



# **Early Help Family Hubs**

## **May – July 2018 Consultation**

### **Feedback Report**

## Summary

The first stage of consultation on a new Early Help delivery model for children, young people and their families took place during February and March 2018 for six weeks. It comprised an online and paper questionnaire and a number of public and partner workshop sessions held across the county and explored the principle of changing early help service delivery.

459 people took part in that consultation: 186 respondents (including service users and representatives of organisations) completed a questionnaire and 273 people attended a workshop session.

Following Cabinets approval in May 2018 the second stage of consultation took place May through to July for six weeks. It comprised an online and paper questionnaire and 24 drop in sessions and workshops held across the county and explored proposed sites for six family hubs and the removal of childrens centre services from existing sites.

461 people took part in the consultation (including service users, representatives of organisations and young people): 269 respondents completed a questionnaire, 158 people attended one of 19 drop in sessions and 35 young people attended 5 workshops (10 also completed a questionnaire).

## Key Findings and Messages

### The Proposed Family Hub Sites and Removal of Childrens Centre Services

- Overall, respondents were slightly more positive than negative about the proposed six family hub sites. Support was highest for the Oswestry venue, The Centre (46% either agreed or disagreed). Whitchurch was the second most supported venue

There was most disagreement with the proposed family hub sites at Richmond House, Shrewsbury, 37% either strongly disagreed or disagreed (37% agreed or strongly disagreed), and Whitchurch, 36%

Young people agreed with the proposed sites for the family hubs and understood that by ending our sessions in the Childrens' Centres we would be able to support the families who need it most and agreed that it was a plan we have to put into place.

- The majority of comments were in objection to proposals to withdraw children centre services from listed venues. Transport and distance to a hub were cited as key issues.

However, there were a small number of respondents who thought the plans appropriate to secure services for the most vulnerable families.

Some young people were sad that some Children Centres were withdrawing their services – they remembered attending centres that are proposed to close - but they thought it was good that the buildings wouldn't be empty and would be used by other organisations (schools and nurseries). They commented that there needed to be somewhere for young people to go, socialise and youth workers to talk to. Particularly during school holidays when there may not be someone to talk to if you had issues.

Face to face contact was considered best. They talked about the accessibility of sexual health services in the community for young people. The young people felt drop in clinics for them would

be an interesting development or opportunities for group work around issues that may affect them, for example, drugs, how you feel about yourself (self-esteem), anxiety and other mental health issues. They also talked about consistency of people in the hubs, so you are not seeing different people every time you attend

- Family hubs will continue as venues for Children's Centre services but will provide services for a wider age range 0-25, and have a clear focus on working with the most vulnerable families. 60% of respondents think that after looking at the list of alternative provision available that there is still a gap for their family with general support.
- During the first stage of consultation some parents told us that they'd be willing to pay a contribution in order to retain certain support services that are currently delivered by Children's Centres, for example Stay and Play. Exploring this further in the second stage of consultation, 63% of respondents said they would be willing to pay a contribution. The average (mean) contribution parents considered to be reasonable was £2.39.

#### Finding Information, Advice and Activities

During the first stage of consultation respondents told us how important it was to them that it easy to find up to date information about early help support and services. During the second stage of consultation:

- Almost three quarters (74%) of respondents said they would be quite or very likely to use Facebook to look or ask for information about early help. Also popular sources of information are the Health visitor, FIS web pages and Early Help web pages.

Twitter and live web chat were not sources that respondents said they would be likely to use.

- Young people said they would most likely look on Facebook or Twitter for information about early help services. Some young people did say there should not be too much reliance on social media and said that leaflets were still important. A mobile phone app was supported by some young people – input would be needed by users. A TV advert was suggested by the young carers, although they were not sure what channel and time of day would be most effective.

Council websites (eg. Early help, FIS, Local Offer) were not sources young people said they would use.

## Detailed Analysis

The table below summarises responses to the Stage 2 Consultation by Children's Centre area. It shows that whilst some areas (such as Market Drayton, Roman Way, Shropshire Hills, Whitchurch and Borders) are very well represented, other areas saw very low representation, namely Pebble Brook, Mortimer Forest, Severn Valley and South Oswestry.

Children's Centre Area	Number of Respondents <sup>2</sup>	% Survey Response
<b>Borders</b> (North Shrewsbury)	15	11%
<b>Ellesmere &amp; Wem</b>	10	7%
<b>Market Drayton</b>	36	27%
<b>Mortimer Forest</b> (South West Shropshire including Craven Arms, Ludlow and Clun)	1	1%
<b>Oswestry</b>	7	5%
<b>Pebble Brook</b> (East Shropshire including Shifnal and Albrighton areas)	3	2%
<b>River Rea</b> (South East Shropshire including Highley and Cleobury Mortimer)	4	3%
<b>Roman Way</b> (South Shrewsbury)	18	13%
<b>Severn Valley</b> (including Broseley and Bridgnorth areas)	2	1%
<b>Shropshire Hills</b> (West Shropshire including Bishops Castle, Church Stretton and Pontesbury areas)	19	14%
<b>South Oswestry</b> (including Baschurch area)	4	3%
<b>Whitchurch</b>	16	12%
<b>Unknown</b>	138	
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	

This rest of this report details the feedback submitted during the consultation, it is split into two sections:

### Section 1. Questionnaire Summary

- 1.1 Respondent Profile
- 1.2 Survey Feedback

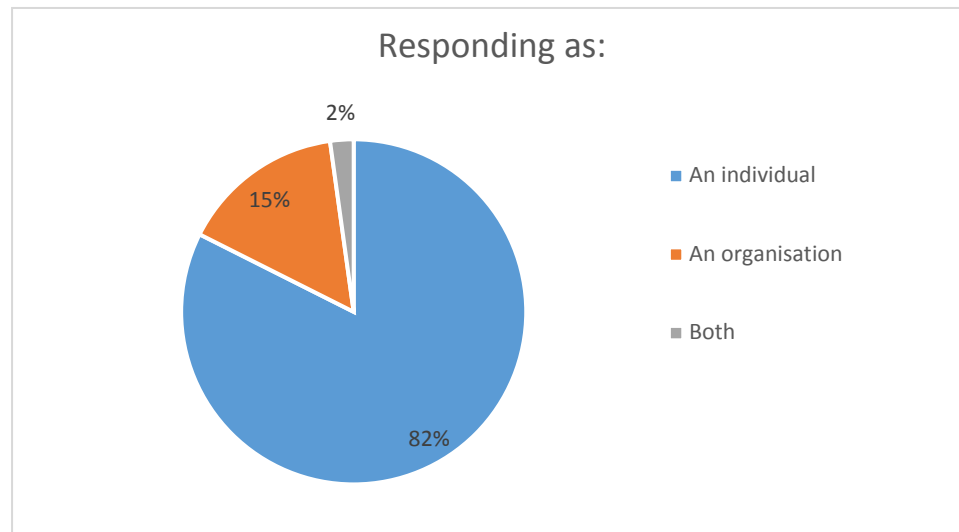
### Section 2. Feedback from Young People

## Section 1. Feedback from the questionnaire

269 responses were submitted of which:

- 11 were completed by young people aged between 11 and 19

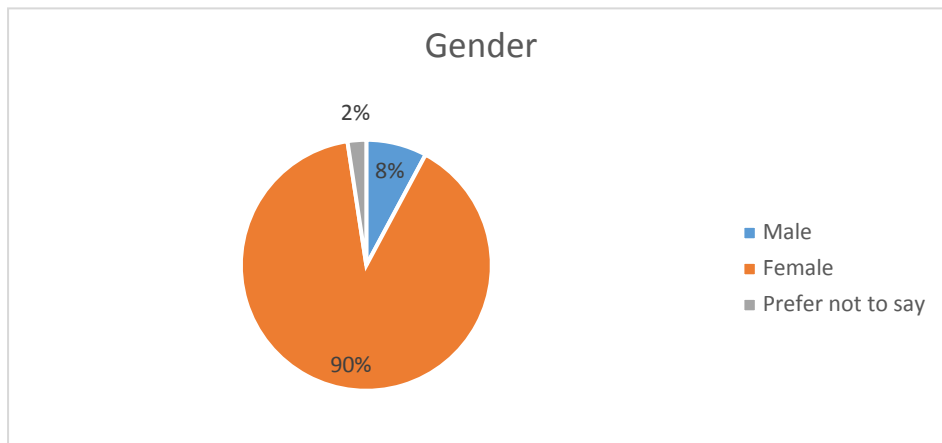
### 1.1 Respondent Profile



Answer Choices	Responses	
An individual	82%	150
An organisation/group/forum	15%	28
Both	2%	4

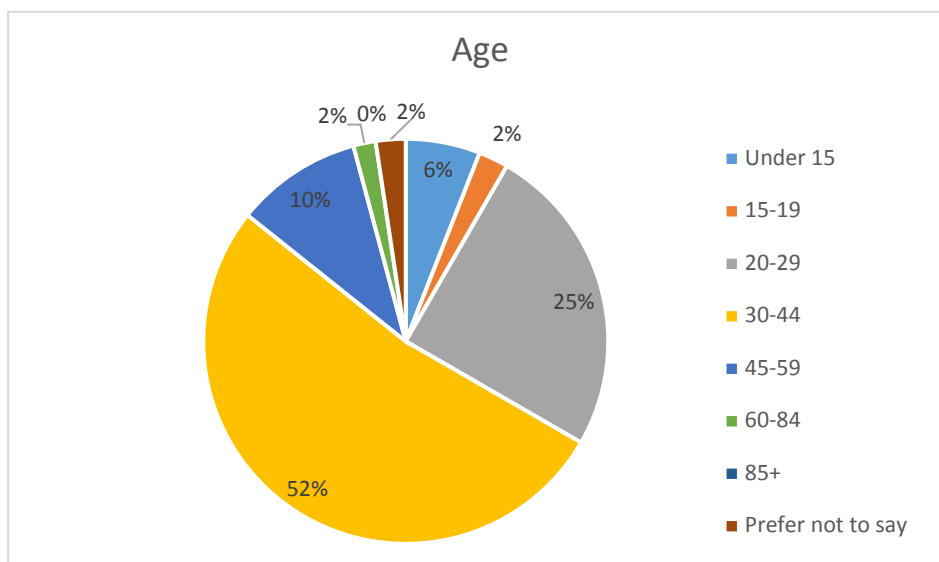
There are insufficient responses from organisations to undertake a detailed and robust analysis of their feedback. The following organisations, groups and forums responded (where known):

- Crowgate Child Centre
- Childminder
- Little Squirrels
- Bishops Castle family group
- FNP
- St Peter's CE Primary School
- Parish Council clerk
- Day nursery
- Health partner



Note: Men formed only 8% of all respondents. Whilst this is very low, this may be proportionate to the user profile of early help services. It is recommended that this assumption is confirmed.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	8%	13
Female	90%	149
Prefer not to say	2%	4

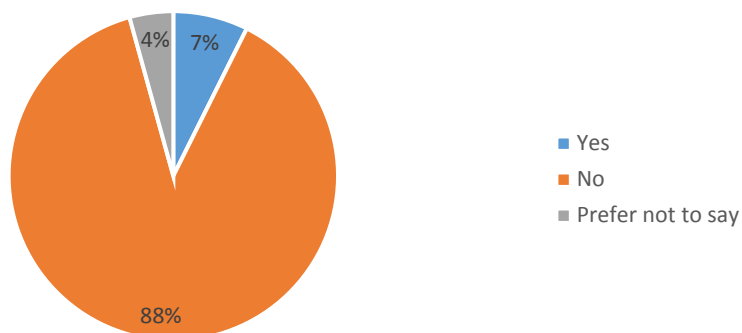


Note: Overall, the profile demonstrates a representation of all ages.

Workshops with young people and young carers were undertaken to ensure that their views were heard.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 15	8%	10
15-19	3%	4
20-29	25%	42
30-44	52%	88
45-59	13%	17
60-84	2%	3
85+	0%	0
Prefer not to say	3%	4

Day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?



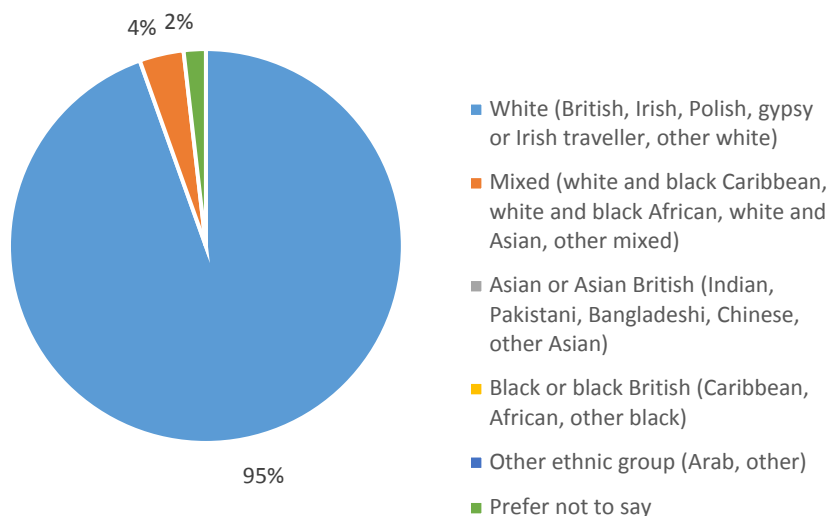
7%, 12 people, said they had a long term health problem or disability.

#### Answer Choices

#### Responses

Yes	7%	12
No	88%	144
Prefer not to say	4%	7

What is your ethnic origin?

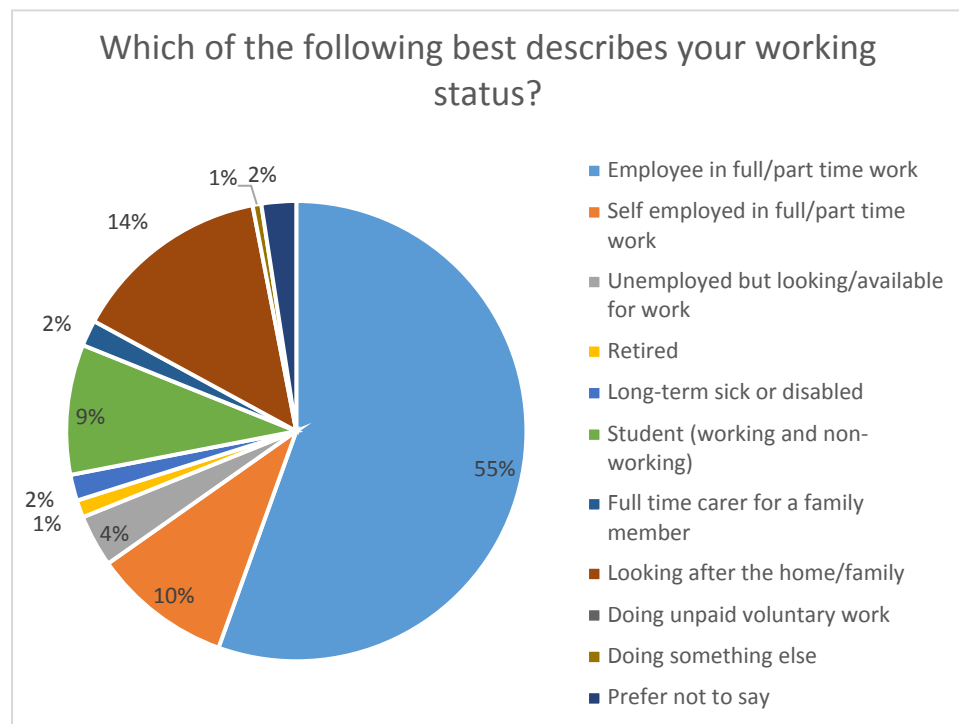


Note: Overall, the profile demonstrates a good representation of ethnicity which is proportionate to the Shropshire area population profile.

#### Answer Choices

#### Responses

White (British, Irish, Polish, gypsy or Irish traveller, other white)	95%	156
Mixed (white and black Caribbean, white and black African, white and Asian, other mixed)	4%	6
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, other Asian)	0%	0
Black or black British (Caribbean, African, other black)	0%	0
Other ethnic group (Arab, other)	0%	0
Prefer not to say	2%	3

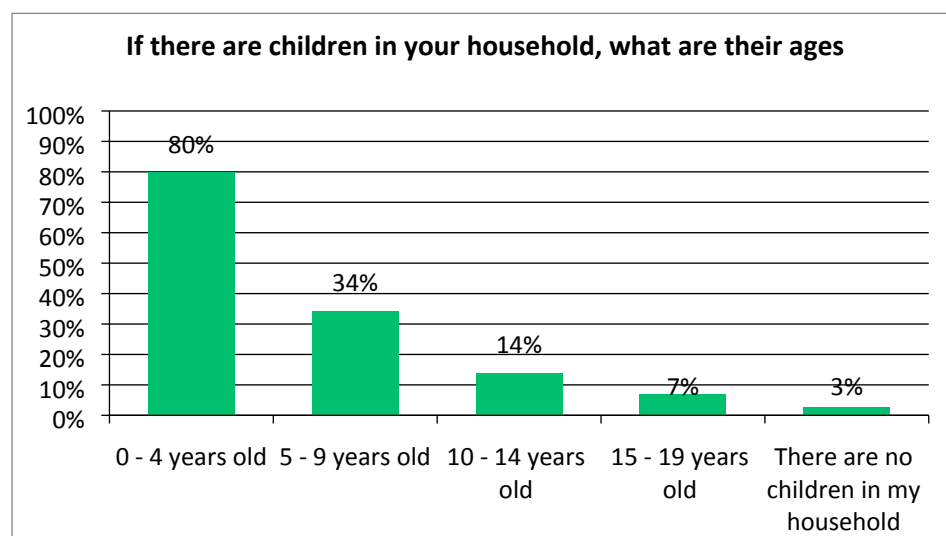


Note: Over half of respondents were in either full or part time work.

4% of respondents were unemployed, 2% were a carer for a family member.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Employee in full/part time work	55%	91
Self employed in full/part time work	10%	16
Unemployed but looking/available for work	4%	6
Retired	1%	2
Long-term sick or disabled	2%	3
Student (working and non-working)	9%	15
Full time carer for a family member	2%	3
Looking after the home/family	14%	23
Doing unpaid voluntary work	0%	0
Doing something else	1%	1
Prefer not to say	2%	4



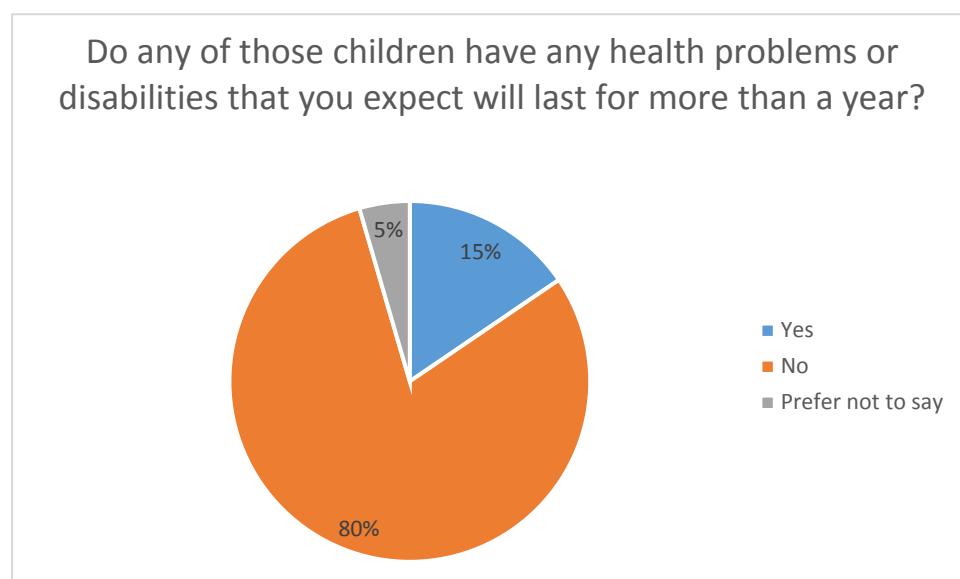


Note: The majority of respondents have children aged 4 and under. Just over a third have children aged 5-9 years old.

3% of respondents said they had no children in their household. These are likely to be, for example, grandparents, childminders or respondents representing an organisation or group.

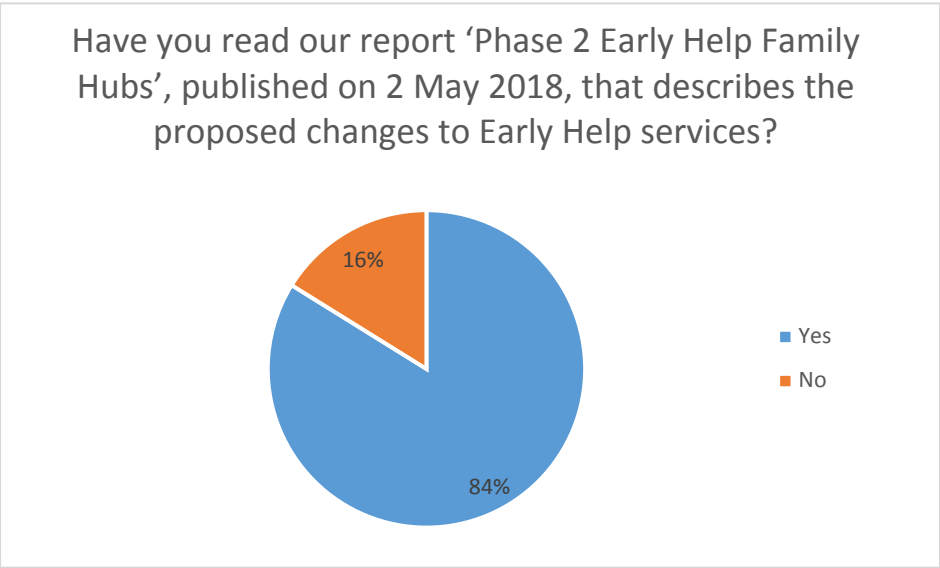
Answer Choices	Responses	
0 - 4 years old	80%	126
5 - 9 years old	34%	54
10 - 14 years old	14%	22
15 - 19 years old	7%	11
There are no children in my household	3%	4

Of those parents with children:



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	15%	24
No	80%	124
Prefer not to say	5%	7

1.2 Survey Feedback



Note: 84% of respondents said that they had read the report describing the proposed changes.

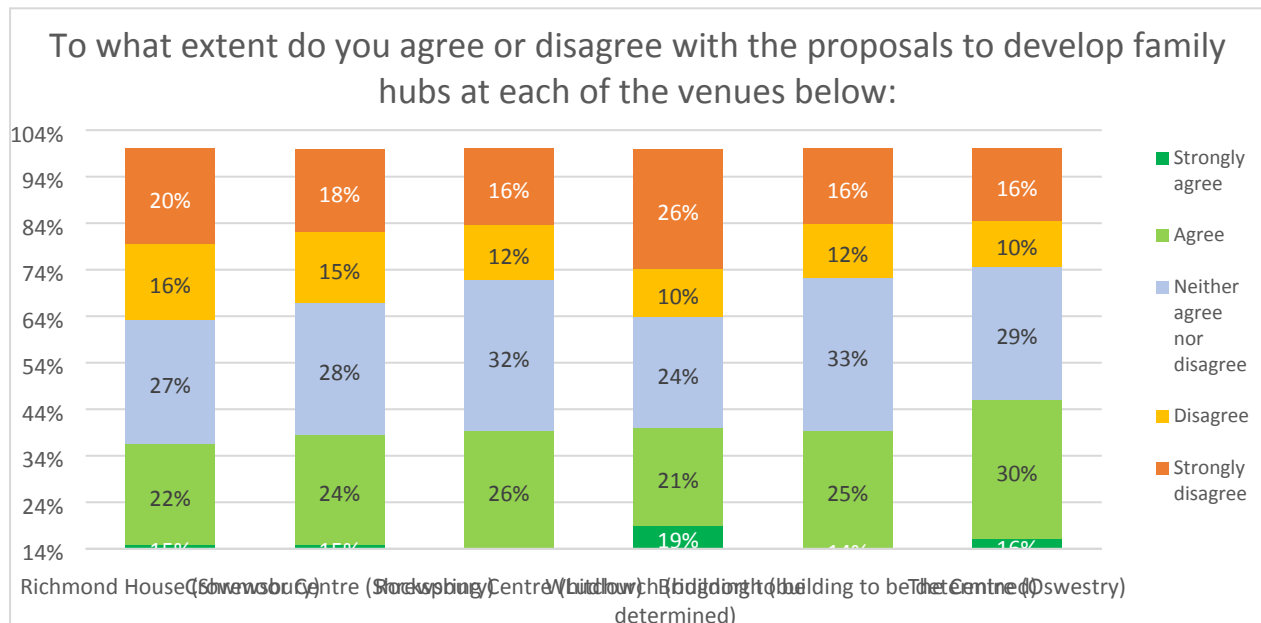
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	84%	218
No	16%	42

Family Hub venues

Overall, respondents were slightly more positive than negative about the proposed six family hub sites .

Support was highest for the Oswestry venue, The Centre - 46% either agreed or disagreed). 36% of respondents disagreed with the proposal to develop a hub here – *one in four objectors were from the Market Drayton childrens centre area*

Whitchurch was the second most supported venue - 40% either agreed or disagreed. However, 36% disagreed – *over half of people objecting to this venue were from the Market Drayton childrens centre area.*



There was most disagreement with the proposed family hub site at Richmond House, Shrewsbury – 37% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. *In the main, objectors were from the Shropshire Hills and Market Drayton children centre areas.*

Comments tended to be negative rather than positive (this is to be expected). The main themes from analysis of the comments were:

- Many people, *the greatest proportion from Market Drayton*, spoke about how they would find it difficult to travel to one of the proposed hubs. Lack of, or poor, public transport was usually cited as an obstacle, but also the distance, time and cost involved.
- Respondents talked about the services they currently, or previously, access, and lack of alternative provision and how they felt their town needed a hub site – *this was mainly for the towns of Market Drayton and Whitchurch*.
- There was a great deal of talk, by respondents in towns without a hub, of how they would feel isolated without any kind of early help service provision, usually due to the rural nature of the town they lived in. Lack of, or poor, public transport played a part in this feeling, but also the lack of any other services or support in the local area.

Themes	Number of Responses
Hub(s) too far or difficult to get too	49
Keep site open/need site in town	30
Other	25
Isolation of families in towns with no/ poor transport	23
Hub sites are easily accessible, well sited, will serve the right areas	8
Shrewsbury does not require two centres (so close together)	6
Excellent service and staff	4
Not got enough information	4
Who will provide local (expert) support?	3
Stay & Play should be available at the hubs	3
Parents who don't meet the vulnerable criteria still need support	3
Consolidate local services into single venue to retain a local hub	2
Six hubs is not enough	2
All centres should stay open	2
Centre is not well attended anyway	1
Suggest alternative venue	1
What will Hubs provide with reduced budget?	1
Support existing parent run groups instead of creating hubs	1
Concerns over future of building and services that function from there	1
Alternative play group provision is too structured	1
Hubs should be located in the centre of the towns	1
Pay more Council for lesser quality service	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>172</b>

#### Withdrawing children centre services

The consultation set out those venues where it is proposed to withdraw children centre services. Again, as would be expected, the majority of comments were in objection. However, there were a small number of respondents who thought the plans appropriate to secure services for the most vulnerable families.

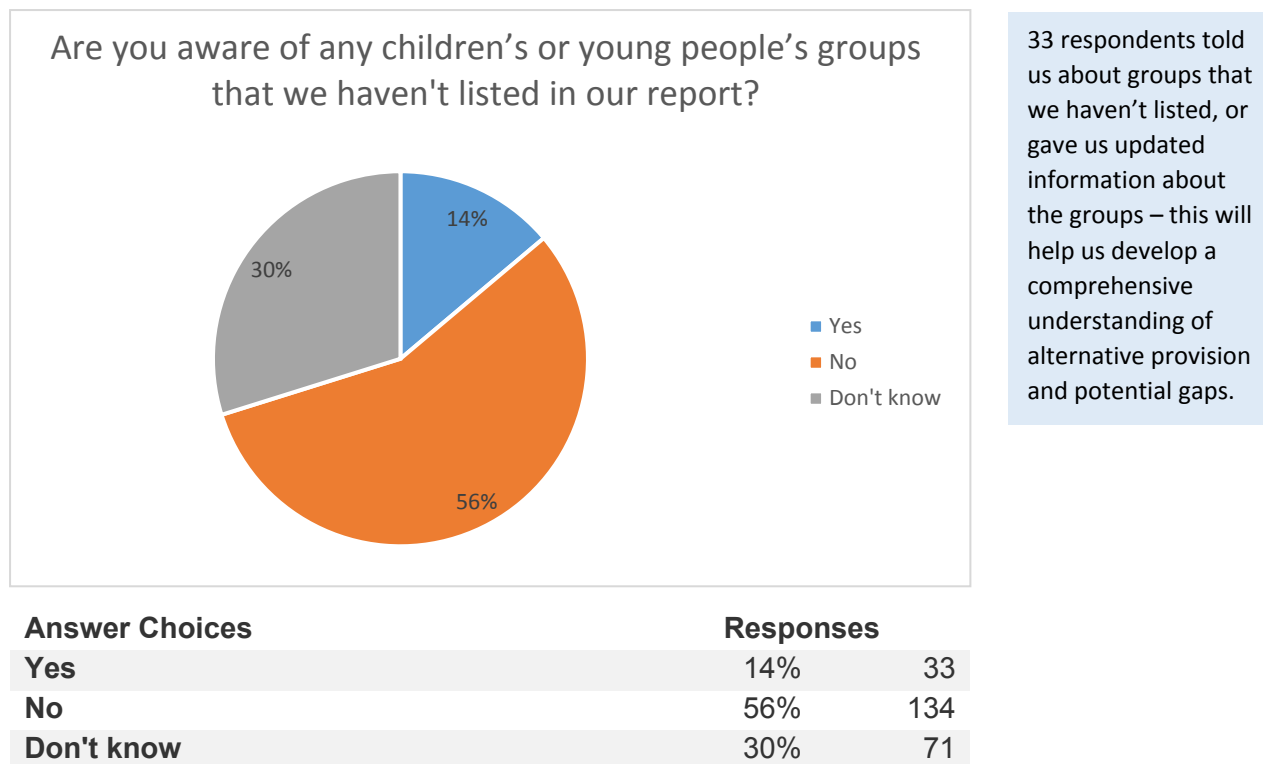
The main themes from analysis of the comments were:

- That families living in towns (*mostly rural, Bishops Castle, but not exclusively so*) without either their own, or good public, transport would feel isolated.
- There were many comments stating that their town needed to retain a children centre site, or at least, some children centre services (at another venue). *The majority of comments were for Market Drayton.*
- Families said that the hubs would be hard to get to. This was usually because of poor transport links, but was also because of the distances involved from home to a hub. *Respondents from Market Drayton were most likely to make this comment.*

Themes	Number of responses
Isolation of families in towns with no/ poor transport	42
Keep site open/need site in town	41
Other	23
Hub(s) hard to get to	19
Concerns over future of building and services that function from there	13
Understand that some centres must close, Supportive of plans	10
Closing a popular, well used centre	10
Groups are important for parents health and wellbeing	10
Withdrawing support services will create problems/increase costs longer term	9
Not got enough information	4
Parents who don't meet the vulnerable criteria still need support	3
Can service remain open in return for a small fee to families	3
Alternative local providers are not skilled like CS staff	3
No alternative/Alternative local providers are not skilled like CS staff	3
Unfair to close all town centres whilst Shrewsbury keeps two	2
Consolidate local services into single venue to retain a local hub	2
Alternative childrens groups charge a fee	1
Well used centres should remain open	1
Six hubs is not enough	1
Stay & Play should be available at the hubs	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>201</b>

### Alternative local provision

The consultation listed existing local childrens groups and support networks as alternative options of general support for families.

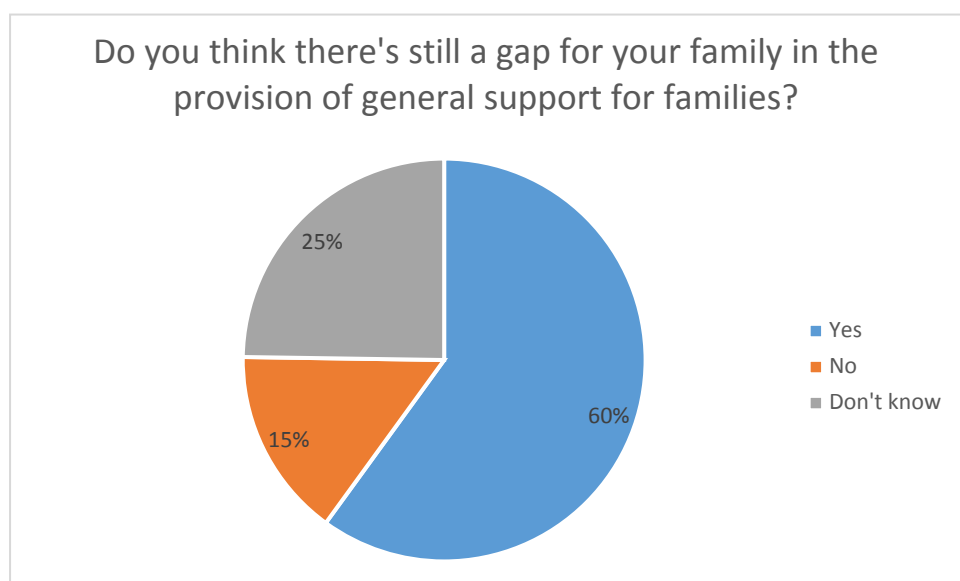


Respondents listed the following play groups and sessions in addition to those listed in appendix A of the consultation:

- Bishops castle - Monday 1-3pm
- Bishops Castle Crowgate
- Bridgnorth - Jiggy Riggles
- St Mary's Youth Project, Cleobury Mortimer - Kids Club (KS2) 7-11 yr olds (Mon) - The Hub (secondary) - Youth Drop-in (Tues and Fridays) - Late Hub (11+) - Focused activities (Tues 6-8pm) - Climbing Club (Mondays) - Guitar Club (Wed) - Ignite (faith exploration, Wed) - UYC (Thursdays\*) \*course runs once per term - Nippers (parent toddler group, Tues) Active Education Programme - Targeted youth and family engagement based around climbing (evidence based). - Messy Church (All ages) - Family Climbing (Tues) - Community Family Service (11 o'clock on the first sunday of the month) - all ages
- La Leche league shropshire
- Ludlow - Home-start do some groups in ludlow I think.
- Oswestry - Woodside School
- Oswestry - By Meadows School
- Oswestry - Albert Road Church (Thursday AM), St Oswalds Church, Fantastic Funhouse (Monday AM), Eastern Community (centre by the Meadows School)
- Oswestry - Sticky Fingers Hope church Monday's term time a parent/toddler group Fizzy Kids Christ church Oswestry term time Tuesdays a parent/toddler group 0-4 years
- Shrewsbury - Church Groups, NCT Groups, Payable activity eg; mini music.
- Shrewsbury Baby sensory, Sing and Sign Clatter bugs Mini music- all are payable and are quite expensive and therefore not accessible to all. Church playgroups and NCT groups are also available ie Barneytots at the Barnabus centre on Tuesdays and NCT group at Palmers

cafe on Wednesday Libraries also do free rhyme and story times.

- Looking at the list it include paid for activities (e.g baby sensory / tumbletots) A detailed list can be found in the Grapevine magazine
- You haven't listed: Shrewsbury Town Council youth clubs Guide Groups across the county Oswestry Youth club is run by SYA, not FAO Knockin Youth Group is closed Wem Scouts Market Drayton Youth Club Juniors - SYA Market Drayton Youth Club Seniors - SYA Market Drayton Methodist Youth Group Market Drayton Girls Friendly society Tern Hill Youth Group Kynaston Road Youth Group - SYA - Due to close Summer 2018 Sorrella Dance Group - Kynaston Road Smile Youth Group - Shrops Council - SEN Big Time Club - Shrops Council - SEN Mambo's - Shrops Council - SEN Minsterely Youth Group Ford Youth Group South Shropshire Youth Forum CASCA Girls Group - Craven Arms Craven Arms Samba Band for young People Bucknell Youth Group Church Barn Wednesday club - Bishops Castle Clee Hill Youth Club Hive XYZ Youth group for LGBT+ young people (Shrewsbury, Oswestry & Telford) Shropshire Young Health Champions (Projects across the county) Media Active - Wem Ignition - Church Stretton Scrapies - Church Stretton
- Shifnal - Squirrels playgroup - Thursday AM, Little Fishes - church based every 2nd Wednesday - St Andrews. Ladybird tots and toddlers- Friday AM - Methodist Church
- Whitchurch - Friday parents group at Whitchurch children centre
- Whitchurch bumps to baby, stay and play, Friday fun
- Shrewsbury united reform church messy church on a friday.
- Market Drayton - La Leche League Shropshire Breastfeeding Support



60% of respondents think that after looking at the list of alternative provision available that there is still a gap for their family with general support.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	60%	126
No	15%	32
Don't know	25%	52

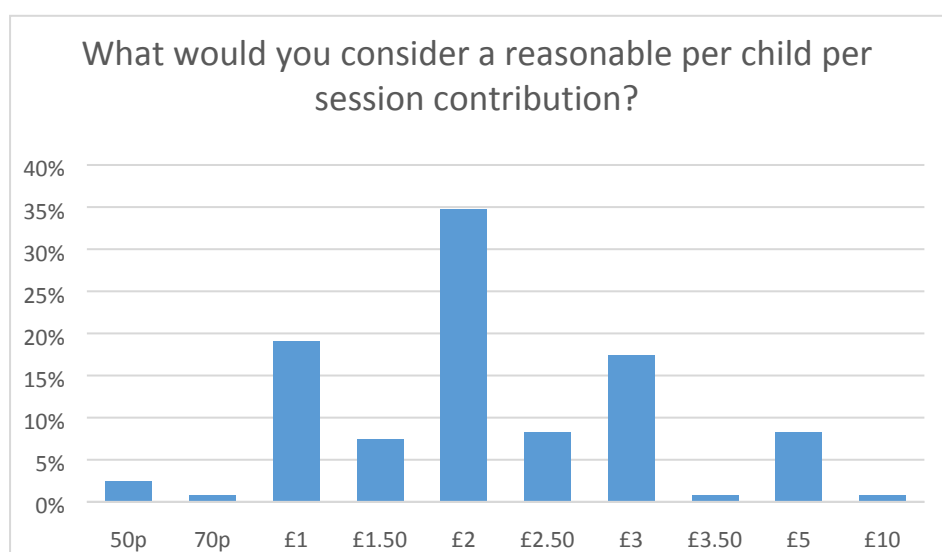
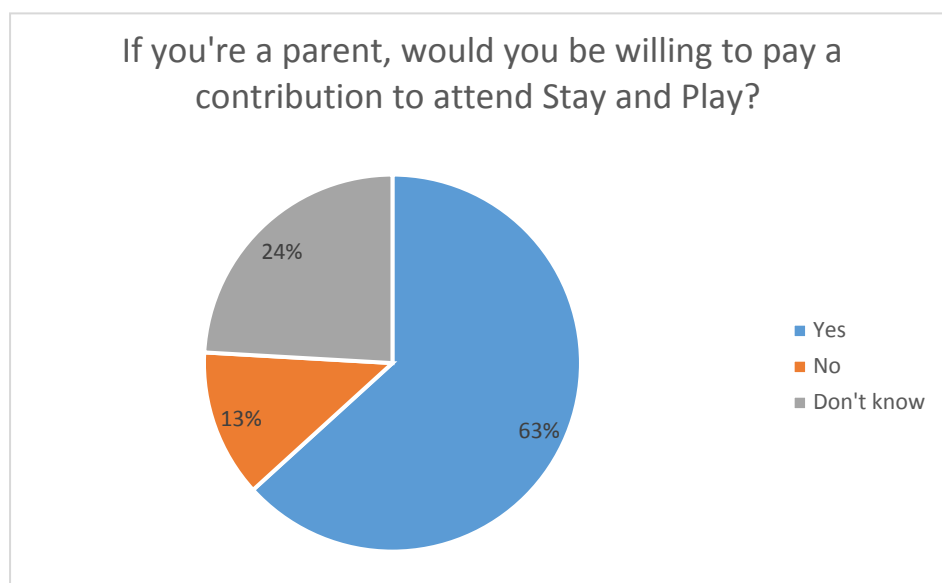
Respondents were asked to explain what they felt the gaps would be. The main themes from analysis of their comments were:

- Families felt it was important that there was still professional support for those not classified formally as ‘vulnerable’. Some went on to describe personal circumstances (eg depression) which would not be supported by any other service and which, if left, would have a detrimental effect on their family.
- A lack of transport for many families was cited as difficulty in reaching alternative provision. Some felt that they would become isolated with growing problems if they were unable to access local support. *These respondents were mainly from the Shropshire Hills children centre area.*
- Parents told us that there was no other alternative provision where they lived. *These parents were mostly from Market Drayton and Whitchurch.*
- Parents valued the professional support they received from children centre staff. They felt that staff in the alternative local provision would not have this level of knowledge or skill in spotting potential problems before they developed, and would not be able to signpost parents to relevant services.

Themes	Number of responses
Families not classed as vulnerable still need professional support	26
Other	20
Those without transport will have limited choice/become isolated <sup>2</sup>	19
There is no alternative provision where I live	15
Alternative provision lack skilled professional staff (catch problems early)	15
Need stay & play	8
Hard to get health visitor appointment/support is poor	7
Cannot afford to attend groups that charge / is a need for free provision	6
Need a baby group	5
Need a youth centre	4
Gap in services for 0-4	3
What about families with additional needs	2
Need under 3s professional support	2
Gap in afternoon provision	1
Council needs to support community/parent led groups	1
How does this fit in with Family Support Workers	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>135</b>

In the first stage of consultation some parents suggested that they would be willing to pay a contribution to childrens centre run groups such as play and stay if it meant the groups could continue. The consultation explored this idea further and what they thought would be a reasonable sessional contribution.





The average (mean) contribution considered reasonable was £2.39.

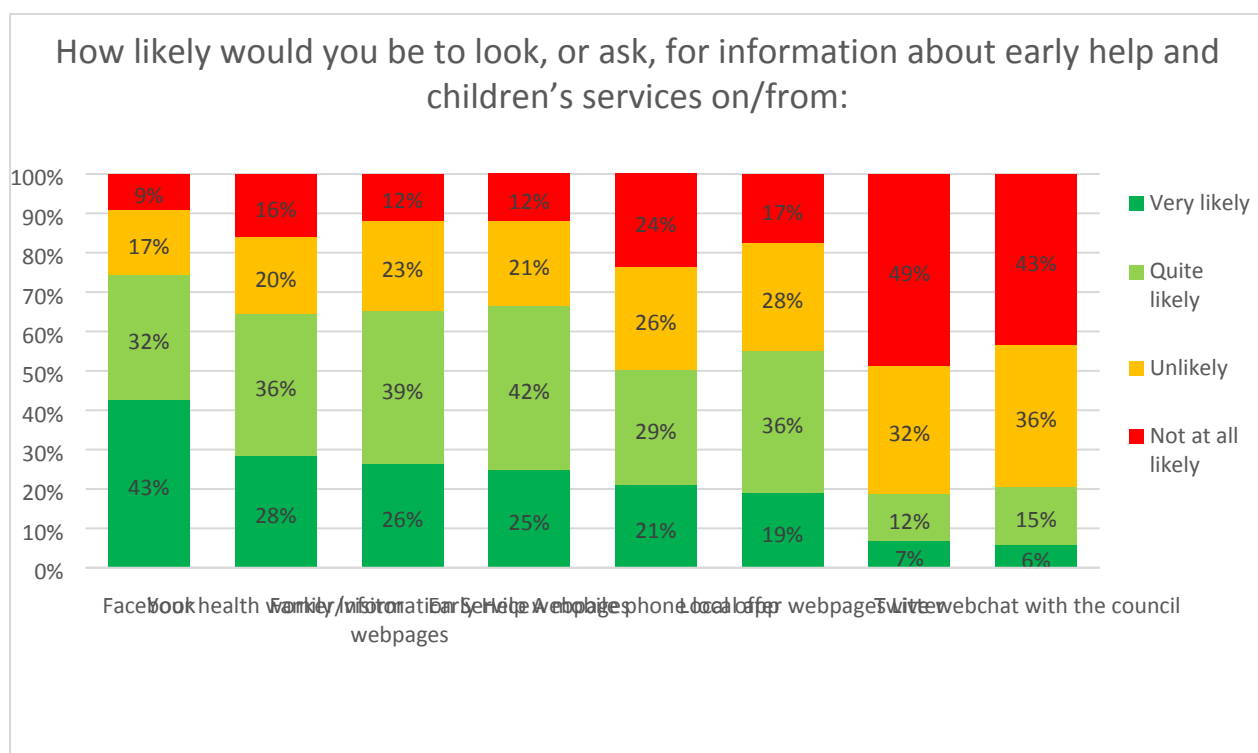
Note: The profile of respondents showed that around 60% of respondents were employed.

A large number of respondents, 63% - see above, said they would be happy to pay a contribution towards continued children run groups such as stay and play. Parents also provided some additional thoughts on this, mainly positive, but wanting to explore how this would work practically. Some parents also commented on the idea of parent run groups (also suggested in the previous consultation). The themes from these comments are detailed :

- A large number of comments expressed positivity to the concept of a monetary contribution. In many cases this was because of the high value they placed on Stay & Play.
- Although parents were receptive to a contribution, they also recognised that some families would not be able to afford it, and felt that the most vulnerable families may therefore become excluded.
- Similarly, but going one step further, there were questions about what support would be available for families who could not afford a contribution.

Theme	Number of responses
£ - Reasonable suggestion, happy to pay in return for continued support	33
Other	30
£ - Affordability - will not attract the most vulnerable families (only middle class)	13
£ - What support would there be for families who couldn't afford to pay	11
£ - Scaled/means tested contribution, a membership scheme	8
£ - Other play groups charge a fee	6
£ - Can't afford to pay	6
£ - Parents could pay for/subsidise/bring own refreshments	4
£ - Object to paying for a service that was free	3
Parent Groups - Cannot replace skilled CS staff	3
£ - If contribution included snacks	2
Parent Groups - parents need support to do this	2
£ - Voluntary donation only	2
Parent Groups - would be good to have one locally	1
Parent Groups - are clique, hard to join	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>125</b>

### Promoting and signpost early help and childrens services



Almost three quarters (74%) of respondents said they would be quite or very likely to use Facebook to look or ask for information about early help.

Also popular sources of information is the Health visitor, FIS web pages and Early Help web pages.

Twitter and live web chat were not sources that respondents said they would be likely to use.

## Section 2. Young Peoples Feedback

Five workshops were arranged and were attended by 35 young people aged 19 and under, of which four are young carers:

- 30 were aged under 15.
- 4 were aged 15-19
- 1 did not disclose their age

11 young people completed a paper questionnaire.

- Only one of the young people who completed a paper questionnaire said they had not read any of the background information. Some of the young people had attended early help services, such as attending a Childrens Centre, or Enhance, and so had an understanding of what Early Help Support looks like.
- All agreed with the proposed sites for the family hubs and understood that by ending our sessions in the Childrens' Centres we would be able to support the families who need it most and agreed that it was a plan we have to put into place.
- Some young people were sad that they were closing – they remembered attending centres that are proposed to close - but they thought it was good that the buildings wouldn't be empty and would be used by other organisations (schools and nurseries).
- They commented that there needed to be somewhere for young people to go, socialise and youth workers to talk to. Particularly during school holidays when there may not be someone to talk to if you had issues.
- Face to face contact was considered best. They talked about the accessibility of sexual health services in the community for young people. The young people felt drop in clinics for them would be an interesting development or opportunities for group work around issues that may affect them, for example, drugs, how you feel about yourself (self-esteem), anxiety and other mental health issues. They also talked about consistency of people in the hubs, so you are not seeing different people every time you attend
- They thought it was good that we would find other places to meet families in their communities.
- All young people felt that a small charge would be acceptable to access stay and play's. They said that they would usually be charged if they were to access something to do. They wondered if we could do more fundraising to keep buildings and/or sessions open.
- Young people said they would most likely look on Facebook or Twitter for information about early help services. Some young people did say there should not be too much reliance on social media and said that leaflets were still important. A mobile phone app got some support from a few young people and said the development should include input from families and young people. A TV advert was suggested by the young carers, although they were not sure what channel and time of day would be most effective.
- Council websites (eg. Early help, FIS, Local Offer) were not sources young people said they would use.

