

Children's centres redesign consultation document

Introduction

In Luton we have set ourselves the ambitious target of ensuring that no-one lives in poverty by 2040. This vision is at the heart of everything we do as poverty is at the root of some of the biggest challenges the town faces. We are taking steps towards this through transforming the town centre, helping to create jobs and raising aspirations in the community. Luton's Children Families and Education Department is committed to working towards Luton 2040. We believe that all children deserve to reach their full potential and have a good quality of life.

As a council we embrace our values:

Collaborative, Ambitious, Respectful, Empowering and Supportive.

Our values are at the centre of how we support children, young people and families in Luton. We believe that by listening, understanding, designing services together and working without judgement, we will ensure the best possible outcomes for those that need our support.

Luton Council have to make £22 million worth of savings across the council to ensure a balanced budget for 2020-2021. Children's services have to make £3.2 million of savings to support the emergency budget. To ensure that we minimise the impact on statutory services, we are proposing to bring together four of our non-statutory children's services, Flying Start Children's Centres, Early Help, Fresh Start and Manor Contact Centre into one integrated family resource service. We will refocus the work these services do to work with the families who need our support the most.

More information about the emergency budget is available on our website at:

<https://democracy.luton.gov.uk/cm5public/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/5727/Committee/1114/Default.aspx>

What is a children's centre?

Flying Start Children's Centres currently support families from pregnancy until a child reaches five years of age. They work with local midwives, GP's, health visitors, nurseries and community groups to make sure families get the support they need.

Luton's Flying Start Service

The Flying Start vision is to make a positive change to the lives and life chances of our youngest children from pregnancy to five years of age in Luton for future generations. This is done by all services working together to deliver outcomes for children and families, with parent and community-led decision making at the heart of the process. Working closely with our key partners and with our Flying Start Children's Centres, we deliver a range of services and activities based on research. Highly trained Flying Start Children's Centre Family Workers work alongside professionals to provide increased focus on preventing needs where possible and when not early intervention to reduce those needs from escalating.

Early Help

Early Help for children and families provide support early on, before or as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in the child's life from the antenatal period and birth through to the teenage years. Early help is about agencies acting together to prevent escalation of need by intervening at the right time and the right level of service. It aims to prevent or reduce the need for specialist interventions such as child protection and intensive physical and mental health services.

Fresh Start

Fresh Start works with women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeat removals of children from their care. It aims to break this cycle and give woman the opportunity to develop new skills and responses that can help them create a more positive future.

Manor Contact Centre

Manor Contact Centre has trained staff to provide support, advice and guidance to parents who are open to social care support to help them build on their parenting skills in a supervised environment.

Why are we consulting?

To ensure financial sustainability we have made significant savings over the last four years. This already challenging situation has been made worse by the COVID-19 crisis which has had an impact on the funding available for services across the council. As with all local authorities we have a legal obligation to operate with a balanced budget. We have some very difficult decisions to make. We need to ensure that the money we spend and the resources available are used in the most effective way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable within our communities.

Our proposal would alter how our children's centres operate and see a change in how services are delivered and from where. These changes are set out in "our proposal" and "what is the impact?" sections below. We are particularly keen to hear from those who use our Flying Start Children's Centres and to understand any potential impact of the proposed changes.

We aim to use this as an opportunity to look again at the needs of our communities and to develop a service that meets those needs and to ensure that we have the specialist knowledge and skills required to deliver an outstanding service.

Our proposal

The proposal is to develop a model of support that encourages families to access and build upon existing family, friends and community networks. That aims to empower people to develop their own solutions and goals wherever possible. The proposed service would be for families with children who are aged 0-19 or 0-25 for children with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEND) and facing the most complex and significant challenges, and would benefit most from support.

A referral and assessment process would be used to determine who would be able to access the service and to draw up a tailored package of support for them - or signpost them to community or voluntary sector based services.

We will provide an integrated support service for families with:

- Early years children
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Children who need supervised contact
- School-aged children
- Teenage children

To achieve this, our aim is to develop a neighbourhood based multi-disciplinary Family Resources Service delivering a range of different types of support based on need. The proposal is for our practitioners to develop close working relationships with nurseries, schools and other key services to deliver targeted and structured interventions to the most vulnerable children and families in the 5 neighbourhood areas. The support will be offered in two ways the first will be directly working with a family or family member on a one to one basis either at one of the hubs or within the family home and the second through group sessions that would be held at one of the hubs.

We will provide support with the following needs:

- evidence based parenting programmes (such as Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities, and Incredible Years) and parenting assessments (parenting adolescents, parenting children with disabilities, reducing parental conflict)
- domestic violence interventions and support for the whole family
- school readiness support
- substance misuse guidance, advice and support for all family members that require it, through one to one and group sessions
- Life Story Work to support the children and young people going through fostering or adoption to gain an understanding of their personal journey, to help them integrate their past, enabling them to make sense of their present and develop a clear sense of identity for their future
- personalised support to young carers and their families.
- mental health and self-esteem support for all family members that require it, through one to one and group sessions
- personalised support to prevent teenage homelessness
- support for families with no recourse to public funds. Advice, guidance and limited support for people from abroad who are not eligible to receive benefits and are destitute but are 'ordinarily a resident' in Luton
- supervised contact providing advice and guidance to parents to help them build on their parenting skills in a safe environment
- trauma informed practice and Motivational Interviewing will be our approach for providing support for all family members that require it through one to one and group sessions
- contextual safeguarding is our approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families
- London Road will continue to provide short breaks for young people with complex health needs
- Fresh Start support will be provided through one to one and group sessions
- SEND support for children and young people and their families

We are proposing to have two main family resource hubs, these were chosen based on needs, building suitability and accessible locations, these are:

1. Manor Contact Centre, Chase Street, Luton LU1 3QZ
2. In the Leagrave Area, with site to be agreed

With two outreach bases at:

1. London Road Resource Centre, 111 London Road, Luton, LU1 3RH
2. Beech Hill Children's Centre, Dunstable Road, Luton LU4 8BW

Each hub will deliver services across two premises.

What is the impact?

Our proposal should ensure that people receiving support would receive a service that is more tailored to their needs. We would gradually reduce all universal activities such as Stay and Play and other services see below* available starting in February 2021 and cease all delivery from 30 April 2021. Working with our partners, such as the NHS, community health services, schools, nurseries and within the community and voluntary sector we will explore how we could join up our proposed new service with support they offer. We will no longer be providing any children's centre services from the children's centre premises in the following locations:

- Flying Start Central Children's Centre: (Denbigh, Stopsley Baptist Church)
- Flying Start North Children's Centre: (Limbury, Redgrave CYP, Gill Blowers Nursery Leabank)
- Flying Start South Children's Centre: Park Town, Whipperley, The Mall)
- Flying Start West Children's Centre: (Dallow, Pastures Way Nursery, Foxdell, Beechwood, Mossdale Court, Leagrave, Chaul End Community Centre)

A map is available showing current Flying Start delivery sites at

<https://www.flyingstartluton.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Flying-Start-May-2018-Revision.pdf>

However we will be exploring opportunities to ensure that buildings continue to be used to support children, young people and families.

We want to hear your views on how our proposals would affect you accessing the support you need. We will then use your views to help us shape the new model.

*Proposed universal services that will cease on 30 April 2021

Pregnancy Club, Bump to Babe antenatal education, Feeding your New Born, Breast Feeding Café, Take 5 Café, Baby Massage, Baby Talk, Stay and Play, Messy Play, Sing and Sign, Parenting Puzzle courses, Nurturing Programme courses, Henry courses (healthy lifestyle, eating and nutrition), other health related services currently held within Flying Start Children Centre sites.

Overview

We have some very difficult decisions to make.

The COVID-19 crisis which has had an impact on the funding available for services across the council means that Children's services have to make £3.2 million of savings to support the emergency budget.

Luton's Children Families and Education Department is committed to working towards Luton 2040. We believe that all children deserve to reach their full potential and have a good quality of life. It is therefore essential that the money we spend and the resources available are used in the most effective way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable within our communities.

Why we are consulting

Our proposal would alter how our children's centres operate and see a change in how services are delivered and from where. These changes are set out in "our proposal" and "what is the impact?" sections of the attached consultation document.

We are particularly keen to hear from those who use our Flying Start Children's Centres and to understand any potential impact of the proposed changes.

We will look again at the needs of our communities to develop a service that meets those needs and to ensure that we have the specialist knowledge and skills required to deliver an outstanding service.

We want to hear your views on our proposals. Please read about the proposals below and complete the online survey before 20 September 2020.

Due to Covid-19 no face to face meetings be made available, however online meetings will take place so that stakeholders can hear about the proposals and ask questions.

These are scheduled to take place via Zoom on:

Thursday, 13 August at 1pm-3pm

Thursday, 13 August at 6.30pm-8.30pm

Monday, 7 September at 2pm-4pm

Tuesday, 8 September 6.30pm-8.30pm

Please send us an email if you wish to register your interest to attend.

We encourage people to respond to this consultation online but you can download a paper copy of the survey from the 'related documents' section online. Alternatively, paper copies will be available from the Luton Central Library or by contacting us using the contact details below.

Introduction

Please be assured that all responses will be kept confidential.

If you have any queries regarding this consultation you can email

PeopleDirectorateSupportUnit@luton.gov.uk or you can leave a voicemail message including your contact details at 01582 546939 and we will get back to you.

If you wish to attend the zoom meeting on 7 September or 8 September, please send us an email.

Please return your completed questionnaire (no stamp is required) to Freepost LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, IFRS consultation before 20 September 2020.

1 Are you responding to this consultation mainly as a...?

Please select only one item

- Parent / carer Young person under 18 Member of the public
 Health representative / GP School representative Trade union representative
 Children's centre member of staff Voluntary and community sector organisation
 Private sector organisation Council member / Member of Parliament Other

Other, please specify

If applicable, please provide the name of your organisation:

2 Do you have a child or children with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities?

Please select only one item

- Yes No

If yes how many children?

Children's Centre services

- 3** Have you used any of the services stated below in the last two years?
If so please tick relevant services

Please select all that apply

- Flying Start Children's Centres Early Help Fresh Start
 Manor Contact Centre

- 4** How often in normal circumstances (e.g. before the COVID-19 crisis) would you use children's centre services in Luton?

Please select only one item

- 2 or more times a week Once a week A few times a month
 Once a month Less than once a month I do not use any children's centres

About the proposals

- 5** Do you think the proposed changes will have a positive or negative impact on you, your family and/or others?

Please select only one item

- A positive impact A negative impact No impact Don't know / not sure

Please explain:

Universal services

We are proposing to stop providing universal activities* from 31 March 2021. Instead we will be discussing with our partners how some of these services might be delivered through them.

* Pregnancy Club, Bump to Babe antenatal education, Feeding your New Born, Breast Feeding Café, Take 5 Café, Baby Massage, Baby Talk, Stay and Play, Messy Play, Sing and Sign, Parenting Puzzle courses, Nurturing Programme courses, Henry courses (healthy lifestyle, eating and nutrition), other health related services currently held within Flying Start Children Centre sites.

6 Which universal activities do you feel are essential and should be considered as a priority?

Please explain why

7 If you are a partner agency how do you feel the changes will affect your service and the families you support?

Please explain

Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable families

8 Do you think that the proposed changes to an Integrated Family Resource Services will meet the needs of Luton's most vulnerable families?

Please select only one item

Yes No Don't know / not sure

Please explain:

Suggestions and comments

9 Do you have any suggestions for alternative ways that the Council can deliver the required savings?

Please write in the box below

10 Do you have any suggestions about the proposed changes to Luton children's centres for example alternative options, why the council should keep or consider closing a particular children's centre or anything else you would like to add?

Please write in the box below

11 Do you have any further comments that the council should consider?

Please write in the box below

About you

The information you provide in the 'about you' section gives the Council additional information about who has responded to the consultation and will help in the analysis of the feedback. Your feedback is always treated confidentially and will not be shared with any third party. We will ensure that it will not be possible to identify individuals when reporting results.

12 What is your home postcode? This question will be used for analysis purposes only

Please enter your postcode

13 What gender do you identify with?

Please select only one item

- Male Female Other

14 Are you currently expecting or have had a baby in the last six months?

Please select only one item

- Yes No Prefer not to say

15 Which age group do you belong to?

Please select only one item

- Under 18 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64
 65-74 75-84 85 and over Prefer not to say

16 Which of the following groups best describes you?

Please select only one item

- White - British White - Irish White - East European Other White
 Mixed - White and Black Caribbean Mixed - White and Black African
 Mixed - White and Asian Other Mixed Asian/Asian British - Indian
 Asian/Asian British - Kashmiri Asian/Asian British - Pakistani
 Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi Other Asian
 Black/Black British - Caribbean Black/Black British - African Black Other
 Chinese Other

17 Do you have /or are have you been classed as having a disability?

Please select only one item

- Yes No Prefer not to say

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK