**Proposals to change Children’s Centre Services - April 2014**

**What are Children’s Centre Services?**

Children’s Centres offer services for local families and others caring for children under the age of five. Children’s Centre Services vary in different areas, offering a variety of activities and groups according to the needs of local families. They are designed to:

 Deliver services for the most vulnerable families with children up to the age of five

 who are in need of additional support

 Help parents develop their parenting skills

 Support children to develop well and be ready for school

**Which services in Children’s Centres could be affected?**

There are 11 Children’s Centres in Bath & North East Somerset. All 11 will remain open; **none will close,** although it is proposed that some of the services they provide, and how the centres are managed will change. The services which are funded through the Council budget which is being reduced are:

1. Parent /carer groups e.g. Stay and Play, Messy Play, and Bumps and Babies.
2. Outreach support where Children’s Centre staff visit families at home to support families and home learning.
3. Reception and help for other organisations to run their groups and activities within the centre.

**What changes are we proposing from April 2015?**

Of the services which are funded by the Council budget three main changes are proposed as follows:

**1. Proposal to target services to those who need them most**

Currently Children Centres provide some groups and activities which are open and available to **all** families with young children who live in the local area. From April next year it is planned that the Council funding is only used to provide these services for those families and children who need them the most (e.g. where the child needs

additional help to develop well in the same way most children do without extra help).

These services will be run and managed by paid staff.

**2. Proposal to reduce admin and management costs by organising all the Children’s Centres into two service groups**

The 11 Children’s Centres are currently clustered into four geographical areas. Each

has its own management and administration.

It is proposed to reduce management and administrative costs by organising all of the centres into two Service Groups, one covering Bath and the other covering North East Somerset.

Each Service Group will have two Main Children’s Centres where most staff will be based. For Bath these will be Parkside and Twerton. In North East Somerset these will be Radstock and Keynsham.

These four Main Children’s Centres are currently four of the busiest Children’s Centres and offer services across Bath and North East Somerset. This will not mean that any of the other centres will close, only that administrative and management at them will reduce.

**3. Proposal to change the opening times of some Children’s Centres**

At the moment 8 of the 11 Children’s Centres in Bath and North East Somerset are open each weekday (even when no direct work with families is being undertaken). This is usually 9.00am to 5.00pm, although opening hours vary from centre to centre.

In order to make savings, it is proposed to change some opening times of the family support services to match the times when the Children Centre staff are running groups. The groups vary each week, so it’s not possible to be specific about which particular days each centre will be open, but each week the opening hours could be as follows and could be spread over a number of days.

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|  **Children’s Centre** | **Current opening times** | **Proposed opening times** |
| Parkside | Mon - Fri all day | No Change |
| Twerton | Mon - Fri all day | No Change.  |
| Radstock | Mon - Fri all day | No Change.  |
| Keynsham | Mon - Fri all day | No Change.  |
| Moorlands | Mon - Fri all day | 8 hours a week.  |
| St Martins | Mon - Fri all day | 16 hours a week.  |
| Weston | Mon - Fri all day | 12 hours a week |
| Midsomer Norton | Mon - Fri all day | 24 hours a week |
| Paulton | Weds & Thurs all day | 8 hours a week |
| Peasedown | Mon -Weds all day | 8 hours a week |
| Chew Valley | Mon - Fri all day | 20 hours a week |