

About this report



Last year we asked people what they thought about our idea for a new Early Childhood and Family Service to help children and families.



This is a report about what people told us about this idea.



There are 53 children's centres in Norfolk. Children's centres support families with young children.



Children's centres help families by running play sessions and giving them information.

Our idea



We asked people about our idea for a new Early Childhood and Family Service to help children and families.



Our new service would help communities and parents to run their own local activities and groups.



Our new service would give information and advice for all parents online.



Our new service would offer support groups for some families who need extra help.



Our new service would offer one-to-one support for some families who need extra help.



We think we that we would need seven buildings to run the new service. We think these buildings should be:

- City and Eaton Children's Centre
- Drayton and Taverham Children's Centre
- St Clements Children's Centre
- Attleborough Children's Centre
- Long Stratton Children's Centre
- Seagulls Children's Centre
- Holt Children's Centre

Who did we ask?



We asked people in Norfolk what they thought about our idea. Anyone could have their say.



We tried hard to get the views of people who use our children's centres.

How people could have their say



We asked people to fill in a questionnaire.



We had 7 drop-in events for people to come and talk to us about our idea.



We ran two meetings for people from groups and organisations to find out more about our idea.



People also sent us some petitions. A petition is when lots of people sign to ask the council to do something.



We heard from 1,576 individuals and people from groups and organisations.



We looked at everything that those people told us.

What people told us about our idea



Most people said they disagree with our idea.



Many people said that they don't want us to close any children's centres. They said children's centres are safe places for families and workers.



Many agreed that the service would provide a better and needed service and wanted them to run alongside existing children's centres.



Some people working in organisations said they don't think we could make our idea work.

How people said our idea might affect them



Many people said that if our idea goes ahead they think the service will get worse. A few suggested our idea would result in a better service.



People said if our idea went ahead they think they will become lonely.



People are worried that staff will lose their jobs.

What people said about our idea for communities and parents to run their own local activities and groups



Many people said communities and parents are already running local activities and groups.



Some people said that children will not be safe if the services are in community buildings, like libraries.



Some people said it will not be easy for them to get to community spaces.

What people said about our idea to give information and advice to parents online



Many people said we should give parents information online.



Many people said that there is already lots of information available online.



Most people said face-to-face information is best.



Some people said using the internet is expensive.



Some people said it can be hard to connect to the internet.



Some people said information on the internet is not good for people who find reading difficult.

What people said about our idea to offer support groups and one-to-one help for some families who need extra help



Many people said that families who need extra help already get support.



People said that all families need to be able to get this help.



People said they think our idea will make it hard to keep children safe.

What people said about our idea to use buildings like village halls, schools and libraries



Most people disagree with our idea to run services for children and families in village halls, schools and libraries.



People told us they think the children's centres we already have are better buildings.



Some people think it is a good idea for services to be in the community.



Some people think it will cost more to run services in community buildings.

What people said about our idea to keep using children's centre buildings to support families with young children



Many people said they weren't sure about this idea.



People said they do not want their children's centre to close.



Some people said it would result in an improved service.



People said they like the children's centres as they are now as they think they are safe and can trust them.

People's ideas for other ways we can use our children's centre buildings



Many people said we should keep our children's centres open.



People said we should spend more on services for children and families, working more closely with our partners to find better ways of delivering services.



People told us their ideas for children's centres buildings. These include:



More support for parents



Health visitors



Play areas, sensory play and 'stay and play'



Training Room

Running courses



Cafe

Café

What happens next?



We will take this report to our Children's Services Committee meeting.



The meeting is on 22 January 2019.



Our County Councillors will use this report to help them decide if they want to go ahead with our ideas.



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