

Gloucestershire County Council is currently conducting a [consultation regarding the future of Children's Centres in the County](#) . We have concerns about the lack of information about what the Council is proposing and the complexity of the consultation, and want to help people to complete the consultation in ways that will defend provision of services.

Two members of Stroud Against the Cuts - Barbara Potter and Christine Stockwell - have completed the questionnaire and their response is below. We hope it helps others to complete the consultation - though obviously your answers to questions about your personal circumstances or experiences will be different. You can [fill the consultation in via this link](#) . If you have questions or comments, please email: contact@stroudagainstcuts.co.uk or text/call 07734 058789. We will respect confidentiality and are willing to publish statements from workers or parents anonymously.

Our objections to the proposals concern the attack on universal services and moving of services to two main centres - much of it is to be provided by volunteers and therefore provision is likely to be patchy and inconsistent as volunteers move on. Underpinning universal provision was a recognition of the need that all parents/carers have for informal non stigmatising support from time to time. Children's Centres have cut through the isolation parents feel and provided a local community network. How will this work if parents have to travel long distances with small children to find such provision in the future? The absence of universal provision by skilled staff trained to recognise children with additional needs will put at risk the identification of these children and provision for their needs at an early stage.

Q1. In which capacity are you responding to this survey (tick all that apply)

Someone who has used children's centres in the past

Q2. How frequently do you access services through a children's centre?

At least weekly

Q2a. In which locality?

Stroud

Q3. To what extent do you agree that the proposed family support service should be for families with children pre birth – 5 years or pre-birth to 11 years?

Pre-birth – 5 years? Strongly agree

Pre-birth – 11 years? Strongly agree

Q4. What impact do you think the proposed targeted support service would have on the early identification and support for children with special education needs and disabilities?

Negative impact

Q4a. Please explain your answer:

Children will be missed as there will not be a targeted service in Stroud. The area is populated with families who do not go out to get help or know how to ask for it. The town is built over a long steep hill making the town centre along way from the top of town. There is new housing being built over the next two years to rehouse families. The area has had many families housed else where.

Q5. To what extent to you agree with the proposal to create 16 Children and Family Centres in areas of greatest deprivation?

Strongly agree

Q6. To what extent do you agree that a network of 30 Children's Centres should be used for early education and childcare, other universal services run by the local community and as bases for professionals who work with families?

Early education and childcare - Strongly disagree

Other Universal services run by the local community - Strongly disagree

Bases for professionals who work with families - Strongly agree

Q6a. If you have any comments or suggestions about the proposed integrated family support service or services to be delivered from other children's centres please tell us?

I think you need local professionals running all services. Staff who understand and can relate to us.

Q7. Which area of Gloucestershire would you like to give your feedback on? (please select all that apply)

Stroud

Q7f1. To what extent do you agree that the Children and Family Centres in Stroud should be The Park (Stonehouse) and Treetops (Dursley)?

Strongly disagree

Q7f2. Would the location of the proposed Children and Family Centres in Stroud have any impact on you and your family?

Negative impact

Q7f3. To what extent do you agree with the proposals that in Stroud, Fiveways, Parliament, Painswick, Nailsworth and Wotton children's centres will be used for early education and childcare, other universal services run by the local community and as bases for professionals who work with families?

Strongly disagree

Q7f4. Would the proposed services offered at Fiveways, Parliament, Painswick, Nailsworth and Wotton in Stroud have any impact on you and your family?

Negative impact

Q8. If you have any comments or suggestions about the proposed 16 Children and Family Centres or the other children's centres please tell us?

The staff need to be regular to get to know the families attending the centre. To understand the local needs. To build families trust and the families confidence. Raising children is lonely and mental health issues can arise having a knock on effect with the children and other family members. A qualified listening ear and someone to point you in the right direction can prevent a crisis happening. Suicide and self harm statistics in Stroud are very high. Changing the services in Stroud will impact families and could be critical in some cases. It removes a gathering space for community to make friends and support each other in challenging times with the help of staff.

Q9. To what extent do you agree that a new Parent and Community Support service should be created to offer advice and support to schools and voluntary and community groups?

Strongly disagree

Q9a. Please explain your answer

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Q10. To what extent do you agree that the existing Children's Centres childcare facilities should be expanded to meet government proposals to increase nursery entitlement to 30 hours a week for 3 and 4 year olds of working parents?

Strongly agree

Q10a. Do you have any comments or suggestions about this option?

The parents in Stroud are unlikely to have a contract to qualify for the Nursery entitlement. Most people work on a zero hours 'contract'.

Q11. To what extent do you agree that a high quality public health nursing service should continue to work closely with other services to support families?

Strongly agree

Q11a. Do you have any comments or suggestions about this option?

The Health Visitor programme has been cut. 8 Children in my sons class including my son did a years education without being able to hear. There is no point in verbally teaching a group of children who cannot hear anything. It was a complete waste of time. Simple hearing test for glue ear and other hearing problems would have picked up this problem before they reached school if the pre school check ups hadn't been cut. It is very important to improve the nursing services and bring back regular childhood checks.

How many children aged under 5 do you have?

0

How many children aged 6-11 do you have?

0

Do any of your children have special educational needs or a disability?

Yes

Which types of childcare do you use (tick all that apply)

None

Please tick all the statements that apply

Transport is a problem for me