

**SPECIALIST CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEVELOPMENT****Report By: Director of Adult and Community Services****Wards Affected**

County-wide

**Purpose**

1. To consider a response to consultation proposals by the Primary Care Trust (PCT).

**Financial implications**

2. As set out in the consultation document. The financial implications of the consultation are properly within the resources held by the Primary Care Trust.

**Background**

3. On 5th September the Committee considered a draft consultation document on the possibility of developing a central building for specialist community services for children with developmental problems/disabilities. The Committee commented on the draft and endorsed the proposed timescale for consultation.
4. The published consultation document on the development of a new centre for children's community based specialist services in the County is enclosed separately for members of the Committee.

**Progress**

5. A report by the Director of Children's Services suggesting important themes for consideration by the Committee is attached at appendix 1.
6. A report by the PCT's Director of Corporate Development summarising the responses to consultation received by the PCT to date is attached as appendix 2.
7. A detailed feedback questionnaire is also included in the consultation document itself.

**Issues**

8. The Committee's views in response to the consultation are invited.
9. It will be noted that the Director of Children's Services has highlighted that in terms of the options presented in the consultation document, the development of a new children's services building at a different central site is the preferred one in relation to the Children & Young People's Plan for Herefordshire and that this should be pursued as a priority. It is proposed that the Committee supports this approach and that the themes identified by the Director are incorporated into the Committee's response.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Sue Fiennes, Director of Children's Services on 01432 260039

10. In order to respond to the more detailed points in the feedback questionnaire and to allow the Committee's response to take account of any major issues raised by key stakeholders between the meeting and the end of the consultation period it is proposed that authority be granted to submit a detailed final response after the meeting.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- THAT (a) subject to any comments the Committee wishes to make, a response to the consultation proposals be submitted on the basis that the development of a new children's services building at a different central site is the preferred one which should be pursued as a priority and that the themes identified in appendix 1 to the report are incorporated into the final response;**
- and**
- (b) authority be granted for the final response to be submitted by the Director of Adult and Community Services following consultation with the Chairman.**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None

## **Important Themes Identified for the Health Scrutiny Committee's consideration by the Director of Children's Services**

### **Purpose**

1. To advise Health Scrutiny on key themes in Children's Services in Herefordshire relevant to the consultation.

### **Considerations**

2. The outcomes as described in the report are clearly about fit for purpose buildings and a joined-up approach to co-locate some designated provision. This should be supported in principle.
3. An opportunity should be taken to consider further integrated working options and co-location beyond the proposal and to highlight this with more purpose in the vision. This should include consideration of how the principle of a "one stop shop" for children with additional needs could be expanded and also linked to the customer service arrangements which are part of Herefordshire Connects in the Council.
4. The Children & Young People's Directorate in the Council has a new structure which builds integration so there are more professionals able to contribute than "former education and social care staff". In addition, the Council has invested in re-designing 2 senior posts to include the development of integrated working across the partnership and this adds capacity for designing together the arrangements which would include consideration of existing workplace/assets across both organisations.
5. There is an opportunity to link to Children's Centre developments which will be critical to support to children and families to prevent additional needs developing.
6. The redevelopment of the services currently provided at the Kite Centre, Ledbury should also include the re-modelling of the "respite service" to link clearly to the Support for Families Strategy supported by the Children & Young People's Partnership Board. This would release service capacity to increase access and modernise the service.
7. In terms of the options presented the 4th option is the preferred one in relation to the Children & Young People's Plan for Herefordshire.

### **Conclusions**

- The business case for re-location and the re-design is regarded as sound.
- the development of a new children's services building at a different central site is the preferred one in relation to the Children & Young People's Plan for Herefordshire and that this should be pursued as a priority.

**HEREFORDSHIRE PRIMARY CARE TRUST**  
**CONSULTATION ON SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR**  
**CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**  
**REPORT FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE BY THE PRIMARY CARE**  
**TRUST**

1. **Introduction**

Herefordshire PCT is currently out to public consultation on the best way to develop specialist services for children with additional needs in Herefordshire. The full and summary consultation documents are available separately to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In essence, the consultation is about:

- The future service model for children and young people with additional needs eg with disabilities or developmental needs.
- The consultation covers services in the community, not hospital services or those out of the county.
- Health, education and social care services are involved, because they work together with many of this group of children and young people.
- Specifically, the consultation asks for peoples' views on proposals to develop a new "one stop shop" centre for the county for these services. There would still be outreached services to children's schools and homes and using more local buildings on a sessional basis, but the services and professionals now scattered across a variety of buildings would come together under one new roof.

This paper summarises the responses to consultation received by the PCT so far.

2. **The Consultation**

The consultation runs from 25 September to 22 December 2006. The consultation process has included:

- Sending 350 copies of the full document and 400 summary leaflets to interested organisations and individuals.
- Consultation displays at PCT sites providing children's services.
- Press release leading to Hereford Times article.
- Consultation document invited anyone interested to contact the PCT if they would like to meet for a discussion, or for a PCT speaker to come to their group.
- Meeting with parents of children at special schools (12 attended).
- Meeting with head teachers of special schools.
- Meetings still to take place include Patient and Public Involvement Forum on 5 December and Herefordshire Alliance on 12 December.

### 3. Consultation Responses

Written consultations received to date include:

- Response from the Patient and Public Involvement Forum (attached) in support of a new central building.
- Six long consultation questionnaires returned.
- 17 short consultation questionnaires returned.

People returning questionnaires are not required to say who they are, and the responses suggest parents/family members, other organisations linked to children's' care and some staff responses.

Key points from the 23 questionnaires:

Which option:

- 19 favoured a new central building.
- Three favoured refurbishment of current buildings, and providing a new limited assessment centre.
- One favoured leaving the arrangements as now (the "do nothing" option).

Which services to include in a new building:

We divided the possible services into four main groups:

1. Assessment, diagnosis and therapies for children/young people with developmental problems/disabilities
  2. Teams and services for specific conditions – for example, autistic spectrum disorders or visual impairment
  3. Extra services like child and adolescent mental health services, audiology and nursery provision.
  4. Some acute hospital (eg County Hospital) services, like outpatient clinics and x-ray
- Seven respondents wanted to see all the first three groups included, but not acute hospital services. Some people wrote the latter would be unnecessary duplication.
  - Five respondents wanted to see all four groups of services included.
  - Two respondents wanted to see just the first group of services included.
  - One respondent wanted to see all services except the second group.
  - One respondent wanted to see just the first two groups of services included.
  - One respondent did not want to see any services in a new building, and felt strongly that services "should be geared to the needs of children in the community rather than the needs of the professionals. We are not convinced by arguments about the need for central clinic facilities."

Should any specific services be provided nearer children's' own homes and not in a central building?

Comments included:

- Diagnosis and hearing tests.
- Yes (but unspecified)
- Relief care for learning disabilities

- Staff need to travel to children's' homes and schools
- Hearing, speech, ENT
- Services at community hospitals and special schools after initial full assessment
- Outreach – home care workers
- Everything should be out in the community except perhaps audiology
- Follow up and feeding needs to happen where children usually are, home and school.
- Health visitors and hearing tests
- Outreach family support

#### What would make a good location for a central building?

We asked people to choose from:

#### Chosen by these respondents

- |                         |    |    |
|-------------------------|----|----|
| • Parking nearby        |    | 18 |
| • Good public transport | 14 |    |
| • Easy drop off spaces  | 8  |    |
| • In Hereford City      |    | 13 |

Other comments included:

- Should be South of the river
- Doesn't have to be Hereford but must be central with good bus access
- Good to have a play area
- We should be working as locally as possible. Families already complain about having to come into Hereford. A central site is not what families want.

#### Other comments

Other comments show support for a new single centre but want to ensure that outreach services to children at home and in school will continue.

A selection of comments from questionnaires and made at meetings:

- It makes sense to have all these services under one roof, which would help families know what is there and get information.
- Centralised services weights them in favour of middle class families with flexible work arrangements and transport.
- Helpful if it makes it easier to contact professionals.
- Concern that the priority must be more staff not a plush building; staff and speed with which you get an appointment are more important.
- Recreational and play facilities for disabled children would be good to include.
- A centre would be useful in providing sibling support, peer support.
- Children's' medical tests would be less frightening here than in hospital.

**Conclusion**

The PCT will take stock of all the comments received after consultation ends on 22 December.

If a centre is supported, the PCT will then need to work up a business case, in partnership with the Council's Children's Services Directorate.

The PCT will be happy to answer the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's questions at its meeting. The file of consultation responses is available to see on request.

**Julie Thornby**  
**Director of Corporate Development**  
**Herefordshire Primary Care Trust**

**November 2006**

**SPECIALIST CHILDRENS SERVICES**

**HEREFORDSHIRE PCT PPI FORUM RESPONSE**

Having discussed the consultation document, the Forum would like to make the following observations.

The current centres are unable to offer the best facilities and the best answer is to develop a new, central building, offering a complete range of services. These should include assessment, diagnosis and a range of therapies for young people from a very early age.

There should also be teams and services for specific needs, together with some outpatient provision for things like x-ray and dental care.

Extra services such as audiology and nursery facilities would be ideal.

Of particular importance would be the provision of adolescent mental health services.

If a new central building were to be developed, particular attention should be paid to its location and ability to provide adequate free parking on site, together with good public transport.

With these considerations in mind, a site within the Edgar Street grid might be suitable.

With regard to facilities being provided near or at children's homes, the Forum suggest that mobility equipment is important, together with physiotherapy and feeding support, so that both children and their carers get the best service available.