low-skilled, low paid employment and poor connectivity by transport.

2.3.19 From our analysis of Norfolk’s position, many affluent areas are doing worse for their disadvantaged children than places that are much poorer. On the contrary, very similar areas only a few miles apart, do very differently despite having similar challenges and opportunities.

2.3.20 Norwich was selected as one of the first six national Opportunity Areas in 2016 by the Department for Education. Norwich was chosen as an Opportunity Area after it was ranked 323rd out of 324 districts in the 2016 Social Mobility Index, which compares the chances that a child eligible for Free School Meals will do well at school and get a good job⁴¹.

2.3.21 The primary purpose of the Areas is to focus local and national resources and a local partnership on a common goal of improving social mobility through education. The Norwich Opportunity Area has four key strands of focus, of which one relates to early years and focuses on improving speech and communication in the early years, so that children have the best chance as they start school.

2.4 Local driver 2 – Ambition to build an early childhood system in Norfolk

- The need to re-focus priorities for a new early childhood and family system and service that reflects national evidence and the needs of Norfolk
- Opportunity to align a new early childhood service on a district footprint to align partnership working with district councils, Family Focus, Social Work and Healthy Child Programme.
- National evidence for the impact of a traditional children’s centre model is comparatively limited. But evidence is stronger where services successfully take an integrated approach to addressing social, economic and challenges in the family home.

- 2.4.1 A number of services have contact with families with children pre-birth to age 5 across a range of organisations, including Early Years settings, district councils, commissioning via Public Health and Clinical Commissioning Groups, DWP and the voluntary sector. Local communities themselves also play an important role in the lives of families
- 2.4.2 We want to develop a more ambitious ‘whole system’ ‘whole family’ approach to help design greater and more relevant provision in local communities for children young people and families. As part of our strategy to deliver fully integrated and joined up services, we have an opportunity to develop ambitious proposals to create a new early childhood and family system that brings services for families together and effectively supports those in the greatest need.
- 2.4.3 We are working collaboratively with officers from all of Norfolk’s District Councils to progress how the emerging Early Childhood and Family Service might operate as part of developing a system-based approach to supporting families in each locality. This includes exploring how integrating the community development element of the new model can be achieved with their local priorities and existing community and capacity building activity. There is an opportunity to work together to build families’ access to social networks that offer support across all our districts, building on the collaboration from existing joint working through Early Help Hubs in providing targeted support, especially to those most in need, on issues such as parental mental health, domestic abuse, benefits and housing and overall to reduce the inequalities that occur in Norfolk.
- 2.4.4 Only by better working together as a whole system, will we achieve the impact and outcomes needed for families and children, and use our resources efficiently. One service alone cannot achieve this. How we work together to deliver those services will define our success in the future. We have been working with partners on a logic model approach (see table 2) to understand how agencies already contribute to our three impacts so that we build a picture on how we can better work together and also inform the final specification for a new Early Childhood and Family Service, as well as wider services.

Table 2 – Logic model for measuring the outcomes of the new service

Impact Statement	Outcomes	Determinants on outcomes
<p>Supporting Children to achieve their developmental milestones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children develop in-line with expected milestones • Parents are aware of expected developmental milestones and know how to help their children achieve these • Reduced inequality gap in Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good early attachment 2. Access to high quality early years education 3. Effective speech and language development 4. Effective home learning environment 5. Access to social networks that offer support
<p>Preventing more children aged 0-5 experiencing neglect or emotional harm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families are well equipped to care for themselves without the need for statutory intervention • Appropriate SEND support for children aged 0-5 is readily available for families when needed • Children are safer and healthier • Parents have better mental health and wellbeing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent mental health 2. Domestic abuse 3. Drug and alcohol misuse 4. Family functioning including parental conflict 5. Adverse Childhood Experiences and childhood trauma
<p>Increasing social mobility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved educational attainment • More parents accessing good work or developing the skills need for employment, especially those furthest from the labour market • Parents in good quality secure jobs and know how to gain the skills needed to achieve their aspirations • Fewer children living in poverty • Reduced inequality gap in children’s educational attainment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to a good job 2. Housing 3. Levels of parental education 4. Being healthy (mentally and physically) 5. Access to opportunities

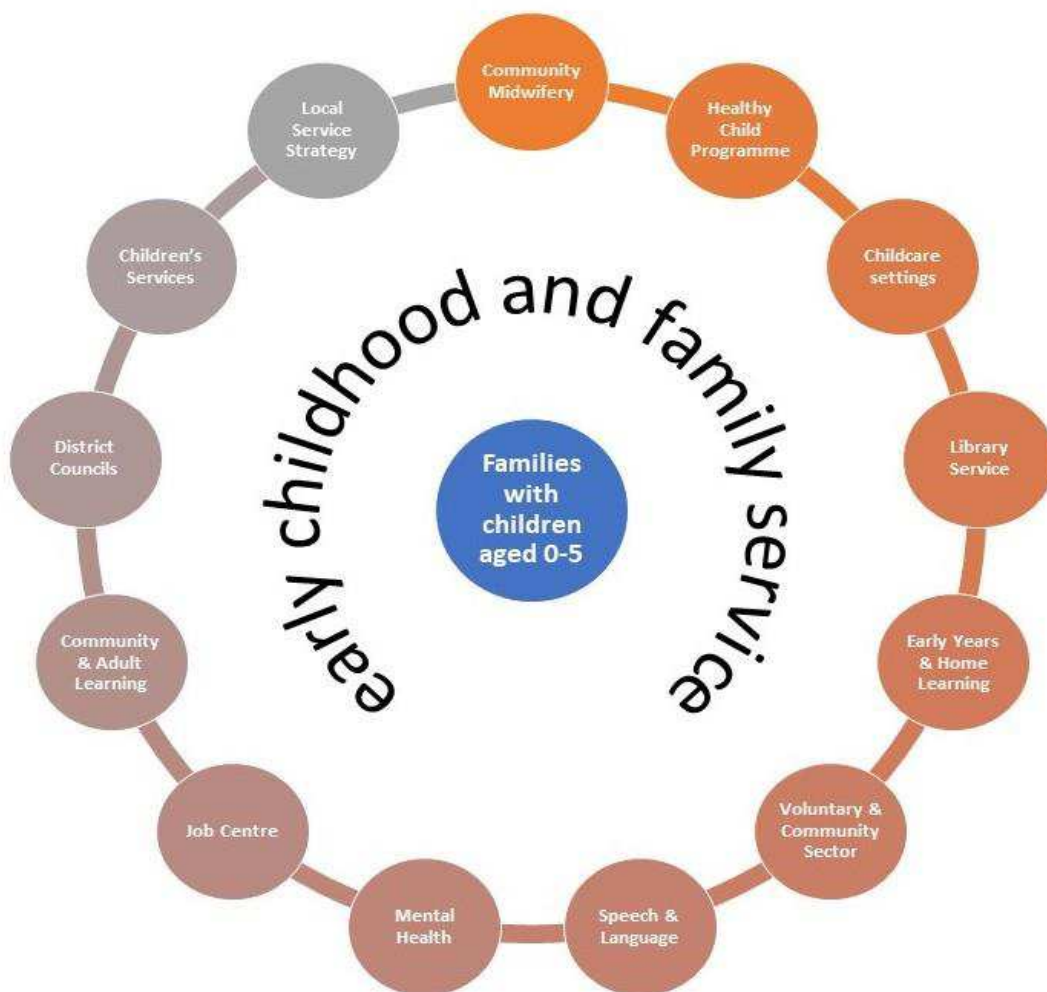
2.4.5 Having shared our logic model on impact and outcomes within a recent national roundtable discussion on early intervention, hosted by *Children and Young People Now*, we have received positive feedback from the Early Intervention Foundation:

“We were happy to provide feedback on a draft ECFS document setting out outcomes, determinants and measures for the new service, which was strong compared to examples we have seen from other local areas. We are a small charity and What Works Centre with a limited capacity, though supporting areas to improve the evidence base for early help is one of our strategic aims, and we would therefore be happy to keep in touch as this work progresses, especially in terms of helping ensure the new service can be accountable for affecting the outcomes Norfolk’s framework measures.”

Sarah Taylor, Head of Local Evaluation, **Early Intervention Foundation**

2.4.6 Key elements of an early childhood and family system

These include a number of interdependent services and priorities, as outlined below:



- **Healthy Child Programme** – Working closely with healthy child programme teams and health visiting to offer integrated delivery and support to families, including jointly undertaking targeted outreach and activities.
- **Midwifery Services** – Working closely with midwifery teams to ensure support is in place as early as possible, especially for families requiring extra help, linked into Maternity Transformation.
- **Library Service** – Working closely with the library service, jointly pursuing opportunities to provide a range of child and family programmes that support literacy, language development and early communication skills, as well as addressing social isolation for parents.
- **Speech and Language** – Working closely as part of a whole system approach to addressing the speech, language and communication needs of children and young people.
- **Early Education and Childcare Providers** – Working closely with childcare settings so that families can easily be identified as needing extra help or be signposted to support from the Early Childhood and Family Service.
- **Early Years** – Working closely with colleagues in the Education Achievement and Early Years Service to join up support for families' access to high quality childcare and to provide an effective home learning environment.
- **Emotional Health and Wellbeing** – Working closely to strengthen and use assets within universal services, schools, voluntary organisations, communities and specialist provision to support children and families with respect to emotional and behavioural, attachment and emerging mental health issues.
- **JobCentre Plus** – Working closely with Job Centre colleagues, supporting parents back into employment and linking into the East Anglia 2020 vision
- **Adult Learning** – Working closely with Norfolk Community Learning Services (Adult Education) to offer fun, friendly and inclusive learning opportunities. Supporting parents to develop their skills and confidence including key skills for employment.
- **District Councils** – Working closely with district councils, ensuring that early childhood services are part of a local district offer for families.
- **Voluntary and Community Sector** – Working closely together to support and connect the wide range of voluntary services and community activity that are focused on families with children. Supporting a coordinated and integrated approach in targeting support for families most in need of help.
- **Children's Services & Safeguarding** – Working closely with family focus and social work teams, communities and partner organisations within localities, so that families' needs can be met at the appropriate level and to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

2.4.7 Below are examples from partners committed to working as part of an Early Childhood and Family System:

“Great Yarmouth has a strong ambition to work collectively with NCC on improving outcomes for children and young people. We see the new approach to work with vulnerable children and their families as an opportunity to explore how a system’s wide approach to the design of services can lead to better outcomes.”

Senior officer from Great Yarmouth Borough Council

“Norfolk and Waveney CCGs are committed to working with system partners and communities to improve outcomes for children in order that they can be supported to meet their potential.”

Norfolk and Waveney CCGs

“The new Early Childhood and Family Support Service could be a key partner in supporting children and their families with the identification, signposting and support for children with speech, language and communication needs. Partner organisations are committed to working collaboratively with the Early Childhood and Family Support Service to ensure joint outcomes for improving speech, language and communication. For example, drop-in sessions continuing in partnership with any revised service model.”

Speech and Language Therapy Stakeholders Group

“The VCSE sector recognises the vital importance of early childhood and family services and is committed to working with a wide range of partners to deliver the best possible outcomes for children, families and communities. Not least in working together to address the inequalities that many families and their children face within our communities, and as a result need additional support to overcome such barriers to achieve their potential.”

‘Working Together’ Group

“We are keen to work together to develop a systems approach to supporting young children and families. Through the South Norfolk Help Hub, we have seen the benefit over the last four years of working collaboratively with partners to create a systemic approach to supporting families and individuals. We know we can improve the early years offer, which varies across the district, by building on the model that already exists with Children’s Services early help and social care team we can create a consistent offer that focuses on individual families and their communities to enable each child to grow and thrive.”

Senior officer from South Norfolk Council

2.5 Local driver 3 - Alignment with the Healthy Child Programme and the Library Service

We know from national research and evidence the benefits of greater alignment between early years services and the Healthy Child Programme⁴². We also know the importance of effective speech and language development, home learning environment and access to social networks that offer support which means closer working with the Norfolk Library and Information Service is vital. Both of these comprehensive service offers for families with children aged 0-5 have significantly developed since the current children's centre contracts were awarded in 2011.

2.5.1 Healthy Child Programme

National evidence highlights the benefits of closer alignment between the Healthy Child Programme and Early Years Services. Norfolk County Council Public Health commissions the Healthy Child Programme (HCP), currently a £16.5 million per year contract with Cambridge Community Services NHS Trust (CCS) which is commissioned until September 2024.

2.5.2 Every family in Norfolk is known to the Healthy Child Programme, (with a coverage of c.47,000 Under 5s and c.189 000 0-19s) and with very few exceptions families engage with the HCP to give every child the best start in life. Healthy Child Programme is our early intervention and prevention public health programme that lies at the heart of our universal service for children and families providing a range of community-based children and young people's health services across Norfolk including:

- Health visiting service
- 5 mandated health checks for children 0-3 years
- Services for all 0-5s both universal and targeted interventions for families requiring additional support, increased intervention and safeguarding
- Looked after children health reviews for 0-5s
- Specialist led pathways and support, including for teenage parents, children with additional needs, emotional health, early relationships, attachment, Travellers and migrant families
- Integrated vision and hearing screening for all 5 year olds
- Healthy weight services #NorfolkCan
- Established route for service users to access confidential advice and support
- Services for 5-19 year olds, including Chat Health, targeted interventions to support emotional health and resilience, transition support to school, high school and adulthood, locality information and resources, advice and guidance
- Building community capacity through co-production with service users

2.5.3 Public Health have been working closely with Childrens Services and the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) to look at the following enhancements to our HCP provision as an offer to support the development of the Early Childhood and Family Service to include:

- **A community offer** - supporting community groups and activity, developing and promoting opportunities for volunteering and co-production of services
- **An expanded *Just One Number* offer** – a single point of access telephone service for advice, support, referrals and intervention for service users and professionals for that cover HCP and Early Childhood and Family Service concerns
- **A digital offer:** *Just One Norfolk* website – expansion of the current digital platform to increase access to advice, care and support 24 hours a day, promoting confidence of parents and carers to support their children’s development, health and wellbeing:
 - Integration of *Just One Norfolk* with Norfolk Community Directory, Family Information Service and Norfolk Libraries, providing a single source for information, advice and guidance
 - Wider integration of the digital platform with partner providers to support children to achieve developmental milestones through improved early access to effective information, resources, support and referral pathways
 - Live Chat - direct link to clinician for advice and support, and on line peer support
 - Parenting support and adult learning available through groups, webinars and online courses from antenatal onwards
 - Digital assessment, goal setting tools and resources – including home learning environment and communication, healthy lifestyles, emotional well-being, managing minor illness and accidents
 - Professionals portal – access to site and resources for ECFS and other professionals with resources tailored to need
- **Support to develop targeted groups and 1:1 support with ECFS provider:** developing clear integrated referral pathways across HCP and ECFS, triage of health and family support requests relevant to specialist pathways, training and support for specialist activity, shared delivery of targeted groups

2.5.4 Norfolk Library Service

A number of libraries in Norfolk have been delivering elements of Early Childhood and Family Services over the past few years, however the services have not been consistently available across the County. Our Library Service has been refining and further developing its offer with the intention of supporting library staff across the county to deliver a consistent and focused service to children 0-5 and their families. It intends to focus attention on the role parents play in their children’s learning and literacy development and to support their health and wellbeing. It also wants to increase the number of young children, families and early years providers who use the library both to borrow books and attend events. And finally, to increase community and partner awareness of libraries as a valuable and key early learning destination.

2.5.5 The planned developments are as follows:

- Every library has a baby weigh station and feedback from people using the stations has been positive, especially from parents weighing their babies at weekends.

- Work with the Registration Service to join children to the library when their births are registered.
- Every library will have a year-round baby bounce and rhyme session. It is also envisaged staff from the new Early Childhood and Family Service will also support these sessions.
- The service is also reviewing the impact on maternal mental health of bounce and rhyme times. As a result, it is looking at a 'stay and chat' session after bounce and rhyme time to encourage informal networking and reduce social isolation amongst parents. This will be based on the established and successful 'just a cuppa' model. A new parenting collection of materials to support parents will be available at each library, along with books to help parents keep reading.
- A review of space occupied by the children's libraries at each library will be undertaken. The early years library at the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library is being refurbished and will open in February 2019
- Book Start: gives free books to every child in England and Wales at two key stages before school, as well as free packs for children with additional needs, tips and guidance on reading together, resources and activities, and much more. It is managed by Norfolk Library and Information Service but delivered in partnership with Health and Early Years services.
- Various pilots to extend the offer have been held. These include:
 - Dialogic reading as part of story time at the Millennium Library. The first session was held in November 2018 and involves providing copies of books for parents and children to share, while library staff model reading aloud techniques for parents to try. Parents are encouraged to borrow the books and sent home with copies of questions and activities that can help expand the story
 - School readiness activities have been trialled in Thetford Library, where a weekend toddler club focussed on school readiness through play following practice developed by the ELF (Early Learning with Families) programme in California⁴³, using maths, science and storytelling to encourage children to ask questions and explore.

2.6 Local driver 4 – Current operating model and use of budget

Children's centres were first established in Norfolk in 2000, with the first centre opening in Norwich under the national Sure Start programme. Their aim was to offer support to families in the most disadvantaged areas of the county, offering a variety of services.

2.6.1 As highlighted in the original data pack, there are over 47,000 children aged between 0-5 years old in Norfolk as of Sept 2018, of these:

- 41,455 are currently registered with their local children's centre service
- 33,424 families currently have a child registered with their local children's centre service

- 23,000 children and their families have used their children’s centre service once or more in the past 12 months – either for advice and information, to attend groups or for more targeted support
- On average there are over 800 families receiving more targeted support at any one time.
- 24% of Norfolk’s most deprived children aged under five years have had no contact with children’s centres.

2.6.2 The services have been delivered through contracts with 12 different providers including a national charity, a local charity, an NHS Trust, and schools including academies. The current children’s centre service model was constructed more than seven years ago and contracts with existing providers are coming to an end. This is the right time to redesign the service to reflect the change in needs and how families access services.

- 80% of provision takes place in the centre buildings - this approach is not reaching families who most need our help and taking services out of buildings and with greater use of outreach venues and families’ homes will improve access and, in the latter case, allow us to directly impact on the home learning environment which we know is crucial.
- The current service is delivered through contracts with 12 different providers leading to inconsistency and inefficiency.
- Children’s centres currently work in greater isolation due to there being 12 different lead partners. This limits the flexibility of how resources are deployed within and across different district areas, alongside the constraints of operating within 53 individual centre reach areas.
- Existing arrangements with 12 lead providers and 53 reach areas result in duplicated overheads and management costs and do not offer flexibility to deploy resources according to need.
- The current contracts are coming to an end and are 7 years old, so a new service needs to be right for the current and future Norfolk context.

2.6.3 Current levels of outreach delivery

Children’s centres deliver group activities to families, either led by the centre staff or delivered in partnership with other agencies. Based on a recent audit of centre activities, we know that 80% of sessions are held onsite in the designated children’s centre with 20% held in outreach venues. There is significant variation within individual centres about how much of the group provision is delivered onsite, but at a district level there is not the expected greater use of outreach, despite the expectation to cover large geographical reach areas in our more rural districts, and the associated difficulties for families to get to centres in these areas.

District area	Balance of onsite and outreach group sessions
Breckland	79% onsite, 21% in outreach venues
Broadland	87% onsite, 13% in outreach venues

Great Yarmouth	76% onsite, 24% in outreach venues
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	81% onsite, 19% in outreach venues
North Norfolk	80% onsite, 20% in outreach venues
Norwich	84% onsite, 16% in outreach venues
South Norfolk	75% onsite, 25% in outreach venues
County	80% onsite, 20% in outreach venues

2.6.4 Current balance of targeted delivery and universal activities

Our current mix of service provision is too heavily weighted towards universal access rather than targeted help for those families most needing support.

2.6.5 Whilst there has been a shift in expectation towards the delivery of more targeted activity, centres have maintained a high level of universal provision. Of the group sessions led by centres, or delivered in partnership, only 35% are targeted, with 65% offered as universal sessions as a county. There is a lack of consistency about what 'targeted' means from centre to centre and significant variation across centres and as district areas.

District area	Balance of targeted versus universal group sessions
Breckland	45% are targeted, 55% are universal
Broadland	25% are targeted, 75% are universal
Great Yarmouth	54% are targeted, 46% are universal
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	32% are targeted, 68% are universal
North Norfolk	22% are targeted, 78% are universal
Norwich	23% are targeted, 77% are universal
South Norfolk	30% are targeted, 70% are universal
County	35% are targeted, 65% are universal

2.6.6 The need to reprofile how the available budget is used to deliver better impact and outcomes for children aged 0-5

Our ambition is to secure better outcomes for children and families and ensure that any investment provides value for money and delivers impact for children by ensuring our funding is focused on front line delivery. Existing arrangements with 12 lead providers and 53 reach areas have resulted in duplicated overheads and management costs and do not offer flexibility to deploy resources according to need.

2.6.7 The current service model has resulted in only 39% of the budget being spent on front line services, while together management, administration, building and infrastructure costs take up 52% of the budget. The remaining 9% is made up of the hardship fund, contingency and reserves.

2.6.8 Whilst there are currently 53 designated children centres across Norfolk, 8 of these centres purely operate on an outreach basis with no delivery onsite. 7 centres are open for 20 or less hours per week. The remaining centres are open

for more than 34 hours per week. 47.6% of total county usage of centre buildings is by partners. The buildings are used by 91 partners, of which 16 pay to use them (See Appendix 2 – Early Childhood Offer – District Profiles).

2.6.9 Under our current contracts there are 12 different lead partners which leads to a range of different approaches and missed opportunities to join up delivery. This limits the flexibility of how resources are deployed within and across different district areas, alongside the constraints of operating within 53 individual centre reach areas.

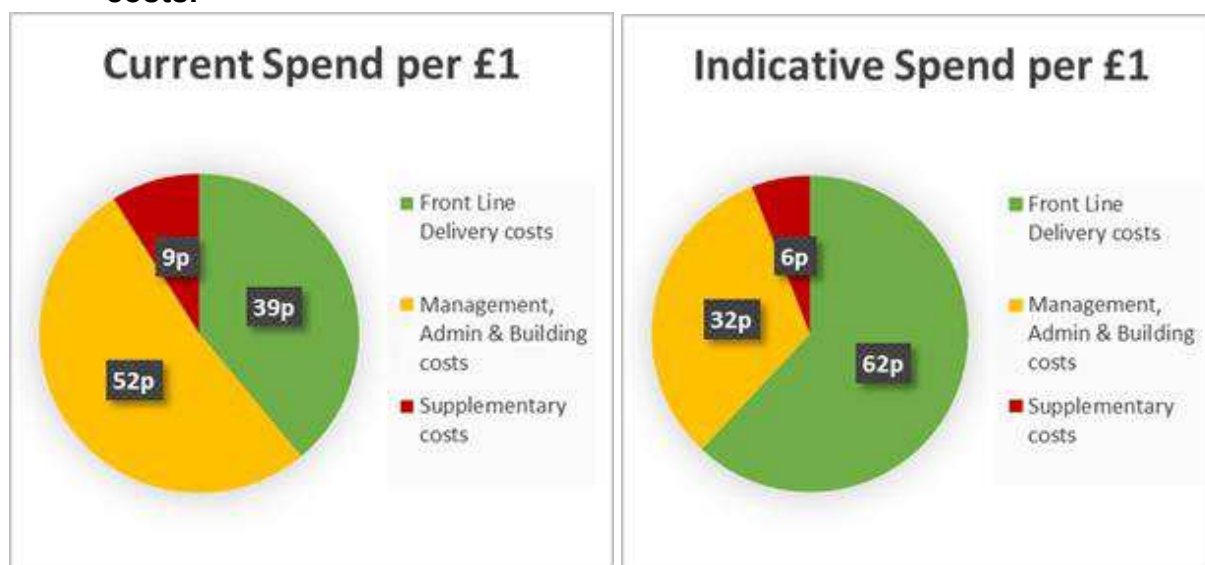
2.6.10 We need to increase the proportion of spending on front line delivery with families and reduce the proportion spent on buildings, management, administration and other overheads to ensure our resources achieve the most effective outcomes for children and families. With the current contracts ending in 2019, and the proposed transformation to establish a new Early Childhood and Family Service, we have a real opportunity to secure a more efficient and cost-effective service model that:

- Increases the proportion of the available budget spent on frontline delivery to over 60%
- Reduces the amount and proportion spent on managing and administering the service to around 20%
- Reduces the amount spent on operating buildings currently designated as children's centres
- Retains allocation of financial support for families being supported by targeted support (was previously called 'hardship fund') at 5% of the budget
- Improves the ability of the service provider to deploy resources more efficiently to respond to the needs of families by moving to a district rather than centre-reach footprint
- Improves cost efficiency by reducing the number of contracted providers & associated management costs

2.6.11 We have undertaken an indicative financial modelling exercise to ensure that our expectations around service delivery can be met. It is important to note that as we are tendering contracts to deliver this service, any financial modelling at this stage is only indicative as the final financial modelling will be agreed as part of a competitive dialogue process with potential service providers, once decisions have been made about the future service model.

	current children's centre budget use	% of budget	Indicative budget for new Early Childhood and Family Service	% of budget
Front line delivery costs	£4,027,289	39%	£3,250,000	62%
Management & admin costs (including management fees)	£4,243,539	41%	£1,150,000	22%
Building & infrastructure costs (inc cleaning & caretaking, hire of outreach venues)	£1,078,896	11%	£550,000	10.5%
Family support fund (replacing the hardship fund)	£471,773	5%	£250,000	5%
Contingency/set aside for redundancy reserves	£410,680	4%	£32,177	0.5%
Total	£10,232,177	100%	£5,232,177	100%

2.6.12 This means that currently only 39p out of every £1 spent is on front line delivery, compared to 52p on management, administration and building costs.



2.6.13 Based on our indicative financial model for the Early Childhood and Family Service, we estimate 62p in every £1 could be spent on front line delivery and only 32p out of every £1 on management, administration and buildings.

2.7 Local Driver 5 - Transformation and financial context

Financial pressures facing local authorities are well documented. However Norfolk County Council has increased spend on children's services, both in the base budget and for transformation, in order to achieve longer term improvements to outcomes. This investment is being made in line with our Norfolk Futures core principles:



Offering our help early to **prevent and reduce** demand for specialist services



Joining up our work so that similar activities and services are easily accessible, **done once and done well**



Being **business-like** and making best use of **digital technology** to ensure value for money



Using evidence and data to **target our work** where it can make the most difference

2.7.1 Our focus, as a children’s services department, is on securing:

- Targeted interventions that support children and families, and avoid the need for high intensity, high cost services
- The right staff, working in the right way, based on the right evidence, focused on outcomes and impact
- Transformation that enables a whole system approach which can deliver the impact and outcomes required for children and families

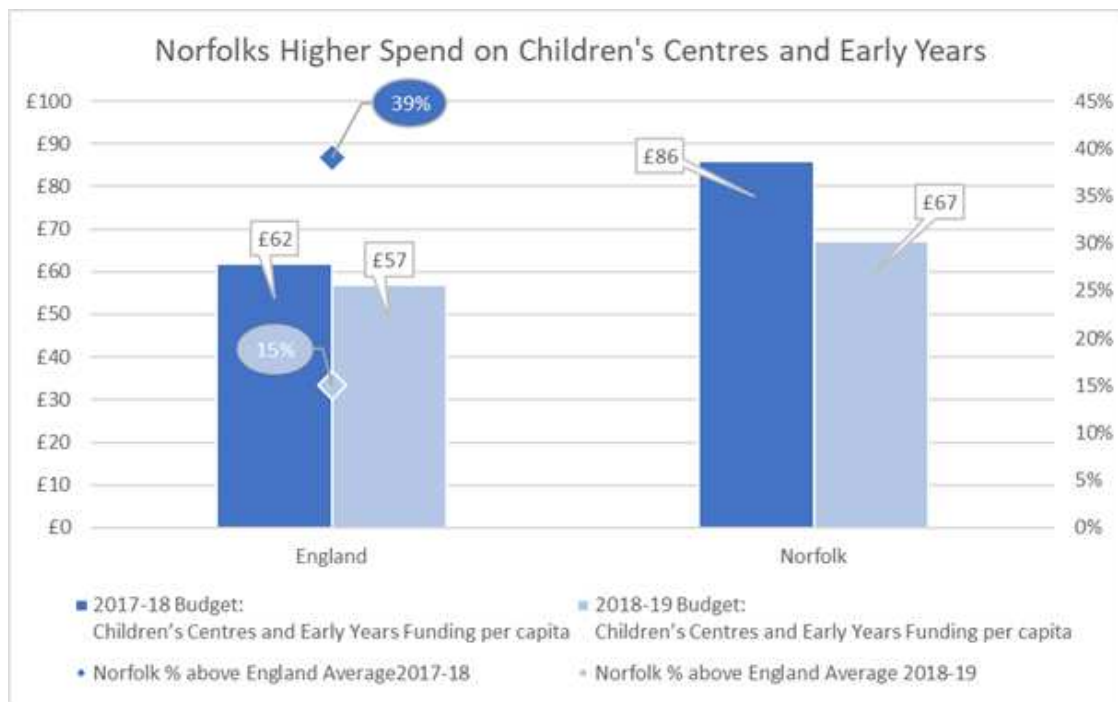
2.7.2 The Council is continuing to spend more than £65m per year in a comprehensive system of support for families with children aged 0-5, of which the £5.2m budget for the proposed Early Childhood and Family Service forms just one part. The wider offer and additional investments each year include:

- £12.7m to support under 5s via the Healthy Child Programme, funding key roles which support families through early parenting, such as health visitors and school nurses, and also provides a range of universal and targeted support for specific needs and challenges such as mental health difficulties, child illnesses, recovery after birth and impacts on family relationships, finances and wellbeing.
- £43.8m (via a proportion of the Dedicated Schools Grant and high needs block) to give parents fully funded early education hours for children aged 3 and 4, fully funded early education hours for 2 years olds from disadvantaged backgrounds, 3 Nursery Schools, early years classes in primary schools, support for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in early years settings, funding to early years settings to support 2,3 and 4 year olds with SEND complex needs.
- £2.4m on the Council’s Early Years Services which assure and drive up the quality of childminding, private and voluntary, independent and school run early years settings and home education through training, advice and financial support.
- £245k for Portage - a home visiting educational service for preschool children with SEND and their families.
- £214k contribution to the NCC Speech and Language contract so that young children get extra help with speech and language difficulties
- £650k for the Parent-Infant Mental Health Attachment Team which works with parents expecting a baby and with babies up to the age of one year to address mental health difficulties and support positive attachments so that families can remain and thrive together.
- £370k of specialist support for parents who have a disability or long-term illness through the ‘Enabling Disabled Parents Protocol’

- £500k on community learning and adult education via the Education and Skills Funding Agency

2.7.3 All of expenditure is over and above the Early Help Family Focus budget which totals £3.3m and our core duties and functions in relation to safeguarding and child protection and the substantial funding for social care teams and children who are in local authority care. The £5.2m budget for the Early Childhood and Family Service, whilst a reduction from previously, remains a substantial investment in children and families when compared with statistical neighbour authorities and more broadly across England.

2.7.4 Historically Norfolk has had higher spend on children’s centres and early years spend per head, compared with average spend for England and any of our statistical neighbours. Norfolk County Council budgeted to spend £86 per capita in 2017-18, 39% above the average budgeted amount in England, and £67 per capita in 2018-19, 15% above the average budgeted amount in England.



	2017-18 Budget Children's Centres and Early Years Funding per capita	2018-19 Budget Children's Centres and Early Years Funding per capita	2017-18 Outturn Total Spending on children's and young people's services (£000,000s)
England	£62	£57	-
Norfolk	£86	£67	£137.531
Suffolk	£51	£51	£87.598
Cornwall	£84	£87	£73.344

Lincolnshire	£48	£45	£94.651
Cumbria	£80	£78	£85.506
Somerset	£56	£62	£83.809
Devon	£61	£53	£110.108
Shropshire	£16	£20	£34.209
East Sussex	£60	£62	£71.938
Isle of Wight	£64	£59	£22.251
Derbyshire	£15	£20	£99.801

2.7.5 Even if we assume that other local authorities do not reduce their expenditure in 2019/20 from that budgeted for 2018/19, Norfolk's continued annual investment of £5.2m in the new Early Childhood and Family Service for 2019/20 will still mean that Norfolk's total spend on 'children's centres and early years' will be just above the England average and place us 8th out of our 11 statistical neighbours. However, it is a reasonable assumption that other authorities will continue to make savings in this area.

3.0 The Consultation on proposals to develop a new Early Childhood and Family Service

On 17 September 2018 Norfolk County Council opened a consultation on our proposals to develop a new Early Childhood and Family Service, including the transformation of our children's centres. Copies of the consultation document and the Easy Read version are included at Appendix 3 and 4 respectively.

3.1 Summary of consultation methodology

The consultation ran from 17 September to 12 November 2018. We sought the views of families, community groups, staff, children's centre advisory board representatives, service providers, district councils, voluntary sector organisations as well as the general public. Respondents were asked to read our consultation document and answer 19 questions. The consultation document was available online, and paper copies were provided on request and at our public drop in sessions. It was available in other languages on request. A large print and easy read version were also available.

3.2 We organised a number of drop in sessions in each district during the consultation period where council officers were on hand to answer questions from the public about the proposals. We also ran two stakeholder events for groups and organisations; three briefings for children's centre staff and we organised some group meetings for hard-to-reach groups who currently have minimal involvement with children's centres.

3.3 We have promoted the consultation through the media, with a launch day, social media messaging and a number of subsequent interviews on local and national media.

3.4 More detail about how the consultation was conducted is included in the consultation findings report at Appendix 5.

3.5 A summary of what we originally set out in our proposals for an Early Childhood and Family Service

The Council went out to consultation on proposals to build a new early childhood and family support service in September 2018. The proposal that we consulted on aimed to:

- Bring services out of buildings and into the community, to the children and families who need them most
- Help communities and parents offer local activities and groups
- Make it easier for families to access the information and advice they need, through providing better joined up online and digital services
- Change how we work to make sure we deliver in the best way for today's families

3.6 Our proposal aimed to refocus the service on those in greatest need, seeking to target our resources where it could make the most different. It had four elements:

Community support to help parents and communities offer local activities and groups

We proposed investing in community development work to help community groups set up their own activities, such as stay and play, working with staff in our Early Help Family Focus and Early Years teams, local councils and community groups. We suggested that these types of activities could be held in community centres and church halls and would provide universal access to support to ensure parents could avoid isolation and develop support networks. Many groups already exist and run successfully from these types of locations. Some charge a small fee and other groups are free.

Online digital offer

We proposed improving our online digital offer to provide better information, advice and guidance for parents. We proposed joining up with the Healthy Child Programme's *Just One Norfolk*, the Norfolk Community Directory and Norfolk's Family Information Offer.

Group based support

Some families need extra help and support and we proposed that we would commission the delivery of group-based support for these families. This group work would take place in local community venues such as local libraries, community centres or village halls, and would focus on activities such as parenting programmes and antenatal and postnatal support, for example.

One to one support

Some families experience difficulties such as poor mental health, drugs and alcohol misuse and domestic abuse need greater support. We proposed that we would commission the delivery of one to one support to support families who need extra help. This would be delivered in families' homes, and staff would work closely with early help, social work, health, education and other partners to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for families.

Our proposal envisaged that services would be delivered using an outreach model in local communities, in existing community facilities or in homes, to ensure families could easily access services. This would build on the current delivery by some children's centres and ensure that this was more widely available to families who need this type of support across the whole county.

- 3.7 We proposed to de-designate the majority of the 53 children's centres which currently exist, and to retain a base in each district to be used as a hub for staff to work out from, rather than purely as a place to deliver services. The bases proposed were in Attleborough, Drayton and Taverham, Gorleston, Terrington St Clements, Holt, City and Eaton in Norwich and Long Stratton. Of these Attleborough and City and Eaton are also proposed as locations for a multi-function hub as part of the Local Service Strategy so additional benefits could be gained from being co-located with staff from other services and organisations.

3.8 Summary of consultation findings

Norfolk County Council would like to thank everyone who contributed to our children's centres consultation. The Council received 1,576 responses, 1,401 from residents and 175 from organisations commenting on our proposals. The

responses have provided vital information which will help to develop council services in Norfolk and will inform decision-making. Some of the suggestions for service delivery will be used directly in the development of the Council's new Early Childhood and Family Service. A summary of the responses is set out in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of our consultation findings

What we've been told	Our Response
<p>We proposed: to create an Early Childhood and Family Service consisting of 4 elements: community support; online and digital information, advice and guidance; targeted group support and targeted one to one support.</p>	
<p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of you said children's centres were a familiar, trusted, local hub that are a safe place for families and workers to use, and their loss would result in a poorer service. • Many agreed that the proposed service would provide a better and much needed service, but wanted it to run alongside the existing children's centres. • Those affiliated with organisations questioned the thinking behind the proposals, asking if it was deliverable. • You were worried that people would receive a poorer service and would not be able to get to the new locations for delivery, however a few suggested the proposal would result in a better service. • That mental health or wellbeing might be affected, including increasing isolation or loneliness and you were concerned about job losses. 	<p>Our response:</p> <p>We recognise that where families live close to a building, this can be an accessible place for people to access the support they need. For many families living in rural areas and needing support, access to a specific centre or building is often more limited.</p> <p>This is why we remain committed to taking services out to where families live, but we recognise the need to adapt the service model to reflect the local context. This means we will make more use of buildings in urban areas where there are more families living close by who need help, alongside outreach and taking services out to families who need help but live in more dispersed rural communities.</p> <p>We have also listened to the comments about the logistics of operating the service from one base in each district area and balanced the benefits of operating through more bases against the cost of managing more buildings and enabling front line time to reach out.</p> <p>We do not expect families who need extra help to have to travel to the service to access support – we want the service to travel to them. Whilst we recognise that a greater emphasis on outreach may increase staff travel times in some areas, this model is successfully used with our Family Focus teams and health visitors - taking services out to families.</p>

	<p>It is clear that the new Early Childhood and Family Service will require a workforce that is highly skilled, trained and experienced in delivering early years services. We do not want to lose these attributes from the current workforce as it is these aspects and the ability to form purposeful and supportive relationships with families that will enable the new service to secure the desired outcomes and impact. At this point we are unable to provide clarity regarding the impact this may have on the employees of these commissioned services. Once the contract for the new service has been awarded the successful bidder(s) will have a clearer picture of the implications for staff.</p>
<p>The Community Impact Assessment has highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As impact on the wider community in most cases will be minimal the work to minimise the impacts of the new service will need to focus the service users rather than the wider community. • The transition to the new service will need to include plans to minimise the negative impact of the removal of universal services for those ‘just about managing’. 	<p>Our response:</p> <p>We recognise the importance of families having opportunities to meet other families as part of building a network of support and reduce feelings of isolation, including through being able to access universal activities.</p> <p>As the location of these opportunities to meet other families changes, we recognise that some families will need help to connect with and make use of the wider universal activities on offer in their local community and we will build this into the new service offer.</p> <p>We recognise the importance of families being able to access information, advice and guidance in addition to the information available on the digital offer and we will extend the service offer to ensure there is a programme of regular drop-ins for families to access the new service, as well as wider support.</p>

<p>On the community support element:</p> <p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many agreed this is an important service that is already happening in some places, but some thought it would result in a poorer service. • People raised questions over suitable space, accessibility, confidentiality, security and affordability issues. <p>The EQIA has recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased investment in community-based groups to be targeted at areas of most need, including rural areas. This should aim to; map and identify gaps in capacity, ensuring as far as possible, a consistent offer across the county and; invest in the expertise / skills of the workforce (both paid and voluntary) and the community venues to be used for service delivery. • Work across all statutory agencies (children’s services, adult services, health) to develop a support network for community groups running universal services and establish a mechanism for parents to report issues as to practice. • Development of a self-assessment tool for reviewing the accessibility, inclusivity and suitability of community-based venues. To include the 	<p>Our response:</p> <p>Many families already use these types of community led groups and activities and they form an important part of family life, helping to create their network of support. They run in a variety of locations such as libraries, community and church halls and children’s centres. Often there is a small charge to cover refreshments and we expect this to continue.</p> <p>Whilst there are nearly 1000 community led groups and activities on offer across the county (see Appendix 2), we recognise there are some places where there are less community activities taking place or groups are not meeting the needs of some families or particular communities.</p> <p>We also recognise that community led groups can need support themselves, either to get established or to respond effectively to particular issues that families present.</p> <p>We will invest £250,000 to support this, building on the range of community development activity that is already taking place in districts, either led by the voluntary sector, the district councils or our own early help teams. We recognise the importance of this and want to ensure that there is sufficient focus on support for families with young children.</p> <p>We understand that community-led groups should not replace the support provided by qualified staff and that they should be part of a wider early childhood offer for families in each area.</p>
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<p>development of guidance for groups in determining what they need to provide linked with funding applications.</p>	
<p>On the online and digital element:</p> <p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many agreed that we should use technology more to deliver services, but many more thought that there is already a wealth of online information and more is not needed. • Most agreed that face to face support is often better. • Comments were raised over affordability, difficulty finding the right support, poor connectivity and reading difficulties. <p>The EQIA has recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A further review to be carried out of the on-line offer ‘Just one Norfolk’ platform and the ‘Norfolk Directory’ to identify opportunities for enhancing accessibility of digital information, particularly focusing on the needs of disabled users, including those with learning difficulties or who are Deaf. Following the review ensure that web information meets accessibility standards and set clear parameters for the ongoing development of the site. 	<p>Our response:</p> <p>We also recognise that there is a lot of information available online and it can be difficult to find the information relevant to you. The “Just One Norfolk” platform operated as part of the Healthy Child Programme has been developed with families and has been really positively received by those using it. We want to utilise this excellent resource and integrate it with the Norfolk Community Directory and our Family Information Service so that families will be confident that there is an easy route to the information and advice that they can trust. The Directory will also contain information about other community-led services.</p> <p>We understand the need to provide a mix of opportunities to ensure everyone can access services and the support they need. Whilst many are now using digital services by default, we recognise the importance of still being able to speak to someone, including face to face and over the telephone.</p> <p>We recognise that digital literacy and access is an issue for some, but this is an existing challenge and is not a result of the redesign of our service. Norfolk County Council launched a Digital Inclusion Strategy in February 2018, which is taking a range of actions to address these issues. Users of the Early Childhood and Family Service can access support, including the provision of free internet access in Libraries, computer buddying and training.</p>

<p>On the targeted support via groups or one to one element:</p> <p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many agreed this is an important service which is happening in places, but some said this would result in a poorer service and that safeguarding risks may be less likely to be flagged. • People said it is important the service is accessible to everyone not just those in deprived areas or who live on low incomes. • People raised questions over suitable space, accessibility, confidentiality, security and affordability issues. • Many people wanted more information about this service. • Those affiliated with organisations questioned the thinking behind the proposals, asking if it was deliverable. <p>The EQIA has recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage directly with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and Norfolk’s Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (those which play a key role in Norfolk in supporting newly arrived people whose 	<p>Our response:</p> <p>Safeguarding is a priority for the Council and to the wider early childhood system and we will continue to work with statutory and voluntary and community partners to offer training around safeguarding procedures and review its effectiveness on a regular basis to ensure that all is being done to keep children safe.</p> <p>We want the new service to provide better outcomes for children and target those most in need. We do recognise that all families benefit from universal group activities. We will expand the service offer to provide universal group activities open to all families in areas of high need.</p> <p>We will work with the Library Service as they refine and develop the consistency and accessibility of the libraries’ universal offer for children aged 0-5 and their families.</p> <p>Where targeted support is provided, this will be as part of a joined-up system, supporting those in the greatest need. Through prioritising the delivery of targeted support, front line staff will be able to spend more time working with families who need extra help than they do now.</p> <p>By focusing on the three impact statements and improving the outcomes for our children, such as social mobility, we will reduce the overall strain on the wider system which will benefit everyone and create better outcomes for Norfolk.</p>
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first language isn't English), to make sure they are informed about the offer, and know who to contact if individuals cannot access information or are unsure what services may be available.

We proposed: to run the early childhood and family services and activities through different community venues.

You said:

- Many of you felt it makes little sense to close children's centres and to deliver services from use community buildings instead.
- However, some of you said that running services from community buildings is positive move.
- Questions were raised over location, lack of suitable space and capacity, poor accessibility confidentiality, security and that safeguarding risks may be less likely to be flagged.
- Some commented over the viability of running services from many locations and whether they would be affordable.

Our response:

We already use a wide range of different venues and spaces to deliver existing services and some of our designated children's centres are in libraries and schools, or space in a community building, rather than purpose-built buildings.

Even though there are many community venues already used by children centre services, we know that most of the current services (around 80%) are delivered onsite, despite the fact that many families live in dispersed rural communities.

Families in rural communities have said they like being able to access services in community buildings rather than travel to a children's centre. In addition to this, many of the children's centres which will be de-designated will remain open and may continue to be used as a space for delivery by the new service.

We want the new service to deliver locally to families by building on the existing community venues previously used by children's centres.

About 85% of the 0-4 population in high need areas are less than 1 mile from a potential future service delivery site. A greater proportion of children in high need areas are closer to a potential future service delivery site than those in average or low need areas.

	<p>We expect the new service provider to extend the range of local suitable and safe venues, especially in more dispersed rural communities.</p>
<p>We proposed: to use 7 of the current children’s centres as bases and wherever possible to continue to use the 46 children’s centre buildings to support families with children under the age of five.</p>	
<p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of you asked why change things when they work well as they are. • People commented they don’t want their children’s centre to close as it would result in a poorer service with access difficulties, however some people said it would result in an improved service. • Some individuals said it is important that children services remain universal and accessible to everyone. • That the current set-up is an essential service, providing access to a trusted local hub that is safe and secure. <p>The Community Impact Assessment has highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the wider early childhood and family 	<p>Our response:</p> <p>We recognise that many people value the current service offer model, especially if they have easy access to a children’s centre. We know many families do not. In addition to taking services out to families we recognise that in areas of high need and high volume, the buildings that we keep as bases can provide accessible support to many families living in the immediate area. We therefore want to extend the number of bases from 7 to 15, so that there is greater use of buildings in high need/high volume areas. These buildings will be bases for staff for the new Early Childhood and Family Service to operate from and will also be part of the network of buildings through which services are delivered, alongside direct work with families in their home.</p> <p>Operating with 15 bases, rather than the current 53 designated buildings, will help us ensure a greater proportion of the funding available goes to front line support rather than funding premises, management and administration.</p> <p>We want organisations and communities to take on buildings and retain them with a focus on provision for families with children aged 0-5. To enable this ambition, we are establishing a £500,000 capital fund to support organisations taking over the de-designated buildings so that they are able to continue to provide services with a focus on children</p>

<p>system will be important in ensuring that those who need services are able to access them and that collaboration and intelligence sharing is maintained across the system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The role of the wider early childhood and family system will be important in developing plans with communities to transition to the new service.• Buildings being selected as bases for the Early Childhood and Family Service should prioritise locations of highest need and provide good outreach access.• The new service and outreach model will need to pay particular attention to how it will work with market towns with higher levels of deprivation.	<p>aged 0-5. We are reassured by the volume of Expressions of Interest as part of the consultation process. We will work with the wider early childhood and family system providers who currently deliver services from the current children's centres to ensure that they are able to either continue to use the buildings or find alternative venues.</p> <p>The development of how we use Council buildings in local areas will be considered as part of our Local Service Strategy, with the expectation that we take opportunities to co-locate services.</p>
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3.9 Summary of our equality and rural impact assessment – key findings and suggested mitigation

When making decisions the Council must give due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

- 3.10 An equality and rural impact assessment has been carried out on the proposal. It is evident from this process that the proposal will impact on all current users of children's centre services – adults, children and families, including those with protected characteristics and in rural areas. The nature of the impact will differ depending upon the user's circumstances.
- 3.11 For example, for some people, there may be a positive impact – a lone parent with a busy schedule living in a rural area may have increased access to information through enhanced online services which are available 24/7 or be able to access community-led support at a venue nearer to their home, reducing travel times. For others, the impact may be detrimental because, for instance, they may no longer be able to access universal children's centre services at the same building or may have to start paying for a service.
- 3.12 It should be noted that there is no legal impediment to going ahead with the proposal. It would be implemented in full accordance with due process, national guidance and policy. Similar proposals have been implemented elsewhere in the UK.
- 3.13 Six mitigating actions are proposed to address the detrimental impacts relating to the proposal. It is not possible to address all the potential impacts. Ultimately, the task for Children's Services Committee is to balance these impacts alongside the need to manage reduced resources and continue to provide essential children's services to those who need them most, which includes young people and families with protected characteristics and in rural areas.
- 3.14 The mitigating actions are:
1. If the proposal goes ahead, ensure that the findings of this assessment are communicated across all teams responsible for implementation, to ensure that the issues highlighted are systematically addressed in delivery plans, service design and commissioning.
 2. Increased investment in community-based groups to be targeted at areas of most need, including rural areas. This should aim to; map and identify gaps in capacity, ensuring as far as possible, a consistent offer across the county and; invest in the expertise / skills of the workforce (both paid and voluntary) and the community venues to be used for service delivery.
 3. Work across all statutory agencies (children's services, adult services, health) to develop a support network for community groups running universal services and establish a mechanism for parents to report issues as to practice.
 4. Develop a self-assessment tool for reviewing the accessibility, inclusivity and suitability of community-based venues. To include the development of guidance for groups in determining what they need to provide linked with funding applications.

5. Further review to be carried out of the on-line offer 'Just one Norfolk' platform and the 'Norfolk Directory' to identify opportunities for enhancing accessibility of digital information, particularly focusing on the needs of disabled users, including those with learning difficulties or who are Deaf. Following the review ensure that web information meets accessibility standards and set clear parameters for the ongoing development of the site.
 6. If the proposal goes ahead, engage directly with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and Norfolk's Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (those which play a key role in Norfolk in supporting newly arrived people whose first language isn't English), to make sure they are informed about the offer, and know who to contact if individuals cannot access information or are unsure what services may be available.
- 3.15 The full assessment findings are attached for consideration at Appendix 6. Clear reasons are provided to show why positive or detrimental impact is predicted, and the nature of this impact.

3.16 Summary of the Community Impact Assessment on the proposed Early Childhood and Family Service

A Community Impact Assessment examines the impact of the proposals on the community as a whole. It is separate from the formal consultation process on the proposals and is designed to provide a wider 'scope' than could be achieved through an Equality Impact Assessment which focuses only upon the impact of a proposal on people with protected characteristics.

- 3.17 Community Action Norfolk has undertaken this research on behalf of Norfolk County Council. The full assessment findings are attached at Appendix 7. Community Action Norfolk's role has been to gather information about the potential positive and negative impacts on communities and report these back.
- 3.18 460 stakeholders were contacted as part of the development of the impact assessment ranging from Parish and Town Councils through to child-minding businesses. 179 stakeholders inputted into the survey. In addition, 374 community buildings were contacted to help identify the availability of alternative venues.

3.19 Key findings

Overall, the proposals are likely to impact those areas with a higher proportion of children the most significantly. Among parents, those accessing the universal provision will be most significantly impacted, since the proposals withdraw this element of the current offer. Those 'just about managing' below any eligibility criteria for additional service support are likely to be impacted the most negatively. In summarising the community impact assessment Community Action Norfolk identified five key points that require specific consideration:

- Most of the impact of the proposals will be limited to those individuals, families and organisations directly connected to the children's centre and its services. In general, children's centres, unlike other facilities such as post offices, do not seem to have as much wider significance for the community beyond those that use them or have some other form of active connection and the impact on the wider community in most cases will be minimal.

- Childrens' centres in many locations have become a hub of activity for both community provision and wider service providers. There will be a direct impact on a number of these service providers who utilise the children's centre as an operating base and an easy access point to reach their beneficiaries/potential clients. There also may be an impact on collaboration and intelligence sharing that takes place as a result of the children's centre functioning as a hub.
- Stakeholders are pessimistic about the ability of the community to take on a more active role. Wider intelligence suggests that the community and voluntary sector are facing growing demand whilst resources both in terms of cash and volunteers are under severe strain. It should not be assumed the community will develop new provision in response to the service proposals. A careful plan needs to be put in place to actively support the development of community provision and understand and mitigate the impact of a lack of alternative community provision.
- There is a balance of stakeholder feedback and intelligence that suggests the need to reconsider the location of the retained centres. On balance it may be best to locate these in areas of higher need, whilst retaining the strong commitment to an outreach focused approach. Areas of higher need often have less in the way of existing alternative community provision or alternative venues and can have lower levels of resilience. As it is likely that a significant proportion of demand for the redesigned service will be in these areas, locating the hubs in these areas will reduce some of the travel time for support staff, potentially improving efficiency.
- A number of market towns with higher levels of deprivation also appear to have low levels of services/community activity compared to their population size. Specific consideration should be given as to how the resilience of these areas can be strengthened as they face the compounding effects or often poor access/connectivity, a range of service reductions and growing or higher levels of need.

3.20 Implications for the model

- As impact on the wider community in most cases will be minimal the work to minimise the impacts of the new service will need to focus the service users rather than the wider community.
- The transition to the new service will need to include plans to minimise the negative impact of the removal of universal services on those 'just about managing'.
- The role of the wider early childhood and family system will be important in ensuring that those who need services are able to access them and that collaboration and intelligence sharing is maintained across the system.
- The role of the wider early childhood and family system will be important in developing plans with communities to transition to the new service.
- Buildings being selected as bases for the Early Childhood and Family Service should prioritise locations of highest need and provide good outreach access.
- The new service and outreach model will need to pay particular attention to how it will work with market towns with higher levels of deprivation.

4.0 Changes to our proposals as a result of the consultation process:

As a result of the consultation process we have amended our proposals in the following ways:

- Greater recognition that all families benefit from universal group activities
- Making it easier to access support
- Extending the new service to support families to connect with and make use of activities provided by local communities and partner organisations
- Keeping more buildings to reflect varying local needs in rural and urban areas
- Investing £500,000 to support local organisations and communities to use buildings, currently designated as children’s centres, with a focus on services for families with children aged 0-5.

4.1 Greater recognition that all families benefit from universal group activities

The Early Childhood and Family Service will provide universal group activities open to all families in areas of high need recognising the value this provides to parents of young children.

4.1.1 This could include; Stay and Play Sessions, Messy Play, Baby massage etc and will be developed on the basis of local need and demand within the specific communities.

4.1.2 Working with the Library Service as they refine and extend the consistency and accessibility of the libraries’ universal offer for children aged 0-5 and their families.

4.1.3 Examples of this include:

- Every library will have a year-round baby bounce and rhyme session including in school holidays that will be a universal offer for all families with children aged 0-5. It is also envisaged staff from the new Early Childhood and Family Service will support these sessions.
- Consistent with feedback from the consultation and evidence of the positive impact on maternal mental health of bounce and rhyme times, we are also developing a “stay and chat” session after bounce and rhyme time to encourage informal networking and reduce social isolation amongst parents. This will be based on the established and successful ‘just a cuppa’ model.

4.2 Making it easier to access support

We will amend proposals to provide a programme of regular drop in sessions for families with partners to enable families to access one stop shop advice and support and meet other parents/carers reducing their sense of isolation, as well as enable them to have contact with the range of services focused on supporting

families with young children such as health visitors from the Healthy Child Programme, speech and language therapists, the Library Service, or local voluntary and community sector organisations offering support on a range of issues such as domestic abuse, mental health and wellbeing.

4.2.1 The staff from the new service will attend community led and partnership groups (e.g. health clinics, Bounce and Rhyme in Libraries, Speech and Language drop ins) to help identify and address families' needs, either within that setting or enable families to access more targeted support.

4.3 Extending the new service to support families to connect with and make use of activities provided by local communities and partner organisations

Whilst many families already access the wealth of community led activities and groups that operate in their local area (see the details of nearly 1000 groups currently operating across the county within the district profiles in Appendix 2), we know that some families need help to find and participate in these community led groups. The service will therefore be extended to offer support to all families of children aged 0-5 to connect with and make use of the universal activities provided by other organisations and local community groups, as part of enabling families to build 'networks of support'.

4.4 Keeping more buildings to reflect varying local needs in rural and urban areas

We will adapt the service model to fit local contexts, making use of more buildings in our urban areas where there are more families needing extra help, alongside outreach and taking services out to families who need support in our more dispersed rural communities.

4.4.1 We have acknowledged what people told us through the public consultation and have looked again at our proposals regarding buildings. We recognise that accessibility and local community context are important considerations for any proposed future service model. Feedback we have received strongly expressed the desire for designated children's centre buildings being accessible in more urban areas, where there is greater disadvantage and a higher population density. Key reasons given:

- a lifeline
- a place of safety
- trusted professionals at hand
- services all in one place

4.4.2 In the more rural areas there were questions about the logistics of operating from a single base in the district:

- service capability to deliver effective outreach without a more local base
- the cost of staff travel
- the importance of staff receiving supervision and peer support from colleagues

4.4.3 Taking this into account we are proposing that the arrangements for the Early Childhood and Family Service need to be flexed to take account of the different ways in which families access the support they need, alongside the practical challenges of service delivery in a diverse county such as Norfolk. We are therefore recommending an increase in the number of bases from 7 to 15.

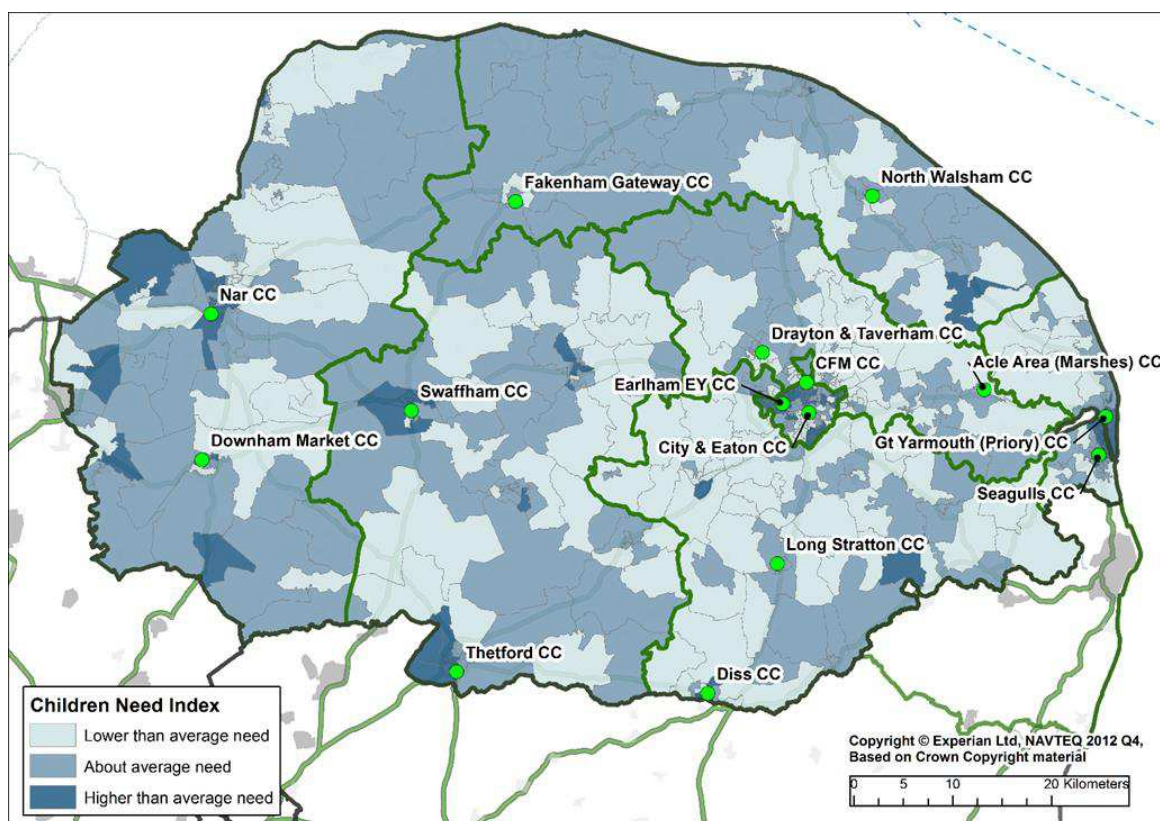
4.4.4 In addition to our original rationale for use of buildings, we have developed our thinking about the number of bases, to take account of the following:

- effective delivery of outreach to support families who need help is the most important aspect of the service
- a service model that takes account of the specific needs and local community contexts within each district area
- recognition that high need and high footfall (volume) is an important factor in some urban areas
- an understanding about how families currently use a variety of buildings
- the logistical requirements for bases and operating an effective outreach service model
- realism about the cost of adding additional bases

4.5 Revised proposals for 15 Early Childhood and Family Bases:

District area	Centres to be retained as an early childhood and family base
Breckland	Swaffham Thetford (Kingsway)
Broadland	Acle Drayton and Taverham
Great Yarmouth Borough	Great Yarmouth (Priory) Seagulls
King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough	Downham Market Nar
North Norfolk	Fakenham North Walsham
Norwich City	Catton Grove, Fiddlewood, Milecross (CFM) City and Eaton Earlham
South Norfolk	Diss Long Stratton

4.5.1 From our original proposals, Attleborough, Holt, and Terrington St. Clements will not be retained as bases, although may still be used to deliver outreach services, depending on future use. For example, in Attleborough the building will be operated as a multi-function hub as part of the Local Service Strategy so the new service will continue to be able to use this as a delivery site.



4.6 Investing £500,000 to support local organisations and communities to use buildings, currently designated as children’s centres, with a focus on services for families with children aged 0-5.

We will provide a £500,000 capital fund to enable continuing use of buildings where they are de-designated as a children’s centre.

4.6.1 Many of the buildings currently designated as a children’s centre will continue to be used to deliver services for children aged 0-5. In some cases, where the building is on a school site, or where there is an existing childcare provider operating from the site, this transition will be relatively straight forward. In other locations, there will be opportunities for new groups to utilize the site and early indications are that many of the buildings are of interest to other organisations and services.

4.6.2 Following decision making by Children’s Service Committee, these early expressions of interest will be pursued. To enable this interest to be realised for the benefit of families with children aged 0-5, a £500,000 capital fund will be available to support any necessary minor adaptations that may be required. We will also take a realistic approach to rents charged from organisations where they are delivering services for families with children aged 0-5, so that the facilities onsite can continue to be available to families. Individual profiles for each of the buildings currently designated as a children’s centre are included as Appendix 8. These highlight the significant variation in the current operating arrangements of each children’s centre.

5.0 Clarifying how the new Early Childhood and Family Service will operate

The new Early Childhood and Family Service will be focused on delivering outcomes that contribute to the three impacts we want to secure for families with children aged 0-5 in Norfolk:

- **Supporting children to achieve their developmental milestones**
- **Preventing more children aged 0-5 from experiencing neglect or emotional harm**
- **Increasing social mobility**

5.1 The new service will help achieve this by focusing on the following determinants:

- Supporting good early attachment
- Helping families access high quality early years education
- Developing effective speech and language development
- Supporting parents to provide an effective home learning environment
- Supporting families to access social networks that offer support
- Helping families reduce or remove the impact on children of:
 - Poor parental mental health
 - Domestic abuse
 - Drug & alcohol misuse
 - Family functioning including parental conflict
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) & childhood trauma
- Working with other agencies and services, to improve families':
 - Access to a 'good' job
 - Housing
 - Levels of parental education
 - Health (mental & physical)
 - Access to opportunities

5.2 Working as part of an Early Childhood and Family System, the new service will:

- 5.2.1 Provide targeted support for families with children aged 0-5**
- 5.2.2 Offer help so that all families can connect with local support and universal early childhood activities**
- 5.2.3 Operate 15 early childhood and family support bases and use a range of local delivery venues**
- 5.2.4 Contribute to joint working and maintaining partnerships as part of securing a local early childhood offer**
- 5.2.5 Invest £250,000 in community development to ensure there are strong 'networks of support**
- 5.2.6 Support an enhanced online and digital information, advice and guidance offer for families**



5.2.1 Providing targeted support for families with children aged 0-5

Focused on families who need extra help but before their needs are so complex that they require the help of family focus teams or statutory support such as social work. We call this level of targeted early help 'tier 2'.

5.2.1.1 We intend to commission this element of the new Early Childhood and Family Service.

5.2.1.2 Delivered through:

- One to one support using a whole family approach, provided by qualified and skilled staff, in families' homes or in local venues that are safe and accessible for families.
- Targeted group support and activities, including for example evidence-based parenting programmes and pre-birth support to mothers and fathers, based on:
 - Assessed need and accessed via referral
 - Targeting specific areas of high need and offered as 'open access' groups.
- Offering creche support to enable families participate in targeted group sessions and programmes.
- Using tools such as the 'Parent and Baby Star' which has been developed for parents who many need extra support with their perinatal mental health and well-being during pregnancy and the first year after having a baby.
- Undertaking a lead professional role alongside other services and agencies as part of working in a more targeted and joined up way with families.

- Supporting other case-holding professionals, such as health visitors or social workers, as part of developing a ‘team around the family’.

5.2.1.3 A case study to show how the new Early Childhood and Family Service might provide targeted support

The Evans – mum Sinead, dad Michael, twins Lily-Anne and Iris aged 4 and Patrick aged 10 months. Mum and dad are separated but dad has contact with the children.

Sinead is seven months pregnant. The twins have just started attending the local school who report that they are always hungry. Patrick is reported to regularly be left in the care of friends, as mum finds it hard to cope with him. Sinead is not working and has been having difficulties paying her rent. After a chat with Sinead the school contact the Early Childhood and Family Service and a worker arranges a visit. They work with Sinead, the school and the health visitor to see what support can be put in place for the children. Everyone agrees Sinead will need help from lots of different agencies. A plan is put together with the family, and the Early Childhood and Family Service worker has the lead role to make sure everything happens to support mum.

The Plan

1. The Early Childhood and Family Service worker will help Sinead to connect with Patrick and meet his needs through providing one to one work on relationships and parent-child interactions. Sinead learns about some of the online courses such as Solihull, through Just One Norfolk, to help her understand the needs of her children.
2. The health visitor will provide ante-natal advice and Sinead and her new baby can attend sessions together to improve their bond e.g. baby massage. Breast feeding support will also be there for her through health visitor, a peer supporter or breastfeeding cafés.
3. The extended family and friends are discussed so everyone knows what is going to be needed when the new baby arrives.
4. The Early Childhood and Family Service worker also helps Sinead get support from the Job Centre and her district council regarding support for employment, housing and rent payments and out of work benefits. Budgeting and payment plans can be put in place to help Sinead.
5. The school can offer breakfast club and after school club for Lily-Anne and Iris as the children are entitled to free school meals.

Next Steps

The family’s plan will help Sinead through this difficult time. In the long-term Sinead will be put in touch with local groups, so she can develop her own local network of support.

5.2.2 Offering help so that all families can connect with local support and universal early childhood activities

Focused on supporting all families, to access and participate in community groups and activities for families with children from pre-birth to age 5.

5.2.2.1 We intend to commission this element of the new Early Childhood and Family Service.

5.2.2.2 Delivered through:

- Providing information, advice and guidance when families initially ask for help so that their needs can be met and as a result, do not require targeted support.
- Staff attending community led and partnership groups, such as health clinics or Library Service 'bounce and rhyme' groups, to help identify and address families' needs, either within that setting or via targeted work.
- Delivering regular drop in sessions, so that all families can speak to someone they trust and be supported to receive the help they need, meet other parents/carers reducing their sense of isolation.
- Jointly delivering sessions with a range of services focused on supporting families with young children such as health visitors, speech and language therapists, the Library Service, or local voluntary and community sector organisations offering support on a range of issues such as domestic abuse, mental health and wellbeing.
- Building relationships that provide families with practical support, where needed, to find, connect with and engage in community groups and activities and/or specialist services as part of building their own 'networks of support'.
- Supporting parents as 'parent champions' so that they are able to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence by supporting other parents, as well as help shape the local early childhood and family offer

5.2.2.3 A case study to show how the new Early Childhood and Family Service might help families connect with local support and universal early childhood activities

It's Thursday 1st October 2020 and the Early Childhood and Family Service has been operational for one year. Chrissy is a team manager for the new service, having previously worked for one of the children's centre providers.

Today she is at the monthly 'Healthy Services Day', being run from a library in a rural market town. The day started with a baby weigh session, run in partnership with the health visitors.

"It's really popular, families come to get their baby weighed and have a word. Mostly we give advice and set minds at rest, letting families know what's on in the area. A big benefit of a day like this is we can get different agencies together in one place. The Job Centre, someone from the district, Family Focus, Point 1, lots of agencies in and out."

"Today we had Tracey from district housing, she does a drop-in surgery every so often. If we see a family struggling with money or worried about rent, Tracey can help before it gets out of hand."

Peter, the Job Centre work coach, is introducing a parent to a district council 'community connector' who is explaining about a local parenting skills course. Chrissy says the courses work well:

"We get a good mix of parents, some referred by our team, some walk through the door and think it will help, and some are referred by social care who think a family will benefit from being in a more mixed group."

At the end of the day, Chrissy meets with the team to see what issues are being picked up and if any of the families they know are struggling. People from other agencies often attend these meetings. Today someone from the local library talks about the 'bounce and rhyme' sessions they run and its agreed that they will come to the next drop in to tell parents about this programme, as several of the mums have talked about wanting to read more with their children and have an opportunity to chat with other parents.

5.2.3 Operating 15 Early Childhood and Family Bases and use a range of local delivery venues

Focused on delivering services in Early Childhood and Family Bases in areas of high need and taking services out to families living in more dispersed communities, so that it is easier for families to access the support they need.

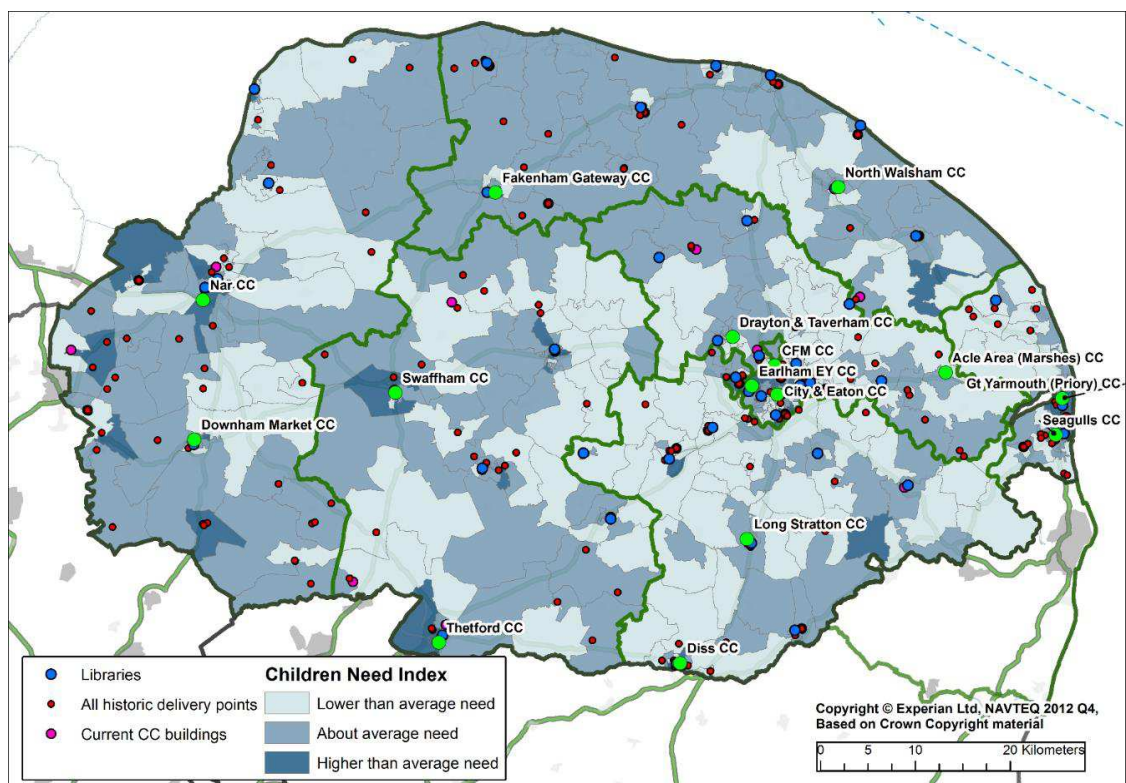
5.2.3.1 We intend to commission this element of the new Early Childhood and Family Service.

5.2.3.2 Delivered through:

- Making use of 15 Early Childhood and Family Bases in areas of high need/high volume, and greater emphasis on using outreach for families living in dispersed rural communities.
- Providing families with regular points of contact, whether accessing support onsite in an Early Childhood and Family base, in an outreach location, or in families' homes.
- Using local spaces and safe venues that are accessible to families, including where it is appropriate, in families' homes. These venues will include many of the buildings currently designated as children's centres as these are taken on by a range of local services and organisations.
- Working with families to agree a 'family friendly' name for the Early Childhood and Family Bases.
- Providing space within the bases for joint working by services and organisations focused on meeting the needs of families with children aged 0-5.

5.2.3.3 We expect the new service provider to extend the range of local suitable and safe venues used, especially in more dispersed rural communities, including working alongside other early childhood services and childcare settings that are used to deliver activities with families.

5.2.3.4 The following map highlights 265 suitable community venues that have been used previously by children's centres. These include libraries, the buildings currently designated as children's centres, 15 of which will be used as new Early Childhood and Family Support Bases and the remaining buildings that will be de-designated as children's centre but are likely to be available as a delivery venue.



5.2.3.5 A case study to show how operating 15 Early Childhood and Family Bases and using a range of local delivery venues will support families.

Lucy is a worker in the new Early Childhood and Family Service. She enjoys the variety of her role. Lucy is asked by a parent about what her job is and what she does as the parent is interested in going back to college and wants to work with families. Lucy explains a typical week for her:

"I love getting to meet so many families and support them in different ways depending on what they need. For example, this morning I was supporting a stay and play at my base for local families. I get to see so many parents and get to know them. This afternoon I'm supporting a targeted group session on safe relationships in partnership for parents who need extra help and support in staying safe. That's a really small group though, in a local venue that's suitable for those parents.

"Tomorrow I have a home visit for a family who are really struggling with money, at risk of being homeless and trying to put routines in place for their young children while having all that to sort out. I am the lead person for the family, but the district council housing team and local job centre have been great in helping support this family. Sometimes families need help supporting them to get services working together and need a key person doing this, they can't always do that themselves."

5.2.4 Contributing to joint working and maintaining partnerships as part of securing a local early childhood offer

Focused on strong partnership working as part of building an early childhood and family system that helps families receive the right support, by the right person, at the right time.

5.2.4.1 We will require the Early Childhood and Family Service provider to work with Children's Services and other partner agencies in each district area.

5.2.4.2 Delivered through:

- Working with other agencies and services to develop and maintain a district early childhood offer for families that includes local early years groups, digital and online information and advice, and community-based services such as health visitors, libraries, community learning, childcare settings as well as more specialist support where this is needed.
- Helping families access specialist support/resources within the local area.
- Acting as lead professionals within a team around the family.
- Working collaboratively with other local services and agencies to target resources, so that the funding for the Early Childhood and

Family Service can be used to support families and children who need extra help.

- Working together to manage and measure performance in terms of evidence about the impact and improved outcomes being secured for children and their family.

5.2.4.3 A case study to show how the new Early Childhood and Family Service might contribute to joint working and maintaining partnerships as part of securing a local early childhood offer

Workers from the Early Childhood and Family Service have joined the weekly meeting alongside health visitors and other professionals within the early help hub. They are discussing families being supported by services as part of making sure there is a 'team around the family'.

One such family is the Lamottes – mum Kayla, father Grant, Alfie aged 3, and baby Simon aged 1.

Kayla and Grant are both unemployed and get Universal Credit. Neither of them did well at school and they both have trouble with alcohol misuse. Kayla told the playgroup that Alfie attends that she can't cope and is feeling depressed and lonely. Her drinking is getting out of hand and Grant just gets angry and shouts at her and the kids. The nursery spoke to their Early Years Development Worker, who made a referral to the Early Childhood and Family Service.

A worker went to see Kayla and Grant in their own home and worked with them to develop a plan. As part of the plan, Kayla was referred to 'Change Grow Live' – Norfolk's alcohol and substance service. She gets specialist advice to address her alcohol use. Grant was introduced to a Job Centre employment and skills coach to improve his opportunities to gain employment and get some qualifications.

It wasn't long before they were able to attend a special course with other families to develop their parenting skills; with Simon attending a creche. The Early Years Team gave information on how Alfie can get a pre-school/nursery placement. Arrangements have been made for him to attend so he can get a really good start at school.

The health visitor has arranged a one-year progress review for Simon with Kayla and Grant and will keep the Early Childhood and Family Service worker informed of any needs.

Kayla has begun to go to the Bounce and Rhyme group at her local library with Simon. She can stay afterwards and chat to other parents. Grant has heard through the Job Centre that the district council are looking for volunteer 'community connectors' and thinks it might help him get into work.

It's agreed that next month, there will be a focused discussion on how everyone is working together locally, looking at the latest data on outcomes for children and families in the area.

5.2.5 Investing £250,000 in community development to ensure there are strong 'networks of support'

Focused on ensuring that there is capacity within communities to provide strong 'networks of support' for families in local areas.

5.2.5.1 Children's Services will lead this activity through the existing early help arrangements in each district area.

5.2.5.2 Delivered through:

- Collaborating with district councils, the voluntary sector, and wider early help arrangements, to build and extend existing local community development activity in each area, with an emphasis on supporting the development of community groups and activities that respond to the needs of families with young children.
- Providing funding to enable local responses to address gaps in community led groups and activities for families with young children.
- Supporting parents and local communities set up local provision for families with young children.
- Linking with existing volunteering schemes that can support volunteers as parent champions.
- Linking with Early Years Development Workers who support registered childcare settings so that there is better integration in how families are supported by child care settings and community led groups.

5.2.5.3 A case study to show how investing £250,000 in community development will help ensure there are strong 'networks of support'

At the district Early Childhood and Family Service forum it is raised by a small community organisation about an increase in families with English as a second language moving into the area. This supported by health visitors and an early childhood and family worker who have also noticed this. Concern was raised that some of these families lacked confidence resulting in social isolation. The early childhood and family worker contacts the Community Connector at the district council and the community organisation to develop a project funded by the community development fund to increase the families' social network and access to services.

Families were engaged by building on the trusted relationship they had with a worker from the community organisation and who is facilitating the course with the early childhood and family worker and the health visitor. The health visitor observed that many of the parents watched English television to improve their language skills, so they developed a weekly quiz. The parents worked in groups to complete the quiz together, developing their group work skills and confidence. They used the quiz and the characters on the television programmes to discuss key public health concerns such as postnatal depression and family planning.

Seeing families grow in confidence and become more integrated in the local community was extremely satisfying and highly rewarding. One of the parents has been supported through the adult community learning service and is now a parent champion in this area and continues to support the group inviting in other professionals when needed.

5.2.6 Supporting an enhanced online and digital information, advice and guidance offer for families

Focused on making it easier for all families to access the information and advice they want, when they want it, and be confident that the information is accurate and reliable.

5.2.6.1 Norfolk County Council will work with Cambridge Community Services NHS Trust, through the Healthy Child Programme, to develop this offer.

5.2.6.2 Delivered through:

- Integrating *Just One Norfolk*, Norfolk Community Directory and Family Information Service platforms to offer a clear route for families to online information advice and guidance.
- Working with service developers to ensure the online and digital platforms are accessible to all.
- Develop a comprehensive, joined up and consistently branded digital offer for Norfolk families across multiple platforms and with stakeholders and commissioned services.
- Improve the quality and efficiency of data feeds into the Norfolk Community Directory, so they include more information to help parents to make informed decisions and access services. Including an automated feed from Active Norfolk on local activities, enhanced schools' information and integration with data on funded childcare availability.
- Establish a programme of proactive messaging, via email and potentially text, that covers pre-birth to age 5 and offers signposting at key milestones and generally to services and activities.
- Coordinate social media communications across services to maximise reach and ensure clear and timely messaging to families.
- Utilising the Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy to address access issues, including linking with the Library Service's provision of free internet access, computer buddying and training.

5.2.6.3 A case study to show how supporting an enhanced online and digital information, advice and guidance offer might help families

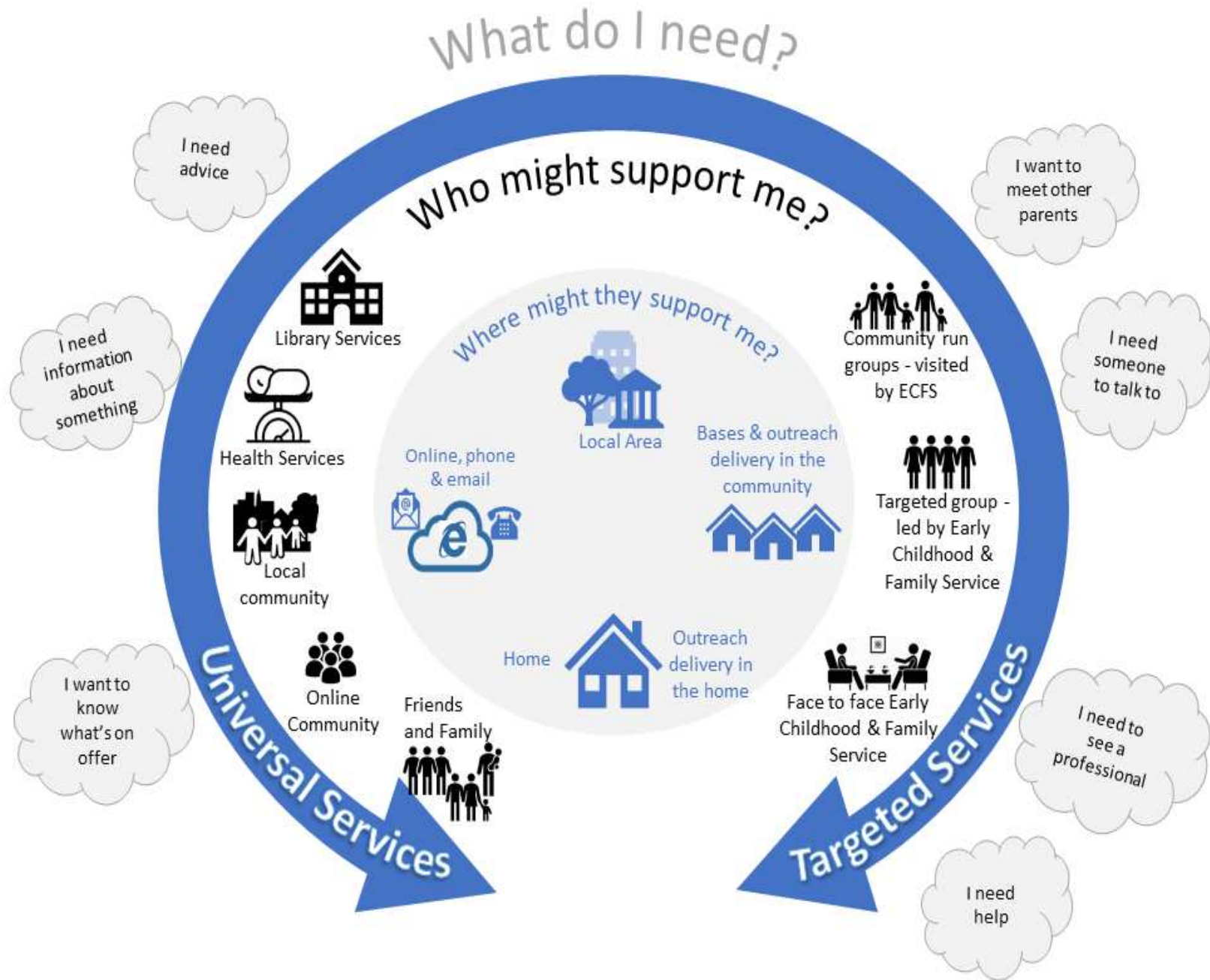
The Phillips – mum Julie, dad Peter and George aged 8 months.

When Julie and Peter moved to Norfolk with their baby son they had no friends or family in the area. Peter works and Julie stays at home. Julie is very shy. Baby George has a disability and although he is progressing well, Julie wants ideas about how she can support his development. At home all day with no friends she is also feeling lonely and isolated.

Julie used Just One Norfolk and Just One number services to get ideas and suggestions on how to support George's development at home. She was also able to book an appointment online for George's one-year progress check with her local health visitor and contacted the Early Childhood and Family Service.

Staff from the Early Childhood and Family Service spoke to Julie about where to find information online about local services near to where they live. They were able to explain that these local services will give Julie the opportunity to meet other families and gain ideas for encouraging George's development. They were also able to explain that because some of the services will be on offer at evenings and weekends Peter can come too.

Julie and Peter joined in a Live Chat session through Just One Norfolk and talked to professionals and other parents about ideas for creating a good home learning environment, as well as what it's like being the parents of a disabled child.



6.0 Implications for Buildings

It is important to understand that the 53 sites currently designated as a children's centre are not all purpose-built buildings – there is a huge variance in the type and status of the buildings. They include:

- 14 are standalone on a school site (1 is a portable building and 1 is a thatched cottage)
- 14 are part of a school building (either attached or fully integrated)
- 17 are based in the community (1 is a refurbished council flat, 4 are standalone buildings)
- 4 are based in a Library
- 4 designated centres offer only outreach, with no dedicated physical building

6.1 What our proposals for 15 new Early Childhood and Family Bases mean for each District area

Breckland	
<p>District rationale: The consultation feedback highlighted the issue of mobilising staff in a large district area and the associated logistics, as well as there being areas of high need. We are therefore proposing that 2 bases are operated in the district: Swaffham and Thetford Kingsway, to provide effective outreach cover across Breckland.</p>	
<p>Why we have chosen these 2 bases: Having assessed all 8 designated children’s centres in Breckland (and Thetford Canterbury, which is not currently a designated children’s centre), Swaffham and Thetford Kingsway are suitable bases. Swaffham has good access to the district and suitability as a base. Thetford Kingsway was chosen as it has good accessibility to the rest of the district and suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base. It is also in an area of high need and high footfall. Both bases are geographically well spaced from each other, enabling access to the whole of district.</p>	
Swaffham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base
Thetford Kingsway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall

Why we haven’t chosen the following alternative sites in Breckland and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children’s centres

Attleborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attleborough (Original option) was assessed to have good accessibility to the rest of the district and suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • Revised following consultation feedback – recognised that Thetford Kingsway with high need and high volume was more suitable as a base. The proximity of Attleborough to Thetford reduced the overall equity of access to the district. • Attleborough will continue to be used to deliver services at the new multi-function hub.
Dereham Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base as the costs of running and maintenance are unrealistic
Dereham South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operates as outreach from Dereham Children’s Centre with no physical designated site.
Litcham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor accessibility to the rest of the district • limited office accommodation and facilities for a base
Thetford Canterbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorer accessibility to the rest of the district compared to Thetford Kingsway • limited office accommodation and facilities for a base • not currently a designated children’s centre
Thetford Drake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base as it is a room within a school building with limited access
Watton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district but its proximity to Thetford Kingsway means it does not fulfil the operational and logistical requirements • limited office accommodation and facilities for a base

Broadland	
<p>District rationale: The consultation feedback highlighted the issue of mobilising staff in a large district area and the associated logistics. We are therefore proposing that 2 bases are operated in the district: Acle Marshes and Drayton and Taverham, in order to provide effective outreach cover across Broadland.</p>	
<p>Why we have chosen these 2 bases: Having assessed all 8 designated children’s centres in Broadland, Acle Marshes and Drayton and Taverham are the only ones that offer suitable office accommodation and facilities. Both bases are geographically well spaced from each other enabling access to the whole of district.</p>	
Acle Marshes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • currently used by families from Trinity for some services
Drayton and Taverham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district. • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • used by families from Aylsham and Reepham, Hellesdon, Spixworth and Sprowston for some services

Why we haven’t chosen the following alternative sites in Broadland and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children’s centres

Aylsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base – small rooms rented in a community centre • Aylsham families currently use Drayton and Taverham for some services
Reepham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates as outreach from Aylsham Children’s Centre, no permanent physical site has existed in this area. • Reepham families currently use Drayton and Taverham for some services
Dussindale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base, room rented in a Norfolk County Council building
Hellesdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base - room used in a school on an occasional basis • Hellesdon families currently use Drayton and Taverham for services
Hoveton and Broadland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base - room rented in a community centre
Spixworth & Sprowston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • both venues unsuitable as a base - small office space • families currently use Drayton and Taverham for some services

Great Yarmouth Borough	
<p>District rationale: Consultation feedback highlighted the importance of families being able to access support especially in areas of high need that exist across the town. We are therefore proposing that 2 bases are operated in the district: Great Yarmouth (Priory) and Seagulls to reflect the high levels of need and ensure provision of an effective outreach service to families across the Borough, with consideration for the geography and transport infrastructure.</p>	
<p>Why we have chosen these 2 bases: Having assessed all 7 designated children’s centres in the district; Great Yarmouth (Priory) and Seagulls in Gorleston offer good geographical spread enabling access to the whole of the district. They both have good space for service delivery and accommodating workforce and are both in areas of high need and high volume.</p>	
<p>Gt. Yarmouth (Priory)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall • used by families from Caister, Gorleston and Hopton and Greenacre for some services
<p>Seagulls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall • used by families from Gorleston and Hopton, Greenacre, Trinity and Village Green for some services

Why we haven’t chosen the following alternative sites in Great Yarmouth Borough and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children’s centres

<p>Caister CC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the north of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of lower need and footfall than either Great Yarmouth (Priory) or Seagulls • Caister families currently use Great Yarmouth (Priory) for some services
<p>Gorleston and Hopton</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base – limited space in a library • Gorleston and Hopton families currently use Seagulls and Priory for services
<p>Greenacre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base - room rented in a community centre • Greenacre families currently use Priory and Seagulls for services
<p>Trinity, Martham</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor accessibility to the rest of the district. • limited office accommodation and facilities for a base • Trinity families currently use Acle and Seagulls for some services
<p>Village Green</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor accessibility to the rest of the district. • limited office accommodation and facilities for a base • Village Green families currently use Seagulls for some services

King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough	
<p>District rationale: The consultation feedback highlighted the issue of mobilising staff in a large district area and the associated logistics, as well as there being areas of high need. We are therefore proposing that 2 bases are operated in the district: Downham Market and Nar (South Lynn), to provide effective outreach cover across the Borough of King's Lynn & West Norfolk.</p>	
<p>Why we have chosen these 2 bases: Having assessed all 9 designated children's centres in the Borough of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Nar and Downham Market both have suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base. They are a good geographical distance from each other enabling access to the whole of district. Nar is in an area of high need and high footfall (volume) and is located close to transport infrastructure and main roads. Downham Market is located 10 miles south of Nar and is linked by main roads and transport infrastructure to the southern part of the district.</p>	
Downham Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • currently used by families from Emneth for some services
Nar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall • currently used by families from North Lynn, Vancouver (Fairstead) and St. Clement's for some services

Why we haven't chosen the following alternative sites in King's Lynn and West Norfolk and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children's centres

Emneth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base as it is at the extreme edge of the district (Cambridgeshire border) • Emneth families currently use Downham Market for some services • Emneth families access services in Wisbech in neighbouring Cambridgeshire
Hunstanton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base as it is at the extreme edge of the district (coastal area) • Hunstanton families currently use Fakenham for some services
Methwold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base as it is at the extreme edge of the district • Methwold families currently use Downham Market for some services
North Lynn, Gaywood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable building for a base - rented council flat • North Lynn, Gaywood families currently use Nar for some services

St. Clements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorer accessibility compared to alternative options being proposed (Nar and Downham Market) • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • St. Clements families currently use Nar for some services
Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorer option as a space compared to other options - rented space in a community building • Vancouver families currently use Nar for some services
West Walton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No physical site operates as outreach from Emneth Children's Centre, following local public consultation

North Norfolk	
<p>District rationale: The consultation feedback highlighted the issue of mobilising staff in a large district area and the associated logistics. We are therefore proposing that 2 bases are operated in the district: Fakenham and North Walsham, to provide effective outreach cover across North Norfolk.</p>	
<p>Why we have chosen these 2 bases: Having assessed all 8 designated children’s centres in North Norfolk, Fakenham and North Walsham are suitable as bases. They are a good geographical distance from each other enabling access to the whole of district. They both have suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base.</p>	
Fakenham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district. • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base
North Walsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district. • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • currently used by families from Cromer and Mundesley for some services

Why we haven’t chosen the following alternative sites in North Norfolk and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children’s centres

Cromer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base – space on a school site • Cromer families currently use North Walsham for some services
Holt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • central geographical location within the district • suitable office accommodation and facilities as a base • poorer accessibility to areas of higher need compared to proposed alternative options of Fakenham and North Walsham
Mundesley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable for a base due to poor access to the district • Mundesley families currently use North Walsham for some services
Stalham & Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor accessibility to the rest of the district compared to North Walsham • limited office accommodation and facilities for a base compared to North Walsham
Stibbard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor accessibility to the rest of the district compared to Fakenham • Stibbard families currently use Fakenham for some services
Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable for a base – limited space in a portable building • Wells families currently use Fakenham for some services

Norwich City	
<p>District rationale: Consultation feedback highlighted the importance of families being able to access support especially in areas of high need that exist across the city. We are therefore proposing that 3 bases are operated in the city: Catton, Fiddlewood and Milecross (CFM), City and Eaton, and Earlham to reflect the high levels of need and ensure provision of an effective outreach service to families across Norwich, with consideration for the geography and transport infrastructure of the city.</p>	
<p>Why we have chosen these 3 bases: Having assessed all 7 designated children’s centres in the city; CFM, City and Eaton and Earlham offer good geographical spread enabling access to the whole city, with opportunities for many families to directly access one or more of the bases. The buildings all offer good space for service delivery and accommodating the workforce, and all are in areas of high need.</p>	
CFM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the city • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall • used by families from North City for some services
City and Eaton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the city • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall • used by families from across the city and Thorpe Hamlet and East City in particular, for some services
Earlham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the city • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • an area of high need and high footfall • used by families from Bowthorpe for some services

Why we haven’t chosen the following alternative sites in Norwich and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children’s centres

Bowthorpe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorer accessibility to the city • an area of lower footfall than the other proposed bases • Bowthorpe families currently access Earlham centre for some services
East City & Framingham Earl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorer accessibility to the city than the other proposed bases • an area of lower footfall than the other proposed bases • East City families currently use City and Eaton for some services

<p>North City</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • located less than a mile from neighbouring CFM • less office accommodation than its neighbour • North City families use CFM for some services
<p>Thorpe Hamlet & Heartsease</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorer accessibility to the city than the other proposed bases • an area of lower footfall than the other proposed bases • Thorpe Hamlet families currently use City and Eaton for some services

South Norfolk	
District rationale: The consultation feedback highlighted the issue of mobilising staff in a large district area and the associated logistics. We are therefore proposing that 2 bases are operated in the district: Diss and Long Stratton, to provide effective outreach cover across South Norfolk.	
Why we have chosen these two bases: Having assessed all 6 designated children’s centres in South Norfolk, Diss and Long Stratton are the only ones that offer suitable office accommodation and facilities as a base. Both bases are geographically well spaced from each other enabling access to the whole of district.	
Diss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district. • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • currently used by families from Harleston
Long Stratton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good accessibility to the rest of the district. • suitable office accommodation and facilities for a base • currently used by families from Harleston and Loddon

Why we haven’t chosen the following alternative sites in South Norfolk and are proposing that these buildings are de-designated as children’s centres

Harleston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base – no accommodation • Harleston families currently use Diss and Long Stratton for some services
Hethersett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates as outreach from Wymondham Children’s Centre, no permanent physical site has existed in this area.
Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unsuitable as a base – limited space in a library. • Loddon families currently use Long Stratton for some services
Wymondham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not suitable as a base – largely incorporated into a school • Wymondham families currently use Attleborough for some services

6.2 De-designation of the current children centre buildings and potential future use

Profile summaries for each of the 53 sites currently designated as a children’s centre are included at Appendix 8. These detail our proposals for each of the 53 sites: those we intend to retain as an Early Childhood and Family Base and therefore will continue to be designated as a children’s centre, and those that we propose are no longer designated in this way; but they may continue to offer a range of services for families with children aged 0-5.

6.3 A new capital fund of £500,000 has been agreed by the Council to support any minor adaptations required to support and enable local organisations and communities take on and make use of the buildings, with a focus on services for children aged 0-5.

- 6.4 We are keen to see as many of these sites as possible continuing to provide services for families with children aged 0-5.
- 6.5 A range of third party organisations have expressed interest in taking over a number of the sites we potentially no longer wish to operate. It is important to bear in mind that capability and appetite of third parties to take on sites will depend on the Council's approach to market rents, full repairing leases and liabilities for on-going maintenance.
- 6.6 In addition, as a Council we have to manage our liabilities related to capital funding received over a number of years from the Department for Education and associated with a number of the current designated sites.
- 6.7 Of the 53 designated children's centre sites the following uses are being explored:

Norfolk – 53 designated children's centres	
Retained as Early Childhood and Family Base	15
Proposed uses for de-designated sites	
Potential development of childcare and other services	10
Continued use by school for Early Years education	7
Expression of interest from childcare provider	5
Return to library	3
Return to landlord	6
Remain with tenant	1
Local Service Strategy Multi-Function Hub	1
No physical building	4
Early Years Service use	1

- 6.8 The potential uses for each of the sites by district are as follows:

Breckland – 8 Designated children's centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	2
Potential development of childcare and other services	2
Continued use by school for Early Years education	1
Local Service Strategy Multi-function hub	1
Return to landlord	1
No physical building	1

Broadland – 8 Designated centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	2
Potential development of childcare and other services	1
Continued use by school for Early Years education	1
Early Years Service use	1
Return to landlord	2
No physical building	1

Great Yarmouth – 7 Designated centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	2
Potential development of childcare and other services	1
Continued use by school for Early Years education	2
Return to landlord	1
Return to Library	1

King's Lynn & West Norfolk – 9 Designated centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	2
Potential development of childcare and other services	1
Continued use by school for Early Years education	1
Expression of interest from childcare provider	2
Return to landlord	2
No physical building	1

North Norfolk – 8 Designated centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	2
Potential development of childcare and other services	3
Expression of interest from childcare provider	2
Continued use by school for Early Years education	1

Norwich – 7 Designated centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	3
Potential development of childcare and other services	2
Continued use by school for Early Years education	1
Remains with tenant	1

South Norfolk – 6 Designated centres	
Retained as Early Childhood & Family Base	2
Continued use by school for Early Years education	1
Return to library	1
No physical building	2

7.0 Workforce Implications

The proposals to transform the current children's centre model into the new Early Childhood and Family Service will have an impact on the workforce and its current configuration across 12 different providers.

- 7.1 At this point we are unable to provide clarity regarding the impact this may have on the employees of these commissioned services. Once the contract for the new service has been awarded the successful bidder(s) will have a clearer picture of the implications for staff.
- 7.2 It is clear that the new Early Childhood and Family Service will require a workforce that is highly skilled, trained and experienced in delivering early years services. We do not want to lose these attributes from the current workforce as it is these aspects and the ability to form purposeful and supportive relationships with families that will enable the new service to secure the desired outcomes and impact.

8.0 Procurement and implementation timeline

The transition to the new services will consist of three distinct streams of work:

- Procurement of the new Early Childhood and Family Service
- Transition to the new Early Childhood and Family Service
- Transfer of buildings

8.1 These will be managed as individual workstreams but will also include dependencies across the three workstreams which will need to be managed centrally. Throughout this process the management of risk will be important, to ensure that the procurement process is successful, we maintain continuity of the current service and the new service is set up to deliver to the target outcomes. This will be managed through the mitigating actions identified in the risk and mitigation section of this paper which will be added to throughout the procurement and transition stages.

8.2 The following section provides a high-level summary of the key activities within each of the workstreams.

8.3 Procurement and detailed design of the new service

We are procuring the new service provision via a 'lean competitive dialogue' process. This has allowed us to initiate the process with an initial pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) stage to seek expressions of interest and shortlist bidders based on track-record and experience. The detailed specification and invitation to submit initial proposals will be issued on 1st February, after any January Children's Services Committee decision. The new service will commence 1st October 2019.

8.3.1 The procurement has been provisionally split into 7 lots (one for each district), but we have reserved the right to combine some or all the lots. 6 of the 7 expressions of interest have indicated that they wish to provide a county wide service. However, any decision to merge will be dependent on the outcome of the bidder shortlisting stage.

8.3.2 Bidders will be advised about the costs and liabilities of the buildings and invited to inspect the building prior to tender submission. We need to be clear on the obligations and responsibilities of each party.

8.3.3 The clarity on the scope of the services to be delivered by the provider(s) and the contract value will be confirmed in the detailed specification. Some elements of the overall Early Childhood and Family Service will be commissioned, as detailed in this report.

OJEU notice issued with outline specification	20 th November 2018
Evaluation of PQQs & shortlisting bidders	21 st December – 17 th January
CS Committee Decision	22 nd January
Issue of Invitation to Participate in Dialogue	1 st February
Clarification period	4 th February – 13 th February

Initial proposal submission date	20 th February
Dialogue sessions	Week commencing 25 th February
Issue Invitation to Tender (Best & Final Offer)	5 th March
Final tender submission date	22 nd March
Evaluation and moderation	22 nd March – 28 th March
Approval	29 th March
Standstill Period	29 th March – 8 th April
Contract Award	9 th April
Transition & mobilisation arrangements	9 th April – 1 st October 2019

8.4 Transition from the current services to the new Early Childhood and Family Service

8.4.1 The procurement process will define the details of the new Early Childhood and Family Service and how provision will be delivered. Once this is completed and the contract is awarded the detailed preparation and transition will take place in the period between 9th April and 1st October.

8.4.2 The transition to the new service will comprise:

- Maintaining the current service through to the transition
- The transfer of services and information from the current service to the new service
- The establishment of the new service

8.4.3 Maintaining the current services

Throughout this process the current services will still be being provided and a key element of this phase will be to make sure that the current service continues without disruption to the service users at the same time as the planning is taking place for the transition.

8.4.4 Maintaining engagement with the current service users will also be important over this period to ensure that the families in need continue to access our services and the usage does not drop off over the transition period. This will require communication and engagement plans to ensure awareness of the changes and the new service among centre users, the local community and the wider system.

8.4.5 Transfer of services and information from the current services to the new Early Childhood and Family Service

Work will take place with the current providers and new provider(s) to plan the transition including the transition of any current services which will continue in the

new service, including the transfer of arrangements with venues where services are delivered.

8.4.6 All cases that the current service is managing will have individual transition plans and the families involved will be made aware of the changes and supported through the changes in services. The secure data transfer of physical records and electronic records, together with the archiving or destruction of duplicate or historical data will be planned and managed to ensure full compliance with GDPR.

8.4.7 The transfer of buildings from the current providers to the new provider(s) will be managed to ensure that all relevant building assets are transferred, that the building is signed over in an appropriate condition, and all leases and utilities are transferred to the new service provider for each building.

8.4.8 The establishment of the new Early Childhood and Family Service

In advance of the new service commencement date (October 1st, 2019) the new service provider(s) will need to establish capability and capacity to deliver the new service. This will involve forming delivery teams, ensuring that all staff have the appropriate background checks and any necessary training needed to deliver the new service.

8.4.9 The new service capability will also include making links with the wider system and putting in place two-way sign-posting so that families in need can be helped to gain access to services. This will also involve gaining access to shared IT systems to share information where appropriate and enable the delivery of the digital element of the new service.

8.4.10 As the service will be new the set-up phase for the providers will be important and will include detailed design of the new service and establishing methods to identify and reach the target families.

8.4.11 The 3 impact statements and target outcomes will be a key element of the new service and the set-up stage will also include agreeing with the Council how the contract key performance indicators will be managed and monitored. We will also need to work with providers to understand the data that they may need to support this.

8.5 Transfer of buildings

Transfer of buildings will take place at the end of the current service and will be managed to ensure that all assets, buildings and utilities contracts are transferred from the current providers. This process will also have to be managed to ensure that the buildings are emptied of any personal data relating to the current service users to ensure compliance to GDPR.

9.0 Risk and mitigation

Given the scale of this transformation the potential risks and mitigation measures will need to be carefully managed with a focus on a number of key areas:

- Procurement of the new Early Childhood and Family Service
- Service continuity leading up to the start of the new service
- Transition to new service
- Delivery of the new service
- De-designation and transition of buildings

9.1 The following table provides details of the specific risks in each of these areas and the mitigating actions which we will take to manage these risks.

Potential Risk	Mitigation measure
Procurement of new service	
<p>Failed Procurement exercise for new Early Childhood and Family Service</p> <p>Lack of Market interest / attractiveness of the contract</p>	<p>A 'Competitive Dialogue' approach has been chosen to allow the Council to discuss the solution with bidders during the procurement process leading to an increased understanding of what the successful provider(s) will deliver.</p> <p>Pre-procurement market engagement undertaken. 7 expressions of interest have been received.</p> <p>Adequate mitigation of risks that would suppress market appetite:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract length (contract needs to be at least 5+ years for contract to be commercially attractive to bidders) • Cost of mobilisation including potential TUPE liabilities (redundancies, public sector pension rights) – need to recognise this in budget allocation • Cost, condition and suitability of buildings, particularly due to the potential increase of sites from 7 to 15 – need to limit the liability for bidders
Service continuity in the lead up to the new Early Childhood and Family Service	
<p>Current service diminishes due to lack of confidence, reduction in staffing levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-active and positive communications plan in place to ensure that Business as usual continues • Ask providers for business continuity plans to be put in place – including acknowledging that some elements of the service specification may be undeliverable – focus on targeted work to remain in place.
<p>Providers withdraw from current contracts early</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek expressions of interest from providers for short term contracts where an open procurement is no feasible • Manage services in-house for short period of time.
Transition to the new Early Childhood and Family Service	
<p>Complexity of mobilisation creates severe service disruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there is proper management and officer resourcing of this. • There is a fully understood mobilisation plan in place, including pro-active mitigation of risks – especially to families who currently receive a service.
<p>Shortfall in individual provider redundancy provision as part of transition to new service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of contractual liabilities for redundancy – sits with provider • Recognise Norfolk County Council interest in providers accruing adequate redundancy reserve • Close financial and contractual monitoring of providers to ensure adequate redundancy reserve is accrued

Potential Risk	Mitigation measure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure mechanisms are in place to recover unspent funding – including redundancy reserves.
Delivery of the new Early Childhood and Family Service	
<p>Commissioned services do not recruit and retain a sufficient, appropriately trained and supported workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to effectively recruit, retain, train and support a sufficient workforce • Contract will clearly set out workforce expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Quarterly monitoring will set out budget management against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Annual monitoring will include budget forecasting for the next year • Quarterly performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Introduce quarterly oversight with new provider at Assistant director level in Childrens Services
<p>Commissioned services do not effectively, pro-actively and accessibly involve service users and partners in the development and delivery of services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to deliver against the service specification • Contract will clearly set out service user and partner involvement expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Quarterly monitoring will identify service user and partner involvement performance against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions
<p>Commissioned services do not pro-actively identify and engage with targeted families within agreed timescales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to deliver against the service specification • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Monthly monitoring will identify outputs and timescale performance against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Provider submissions will be supported by Connect+ reporting and assessed against locality data sets • Quarterly reports overseen by assistant director in Childrens Services

Potential Risk	Mitigation measure
Commissioned services do not register and work with the expected numbers of families through agreed activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to deliver against the service specification • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Monthly monitoring will identify outputs and timescale performance against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Provider submissions will be supported by Connect+ reporting and assessed against locality data sets • Quarterly reports overseen by assistant director in Childrens Services
Commissioned services do not register and work with the expected scope of targeted families through agreed activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to deliver against the service specification • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Monthly monitoring will identify outputs and timescale performance against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Provider submissions will be supported by Connect+ reporting and assessed against locality data sets
Commissioned services do not contribute to the expected level towards delivery of improved outcomes for children and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to deliver against the service specification • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Quarterly monitoring will identify outcomes achieved against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Data sets including NCC information, deprivation, developmental, education, health and social mobility will be regularly analysed to evidence • Provider submissions will be supported by Connect+ reporting and assessed against locality data sets • Quarterly reports overseen by assistant director in Childrens Services
Commissioned services do not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to deliver against the service specification

Potential Risk	Mitigation measure
identify and work collaboratively and effectively with partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences • Implementation period will include close liaison with identified key collaborators • Quarterly monitoring will identify partnership working against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Quarterly reports overseen by assistant director in Childrens Services
Commissioned services do not manage organisational or service-specific spend competently or effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to effectively manage finances • Contract will clearly set out budget levels and expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Quarterly monitoring will identify budget management against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Annual monitoring will include budget forecasting for the next year • Quarterly (at least) performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Quarterly reports overseen by assistant director in Childrens Services
Commissioned services do not have or implement adequate Health and Safety arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to effectively implement health and safety arrangements, including obtaining copies of policies and procedures • Contract will clearly set out health and safety expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Quarterly monitoring will identify health and safety management performance against contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified • Annual performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions
Commissioned services have inadequate policies and procedures including data protection and safeguarding arrangements and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to effectively implement arrangements, including obtaining copies of policies and procedures • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan including how this element will be approached • Quarterly monitoring will identify performance against

Potential Risk	Mitigation measure
issues are not dealt with safely and effectively	contract expectations and set out provider improvement actions where issues are identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual performance discussions will address performance concerns and identify collaborative solutions • Quarterly reports overseen by assistant director in Childrens Services
Commissioned services do not work collaboratively and effectively with NCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will evaluate the ability of provider(s) to work effectively and collaboratively • Contract will clearly set out expectations and consequences with regards effective collaboration with NCC • Implementation process will include the co-production of a detailed implementation plan in partnership with NCC • Ongoing collaboration and discussions between NCC and commissioned provider(s) will address any concerns and identify collaborative solutions
De-designation of buildings	
De-designated centres are not successfully occupied by other providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop 'plan per site' so that risks are understood at a granular level • Ensure process for transfer of sites is favourable to new incumbents (including reduced bureaucracy) • Ensure this element of the project is properly resourced • Communications and relationship management plan is in place.
Childcare sufficiency is reduced as a result of changes to designated buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with colleagues from Achievement and Early Years Service to ensure Local Authority Sufficiency Duty is not compromised and is enhanced where possible • Work with childcare providers to develop business plans and provide opportunities for existing or new community groups to use the space • Continue to map supply of and demand for childcare at local level • Provide support with cost of rent if childcare providers meet certain criteria – provide places for funded 2 year olds, support the LA Sufficiency Duty, provide high quality early education, meet the needs of working parents through a flexible offer • Provide capital funding where necessary for ensuring building is fit for future use • Develop the role childcare providers have as the initial point of contact for the vast majority of families. • Include childcare providers as part of the wider system under the new Service, and in many cases support them to enhance their offer for the local community.
Clawback of Sure Start Capital investment from	Understanding of full liabilities against each site. Relationship management with DfE Plan per site to include mitigation of Sure Start Capital

Potential Risk	Mitigation measure
Department for Education	Investment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible alternative use of site (60% use - education for 0-5s) • Transfer of liability to alternative provision • Alternative use to satisfy DfE (e.g. SEND) • Understanding of approach by other LA's

10.0 Governance

Given the significant reach of the new Early Childhood and Family Service and development of the wider system it is vital that governance for mobilisation and quality of delivery of the new service and system achieves impact and outcomes for children and families. It is proposed that governance and oversight of the Early Childhood and Family service is overseen by the Childrens Services Leadership Team and Corporate Board. At key stages of implementation and evaluation, a report will be provided to the appropriate select committee following the changes in political governance post April. Governance for oversight and driving the system response will sit with the Children and Young People Partnership Board which feeds in to the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board and the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP).

11.0 Background Papers

16 January 2018: 2018-22 Budget Planning

<http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/618/Committee/8/Default.aspx>

10 July 2018: Children Centre Service Re-design Update

<http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1469/Committee/8/Default.aspx>

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/mat-transformation/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-child-programme-0-to-19-health-visitor-and-school-nurse-commissioning>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-evaluation-of-the-troubled-families-programme-2015-to-2020-interim-findings>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-works-network>

⁵ <https://www.eif.org.uk/>

⁶ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-social-mobility-through-education>

⁸ The impact of children's centres: studying the effects of children's centres in promoting outcomes for young children and their families. University of Oxford. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485346/DFE-RR495_Evaluation_of_children_s_centres_in_England_the_impact_of_children_s_centres.pdf

⁹ House of Commons Briefing Paper number 7257, 9 June 2017: Sure Start (England). Available at: <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7257#fullreport> and the National Evaluation of Sure Start by Birkbeck. Available at: <http://www.ness.bbk.ac.uk/>

¹⁰ House of Commons Briefing Paper number 7257, 9 June 2017: Sure Start (England). Available at: <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7257#fullreport> and Audit Commission Report Giving Children a Healthy Start, February 2010. Available at: <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/giving-children-a-healthy-start-health-report>

¹¹ House of Commons Briefing Paper number 7257, 9 June 2017: Sure Start (England). Available at: <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7257#fullreport> and The impact of children's centres: studying the effects of children's centres in promoting outcomes for young children and their families. University of Oxford. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485346/DFE-RR495_Evaluation_of_children_s_centres_in_England_the_impact_of_children_s_centres.pdf

¹² The impact of children's centres: studying the effects of children's centres in promoting outcomes for young children and their families. University of Oxford. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485346/DFE-RR495_Evaluation_of_children_s_centres_in_England_the_impact_of_children_s_centres.pdf

¹³ The impact of children's centres: studying the effects of children's centres in promoting outcomes for young children and their families. University of Oxford. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485346/DFE-RR495_Evaluation_of_children_s_centres_in_England_the_impact_of_children_s_centres.pdf

¹⁴ The impact of children's centres: studying the effects of children's centres in promoting outcomes for young children and their families. University of Oxford. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485346/DFE-RR495_Evaluation_of_children_s_centres_in_England_the_impact_of_children_s_centres.pdf

¹⁵ <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/centres-of-excellence.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2016-to-2017>

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- ¹⁷https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA_Delivering%20children%E2%80%99s%20centre%20services_15%2024_January%202018.pdf
- ¹⁸https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA_Delivering%20children%E2%80%99s%20centre%20services_15%2024_January%202018.pdf
- ¹⁹<https://www.local.gov.uk/marmot-review-report-fair-society-healthy-lives>
- ²⁰<https://www.local.gov.uk/marmot-review-report-fair-society-healthy-lives>
- ²¹<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Family-Hubs-A-Discussion-Paper-2016.pdf>
- ²²Early Intervention: The Next Steps 2011 <http://www.grahamallenmp.co.uk/about/publications>
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