

Medium Term Financial Plan

Initial Equality Impact Assessment of Budget Proposal 2024/25



1. The Proposal

Budget Theme: Services we provide to the community - children's centres

Budget reference: SPTC01

Budget proposal 2024/25 (£): £150,000

The following savings are included within this Theme:

Directorate Reference	Service Area	Budget Proposal	2024/25 Budget reduction
CH02	Children's Centres	Continuation of the programme to redevelop Children's Centres into Family Hubs, rationalise library provision and review service delivery models for maintained nurseries to reduce the financial subsidy.	£150,000

Theme Narrative:

Proposals to transform and reshape the delivery of library services, nurseries and children's centres to residents ensuring best use of buildings and considering alternative delivery models.

Summary of changes:

In 2024/25 the focus of the proposal is to rationalise the Children Centre offer (14 Centres) by developing 3 Family Hubs. Consideration of improvements to libraries and nurseries will follow in 2025/26 and 2026/27.

From the late 1990's North Somerset has offered support for children and families through the development of 14 children's centres (3 delivered via outreach). This model of service is evolving, and local authorities are being encouraged to develop a Family Hub approach.

The council is currently considering a wide range of options for the development of this approach. Work so far has considered:

- What is a Family Hub
- Services in scope
- Key information about children centres
- Key information libraries*
- Key information about nursery provision*
- The current Youth offer
- The options to be considered
- The next steps / actions required

*The focus of the budget proposal for 2024/25 is on the Children's Centre Provision, however some Children's Centres share sites with libraries and nurseries

Being ambitious for all children and young people is essential to the success of Family Hubs and it is clear from the work to date that North Somerset council and its partners are committed to ensuring all children and young people (from early years through to adulthood) have access to a successful Family Hub model.

Is any of the proposals within this theme a continuation of a previous medium-term financial plan saving?

Yes **No**

If yes, please insert reference number and year of assessment?

Budget Proposal	Year of assessment	Budget Reference
Rationalisation / reprioritisation of children's Centre and Early Help Provision.	January 2023	CH11

If yes, please describe what steps you have taken to review the equality impacts from previous years?

The previous EIA was completed in January 2023. Since then, a range of options for the development of family hubs have been created. The issues that were identified in the 2023 EIA such as lack of service specific data, the importance of communities being able to access support without prejudice are being considered in the ongoing development of the project.

2. Customer equality impact summary

Will the proposal have a disproportionate impact on any of these groups?

Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.

H = High, M = Medium, L = Low, N = None

+ = Positive, = = Neutral, - = Negative

Impact Level	Impact type						
	H	M	L	N	+	=	-
Disabled people (Including consideration of neurodiversity)		X					X
People from different ethnic groups		X					X
Men or women (including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave)		X					X
People who are LGBTQ+			X			X	
People on a low income	X						X
People in particular age groups		X					X
People in particular faith groups			X			X	
People who are married or in a civil partnership			X			X	
People who are undergoing gender reassignment			X			X	
Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, armed forces community, impact on health and wellbeing. Please specify: Parents and Carers	X						X

3. Explanation of customer impact

Children centres identify families with young children in their community, the early childhood services those families need and how those that are in most need of services are helped and encouraged to participate in them. Children centres pay a particular emphasis to those that are in most need of intervention and support who may be unlikely to access the help they may need.

Our plan is to develop a model that provides; high-quality, joined up, whole-family support services for families with children aged 0-19 (25 years of age for young people with SEND). Providing families with somewhere they can go if they need information, advice or guidance about parenting, concerns about family breakdown, and other worries. A family hub will provide a universal front door for children, young people, parents, and carers to access support in respect of their social care, education, mental health, and physical health needs.

This proposal aims to have a positive impact for those who access Family Hub services. However, we recognise that any changes in the delivery model and availability of services could have an impact on our customers. The main impact will be accessibility regarding distance to travel to a new site.

Childrens Centres provide a universal offer to children and families, but we know:

- Age – the centres are more likely to be used by children and parents within the 30 – 39 years age group
- Ethnicity and Disability – some centres offer specific services for those whose first language is not English and for Disabled children
- Low income - Children's Centres based in Weston-super-Mare have high numbers of people accessing services

The development of the Family Hubs must consider the need to ensure good public transport links. All groups who currently access a children centre could be negatively affected in a reduced or less accessible (due to location / distance / public transport links) service offer.

Detailed consideration of the impact of the chosen option including the impact on protected groups will be carried out throughout the development of this project.

Please describe how you will communicate these changes to your customers

Any changes to the delivery of Children Centres will require public consultation. Through the consultation process the public will be advised of the proposed changes and the reasons for this.

4. Staff equality impact summary

Are there any staffing implications for this proposal?

TBC

Explanation of staff impact

At the current time there are no proposed staffing reductions / impact on staff in respect of the children centre work. Current staff may / will need to change work base location, but job losses are not being proposed as part of the savings.

5. Review and Sign Off

Service Manager Review

Insert any service manager comments here:

Is a further detailed equality impact assessment needed? No **Yes**
If 'yes', when will the further assessment be completed? A full EIA will be
completed and circulated to equality stakeholders early January 2024

Service Manager: **Carolyn Fair**
Date: 15 December 2023