



Public consultation on the delivery of Early Help Services in Barnet

London Borough of Barnet

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This report sets out the findings from the public consultation on the organisation and delivery of Early Help Services in Barnet, which will be presented at the Children, Education and Libraries and Safeguarding Committee Meeting in Summer 2018.

1.2 Background and objectives

- 1.2.1 The council is reviewing how Early Help Services are organised and delivered and the way in which it works with partner organisations that also provide services to help families in Barnet.
- 1.2.2 As part of this review, the council has identified three proposals for long-term changes to help embed improvements to the Early Help Services and deliver better value for money. The three proposals are outlined in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Proposals for the delivery of Early Help Services

- Proposal 1: Co-locate services for children and young people of all ages so they are accessible and delivered from more locations closer to the families they serve
- Proposal 2: Refocus and restructure professional staff to work with children and young people of all ages thus focusing on the needs of the whole family
- Proposal 3: Reduce costs and / or increase charges or find alternative means for delivering non-statutory services

- 1.2.3 To seek views from service users, residents, and stakeholders about the proposals' potential impact and ask for suggestions for alternative ideas for cost effective service delivery, the council conducted a public consultation throughout February and March 2018.
- 1.2.4 To ensure an independent and impartial management of the consultation process, the council commissioned Enventure Research to analyse the questionnaire responses and design, recruit and facilitate focus groups, making sure a wide cross-section of Early Help Service users and non-users were represented.

1.3 Summary of method

- 1.3.1 The consultation was launched on Thursday 1 February and closed on Tuesday 27 March 2018. The consultation consisted of the following:
- An online questionnaire (Appendix 1) was made available on Barnet Council's Consultation Hub – engage.barnet.gov.uk – together with a

consultation document (Appendix 2), which provided detailed background information about the consultation and the proposals;

- Paper copies and an easy-read version of the questionnaire were made available upon request;
- The council wrote to 1,100 service users who had used Early Help Services in the preceding months to draw their attention to the consultation;
- The consultation was widely promoted via the council's residents' magazine (Barnet First), Barnet Online, electronic banner advertising, local press, Twitter, Facebook, Partnership Boards and posters in Children's Centres, libraries and other public places;
- To supplement the online questionnaire, seven focus groups were held with Barnet residents. The groups included:
 - young people who use Youth Centres;
 - parents and carers who use Children's Centres;
 - parents and carers who use Family Support Services;
 - parents and with children who have special needs and disabilities;
 - parents and carers who do not use Early Help Services.

The groups were moderated independently by researchers from Enventure Research using a flexible discussion guide (Appendix 3);

- Six face to face public meetings were held in venues across Barnet, where staff from the council were available to answer questions about the proposals and encourage feedback.

1.4 Response to the consultation

- 1.4.1 A total of **153 questionnaires** were completed, all of which were received online.
- 1.4.2 There were 50 participants who took part in the seven focus groups and six attendees at the public meetings. This included service users and non-users. The council also received two written responses via email from members of the public.

1.5 Interpretation of the data and feedback

- 1.5.1 This report contains several tables and charts that present consultation questionnaire results. In some instances, the responses may not add up to 100%. There are several reasons why this might happen:
 - The question may have allowed each respondent to give more than one answer;
 - Only the most common responses may be shown in the table with less common responses categorised as 'other';
 - Individual percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number so the total may come to 99% or 101%;

- A response of between 0% and 0.5% will be shown as 0%.

- 1.5.2 As the questionnaire was completed by respondents themselves, not all respondents will have answered all the questions. Therefore, the base size may vary slightly by question.
- 1.5.3 To ensure inclusivity, the questionnaire was open for anyone to take part. The results, therefore, can provide considerable information about the views of particular groups and individuals at very local levels and, in particular, the views of parents / carers and those who work for a public sector, publicly funded or voluntary organisation (61% of respondents were parents or carers and 20% worked for a public sector, publicly funded or voluntary organisation), rather than a representation of the views of the general public as a whole.
- 1.5.4 This report includes subgroup analysis that has been undertaken at the 95% confidence level to explore the results provided by different demographic groups to the online questionnaire. This includes gender, age group, ethnic group, and working status. These analyses have only been carried out where the sample sizes are seen to be sufficient for comment. Where sample sizes were not large enough, subgroups have been combined to create a larger group. Only differences that are statistically significant have been discussed and commented on in the report.
- 1.5.5 When interpreting feedback from the focus groups, it is important to remember that these findings differ from those collected via a survey methodology. Qualitative findings are collected by speaking in much greater depth to a select number of participants (those who attended the focus groups). These findings are not meant to be statistically accurate, but instead are collected to provide additional insight and greater understanding based on in depth discussion and deliberation, something not possible to achieve via a survey. For example, if the majority of participants in a series of focus groups hold a certain opinion, this does not necessarily apply to the majority of the population.
- 1.5.6 Discussions from the focus groups were digitally recorded and notes made to draw out common themes and useful quotations.

1.6 Terminology and clarifications

- 1.6.1 Throughout this report, those who completed the questionnaire are referred to as 'respondents' and those who took part in the focus groups are referred to as 'participants'.
- 1.6.2 Respondents and participants who have used Barnet Early Help Services at some point in the past are referred to as 'users'. Those who have not used the services are referred to as 'non-users'.

1.7 Respondent and participant profile

- 1.7.1 The profile of respondents who completed the questionnaire and of participants who took part in the focus groups can be found in Section 3 of this report.

1.8 Summary of key findings

- 1.8.1 A summary of the key findings from the consultation is outlined below and overleaf. Detailed findings are provided in Section 2 of this report.
- 1.8.2 Conclusions and recommendations arising from the consultation are provided in Section 4 of this report.

Proposal 1: Co-locate services for children and young people of all ages so they are accessible and delivered from more locations closer to the families they serve

- 1.8.3 The majority of the **questionnaire respondents** (61%) agreed with Proposal 1 (25% strongly agreed, 36% tended to agree). A much smaller proportion (21%) disagreed (9% tended to disagree, 12% strongly disagreed).
- 1.8.4 Just under half (48%) of those who disagreed said they had a concern about the impact of the proposal on the quality of services and a further 44% of those who disagreed, were worried about children and young people using the same building and facilities, given that the needs of different age groups vary widely and there might be safety issues.
- 1.8.5 **Focus group participants** were split as to whether they agreed or not with the proposal, but slightly more agreed compared to those who disagreed.
- 1.8.6 **Focus group participants** explained that they thought some Children's Centres did not have the space to house more services and that they were sometimes at capacity with some sessions and activities oversubscribed. Some participants worried that if Children's Centres also provided Youth Centre services, there would be a safety risk and the facilities on offer would not be suitable for all age groups.
- 1.8.7 **Focus group participants** who were parents or carers of children and young people with special needs acknowledged that there were a few issues with the services they currently receive from the Early Help Services. These included the quality of handovers between staff, staff rotation, the duplication of services and confusion for families. However, although the proposal's aim is to resolve some of these issues, these participants felt that problems could be exacerbated without investment in a robust system to share information effectively and appropriately. They also worried that re-locating services could be confusing for families and, in some cases, being required to attend a different centre could cause distress and worry for both parents / carers and children.
- 1.8.8 Some **focus group participants** who were in favour of the proposal thought that it would maximise use of buildings that were owned and managed by the council, outside of the current opening hours. Others thought that co-locating services within a single building would be beneficial for families who require a lot of support, particularly those who have children with special needs.
- 1.8.9 A few **focus group participants** who supported the proposal thought it would only work if the council invested in the re-location and training of staff and ensured there were adequate resources so that they could continue to support families effectively.

Proposal 2: Refocus and restructure professional staff to work with children and young people of all ages thus focusing on the needs of the whole family

- 1.8.10 Just under half (45%) of the **questionnaire respondents** agreed with the proposal (19% strongly agreed, 26% tended to agree). However, a smaller proportion (34%) disagreed (20% tended to disagree, 14% strongly disagreed).
- 1.8.11 As with the first proposal and the questionnaire results, opinion amongst **focus group participants** was split, with just slightly more agreeing than disagreeing. Some felt that as Proposal 1 and Proposal 2 seemed to work in conjunction, they could not agree with one without agreeing to the other.
- 1.8.12 **Focus group participants** who were in favour of the proposal thought it would deliver efficiency in terms of cost savings and provide more joined-up services for families. For some, there was a perception that saving management costs could protect front-line services. However, some participants who were opposed to the proposal thought that reducing the number of managers could have an adverse effect on the co-ordination of services, which could lead to a deterioration in service quality. This was corroborated by the **questionnaire** finding that 35% of those who disagreed with Proposal 2 were concerned about the resulting quality of services.
- 1.8.13 Over half (55%) of the **questionnaire respondents** who were opposed to the proposal also had a concern that it would lead to a loss of access to specialised staff at the centres and a further 43% mentioned that the needs of different age groups varied widely. **Focus group participants** also explored these concerns and some felt that staff might not want to work with children and young people of all ages if they specialised in a particular age bracket. However, a few participants felt that if adequate training was provided to staff, the proposal could work.
- 1.8.14 Some **focus group participants** believed that for families who received support from a number of Early Help Services, a single point of contact with access to help and support from a multi-disciplinary team would be beneficial. Families would be able to get to know and trust this person and participants assumed the person would have good local knowledge of the area and the services available to families. This was corroborated by some parents and carers of children who have special needs, who felt that the proposed changes to the service would be beneficial for them.
- 1.8.15 Some **focus group participants** felt that the proposal would only be beneficial to families if there were adequate staffing levels, which could provide continuity of staff. However, others highlighted that even with the changes, the Early Help Services would not be able to guarantee continuity of staff for families, as support workers might change from time to time through staff leaving their posts, annual leave or illness.
- 1.8.16 A few **focus group participants** also felt that although the proposed changes would be beneficial to some families who use many Early Help Services, they could have a negative impact for families that visit Children's Centres for activities and sessions on a regular, casual basis as services become more stretched.

Proposal 3: Reduce costs and / or increase charges or find alternative means for delivering non-statutory services

- 1.8.17 Proposal 3 explored two different options for the delivery of non-statutory services. The first option is preferred by the council in each case. The second option is an alternative if the first option cannot be implemented.

- 1.8.18 Just over half (53%) of **questionnaire respondents** agreed with the option to recover costs for **Greentops Youth Activity Centre** through paid use by other organisations. One in five (19%) said they disagreed. In comparison to the first option, a smaller proportion of questionnaire respondents (46%) said they agreed with the option to explore the use of other buildings to host Youth activities. Three in ten (30%) disagreed with this option.
- 1.8.19 Almost six in ten (57%) **questionnaire respondents** agreed with the option to recover costs for **Finchley Youth Activity Centre** through paid use by other organisations. One in five (20%) said they disagreed. Again, in comparison to the first option a smaller proportion of respondents (44%) agreed with the option to explore the use of other buildings to host Youth activities. A similar proportion (43%) disagreed with this option.
- 1.8.20 **Focus group participants** mostly agreed that the option to recover costs for the Youth Centres through paid use by other organisations would generate much needed income. Participants reflected that this would maximise use of the buildings outside of their usual operating hours and thought that space to rent was in high demand in the area. Some participants, however, highlighted that caution should be taken when hiring out space at the centres and safeguarding issues should be taken into account.
- 1.8.21 **Focus group participants** were not on the whole in favour of exploring the use of other buildings to host Youth activities. They thought there were not many facilities for young people on offer in Barnet and closing the buildings would exacerbate the problem. This was corroborated by the **questionnaire** finding that 30% of those who disagreed with Proposal 3 were opposed to the closure of the Youth Centres or thought that the option of maximising the buildings' usage should be explored more.
- 1.8.22 A third of **questionnaire respondents** (34%) said they agreed with the option to reduce costs and increase charges for the **Duke of Edinburgh Award support and facilitation service**. However, three in ten (31%) disagreed. A larger proportion of **questionnaire respondents** (47%) said they agreed with the option to support schools to contract with other licensed providers who can also deliver a Duke of Edinburgh Award support and facilitation service. A quarter (26%) said they disagreed.
- 1.8.23 **Focus group participants** who were familiar with the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme thought it is a valuable opportunity for young people to learn new skills and gain new experiences. Some participants felt the council should continue to fund the service, even if it was operating at a loss, given the importance of the scheme. They worried that if charges were increased, schools would either not provide the opportunity for pupils to take part in the scheme or look to pass the cost onto parents.
- 1.8.24 Some **focus group participants** were in favour of the option to support schools to contract with other licensed providers to deliver the service. They thought that alternative providers might be able to keep costs down for schools, as they would be able to generate efficiency through providing services at a national or local level.
- 1.8.25 Almost six in ten (57%) **questionnaire respondents** agreed with the option to look for the early help mental health services to cover the cost of clinical supervision (at no charge) for the **face to face counselling service for young people**. Almost one in five (18%) disagreed.
- 1.8.26 By contrast, a smaller proportion (34%) agreed with the option to promote the online counselling service for young people. Four in ten (40%) disagreed. **Focus group participants** felt that counselling should be provided online and face to face for young

people. Young people might seek counselling services anonymously online in the first place, but withdrawing face to face counselling completely could be detrimental for them. It was also felt that it is often important for counsellors to read body language and some of young people's mental health problems might stem from their online experience.

- 1.8.27 Almost four in ten (37%) **questionnaire respondents** disagreed with the option to reduce costs and increase charges for the **Alternative Education service**. Almost three in ten (28%) said they agreed. By contrast, a larger proportion (37%) said they agreed with the option to find an alternative provider and 28% disagreed.
- 1.8.28 **Focus group participants** felt that the service was vital to support young people who are unable to attend school and some felt that the council should continue to provide it, even if it was making a loss given its importance. A few of these participants thought that if charges for the service were increased for schools, these charges might be passed onto parents, which would be unfair. Some participants felt it would be a good idea to support schools to find an alternative provider, as contracting with a national or regional provider might keep costs down for schools. However, it would be important that schools commission a provider who has a good track record and provides a high quality service.
- 1.8.29 Just over a third (36%) of **questionnaire respondents** agreed with the option of reducing costs in the delivery of childcare places at **Newstead Children's Centre**. Three in ten (30%) disagreed. A similar proportion (34%) agreed with the option of seeking an alternative provider who can deliver the service more cost effectively and 31% disagreed.
- 1.8.30 Some **focus group participants** suggested that the council could look to other providers to explore best practice for delivering a cost effective service, but others felt it was likely that the council would have already done this and felt that it was simply a case of the council not being able to afford to run the service anymore. For these participants, there was no other option but to seek an alternative provider. However, those participants who were in favour of seeking an alternative provider, highlighted that it might ensure that the service is delivered cost effectively and is sustainable in the long term.

Additional or alternative suggestions for improving Early Help Services

- 1.8.31 **Questionnaire respondents** were asked if they had any additional or alternative suggestions for improving Early Help Services. Of those who gave a response, the most common suggestion (17%) was that the council should work and consult with the Friends of Finchley Youth Theatre to apply for funding. A further 11% felt that the council should invest more in children and young people services.
- 1.8.32 **Focus group participants** reiterated that the council should look to make more use of the Youth Centre and Children's Centre buildings outside of the usual operating hours to maximise income. They suggested that space could be hired out for private functions, classes and meetings.
- 1.8.33 Youth Centre user **focus group participants** suggested that more income could be generated for centres through drama productions, concerts, renting out room space, and asking users to pay for some activities, such as sports, trips, classes and sessions.

Current and preferred use of Children's Centres / Services

- 1.8.34 Almost two-thirds (64%) of **questionnaire respondents** who used Children's Centres said they go at least once a week, with weekday mornings being the most popular time (63%).
- 1.8.35 **Questionnaire respondents** used a spread of different Children's Centres across Barnet, with 26% saying that they used a Children's Centre outside of Barnet in addition to the one they use the most often.
- 1.8.36 **Questionnaire respondents** used and visited Children's Centres for a number of different reasons, with activities for children, mothers, fathers and carers being most popular (55%), followed by family support parenting workshops and drop in groups (40%) and health services (32%). These were also listed as the services respondents found the most helpful; 54% found activities for children, mothers, fathers and carers most helpful, 41% health services and 37% family support parenting workshops and drop in groups. This was corroborated by **focus group participants**, who suggested that they particularly found playgroup sessions useful as a chance for interaction with other parents and for their children to socialise with others. These participants were on the whole very positive about the services on offer at Children's Centres in Barnet.
- 1.8.37 Six in ten (60%) **questionnaire respondents** said they would like to use Children's Centres more often. Almost four in ten (37%) of these respondents cited a lack of activities that are relevant as a barrier. **Focus group participants** explained that they would like to see more free activities and sessions that are suitable for toddlers so they have a chance to interact with other children before they start nursery or school. Three in ten (29%) **questionnaire respondents** who wanted to use Children's Centres more said that age limits on activities meant that they or their family could not participate. A few **focus group participants** who had two or more children explained that they found it difficult to attend many sessions and activities, as they were often only aimed at a specific age group.
- 1.8.38 Some **focus group participants** had found that some sessions and activities on offer at Children's Centres were often oversubscribed and in their experience centres could be understaffed from time to time. This meant that there had been occasions where they had been turned away at the door, which they had found frustrating.
- 1.8.39 Three in ten (29%) **questionnaire respondents** who wanted to use Children's Centres more felt that opening times were not convenient. Some **focus group participants** mentioned that the times of some of the activities and sessions on offer were not always suitable, particularly if they were early in the morning or at school pick up and drop off times if they had another child of school age.
- 1.8.40 Just over a quarter (27%) of **questionnaire respondents** said that not having enough information about services was a barrier to them using Children's Centres more. The majority of **focus group participants** felt that there was a low awareness amongst the general public of services and support available at Children's Centres, with some participants suggesting that services could be advertised and promoted more by health visitors, schools and on the council website. Participants who used Children's Centres also suggested that centres could proactively promote timetables, activities, sessions and services more to keep people up-to-date through the use of apps and websites.
- 1.8.41 One in ten (10%) **questionnaire respondents** also found the lack of parking or public transport to be a problem. Some **focus group participants** cited access issues for

some centres using public transport. For these participants who do not drive or have access to a vehicle, access to centres is only possible if they are within walking distance.

Current and preferred use of Youth Centres / Services

- 1.8.42 The number of **questionnaire respondents** who said they used Youth Centres / Services was small (18). Two-thirds (67%) said they visit at least once a week and weekdays were the most popular time for using Youth Centres (67%). The most popular reasons for visiting them was after school schemes (44%), holiday schemes (39%) and art activities (39%). These were also the services that these respondents found most helpful; 47% found after school schemes helpful, 47% holiday schemes and 29% art activities.
- 1.8.43 Youth Centre user **focus group participants** praised the facilities and services on offer. Many of them used the centres to keep themselves occupied, socialise, for educational needs such as courses, and for advice and support from staff in a safe environment. Participants mentioned a range of services and facilities that were on offer at Youth Centres.
- 1.8.44 Almost six in ten (57%) **questionnaire respondents** said they would like to use Youth Centres more often than they currently do. Half of these respondents (51%) said that a lack of information about services was a barrier. **Focus group participants** explained that not many of their peers are aware of Youth Centres and the services on offer and suggested that Youth Centres and services could be promoted more through schools.
- 1.8.45 Just under half (49%) of those **questionnaire respondents** who wanted to use Youth Centres more cited a lack of activities that are relevant as a barrier. When asked for suggestions for additional activities, sessions and services that Youth Centres could provide, **focus group participants** mentioned more music sessions, extra tuition and homework clubs, and more sporting activities.

2. Detailed findings

2.1 Proposal 1

2.1.1 This section reports and explores the detailed findings from the questionnaire and the focus groups in relation to Proposal 1.

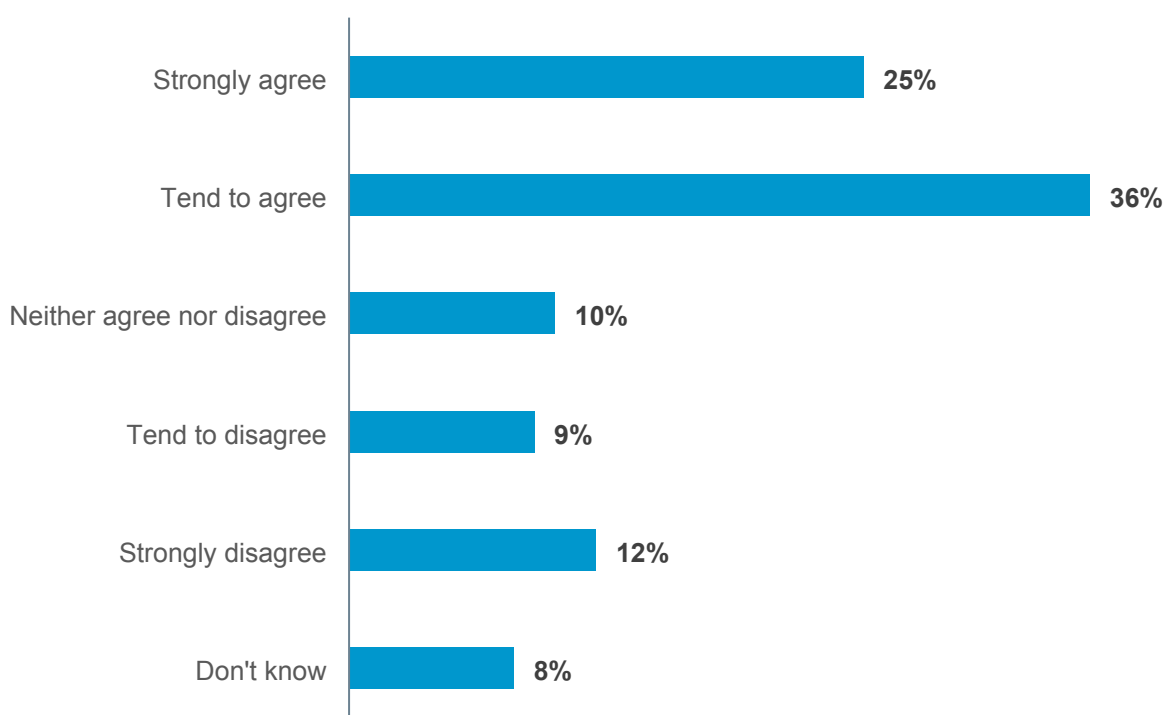
Proposal 1: Co-locate services for children and young people of all ages so they are accessible and delivered from more locations closer to the families they serve

Questionnaire findings

2.1.2 Those responding to the consultation were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Proposal 1: to co-locate services for children and young people of all ages so they are accessible and delivered from more locations closer to the families they serve.

2.1.3 Six in ten (61%) respondents agreed with this proposal (25% strongly agreed, 36% tended to agree). One fifth (21%) disagreed (9% tended to disagree, 12% strongly disagreed). A further 10% said they neither agreed nor disagreed.

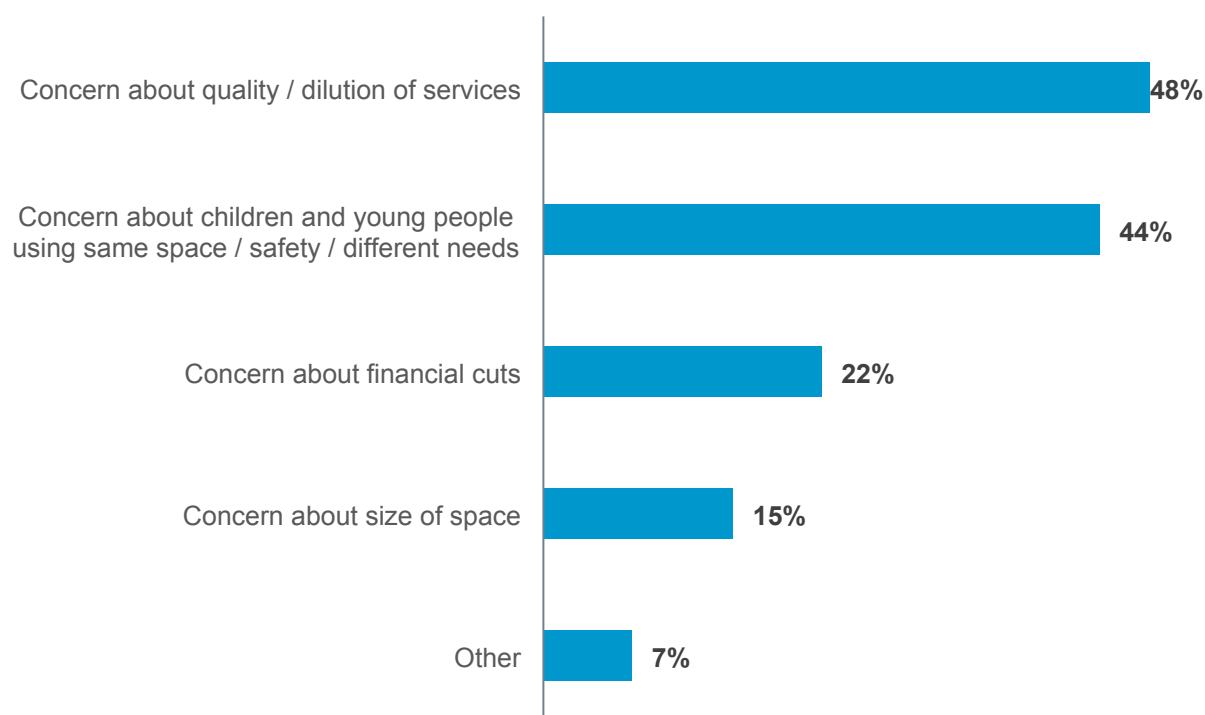
Figure 2 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with Proposal 1?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (153)



2.1.4 Respondents who disagreed with Proposal 1 were asked to specify why by providing comments. These comments were themed and coded and are presented below.

2.1.5 Almost half (48%) expressed a concern that the quality of services would deteriorate or become diluted. A further 44% expressed a concern about children and young people of all ages using the same space, given that different age groups have different needs and that there would be safety implications.

Figure 3 – If you disagree with Proposal 1, please tell us why
Base: All respondents providing a comment (27)



Focus group findings

2.1.6 Some participants in the focus groups found it hard to comment on this proposal and felt that they required more information to be able to make an informed decision as to whether they agreed or disagreed. For example, they did not know whether the current services were effective for families and found it difficult to imagine themselves in a situation where they would benefit from this proposal.

I find it hard to know at the moment whether this will be helpful to have support for all those ages because I have such a young child.

Early Help Services user

It's very difficult for me to answer this. I probably need more information to either agree or disagree.

Early Help Services user

2.1.7 However, all participants did indicate whether they agreed or not and, as in the questionnaire, opinion was split, with a slightly larger proportion saying they agreed compared to those who disagreed.

- 2.1.8 Participants who agreed with the proposal were in favour if it made better use of buildings that are owned and managed by the council. Some reflected that Children's Centres are mostly open only in the mornings, with some afternoon opening hours. They imagined that this would lead to centres being used by older children and young people and their families at other times, such as after school, in the evenings and on weekends.

If it's making better use of physical resources in terms of space, it makes sense.

Early Help Services user

Existing services are provided more or less in school hours. You can see that that could work, by extending it and having access for older children after school time and on weekends.

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.9 Some participants thought that for families who were using many Early Help Services and needed support, co-locating services in one location would be beneficial. These participants felt that this would be particularly helpful for families which include children who have special needs and have more than one child from different age groups.

It's got to be positive hasn't it, to broaden the amount of services available in one place? Especially for someone who has got three or four children of different ages. It's going to be easier for them. They can then bring all their children when they attend, without needing baby sitters.

Non-user of services

For me personally it would be fantastic and work out well for me. One is 11 and one is five. It's a big age gap. To be at the same place with them would be brilliant. At the moment we have to go to two different places. If it was in one building, it would be great for us.

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.10 However, some participants were opposed to the proposal. Some felt that by co-locating multiple services within a single building, there might be a negative impact on the quality of the services, particularly for children aged 0-5 and their families. These participants perceived that Early Help Services were already stretched, and, in their experience, Children's Centres in particular were full, particularly at certain times. They questioned how more services could be provided from these centres and mentioned the lack of space. They felt that the number of people using the buildings would increase substantially and that this would have a negative impact for current users.

For parents with children aged 0-5 you've got parents who need the time with the staff to talk about their concerns and get advice. I think that sticking it all together in one place might make the quality of all the advice, care and services worse and much more stretched.

Early Help Services user

I don't understand how it would work. When I go to the Children's Centre, I can barely get in. There is just no space. If all these things are under the same roof, I don't think it would work based on my experience of the two centres I go to.

Early Help Services user

There will be much more pressure on them. At the minute, it is already hard to access some of these places.

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.11 Many participants imagined that the proposal would mean that Children's Centres would provide Youth Centre services, as well as the current Children's Centre services and Family Support services. Some participants worried about safety of having older children and young people using the same facilities as young children and their families. Some also questioned whether the facilities would be appropriate for all age groups.

The other thing is the security risk. Are there going to be yobs that just come in and wreck the place while you are trying to be in a sanctuary with your baby? Suddenly there will be older age groups that are just going to come piling in?

Early Help Services user

Teenagers wouldn't want the environment that you are going to provide for 0-5s. That's not going to be conducive to what they are looking for.

Early Help Services user

You want to have enough facilities for older teenagers to keep them occupied, otherwise they're going to think 'oh, this is fun' and play with the children's stuff and it will get wrecked.

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.12 Some participants who supported the proposal thought that it would only work if there was a sufficient budget in place to re-locate staff and provide them with the necessary training and resources so they can continue to support families effectively. A few participants assumed there would need to be a budget increase, at least in the short term to implement the proposal.

All this rests on how well funded it will be. It's great speaking about this and bringing everything under one roof. It soon starts to fall apart if there is not enough funding. That is the key. It's great to have it, but it needs to be implemented properly.

Early Help Services user

Is there a budget to expand the centres and bring in those staff?

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.13 Some participants were parents or carers of children who had a disability or special needs and they and their families received support from the Early Help Services. Some of these participants mentioned that relocating services could be confusing for families and worried that, in some cases, being required to attend a different Children's Centre could cause distress and worry.

It's confusing. I can see a lot of parents who already use services just wanting to stay there [where they currently attend] rather than accessing this.

Early Help Services user

My son is 17. He's been going to [various Children's Centres] for a while. I've now got to take him to a new centre with new people? He won't speak to anyone.

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.14 These participants mentioned that there are a few issues with the services they currently receive from the Early Help Services, such as the quality of handovers between staff, staff rotations, the duplication of services and confusion for families.

You're not always assigned a certain person who is always on the ball with your particular case, because Barnet has a rotation system of therapists and specialists. So, for example, somebody who your child is familiar with and comfortable with is suddenly removed because of Barnet's system. It's a system they have where the case notes are alternated. But as a result, the problem is that the person my child sees at the Children's Centre this week may not be the same person that my child sees next week.

Early Help Services user

A good handover of information has been an issue. That's been highlighted within the local area.

Early Help Services user

There were more issues that popped up, so we had to be allocated a different worker. Then other issues popped up, so we had another worker. I had to say the same story each time. I needed a prompt sheet just so I didn't forget anything.

Early Help Services user

- 2.1.15 However, although the proposal's aim is to facilitate information being shared across services and staff, these participants thought that these issues could be exacerbated without a robust system in place to share information efficiently and appropriately.

If the proposal goes forward, there also needs to be one person or a system, where I can say 'my child is allergic to this, my child has this issue' and somebody receives that information so that I am confident that when I leave my child at an outside environment, I am not concerned about their wellbeing.

Early Help Services user

Yes, there's got to be a system of information keeping.

Early Help Services user

2.2 Proposal 2

2.2.1 This section reports and explores the detailed findings from the questionnaire and the focus groups in relation to Proposal 2.

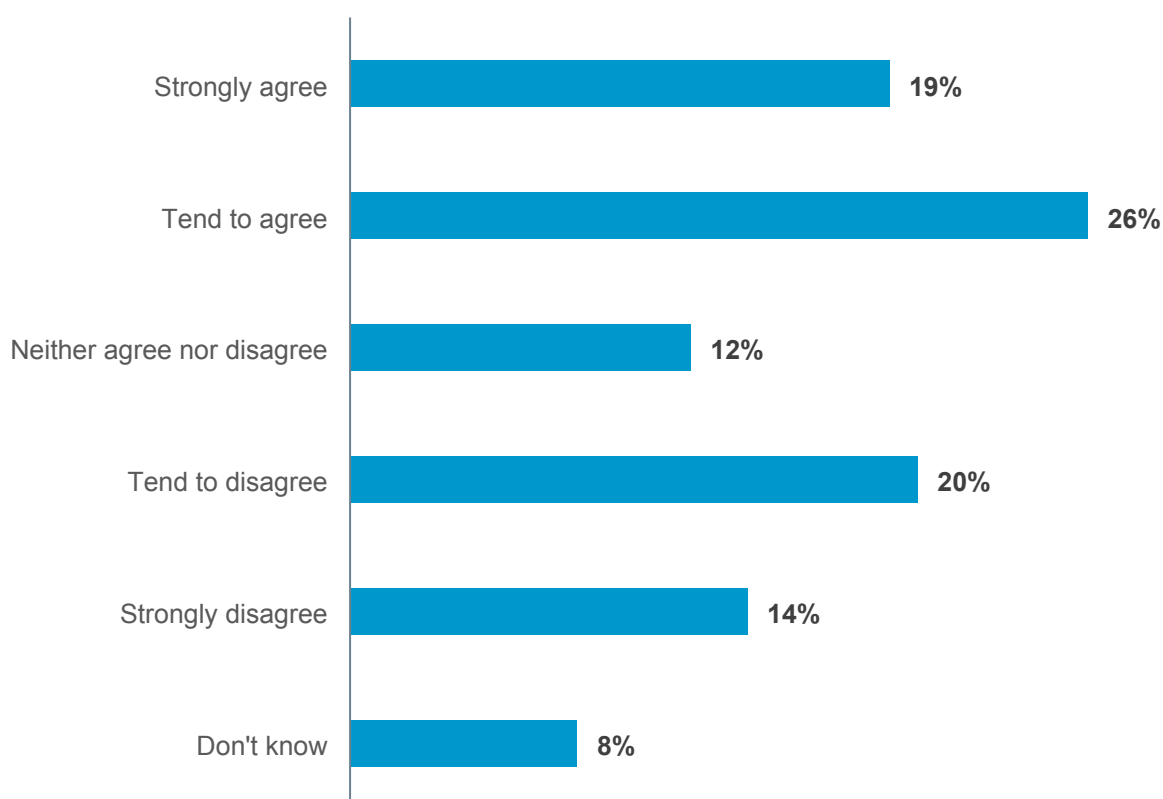
Proposal 2: Refocus and restructure professional staff to work with children and young people of all ages thus focusing on the needs of the whole family

Questionnaire findings

2.2.2 Those responding to the consultation were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Proposal 2: to refocus and restructure professional staff to work with children and young people of all ages thus focusing on the needs of the whole family.

2.2.3 Over four in ten (45%) respondents agreed with this proposal (19% strongly agreed, 26% tended to agree). A third (34%) disagreed (20% tended to disagree, 14% strongly disagreed). A further 12% neither agreed nor disagreed.

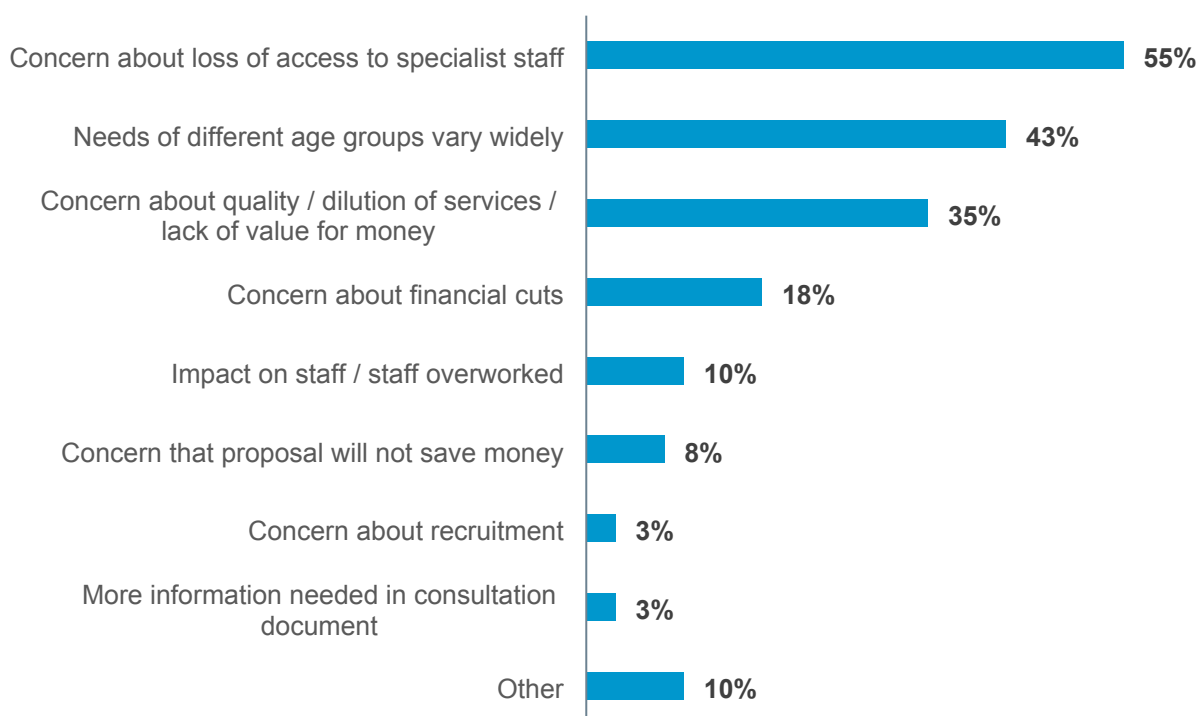
Figure 4 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with Proposal 2?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (139)



2.2.4 Respondents who disagreed with Proposal 2 were asked to specify why by providing comments. These comments were themed and coded and are presented below.

2.2.5 Over half (55%) expressed a concern about the loss of access to specialist staff and a further 43% felt that the needs of different age groups vary widely. Just over a third (35%) expressed a concern about the quality of services deteriorating, services becoming diluted or a lack of value for money for council tax payers.

Figure 5 – If you disagree with Proposal 2, please tell us why
Base: All respondents providing a comment (40)



Focus group findings

2.2.6 Some participants compared Proposal 2 to Proposal 1 and felt that if someone agreed or disagreed with the first one, they would feel the same about the second one as they seem to fit together.

If you say 'yes' to one, you say 'yes' to the other.

Early Help Services user

It's tied in with Proposal 1 with everyone being in the same building.

Early Help Services user

2.2.7 As with Proposal 1, participants were split about whether they agreed or disagreed with Proposal 2. Just slightly more participants agreed with Proposal 2 than disagreed.

2.2.8 Some participants who agreed with Proposal 2 thought it would deliver efficiency, both in terms of saving money and resources, and providing joined-up services for families. Some participants thought looking at saving management costs was a good idea in order to protect front-line services.

They're firing loads of managers. To get rid of managers is a good thing.

Early Help Services user

If this is still about services being the same but streamlining that can only be positive.

Non-user of services

- 2.2.9 However, others worried that by reducing the number of managers, services might lack co-ordination and managers who continue in their posts will be under pressure to manage and support more staff, some of whose roles they do not understand.

You're essentially going to be having managers that are going to be managing more frontline staff than they are now and what is going to be the impact on them in having to support all those frontline staff? It will be significant. Also they might not know what they do for them and they won't be able to tell if they are at capacity and need more support.

Early Help Services user

Who's going to be on top of everything and making sure that staff are adequately trained and supporting them?

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.10 Participants who agreed with the proposal thought families who use multiple Early Help Services will benefit, as they would have a support worker who was a single point of contact that can help them access the help and support they need from a multi-disciplinary team. They thought it would be beneficial as the support worker would also be familiar with the local area and the support that was available for families.

If you have a named contact and they can signpost you to somewhere you can get the support you need, I can see that working.

Early Help Services user

It would be good to see one person who is then dealing with a team. Then the team would be full of specialists. You can then always go to the same place. You don't have to deal with lots of different people. There would just be one, instead of lots.

Early Help Services user

I like the fact there is one point of contact that will know your family and is local. They will know the area and the services available to you locally. They will also have access to different partners.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.11 These participants thought that having a support worker who was a single point of contact would be beneficial for families as they could get to know and trust that person. This would be important in particular for families with children who have special needs.

I think it's important for some families that do have a lot of issues. If they are already working with somebody, it's important they keep the same person if possible because they are used to that person and are comfortable and confident with them.

Early Help Services user

I will have a relationship with someone that I can be open with and will hopefully be able to help. From my experience, I have special needs children and they

are not very good with new people, changes to their routine. If they had that attachment, they will be comfortable with that person.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.12 This was corroborated by participants who were parents or carers for children with disabilities or special needs. These participants welcomed the idea of having access to a single support worker that they could build up a relationship with and who would be able to help them access the services and support they needed. They mentioned that there were issues with the current system, such as transition between services and rotation of staff, and that they hoped the proposal would resolve these problems.

As a parent, you don't know how the system works so you need someone within the system who is familiar with it to help you battle through it.

Early Help Services user

Transition is a real problem already in this borough. I can see why they might want to take the transition away but I just think you're going to be diluting the whole service.

Early Help Services user

As the parent of an older child and a younger child, that's why the constant rotation of therapists really aggravates me because younger children give their trust very very slowly. Sometimes it can take two or three months to give a person their trust and for them to be able to physically touch them, and then suddenly that particular person is taken away.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.13 For some, the success of the proposal hinges on whether there will be adequate staffing levels and whether there would be continuity of staff to ensure that support workers with whom families have built a relationship based on trust, do not continuously change. Again, this was particularly important for families that included a child with special needs or a disability.

It's good if you have enough staff.

Non-user of services

Continuity of staff is important.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.14 However, others pointed out that it would be hard for the Early Help Services to guarantee that families' support workers would not change from time to time due to illness, annual leave or staff leaving their posts.

The counter argument is obviously that you would have the same person supporting your family from 0-19. I would say that is extremely unlikely because that person is going to change multiple times. They might move job, they move area, stuff happens. I don't think that you will get the benefit of having one person that you know. I think it is a false promise.

Early Help Services user

If you have one point of contact, she's only got so many hours in a day. How many cases will she have at one time? What happens if she goes on holiday or on sick?

Non-user of services

- 2.2.15 Some participants who thought that the proposal would benefit families who access Family Support Services worried that the proposal would have a negative impact for other families that might use Children's Centres on a regular basis for activities such as playgroups, as services become more stretched.

This seems to be only talking about families that have certain troubles. But what about the people that just want to have access to those activities? This way it sounds like you'll be taking away loads of stuff to support people that, to be honest, probably get a lot of help elsewhere. People who do not have issues and still want to use the services will miss out.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.16 Participants who disagreed with the proposal were worried that there would be a loss of access to specialised staff, if staff were structured to work with children and young people of all ages. Participants felt that the needs of different age groups widely varied and a professional who specialised in working with young children, might not be able to specialise in working with teenagers too. These were also reasons given by questionnaire respondents for why they disagreed with the proposal.

From 0-5 there is so much change, so much development. I could be talking to someone about my six week old and then my three year old who is maybe struggling to speak, there is already a lot going on in that age bracket. Being a specialist in even the 0-5 bracket is maybe unrealistic. It doesn't make sense to me how you can look after people with children 0-19. Their needs are so vastly different.

Early Help Services user

You need specialists to deal with different age groups. You won't have the same problem with a six year old and someone who is 18 or 19, they are going to have different issues, different life skills. You need the specialist staff.

Non-user of services

You'll lose the expertise. You're looking at a jack of all trades rather than being specialised in areas.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.17 Some participants thought that staff might not want to work with children and young people of all ages, preferring instead to work with age groups that they specialise in and are trained in working with.

There are probably some staff that don't want to do the age range.

Early Help Services user

Do staff want to be jacks of all trades? You might have some staff that want to work with the younger children and some might want to work with older children.

Early Help Services user

- 2.2.18 However, some participants pointed out that if staff received adequate training to be able to work with children and young people of all ages, then the proposal could work and it would be beneficial for families, particularly if they are receiving support and have children from different age groups.

Re-training for staff will be necessary. If you have somebody who specialises in 0-5, but are not so clued up about older children's needs, you may still find you need to speak to someone else. Even if 0-5 is their specialism, they are

going to need some sort of training for the older age groups to be able to treat the family as a whole. Otherwise, it defeats the object.

Early Help Services user

I think it is all down to training. As long as they are trained well.

Early Help Services user

2.3 Proposal 3

2.3.1 This section reports and explores the detailed findings from the questionnaire and the focus groups in relation to Proposal 3.

Proposal 3: Reduce costs and / or increase charges or find alternative means for delivering non-statutory services

2.3.2 To ensure the council can work within the budgets available, it has developed two different options for each non-statutory service.

2.3.3 Those responding to the consultation were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the different options for each service within *Proposal 3: to reduce costs and / or increase charges or find alternative means for delivering non-statutory services*.

Questionnaire findings

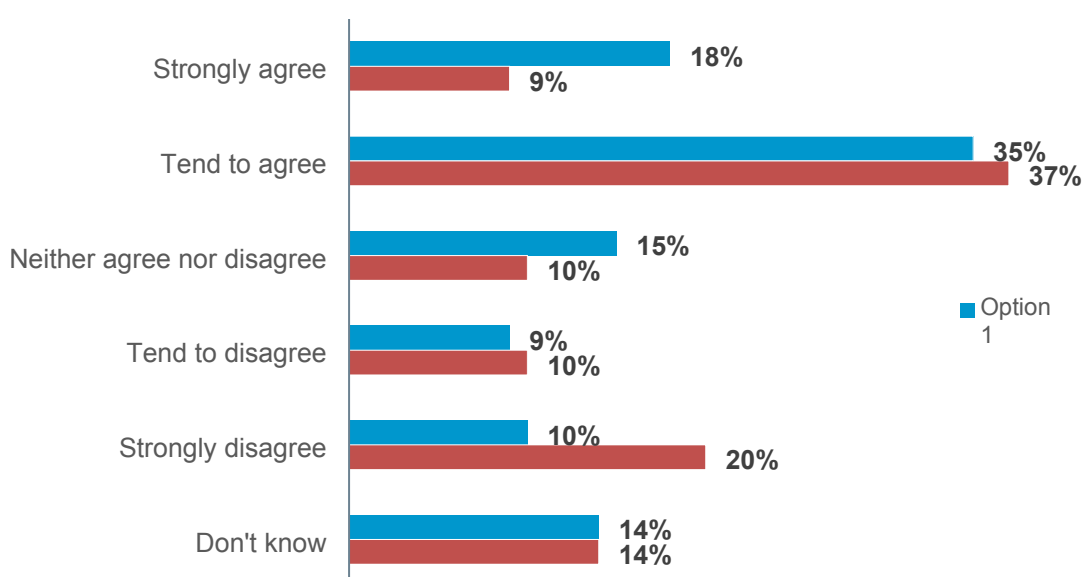
Option 1: Recover running costs for Greentops Youth Activity Centre through paid use by other organisations

Option 2: Explore use of other buildings to host Youth activities

2.3.4 Just over half (53%) of respondents agreed with Option 1 (18% strongly agreed, 35% tended to agree). One in five (19%) disagreed (9% tended to disagree, 10% strongly disagreed). A further 15% neither agreed nor disagreed.

2.3.5 A smaller proportion (46%) said they agreed with Option 2 (9% strongly agreed, 37% tended to agree) in comparison to Option 1. A larger proportion than Option 1 (30%) also disagreed with this option (10% tended to disagree, 20% strongly disagreed). A further 10% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 6 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the two different options?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (Option 1: 103, Option 2: 91)



Questionnaire findings

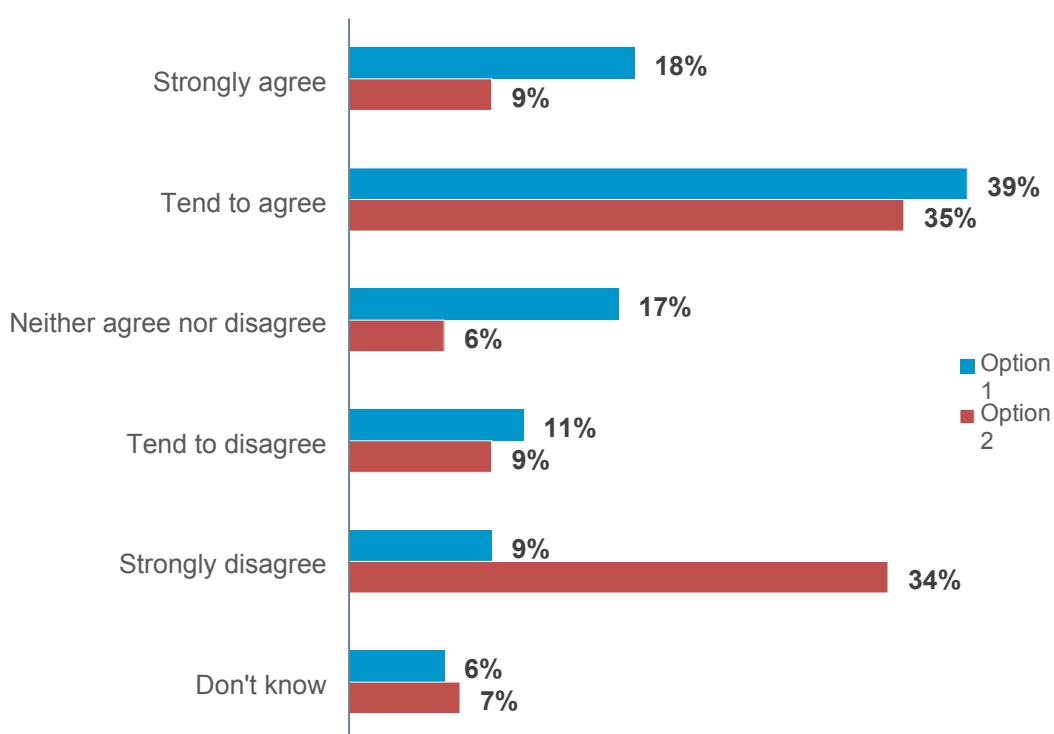
Option 1: Recover running costs for Finchley Youth Activity Centre through paid use by other organisations

Option 2: Explore use of other buildings to host Youth activities

2.3.6 Almost six in ten (57%) respondents agreed with Option 1 (18% strongly agreed, 39% tended to agree). One in five (20%) disagreed (11% tended to disagree, 9% strongly disagreed). A further 17% neither agreed nor disagreed.

2.3.7 By contrast, a smaller proportion (44%) said they agreed with Option 2 (9% strongly agreed, 35% tended to agree). A much larger proportion (43%) disagreed with this option compared to Option 1 (9% tended to disagree, 34% strongly disagreed). A further 6% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 7 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the two different options?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (Option 1: 103, Option 2: 94)



Focus group findings

2.3.8 Participants in the focus groups largely agreed with Option 1 for both centres and thought that this approach would generate much needed income for the Youth Centres, maximising use of the buildings when they are not being used and ensuring the services do not operate at a loss to the council. These participants thought spaces to rent and hire in Barnet are in demand and it would be easy for the council to generate income in this way.

It's a relatively easy way to generate income. Spaces are very much in demand. You won't have trouble finding people to enter into a rental agreement. It will be

good money. These are large spaces and hard to come by. That will then subsidise them.

Non-user of services

It makes sense. Sounds like it will benefit everyone. If they work together, it makes perfect sense, especially if it's going to be used in the evenings for example when the centre is not normally being used for anything else.

Early Help Services user

It seems logical to let a building out when it's not being used. Schools do it, church halls do it. I don't know why the council wouldn't just do it.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.9 However, for some participants it depends on who the spaces were rented or hired to. They thought that careful consideration should be given to safeguarding.

If you've got young people there, I'm a bit uncomfortable with hiring out some of it to adults and the security.

Non-user of services

As long as everything is checked properly.

Early Help Services user

They need to make sure they aren't drug dealers or anything like that!

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.10 Participants on the whole were not in favour of Option 2. They perceived that there were not many facilities on offer for young people in the borough and re-locating these services would exacerbate the problem. Some participants had visited the affected centres in the past and praised the staff, the buildings, and the facilities on offer. They thought the council should continue to run these centres.

There's little youth group provision in the borough as it is. If you don't live near one of the three centres, you're not going to access it.

Early Help Services user

It's a nice building and the staff who work there are very nice. They have an after school club thing. I think they need to keep that building. It's in a nice location, it's a nice building with good facilities like the kitchen, the toilets and the outdoor area. They need to keep that.

Early Help Services user

Written feedback

- 2.3.11 The council received two emails concerning the Finchley Youth Activity Centre. The authors of the emails were against exploring the use of other buildings to host Youth activities (Option 2). They both praised the facilities and highlighted the importance of maintaining facilities such as these for young people, particularly as, in their opinion, there is little provision for young people in Barnet. One of the emails suggested the council could consider leasing the facilities at the centre to groups and individuals, as the dance and theatre facilities are unique, are in a central accessible location and would be in high demand.

Questionnaire findings

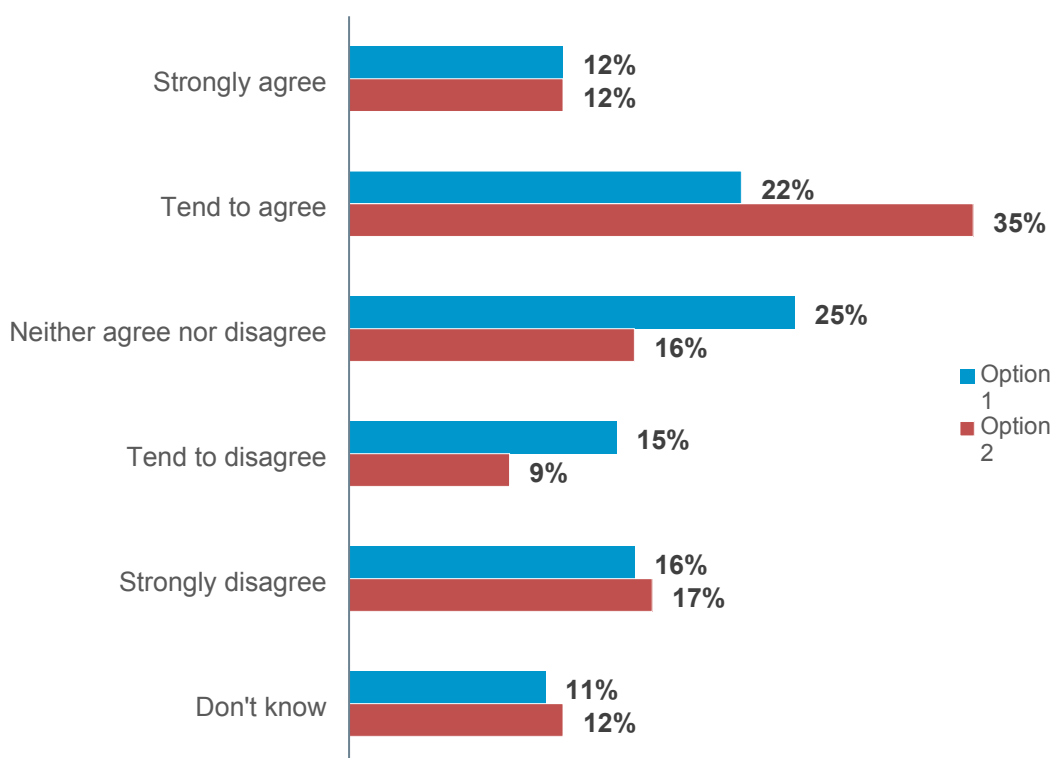
Option 1: Reduce costs and increase charges for the Duke of Edinburgh Award support and facilitation service

Option 2: Support schools to contract with other licensed providers who can also deliver this service

2.3.12 One in three (34%) respondents agreed with Option 1 (12% strongly agreed, 22% tended to agree). A further three in ten (31%) disagreed (15% tended to disagree, 16% strongly disagreed). A quarter (25%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

2.3.13 By contrast, a larger proportion (47%) said they agreed with Option 2 (12% strongly agree, 35% tended to agree). However, a quarter (26%) disagreed with this option (9% tended to disagree, 17% strongly disagreed). A further 13% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 8 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the two different options?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (Option 1: 101, Option 2: 95)



Focus group findings

2.3.14 Some participants were familiar with the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and some were not. Some had even participated in it themselves. Participants who were familiar with it thought it provided an excellent opportunity for young people to learn new skills and give back to their communities. Some of these participants felt the council should continue to provide the service, even it is operating at a loss, given the importance of the scheme.

It's an opportunity for a child to have exposure to different things that they are not going to get at schools.

Early Help Services user

I think for a lot of young people who don't do after school clubs or music lessons, this is actually something that is really nice because it is all about helping other people in the community. Sometimes you might visit an old lady for five hours, another person for ten hours or go and help out in the local Brownie unit for eight weeks or something like that. I really think in terms of fostering community spirit amongst the youth, sometimes you have got to run things at a loss to be able to help people. Certainly don't cancel the whole service.

Early Help Services user

Even if it is running at a loss, as a tax payer, I would be willing for some of my money to go towards it because I know how much it benefits children. It's a good thing.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.15 Some participants were worried that charging schools more for the service could lead to schools no longer providing the scheme to young people or passing the cost onto parents, given that many schools are facing budget issues. This could mean that some young people will miss out on the opportunity to take part in the scheme.

Some parents can afford it and some can't, but it will be the parents that suffer.

Early Help Services user

It's difficult because we don't know how much the increased charges would be for schools. Would schools not then be able to provide it? Schools aren't flush with budget! Schools might then pass the cost onto parents and some parents might not be able to afford it. Then children, for whom this might be an incredible opportunity, might just then not be able to do it.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.16 In line with the questionnaire findings, some focus group participants were in favour of Option 2, speculating that there were many alternative providers and they might be able to keep the costs of the service down for schools as they will be able to generate efficiency savings through providing services at a regional or national level.

There are a number of other organisations that essentially provide it.

Early Help Services user

It looks to me as if giving it to another provider might be a smart move. They will probably be able to generate more efficiency than the council can. They can probably offer the service across a whole range of boroughs. Cost is always going to be a challenge, if it's going to a private provider are they going to look to make big profits and charge a lot? That would be a worry, but I imagine them being able to offer it maybe nationwide would counteract that worry as they will be able to bring the cost down. If every borough is offering the same service to their residents, there will be a lot of wastage.

Early Help Services user

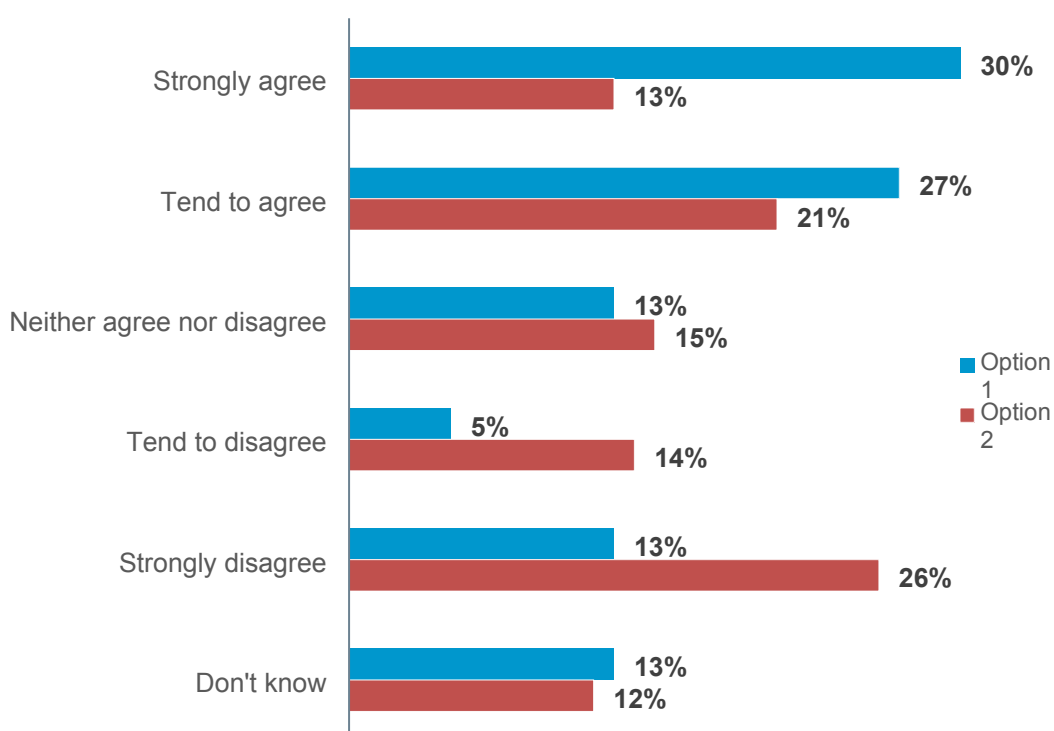
Questionnaire findings

Option 1: Look for the early help mental health services to cover the cost of clinical supervision (at no charge) for the face to face counselling service

Option 2: Promote the online counselling service for young people

- 2.3.17 Almost six in ten (57%) respondents agreed with Option 1 (30% strongly agreed, 27% tended to agree). Almost one in five (18%) disagreed (5% tended to disagree, 13% strongly disagreed). A further 13% neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 2.3.18 By contrast, a smaller proportion (34%) said they agreed with Option 2 (13% strongly agreed, 21% tended to agree). However, four in ten (40%) disagreed with this option (14% tended to disagree, 26% strongly disagreed). A further 15% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 9 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the two different options?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (Option 1: 103, Option 2: 94)



Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **agree with Option 2** (34% overall) included those who were aged 44 or under (47%), compared to those aged 45 or above (17%)

Focus group findings

- 2.3.19 Some participants thought counselling for young people should be provided online and face to face. They were in favour of counselling services being available online as they thought that in some cases young people would access online counselling services, as they would be able to seek advice and talk about their problems from

behind a computer screen, rather than face to face and having to make an appointment.

I think they've got to offer both. There may not be many asking for face to face, but for the one person that needs it, it should be available.

Non-user of services

They should definitely promote online because a lot of people these days are embarrassed to talk about some things in front of somebody. Also it's hassle to go somewhere and build up a rapport, whereas if you go online you can just hide behind your screen. Sometimes they might expose themselves a bit more online and tell certain things.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.20 The majority of participants thought that face to face counselling should not be completely replaced by online provision and that the former should continue to be provided. In their opinion, face to face counselling is important and not providing the service could be detrimental for some young people. Participants felt that it was often important for counsellors to be able to read people's body language and that for some young people, their problems might stem from their online experience.

You've got to have face to face counselling. It's just not the same online.

Non-user of services

Psychologists, the experts, need to be able to read the body language to be able to assess the situation wisely.

Early Help Services user

Face to face counselling is a hugely beneficial thing. Part of the problem is that the online world increases anxiety and issues. We are humans after all. Face to face has got to be a priority. It's not like they are booking a flight, this is serious stuff.

Early Help Services user

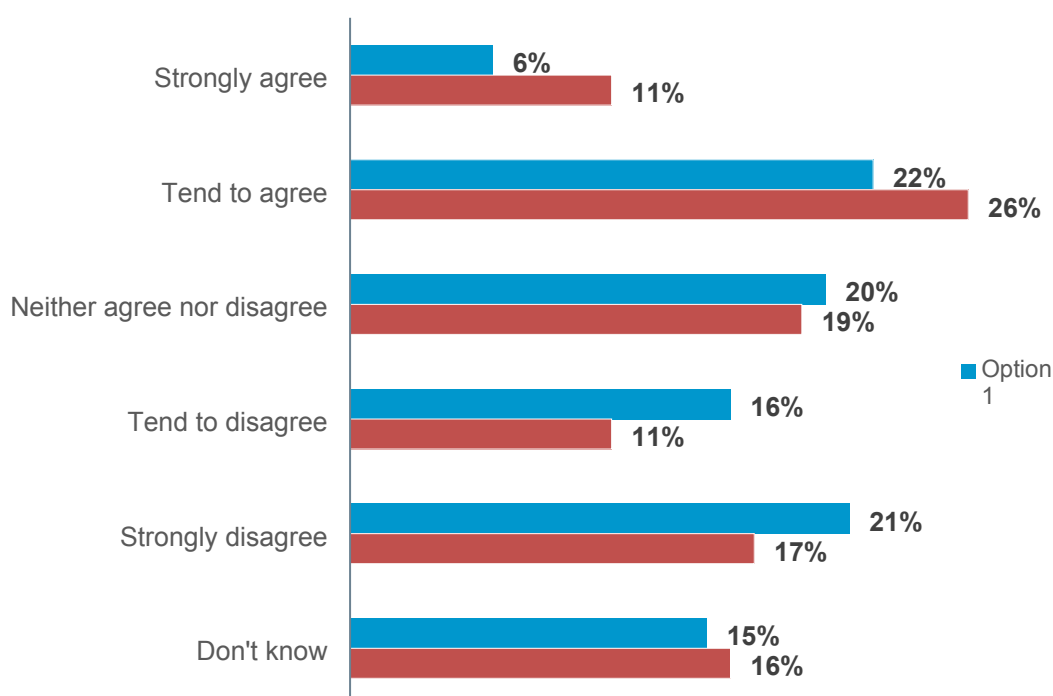
Questionnaire findings

Option 1: Reduce costs and increase charges for the Alternative Education service

Option 2: Support schools to find an alternative provider

- 2.3.21 Almost three in ten (28%) respondents agreed with Option 1 (6% strongly agreed, 22% tended to agree). However, almost four in ten (37%) disagreed (16% tended to disagree, 21% strongly disagreed). A further 20% neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 2.3.22 By contrast, a larger proportion (37%) said they agreed with Option 2 (11% strongly agreed, 26% tended to agree). However, almost three in ten (28%) disagreed with this option (11% tended to disagree, 17% strongly disagreed). A further 19% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 10 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the two different options?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (Option 1: 100, Option 2: 93)



Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **disagree with Option 1** (37% overall) included those who:

- Had children aged 5-11 (59%) or 12+ (67%) living in their household compared to those who had children aged 0-5 (24%)
- Were female (49%) compared to male (16%)

Subgroups more likely to **agree with Option 2** (37% overall) included those who were aged 44 or under (47%) compared to those aged 45 or above (17%)

Focus group findings

- 2.3.23 Focus group participants all agreed that the Alternative Education service is vital for young people who need educational support and are unable to attend school. Some participants thought the council should continue to provide this service, even if it is making a loss, given its importance.

I know that the council is not legally obliged to provide this, but I don't want the sort of council that just does the bare minimum. I want a council that properly invests in a diverse offer for everyone.

Early Help Services user

Children who are having a tough time cost more than other children who are not troubled. That's just the way it is. The money has to be paid and the children have to be supported. That is the bottom line. These children need help.

Early Help Services user

It's important because there are always children at schools that need additional help for different reasons. They need to keep the service.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.24 Some participants thought that if the council continued to provide the service, it would provide efficient partnership working with schools.

I think it should be run by the council because that will give the best integration with the schools and other children.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.25 A few participants were worried that if the service costs for schools were increased, schools might look to pass charges onto parents, as they themselves faced pressure on their budgets.

They would have to ensure the prices are not increased.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.26 Other participants were open to the idea of the council supporting schools to find an alternative provider, as it might keep the costs of the service down for schools. However, it would be important for schools to find providers who had a good track record and could provide a high quality service.

The council doesn't necessarily need to be the one providing this. It is about the quality and, of course, the cost as well. If it is affordable for the school, it is not going to result in fewer young people getting access to what they need. As long as the quality is good, do we care if it comes from another provider? It needs to come from the best place.

Early Help Services user

You'd have to make the decision based on their track record or competency.

Early Help Services user

Questionnaire findings

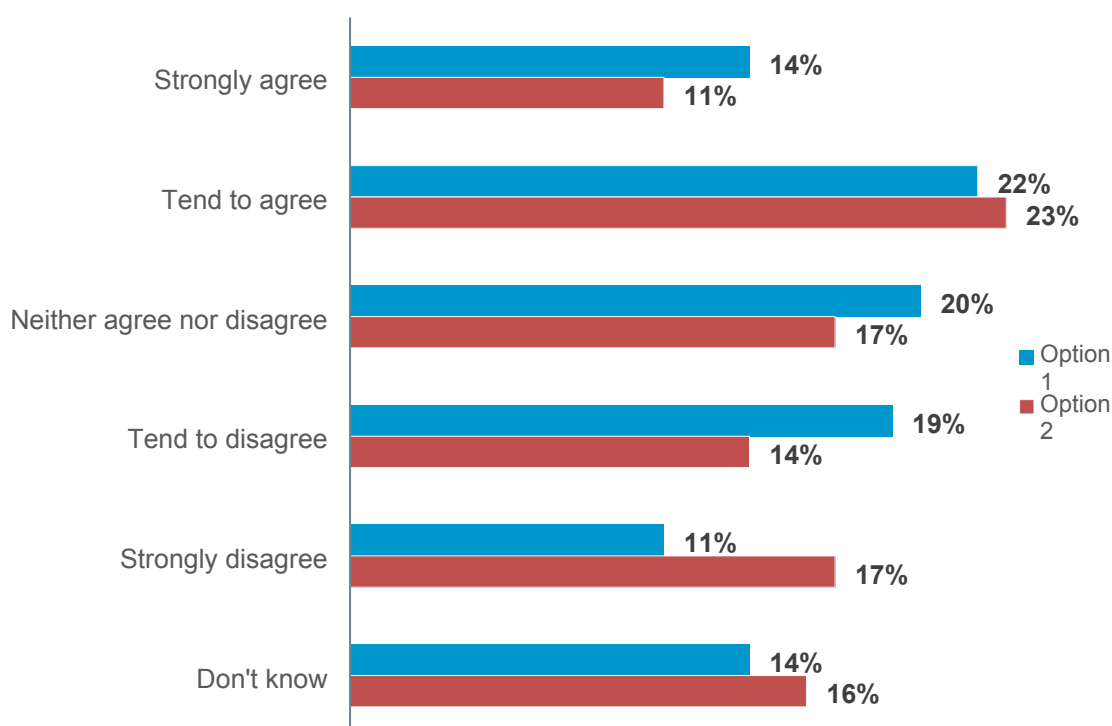
Option 1: Reduce costs in the delivery of childcare places at Newstead Children's Centre

Option 2: Seek an alternative provider who can deliver the service more cost effectively

2.3.27 Just over a third (36%) of respondents agreed with Option 1 (14% strongly agreed, 22% tended to agree). Three in ten (30%) disagreed (19% tended to disagree, 11% strongly disagreed).

2.3.28 A similar proportion (34%) said they agreed with Option 2 (11% strongly agreed, 23% tended to agree). However, three in ten (31%) disagreed with this option (14% tended to disagree, 17% strongly disagreed).

Figure 11 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the two different options?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (Option 1: 103, Option 2: 98)



Focus group findings

2.3.29 Some participants were not aware that there was a council run nursery at Newstead Children's Centre.

I didn't know it was the only one that was run by the council.

Early Help Services user

2.3.30 Some suggested that the council could look at other service providers to explore best practice, so delivery costs of the service can be reduced. Others said they expected that the council has already looked at ways to reduce costs for providing the service and are unable to make any further savings. For them, if this is the case, the council should look to alternative providers to provide the service.

If other providers are providing a service that is more cost effective, maybe the council should look at best practice. How come these other providers can provide services at low cost? What can the council do to match that?

Early Help Services user

Surely they have tried to reduce costs already?

Non-user of services

If they can't afford to run it, then they can't afford to run it.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.31 Some participants felt that an alternative provider might be able to deliver the service more cost effectively and this would ensure the service is sustainable in the long term. They thought that as the council was only running one nursery, the service would be inefficient and an alternative provider who ran more than one would be able to provide the service more efficiently and more cost effectively.

Looking for another provider is a good idea. It will reduce costs and make it more sustainable in the long term.

Early Help Services user

If you are only running one of these things, it's bound to be inefficient. You can't centralise anything.

Early Help Services user

- 2.3.32 A few participants felt they had limited knowledge of the service and expressed the hope that the council is going to consult with users of the service at Newstead Children's Centre to evaluate their opinions and the impact any change to the service will have for them.

A question like this needs to be asked of the parents who use Newstead. I'm not so I have no knowledge of it.

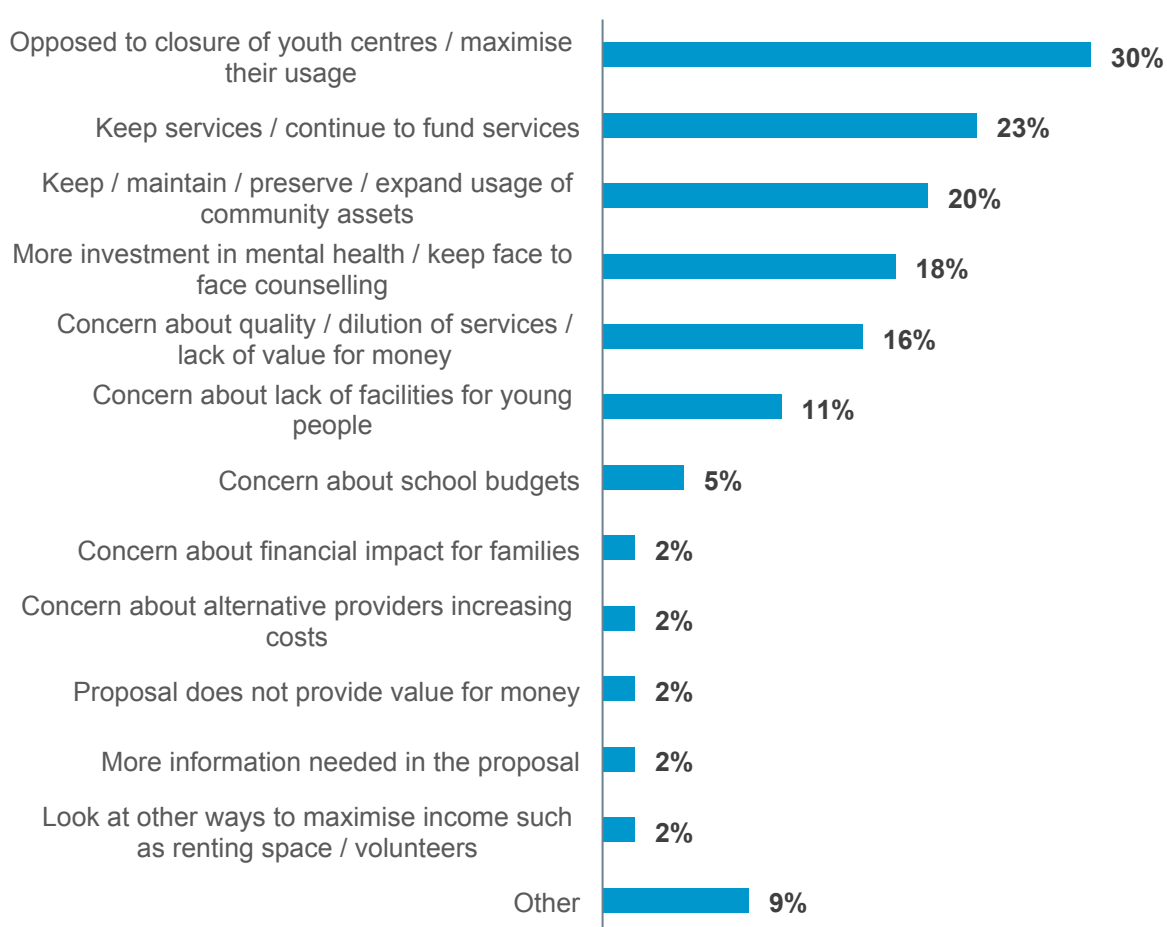
Early Help Services user

Questionnaire findings

- 2.3.33 Respondents who disagreed with Proposal 3 were asked to specify why by providing comments. These comments were themed and coded and are presented below.
- 2.3.34 Three in ten (30%) were opposed to the closure of the youth centres or suggested that these facilities could be used more. Almost a quarter (23%) of the comments mentioned that the non-statutory services listed should continue to be funded and maintained and a further fifth (20%) expressed a desire for community assets to be kept, maintained or have their usage increased.

Figure 12 – If you disagree with any of the proposals for each of the services within Proposal 3, please tell us why

Base: All respondents providing a comment (44)

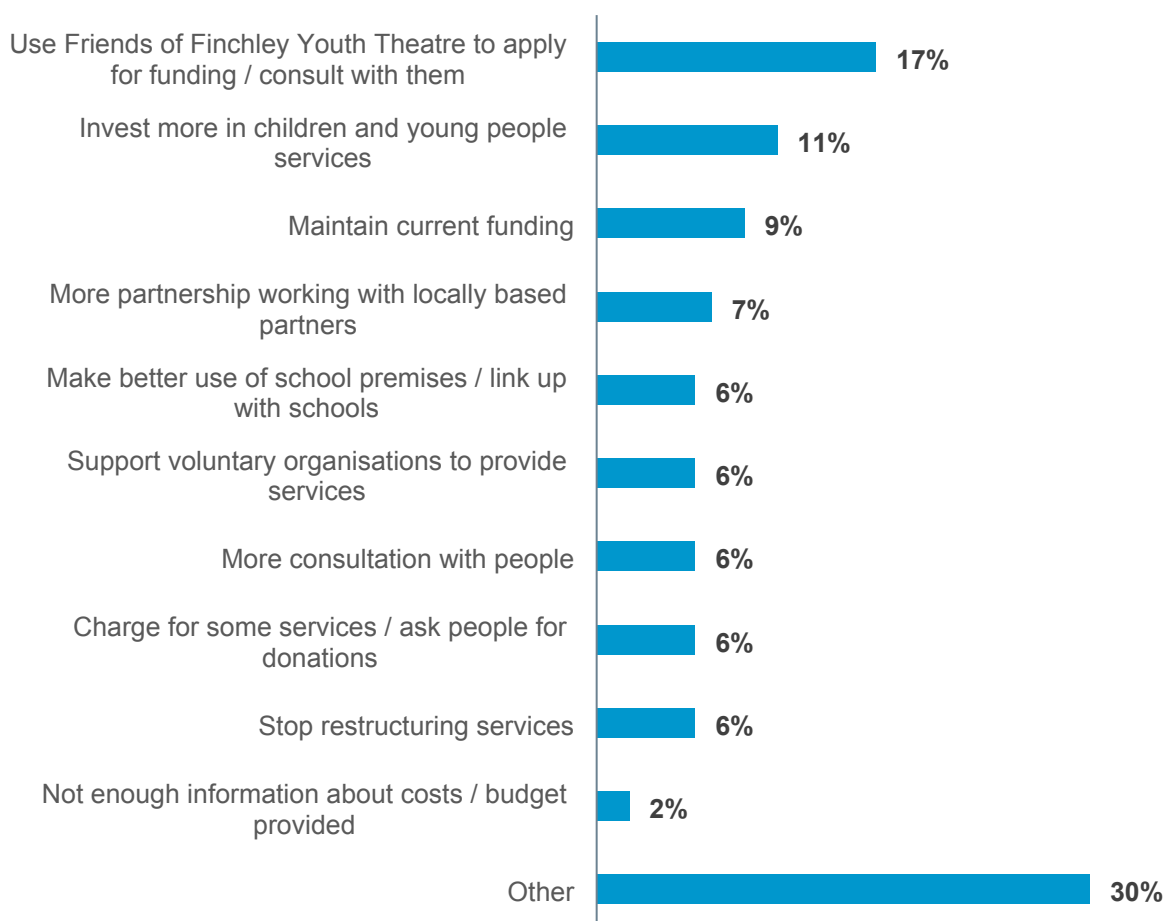


2.4 Additional or alternative suggestions for improving Early Help Services

Questionnaire findings

- 2.4.1 Respondents were asked if they had any additional or alternative suggestions for improving Early Help Services within longer term budgets that the council had not already considered. Comments from respondents were themed and coded and are presented below.
- 2.4.2 One in six (17%) mentioned that the council should work with the Friends of Finchley Youth Theatre to apply for funding and consult with them. A further one in nine (11%) felt there should be more investment in children and young people services and 9% felt that current funding for services should be maintained.

Figure 13 – Do you have any additional or alternative suggestions for improvements to Early Help Services which can be delivered cost effectively?
Base: All respondents providing a comment (54)



Focus group findings

- 2.4.3 Focus group participants were asked if they had any ideas or suggestions for additional or alternative improvements to any of the Early Help Services that may be delivered cost effectively.

- 2.4.4 Youth Centre users suggested that Youth Centres could look to generate more income through drama productions, concerts, renting out meeting room space to paying organisations and asking users to pay for certain activities, such as trips, sports, classes and sessions.

I think they could put on shows and people could buy tickets.

Youth Centre user

They should do trips where you have to pay to go. If you have a chance to go on a trip with your mates for the weekend, you are obviously going to want to go.

Youth Centre user

- 2.4.5 Early Help Service users also suggested that the council could make more use of the buildings when they are closed to the public, such as in the evenings and on weekends. They suggested the buildings could be used for private functions, classes and meetings.

If the facility is closed on a Monday, they could rent it out, maybe to another provider who is doing the same sort of thing for children. We keep a Children's Centre closed for the whole day? Surely people would want to rent that space?

Early Help Services user

Some days there is at least half a day when, as far as we know, the centres are closed and not being used. I see no reason why they couldn't put on more and charge people for it.

Early Help Services user

For some of these Children's Centres and Youth Centres, they could hire out spaces like halls for parties. Some of the halls around charge a fortune. It can be £100 to £150 just to hire a hall. That can really bump up the cost of a party when you add the cost for cake, an entertainer. If they can work it so they are very competitively priced for parties, that could bring in lots more income on the weekends because the centres aren't used then.

Early Help Services user

- 2.4.6 A few participants also held the perception that the Children's Centres waste a lot of money on printing leaflets, schedules and timetables. They suggested that the centres could save money by moving information online wherever possible.

Get rid of the paperwork, all those leaflets. It must be costing the council so much and they just go into the bin. I got the schedule given to me so many times and I never use it. I just go onto my phone like everyone does to look at the timetable.

Early Help Services user

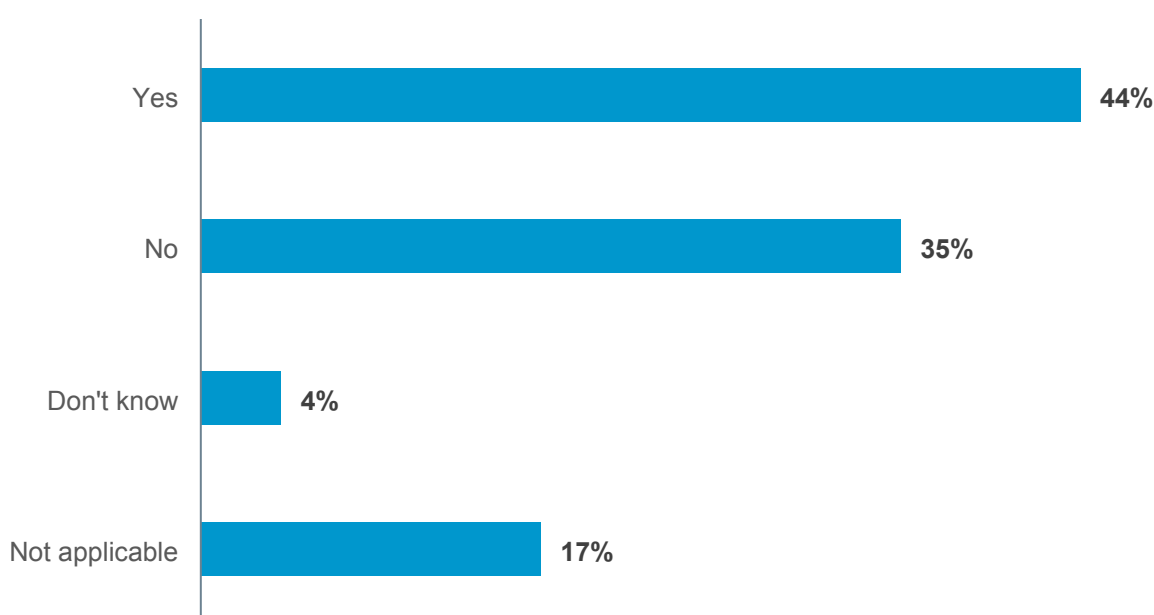
2.5 Current and preferred use of Children's Centres / Services

Questionnaire findings

2.5.1 Over four in ten (44%) respondents said they currently use Children's Centres / Services. Just over a third (35%) did not, and a further 21% said they did not know (4%) or that the question was not applicable (17%).

Figure 14 – Do you currently use any Children's Centres / Services?

Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (108)



Subgroup analysis

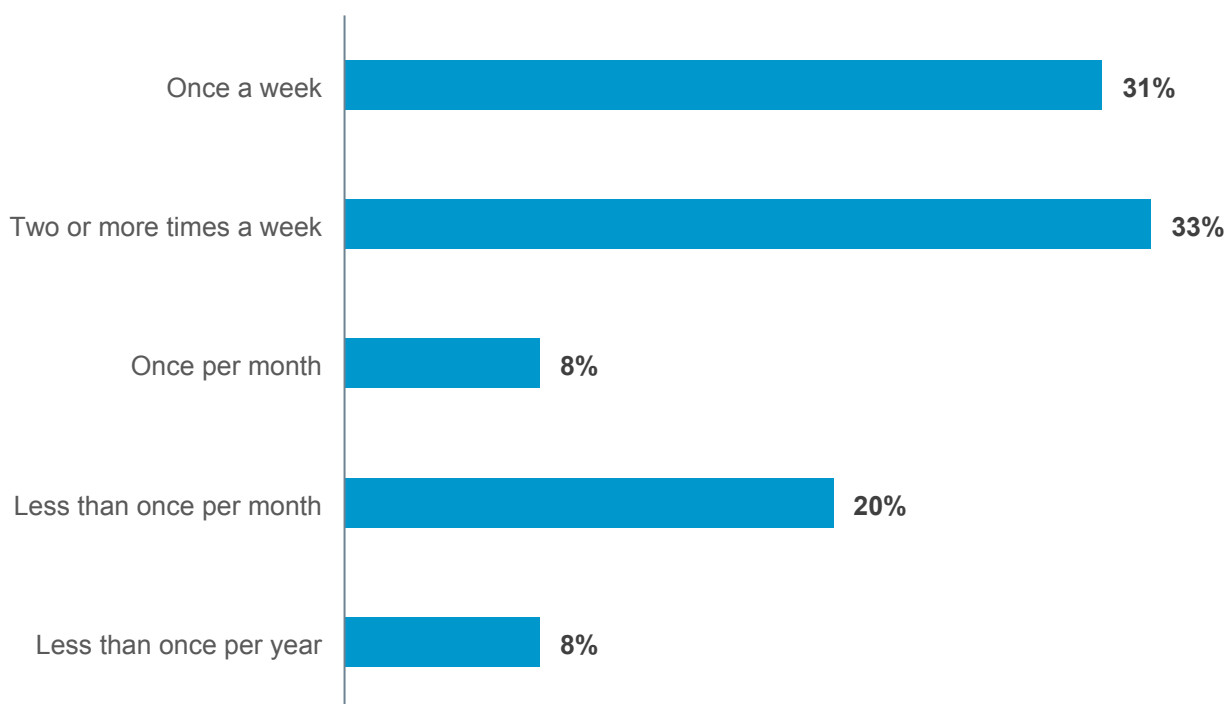
Subgroups more likely to **use Children's Centres / Services** (44% overall) included those who:

- Had children aged 0-5 living in their household (79%) compared to those with children aged 5-11 (52%) and 12+ (37%)
- Were aged 44 or under (62%) compared to those aged 45 or above (28%)

- 2.5.2 Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services were asked how often they visited or used a centre in Barnet. Three in ten (31%) said they visit or use a Children's Centre once a week. A further third (33%) use or visit two or more times a week. The rest use or visit a Children's Centre once per month (8%), less than once per month (20%) or less than once per year (8%).

Figure 15 – How often do you visit / use a Children's Centre in Barnet?

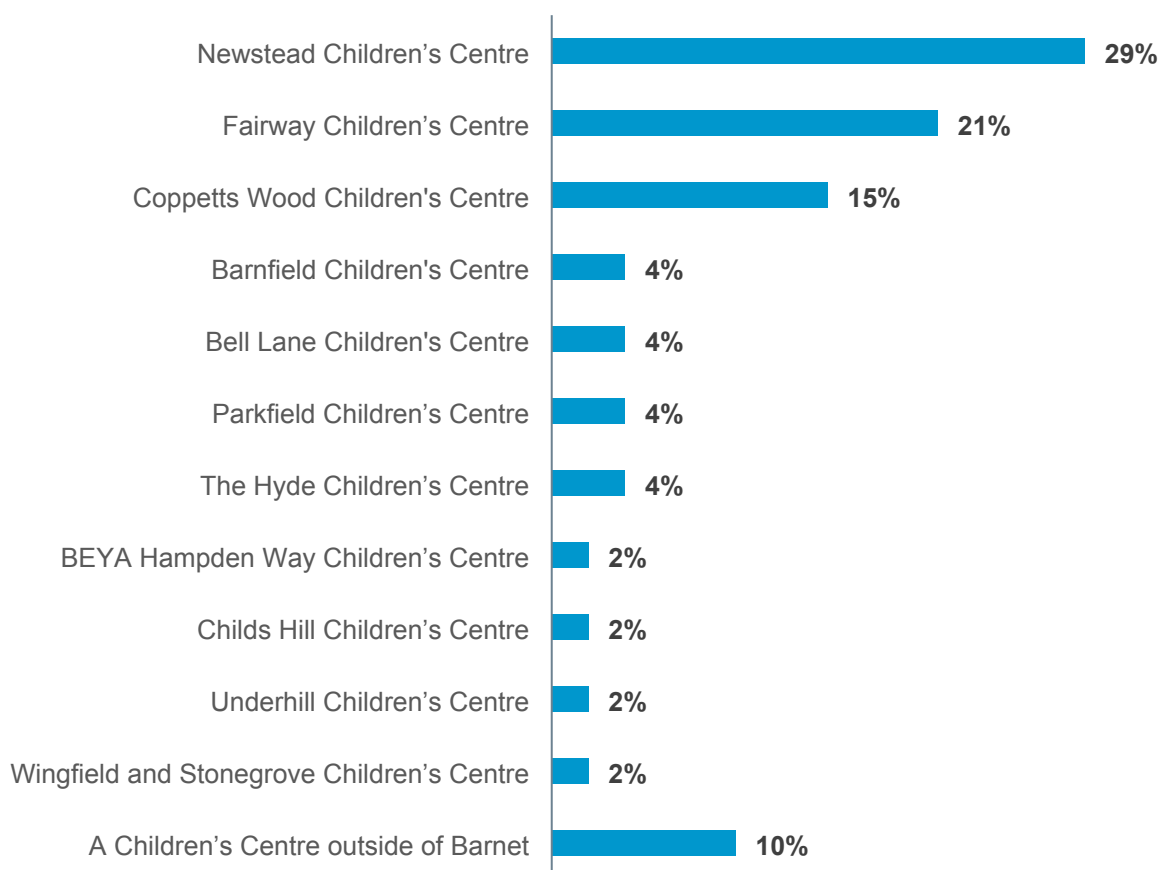
Base: Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (51)



- 2.5.3 Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services were asked which Children's Centre they most often used. Three in ten (29%) said they most often used Newstead Children's Centre and 21% said they most often used Fairway Children's Centre. A further one in seven (15%) used Coppetts Wood Children's Centre the most. The spread of Children's Centres that respondents said they used the most often is shown below.

Figure 16 – Which Children's Centre do you use most often?

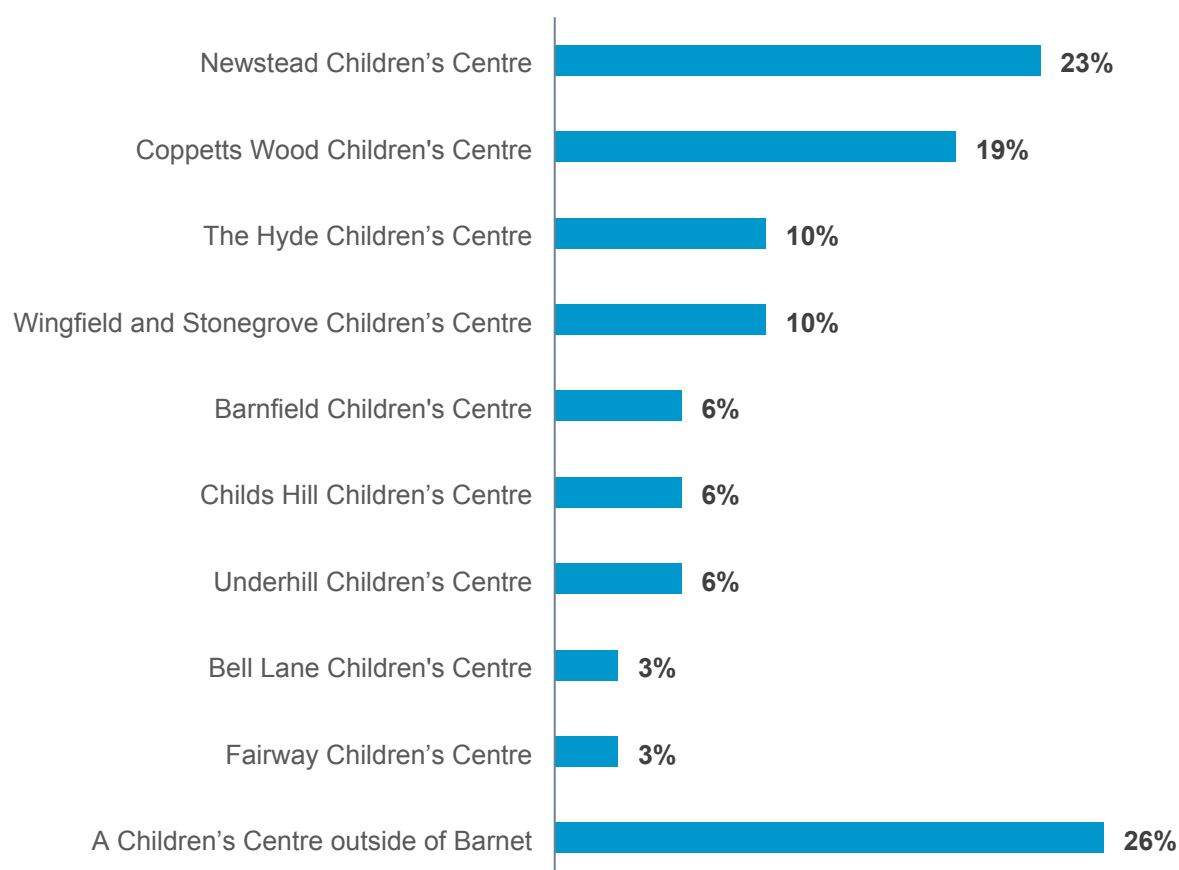
Base: Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (48)



- 2.5.4 Respondents were asked if there were any other Children's Centres that they used. Almost a quarter (23%) said they also used Newstead Children's Centre and 19% said they also used Coppetts Wood Children's Centre. A quarter (26%) said that they also used a Children's Centre outside of Barnet. The spread of Children's Centres that respondents said they used in addition to the one they use the most often is shown below.

Figure 17 – Apart from the Children's Centre you use most often, do you use any other Children's Centres?

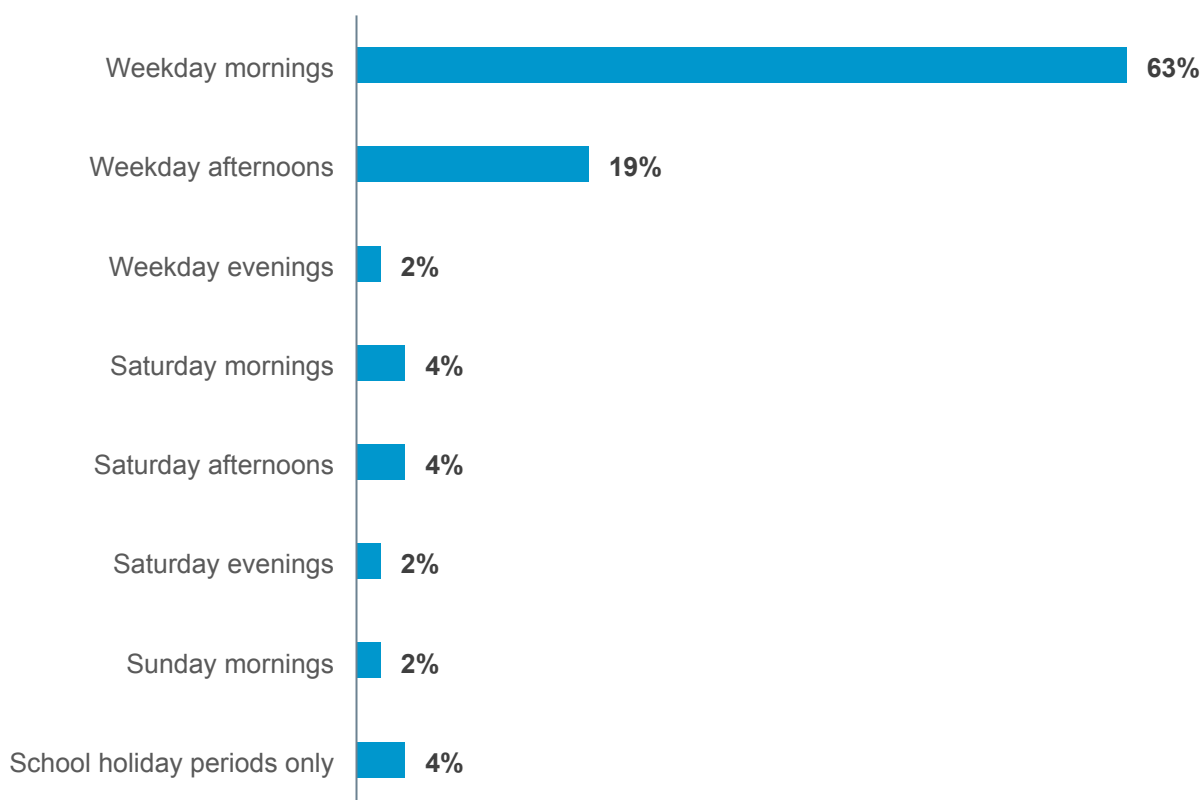
Base: Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (31)



- 2.5.5 Respondents were asked when they usually use Children's Centres. Over eight in ten (84%) said they use them on weekdays, with 63% saying weekday mornings, 19% weekday afternoons and 2% weekday evenings. One in eight (12%) said they used them on the weekends and 4% said it was in school holiday periods only.

Figure 18 – What times do you usually use Children's Centres?

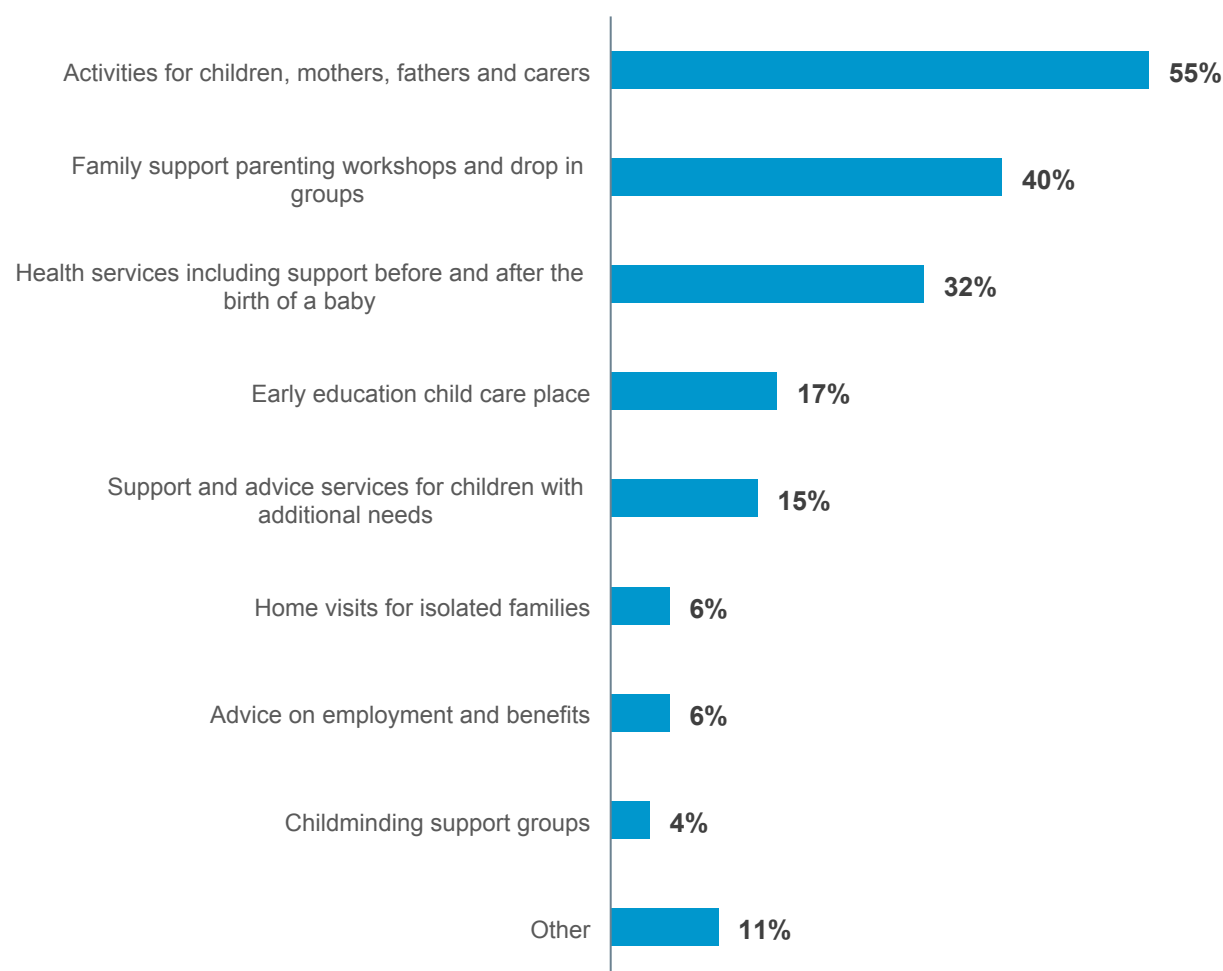
Base: Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (48)



- 2.5.6 Respondents were asked why they usually visited a Children's Centre. The most popular reason was activities for children, mothers, fathers and carers, with 55% saying this was why they visited. This was followed by family support parenting workshops and drop in groups (40%) and one in three (32%) said they usually used health services including support before and after the birth of a baby. The full range of reasons for usually visiting a Children's Centre is shown below.

Figure 19 – When visiting a Children's Centre, what is it usually for?

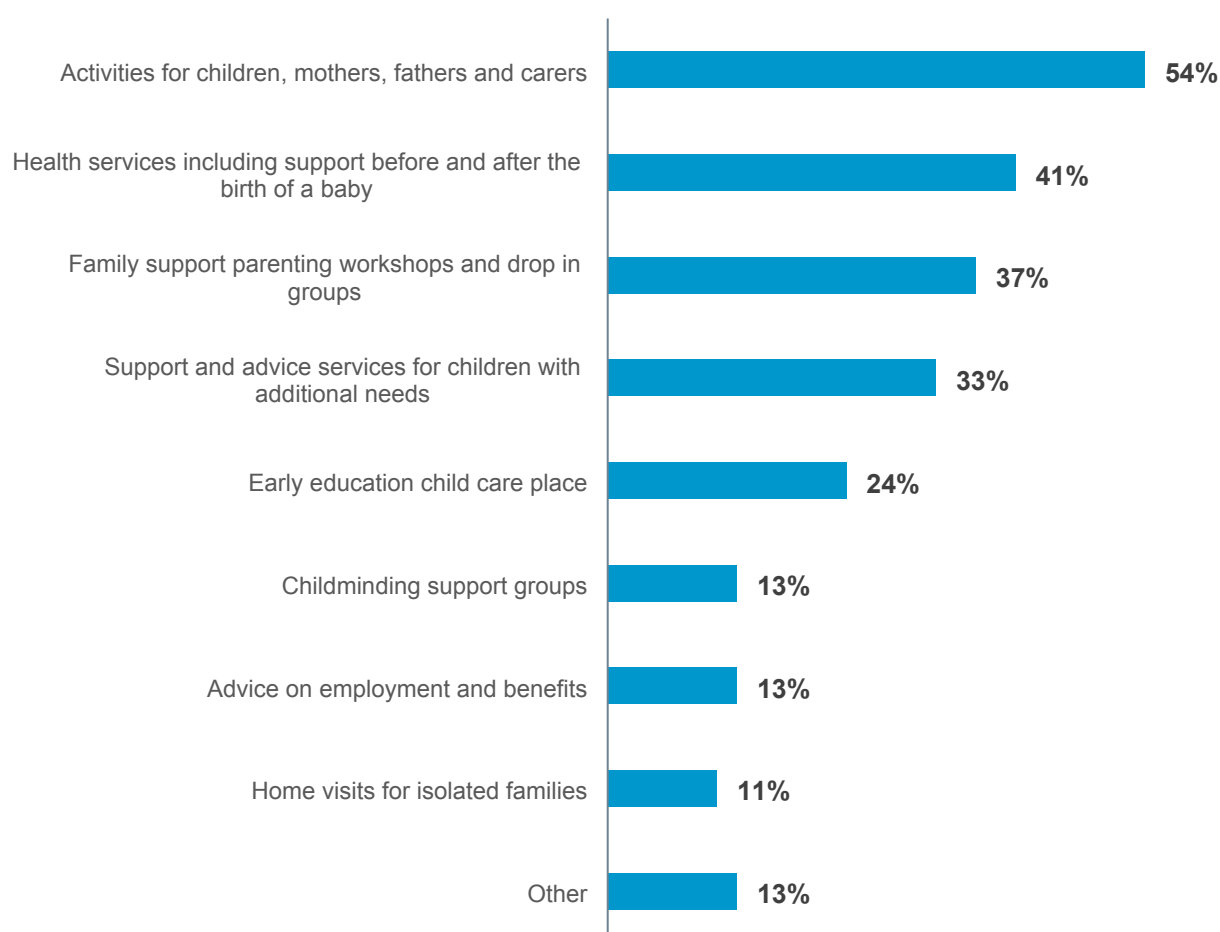
Base: Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (47)



- 2.5.7 Respondents were then asked which services they find most helpful when visiting a Children's Centre. The most popular was activities for children, mothers, fathers and carers, with 54% saying this was the service they found the most helpful. This was followed by health services including support before and after the birth of a baby (41%) and almost four in ten (37%) said family support parenting workshops and drop in groups was the most helpful. The full range of services that respondents found most helpful is shown below.

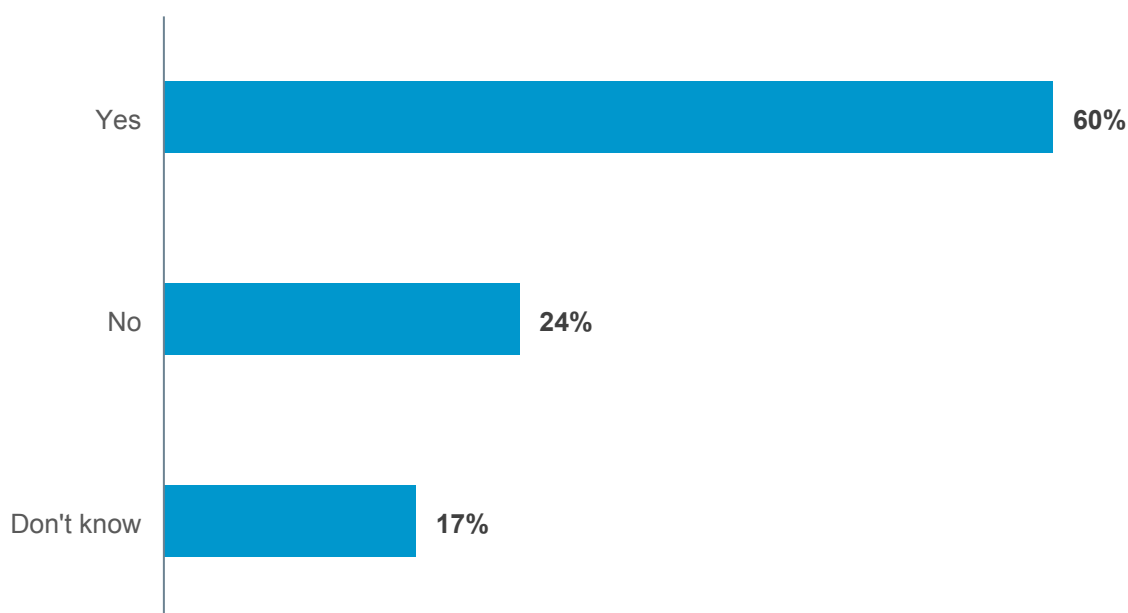
Figure 20 – Which services do you find the most helpful when you visit a Children's Centre?

Base: Respondents who used Children's Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (46)



- 2.5.8 Respondents were next asked if they would like to use Children's Centres more often than they currently do. Six in ten (60%) said they would like to and a quarter (24%) said they did not want to.

Figure 21 – Would you like to use Children's Centres more often than you currently do?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (84)



Subgroup analysis

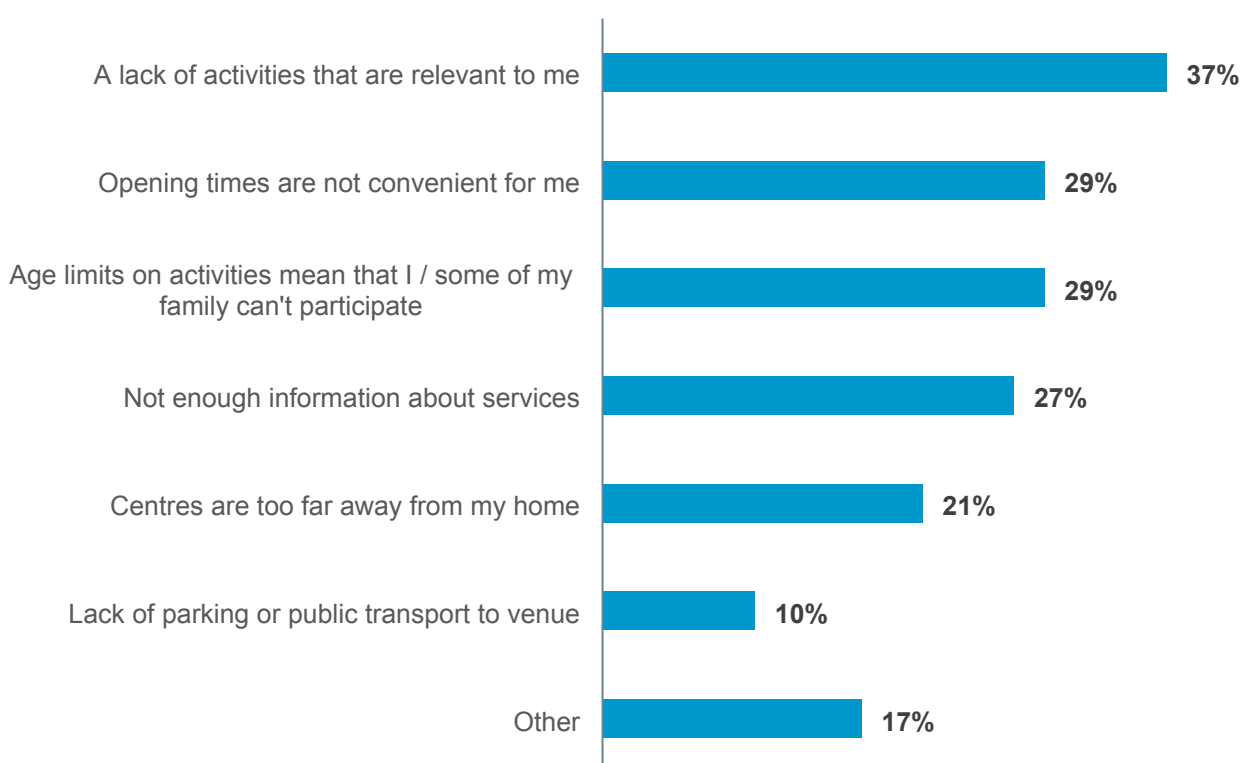
Subgroups more likely to **want to use Children's Centres more often** (60% overall) included those who:

- Had children aged 0-5 years (71%) or aged 5-11 (71%) in their household, compared to those who had children aged 12+ (33%)
- Were aged 44 or under (71%) compared to those aged 45 or above (35%)

- 2.5.9 Respondents who said they wanted to use Children's Centres more often were asked to identify the barriers that stopped them from doing so. Almost four in ten (37%) said there is a lack of activities that are relevant to them. This was followed by a further three in ten (29%) saying that the opening times are not convenient for them and a further 29% also said that age limits on activities mean that some of the family can't participate. Just over a quarter (27%) said that there was not enough information about services and 21% felt that the centres are too far from home.

Figure 22 – If you want to use Children's Centres more often, what are the barriers preventing you from doing so?

Base: Respondents who want to use Children's Centres more often and provided a valid answer (52)



Focus group findings

Current use of Children's Centres / Services

- 2.5.10 In total, five of the focus groups were held with Children's Centre and Family Support Service users. Participants in these groups used a range of different centres and services across Barnet. In line with questionnaire findings, services used by participants at Children's Centres included courses and classes, advice, child care, playgroups, speech and language therapy, family support, rhyme time and sing along sessions, and short breaks. Some participants had attended centres for check-ups and health services.

I went on a parenting course at the Children's Centre.

Early Help Services user

I used Underhill and St. Margaret's for the child care and stay and play.

Early Help Services user

At Underhill I was able to see the speech therapist there. My daughter had a hesitancy in her speech. It was really good. It was essentially a drop in and they were really helpful. They provided good support. It was really easy to access.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.11 These participants were on the whole largely positive about the services offered at Children's Centres and by the Family Support Services. Participants were pleased that there was a range of services on offer that they found helpful and many would recommend them to strangers.

I would refer a new member of the community to the Children's Centres because I find them helpful. You go out, meet new mums and weighing your baby is beneficial as well.

Early Help Services user

I would tell a stranger to check out all of the services provided.

Early Help Services user

I've found the Children's Centres really useful. I've been going to them for all three of my children right from pre-birth to just after they were born.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.12 Participants listed a number of reasons why they visit Children's Centres. Some users attended them because of the range of activities and sessions on offer and would use two or three different centres for different activities, sometimes outside of Barnet. This is in line with the questionnaire finding that some respondents had used another centre outside of the borough.

You go to the centres because of the services being offered. You try and find out what is on near to you on a specific day. It's more about the services that are there.

Early Help Services user

I would say there's quite a lot of things going on. There's quite a lot of variety. You might look at one or two centres that are relatively near to you but you'd probably find something that is helpful to you. It seems there's quite a lot of different things. There's quite good provision I would say.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.13 Other participants said they visited just one Children's Centre and this was within walking distance of where they lived or a short bus journey away. Having a Children's Centre in an accessible location was particularly important for parents and carers that do not drive.

I go to Bell Lane because it is the most local one, within walking distance.

Early Help Services user

As close as possible to home, within walking distance.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.14 Participants who went to playgroups and other activities at Children's Centres often welcomed the opportunity to leave the house with their children. They often find it a valuable opportunity to meet other parents and to share advice, and felt that their children also benefitted from interacting with other children.

If you're going regularly to the same centre, you see the same people. From a social perspective, my toddler is engaged and building friendships. I get to see the same mums again and again. It's great from a community perspective.

Early Help Services user

You're able to meet people in the same situation so you can relate to the same experiences. If you find you haven't got anyone else like that, you can come in and find someone and make friends. It makes you feel good.

Early Help Services user

It was nice they could be with other babies. I could chat to the other parents.

Early Help Services user

Barriers to using Children's Centres more

- 2.5.15 In the questionnaire, a lack of relevant activities was cited as a barrier. Some participants explained that they felt there could be more free activities and sessions that were suitable for young toddlers so they have more opportunities to interact with other children before they go to nursery.

Early years development for toddlers before they are in nursery. More sessions that are engaging, fun and interesting. It's important to leave the house and for the children to interact with other kids.

Early Help Services user

My little one is reaching an age where I can tell she wants to interact with other children more. Now the only groups where you can do that, you end up forking out something like £10 a session. To have playgroups and things like that that are free of charge, would be great.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.16 A few participants were also parents or carers of two or more children of different ages. They said they found it difficult to attend some of the activities and sessions on offer at Children's Centres, as they were often suitable only for a specific age group.

Often the sessions are geared towards toddlers or babies so I can't take my toddler to the baby sensory class for example as they won't let him in and I can't leave a baby in the sensory class and hang out with my toddler so there are a lot of sessions I can't go to because I have two children.

Early Help Services user

If there are siblings, you can't be in two rooms at once.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.17 A few participants suggested that there could be more provision for children who have special needs at Children's Centres, such as sensory rooms, access to speech and language therapy, and advice and support from staff. It was felt that this would be invaluable for some parents and carers.

On the special needs side of things. There is a lack of sensory rooms, sensory toys. Sometimes you need the extra support because they are very energetic with ADHD learning difficulties or autism.

Early Help Services user

There should be a session with a speech therapist. Parents could come and talk to them and they can look at the child. I know there are always a lot of worries about children not pronouncing things properly or they do not talk before a certain age. I think it would be beneficial for parents to be aware that everything is ok and there are no issues.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.18 Some participants mentioned that often sessions and activities were oversubscribed and they had the perception that centres were sometimes understaffed. This meant that sometimes they had attended a centre and had been turned away, which had been frustrating for them.

The challenge for me is that they are just too busy and understaffed. Often I've got my toddler and baby ready, got out the house, got to the Children's Centre, found parking, gone in and then been told they are too full and I can't come in.

Early Help Services user

If you are late, you are turned away. We were turned away once or twice because it was oversubscribed.

Early Help Services user

You get there sometimes and be turned away. It was the most frustrating thing, particularly after you've made a big effort to get yourself dressed, the baby up and fed. That could be your biggest achievement of the day, getting there and then to be told you can't come in is very frustrating.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.19 Some participants mentioned there was a difference in services available between centres, with some centres providing more and better services and sessions than others. These participants said they would like to see the same services, activities and sessions available at all centres, as people are not always able to travel far to attend a specific centre. In their opinion, the council could look to ensure that all centres offer the same activities, services and sessions. This might then alleviate some of the pressure on other centres, which are sometimes full and have oversubscribed services.

In this area, looking at the services that are available at the different centres, there is a big difference. What there was available at the weigh-in clinic that we went to over there was very different to somewhere that was about half an hour's drive away, which we are not going to go to because it was too far.

Early Help Services user

It should be standardised. Instead of needing to go far away, everyone should have the same close by.

Early Help Services user

If they had those activities on in other centres it would probably take the pressure off those centres.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.20 The questionnaire found that for some, opening times of the centres were a barrier. Some participants said they found that the times of activities and sessions on offer at Children's Centres were not always suitable for them. A few said that they found that activities and sessions were always in the mornings, which posed a problem for them, particularly if the start time was early. These participants felt that more could be

provided in the afternoons. Others who had a child of school age and a younger child often found that many activities and sessions coincided with school pick up and drop off times. They suggested the times of activities and sessions should be planned to be inclusive of all parents.

It's like 10:15 to 11:45. It's sometimes hard to get him there for that time, particularly if he's been ill or if he's slept in.

Early Help Services user

My son doesn't go to any other services because they are all in the morning. He's at nursery every morning. In the afternoon there isn't much going on.

Early Help Services user

If you have got children of school age and then a younger child, I always found that some of the services were always during school pick up times so I wasn't always able to attend everything.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.21 The majority of participants, both users and non-users, felt that there was a low awareness amongst the general public of services and support available at Children's Centres. Participants suggested that Children's Centre services could be advertised and promoted more by health visitors, schools and on the council website.

I didn't know any of these services were available.

Non-user of services

More publicity. I didn't know about any of this. I only found out about it when I came here with my youngest for my midwife appointment. Before that, I didn't know that these services even existed and there were these classes that we could go to.

Early Help Services user

It would be nice if schools had all of the information to refer parents. The school in Finchley would have information about the Finchley Youth Centre and so on.

Non-user of services

- 2.5.22 Participants who used Children's Centres also suggested that there could be more communication about timetables, activities, sessions and services. They suggested that centres could create mailing lists and apps to keep people up-to-date. Some participants mentioned that information could often be found online, but sometimes it was out of date, which could be frustrating for users if they attend a centre and then find out a session has been cancelled.

I think an app is an amazing idea. I found, especially in the very early days, that I was given piece of paper after piece of paper. In addition to environmental concerns, it just contributed to a lot of clutter. You have enough clutter already with all of the paraphernalia that comes with a new born. You can collate a lot of information in that space and everyone can access it via computers or smartphones.

Early Help Services user

You can just google Underhill and then you can look at the timetables. However, they are often a little bit out of date. It doesn't always tell you things have changed. There have been a couple of occasions where I have turned up for something and told it has been cancelled.

Early Help Services user

- 2.5.23 A few participants mentioned that transport could be a barrier to them attending Children's Centres. These participants did not drive and could only attend centres if they were within walking distance or easily accessible by public transport.

My area is always excluded from everything. I live in Cricklewood and there's not much there, everything seems to be based in the High Barnet or Finchley area. Even though [some services] are close, they're not close enough. They're not walking distance. I go to Hendon and Childs Hill but I'm not a driver and they're quite tricky to get to.

Early Help Services user

I don't drive and for me it's two buses. That is time consuming.

Early Help Services user

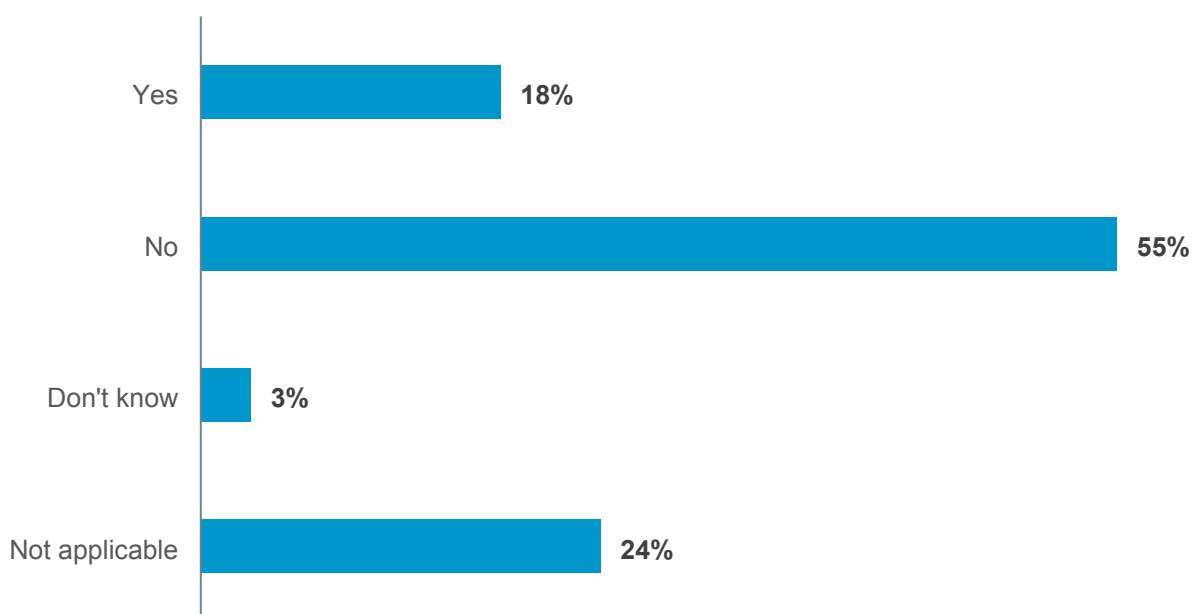
2.6 Current and preferred use of Youth Centres / Services

Questionnaire findings

2.6.1 Almost one in five (18%) respondents said they currently use Youth Centres / Services. Over half (55%) did not, and a further 27% said they did not know (3%) or that the question was not applicable (24%).

Figure 23 – Do you currently use any Youth Centres / Services?

Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (104)



Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **use Youth Centres / Services** (18% overall) included those who:

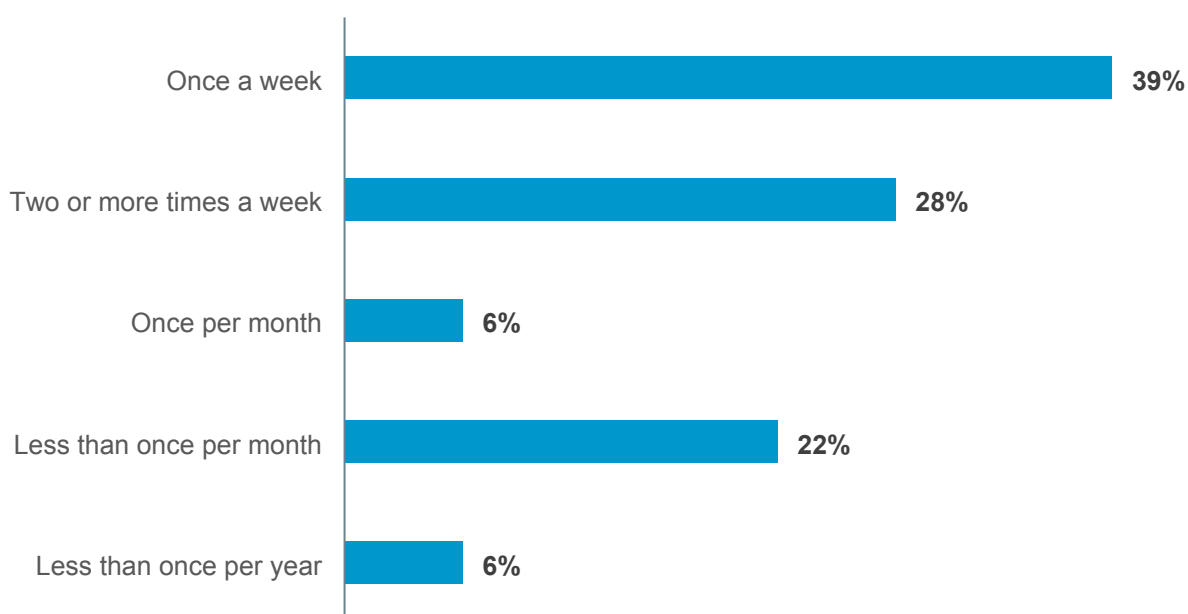
- Had children aged 5-11 years (26%) or aged 12+ (30%) living in their household compared to those with children aged 0-5 (3%)
- Were aged 45 or above (32%) compared to those aged 44 or under (5%)

2.6.2 Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services were asked how often they visited a centre in Barnet. Of the 18 respondents, four in ten (39%) said they visit a Youth Centre once a week. A further three in ten (28%) use or visit two or more times a week. The rest use or visit a Youth Centre once per month (6%), less than once per month (22%) or less than once per year (6%).

2.6.3 The number of respondents who answered questions about Youth Centre usage is small, so caution should be taken when interpreting the results.

Figure 24 – How often do you visit a Youth Centre in Barnet?

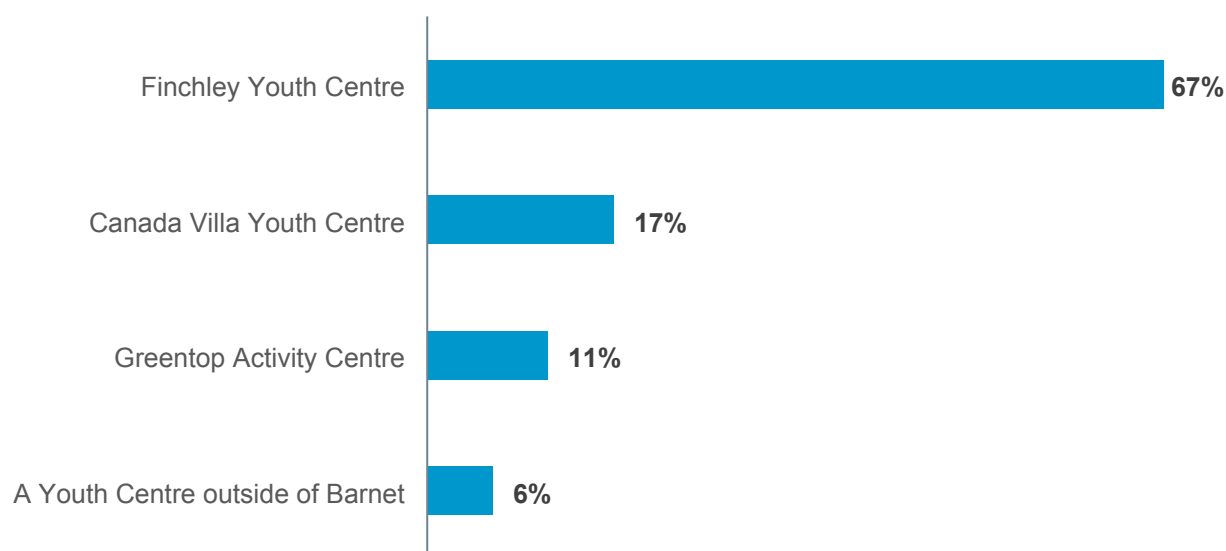
Base: Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (18)



- 2.6.4 Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services were asked which centre they most often used. Two-thirds (67%) said they used Finchley Youth Centre most often and 17% said Canada Villa Youth Centre. A further 11% used Greentop Activity Centre most often. The spread of Children's Centres that respondents used the most often is shown below.

Figure 25 – Which Youth Centre do you use most often?

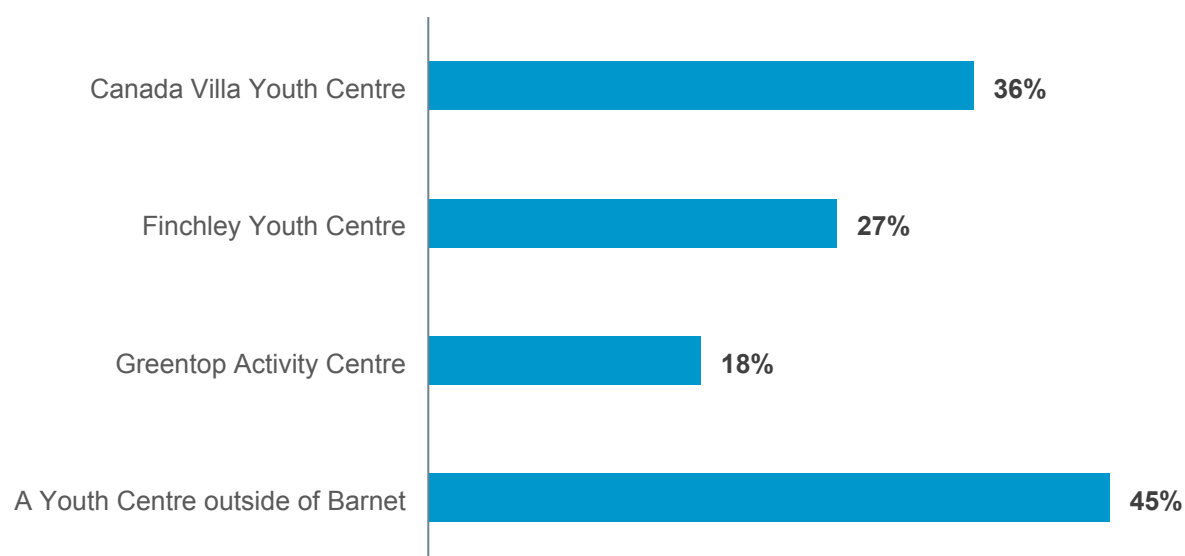
Base: Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (18)



- 2.6.5 Respondents were also asked to identify any other Youth Centres that they use. Just over a third (36%) said that they also use Canada Villa Youth Centre and a further 27% said they also use Finchley Youth Centre. Almost two in ten (18%) said they also use Greentop Activity Centre. Over four in ten (45%) said they also use a Youth Centre outside of Barnet.

Figure 26 – Apart from the Youth Centre you use most often, do you use any other Youth Centres?

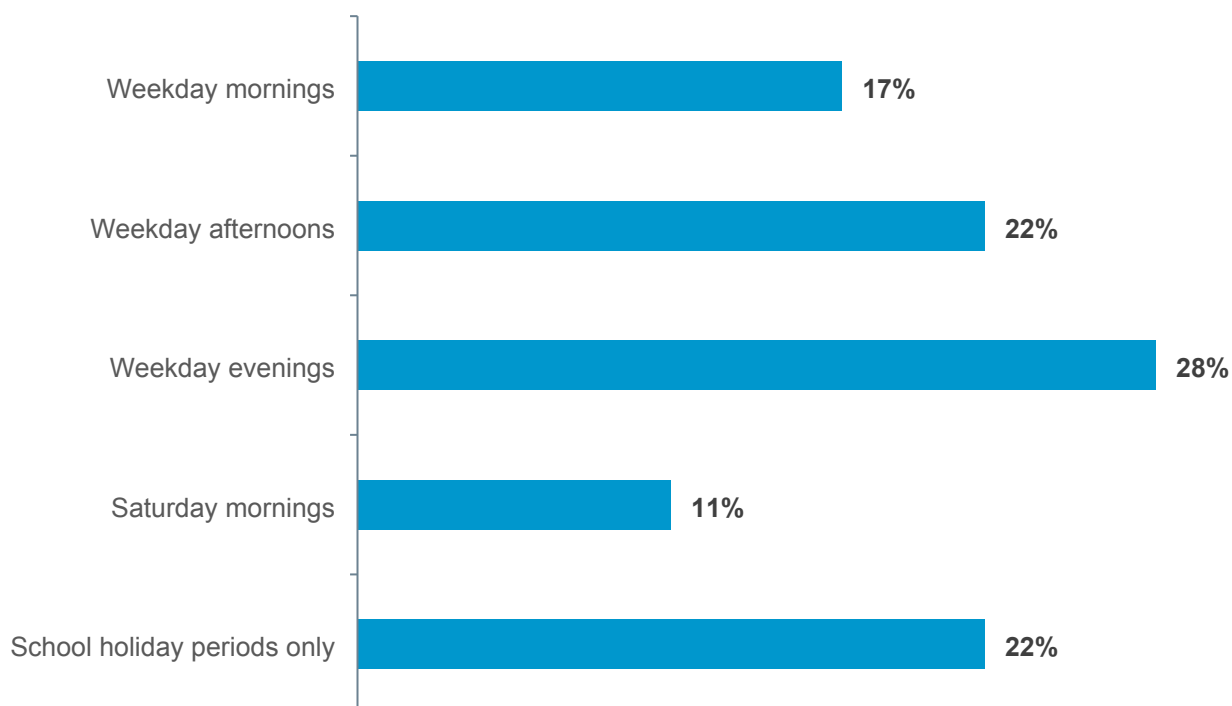
Base: Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (11)



- 2.6.6 Respondents were asked when they usually use Youth Centres. Two-thirds (67%) said they usually use them on weekdays, with 17% saying weekday mornings, 22% weekday afternoons and 28% weekday evenings. A fifth (22%) said they used Youth Centres in school holiday periods only and 11% used them on Saturday mornings.

Figure 27 – What times do you usually use Youth Centres?

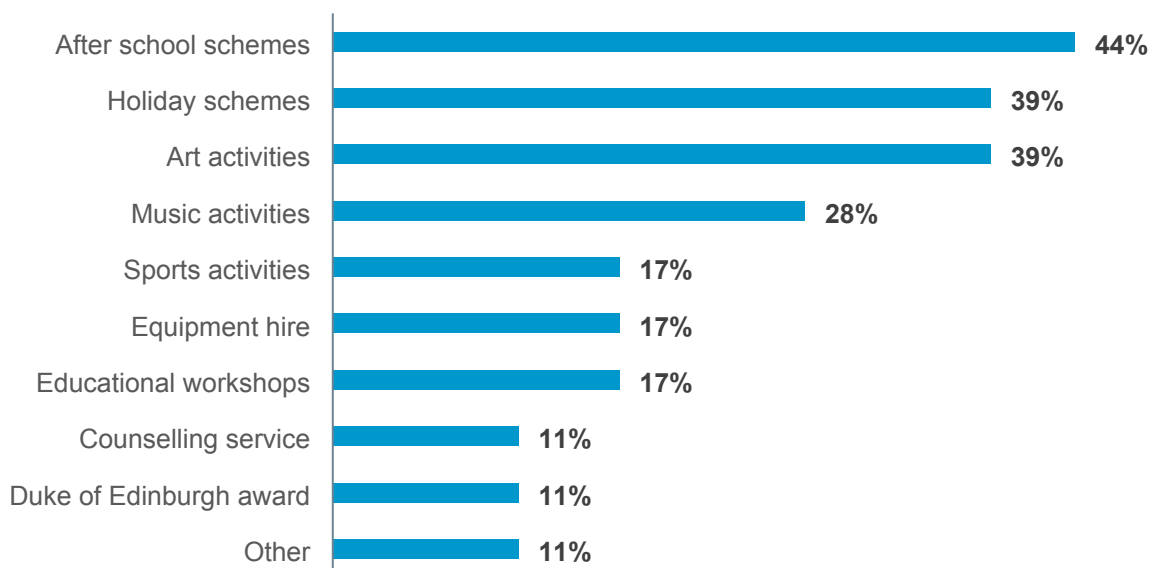
Base: Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (18)



- 2.6.7 Respondents were asked why they usually visited a Youth Centre. The most popular reason was after school schemes, with 44% saying this was why they usually visited. This was followed by holiday schemes (39%) and 39% said they took part in art activities. The full range of reasons for usually visiting a Youth Centre is shown below.

Figure 28 – When visiting a Youth Centre, what is it usually for?

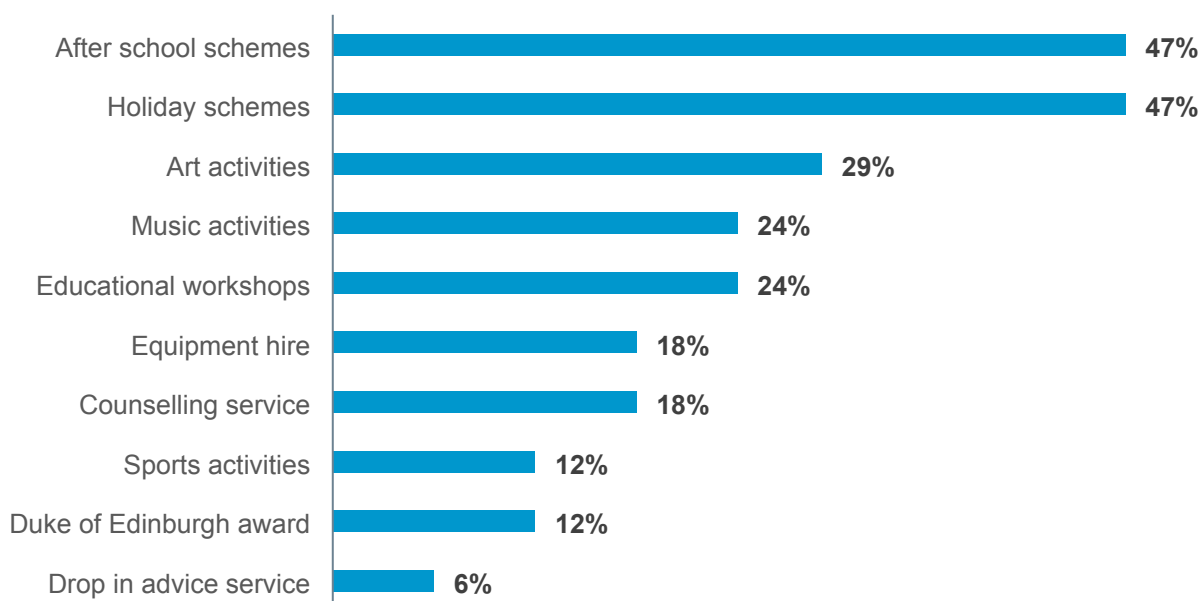
Base: Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (18)



- 2.6.8 Respondents were then asked which services they find most helpful when visiting a Youth Centre. The most popular was after school schemes, with 47% saying this was the service they found the most helpful. The same proportion found holiday schemes (47%) were the most helpful and 29% said art activities. The full range of is shown below.

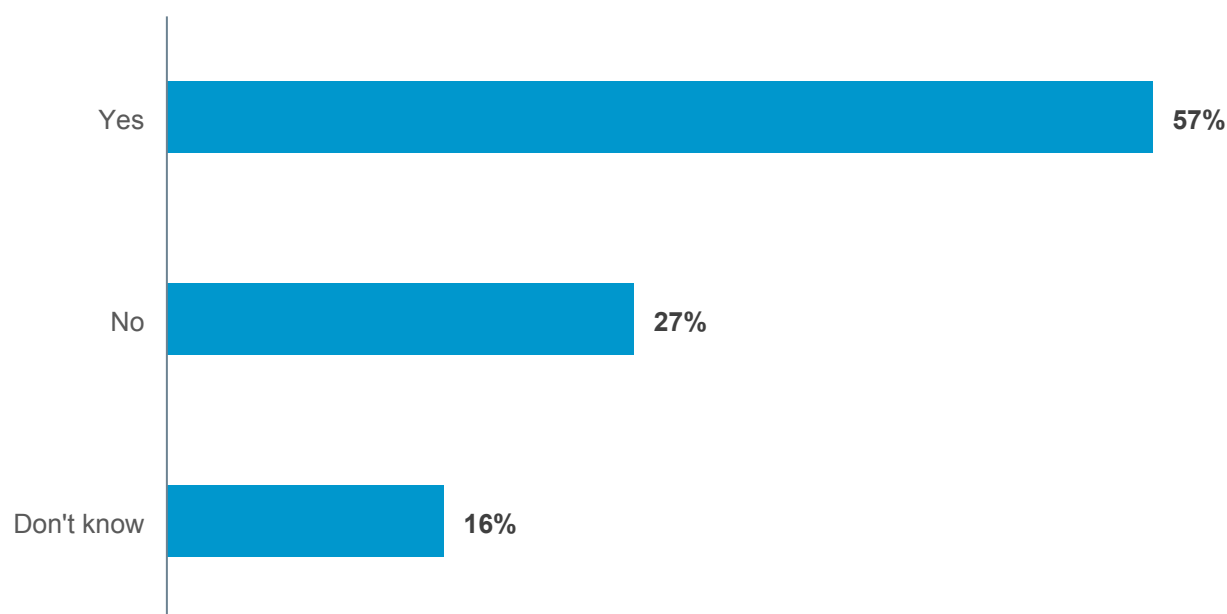
Figure 29 – Which services do you find the most helpful when you visit a Youth Centre?

Base: Respondents who used Youth Centres / Services and provided a valid answer (17)



- 2.6.9 Respondents were next asked if they would like to use Youth Centres more often than they currently do. Almost three in five (57%) said they would like to and just over a quarter (27%) said they did not.

Figure 30 – Would you like to use Youth Centres more often than you currently do?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (74)



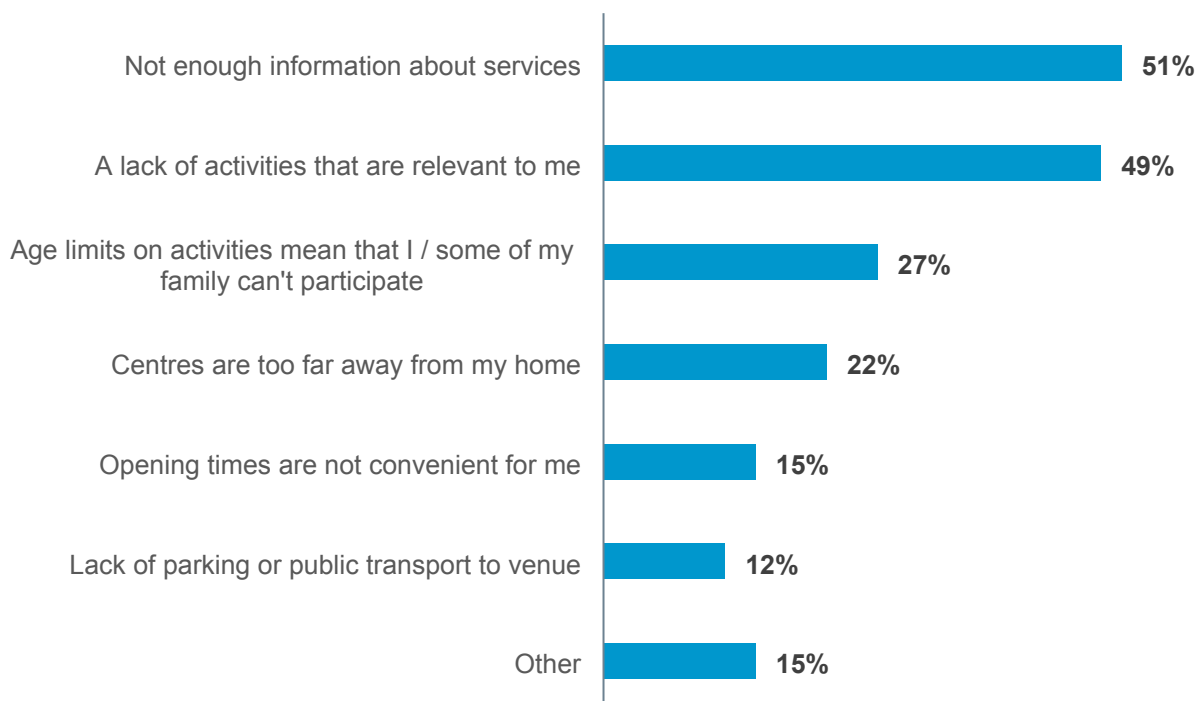
Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **want to use Youth Centre more often** (57% overall) included those who had children aged 5-11 (82%) and 12+ (84%) living in their household compared to those with children aged 0-5 (48%).

- 2.6.10 Respondents who said they wanted to use Youth Centres more often were asked to identify the barriers that stopped them from doing so. Half (51%) said that there is not enough information about services and 49% said there is a lack of activities that are relevant to them. Just over a quarter (27%) felt that age limits on activities meant that they or some of their family cannot participate.

Figure 31 – If you want to use Youth Centres more often, what are the barriers preventing you from doing so?

Base: Respondents who wanted to use Youth Centres more often and provided a valid answer (41)



Focus group findings

Current use of Youth Centres / Services

- 2.6.11 Youth Centre users were full of praise for Youth Centres and many used them to keep themselves occupied, socialise, and for educational needs, such as courses. Participants explained that they provide a safe space for young people.

Youth Centres are really helpful for young people. They can be like a second home for them, where they can feel safe.

Youth Centre user

Youth Centres are very helpful education wise and I come here to take my mind off things.

Youth Centre user

I like to come here to socialise and stuff and meet new people.

Youth Centre user

- 2.6.12 Some participants used the centres as a safe environment to seek advice and support from the staff, which they found invaluable.

It's safe here because you know everyone you can talk to. You just feel comfortable talking to the staff here.

Youth Centre user

There's always someone here you can talk to. They will try and find more than one way to help you with what you are going through.

Youth Centre user

- 2.6.13 Participants mentioned a variety of activities that they participate in at the Youth Centres. These included drama, radio and music projects, courses and trips. A few said they had used the counselling service.

I come here for a course every Wednesday. It's a catering course.

Youth Centre user

I used to go to the Youth Theatre in East Finchley. I did that for about four years and now I volunteer for a programme.

Youth Centre user

I work in a radio station here. I help create features and present them and broadcast the show. It's every month. It gives an opportunity for you to get involved in with whatever best suits your skills. I'm more involved in the broadcasting side of it, while others are more involved in the tech side of it.

Youth Centre user

We go on trips as well. I remember once we went to see a concert.

Youth Centre user

- 2.6.14 Participants discussed how they first found out about Youth Centres and how they became involved. Some participants said they had been referred to a course through school or recommended by a friend and had then found out about other services and activities on offer. Others had found out about the centres through friends, family or their social worker.

I was introduced to it in the summer holidays. I came here to do a course and they told me about other things that go on here.

Youth Centre user

I found out about it through my social worker. She thought it would help me out.

Youth Centre user

I found out about this place through a friend. He was really involved in Youth Centres and still is. He suggested it to me.

Youth Centre user

Barriers to using Youth Centres more

- 2.6.15 The questionnaire found that a lack of relevant activities was a barrier to people using Youth Centres more. Focus group participants were asked if there were particular activities, sessions and services they would like to see on offer at Youth Centres. There was a range of suggestions that included offering more music sessions, extra tuition and homework clubs, and more sporting activities.

I think music sessions should be more frequent. We usually have it on Monday evenings.

Youth Centre user

I think they should offer tuition here for different subjects. You could come here to see a tutor. Maybe like a homework club.

Youth Centre user

I think there should be more sports sessions for kids that don't play that much sport to emphasise the importance of physical fitness. It doesn't have to be like football or tennis, just running maybe.

Youth Centre user

- 2.6.16** The questionnaire also found that not enough information about services was a barrier. Participants explained that not many of their peers are aware of Youth Centres and the services on offer. They suggested that more could be done to raise awareness of them and the facilities and thought that they could be publicised through schools.

I wouldn't have known about this was it not for the course. I've been telling my friends as they didn't know either. I'd never heard about it until the summer holidays. They should publicise it more through schools.

Youth Centre user

I never heard anything about Youth Centres at school and that is a big thing they should have told us about.

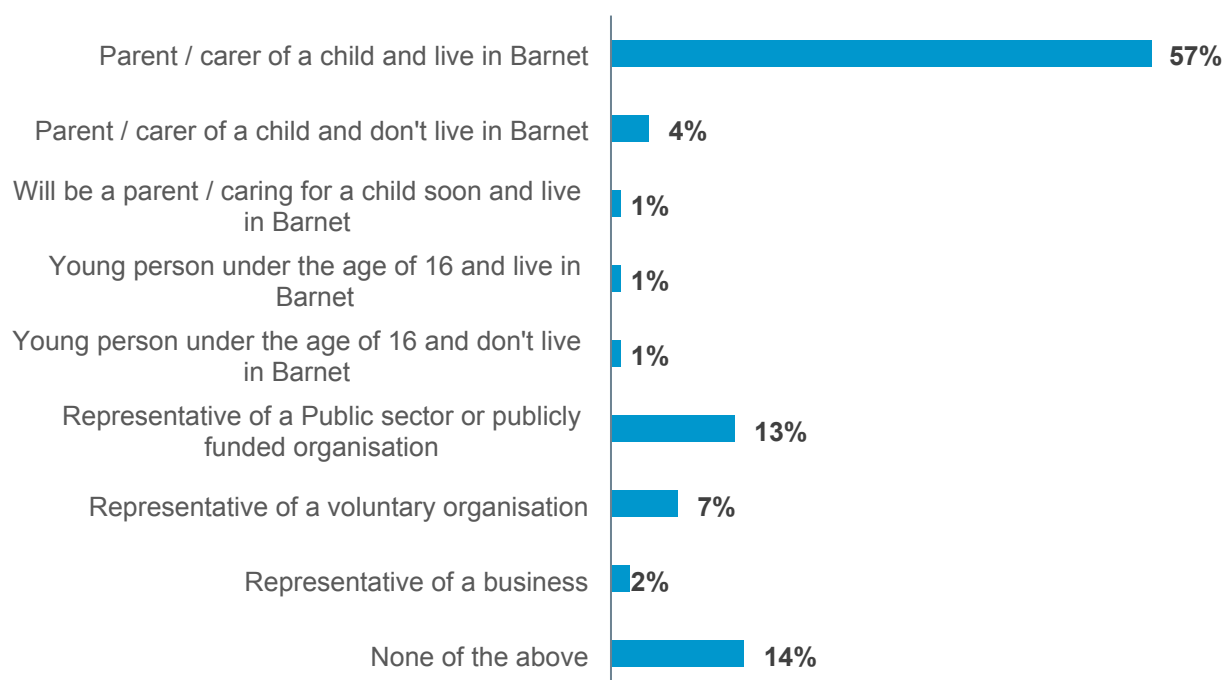
Youth Centre user

3. Detailed respondent and participant profile

3.1 Questionnaire respondent profile

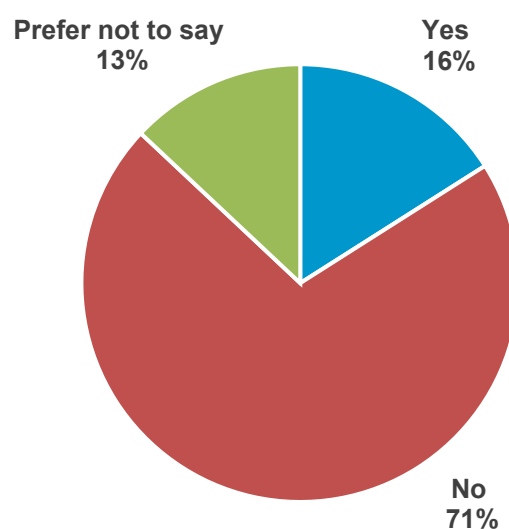
3.1.1 Respondents were asked to identify the capacity in which they were responding to the consultation. Almost three in five (57%) said they were a parent or carer of a child and lived in Barnet. One in eight (13%) said they were a representative of a Public sector or publicly funded organisation. The spread of responses is shown below.

Figure 32 – Please indicate which of the following apply to you
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (99)



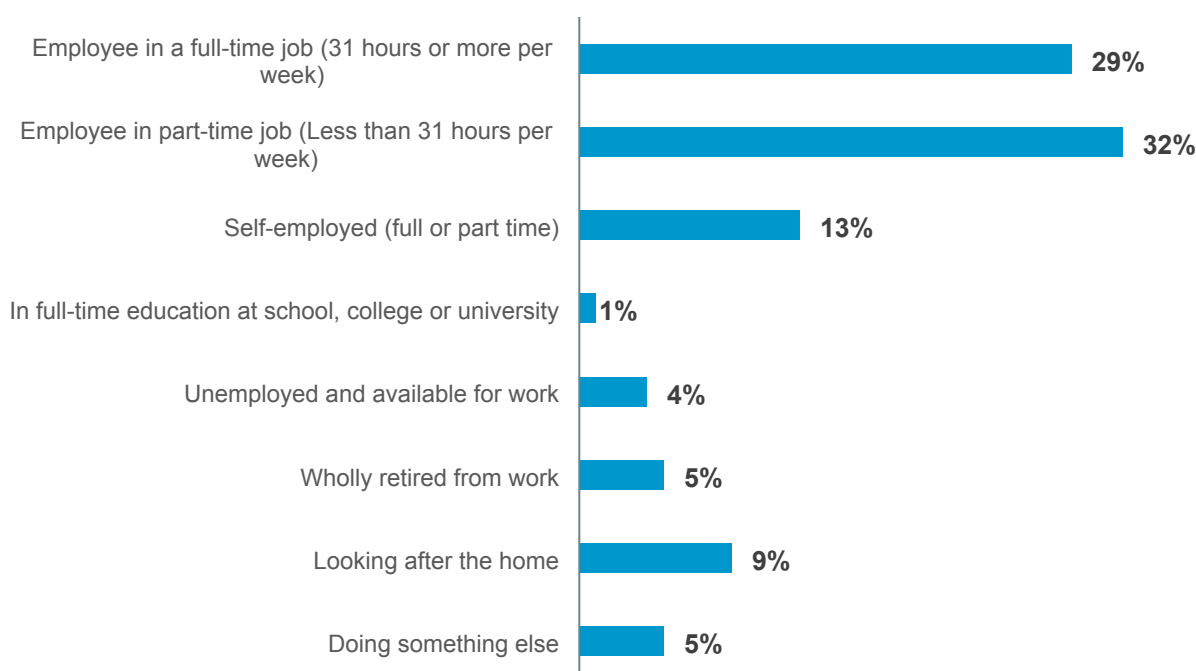
- 3.1.2 Respondents were asked if they were a single parent. One in six (16%) said they were and seven in ten (71%) said they were not. A further 13% said they preferred not to say.

Figure 33 – Are you a single parent?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (75)



- 3.1.3 A third (32%) of respondents said they were an employee in a part-time job and a further 29% were an employee in a full-time job. A further 13% said they were self-employed.

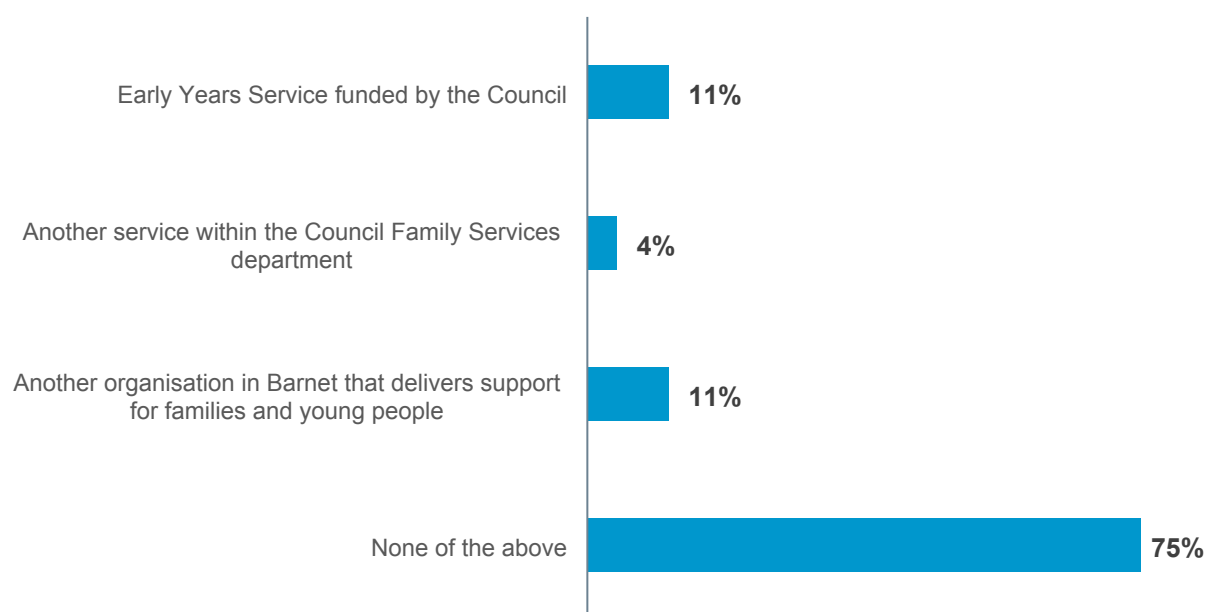
Figure 34 – Are you currently employed, self-employed, retired or otherwise not in paid work?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (75)



- 3.1.4 Respondents were asked if they worked for an employer delivering services that might be affected by the proposals. Three-quarters (75%) said they were not. One in nine (11%) said they worked for another organisation in Barnet that delivers support for families and young people, and 11% worked for the Early Year's Service funded by the council.

Figure 35 – Do you work for a work for an employer delivering services that may be affected by these proposals?

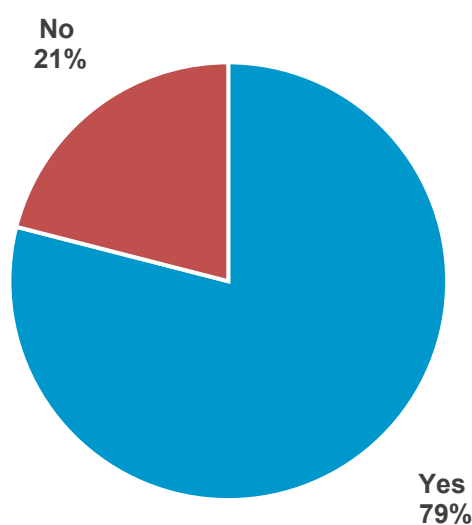
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (55)



- 3.1.5 Eight in ten (79%) respondents said they had children living in their household and 21% said they did not.

Figure 36 – Do you have any children living in your household?

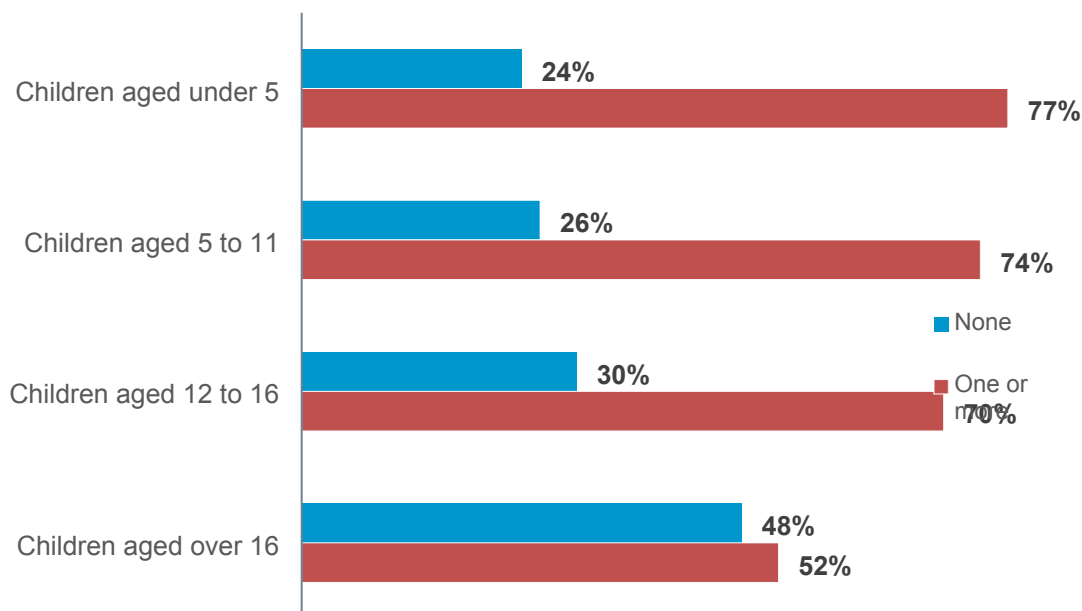
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (73)



- 3.1.6 Respondents were next asked how many children were living in their household and how old they were. Respondents were most likely to say that they had at least one child aged under 5 (77%). A further 74% had at least one child aged 5 to 11 living in their household and 70% had at least one aged 12 to 16.

Figure 37 – How many children live in your household?

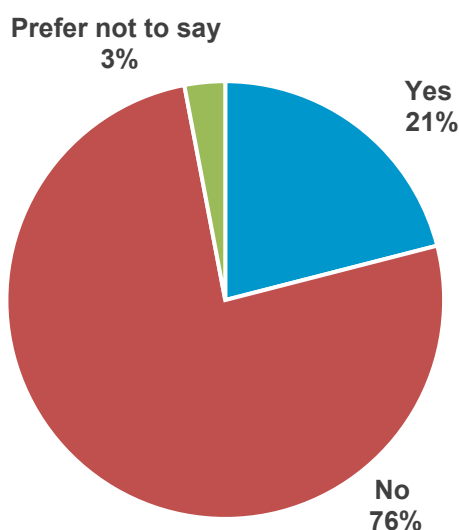
Base: Respondents who had children living in their household and provided a valid answer (Aged under 5: 38, Aged 5-11: 31, Aged 12-16: 27, Aged 16+: 23)



- 3.1.7 One in five (21%) respondents said that at least one child in their household had a long term disability. Eight in ten (83%) said it was one child and 17% said there were two.

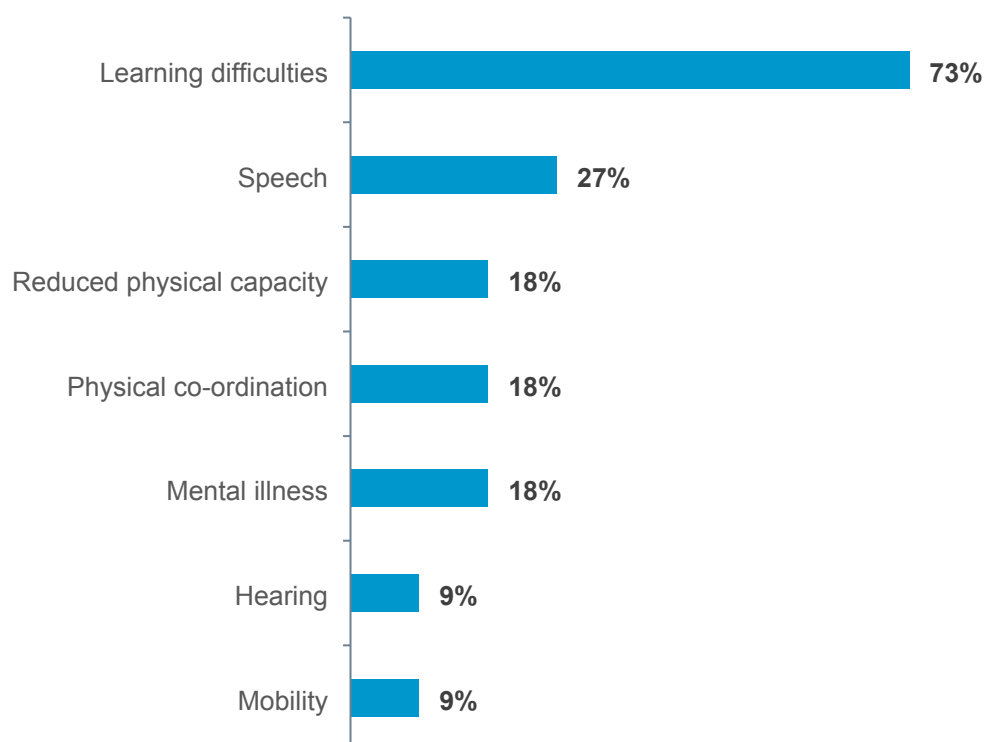
Figure 38 – Do any of the children in your household have a long term disability?

Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (58)



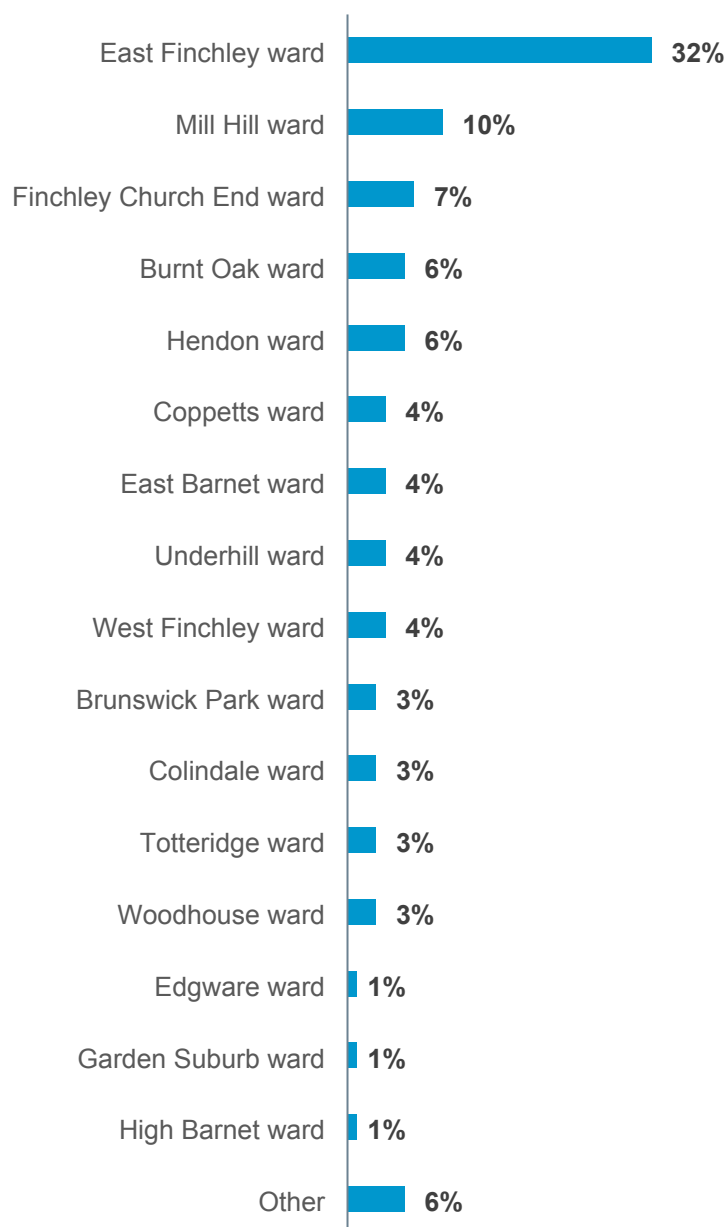
- 3.1.8 Respondents who said there was at least one child living in their household who had a long term disability were asked to indicate the disabilities. Three-quarters (73%) said their child had learning difficulties.
- 3.1.9 The number of respondents who answered this question is small, so caution should be taken when interpreting the results.

Figure 39 – Please indicate the disabilities of the child / children in your household
Base: Respondents who said there was a child living in the household with a long term disability and provided a valid answer (11)



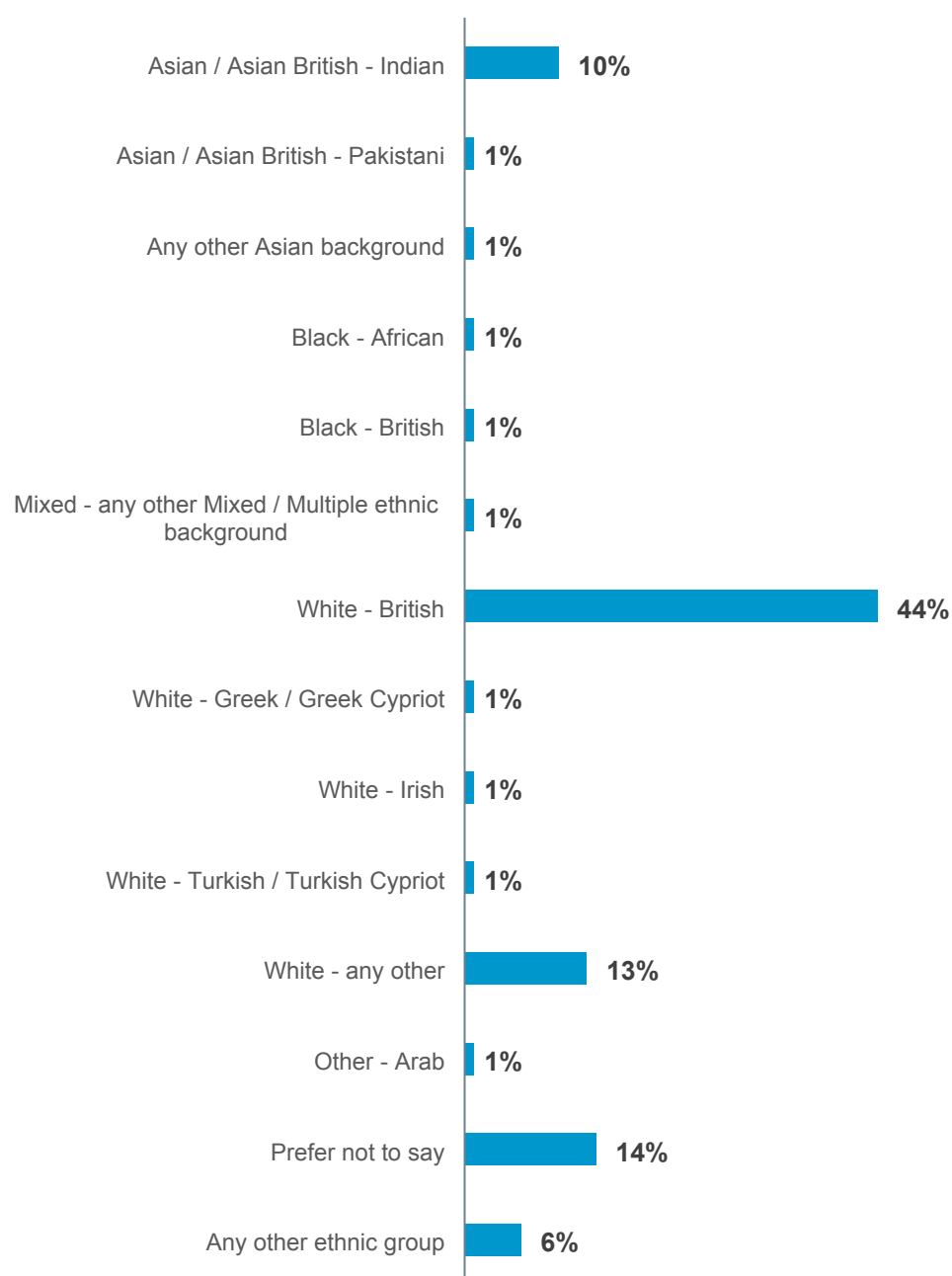
3.1.10 Respondents were asked to identify the ward in which they live. As can be seen below respondents came from a spread of wards, with a significant proportion living in East Finchley.

Figure 40 – Please identify which ward you live in
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (69)



3.1.11 Respondents were asked to identify their ethnic origin. As can be seen, respondents were from a range of different ethnic origins. Just over four in ten (44%) said they were White British. One in seven (14%) said they preferred not to say.

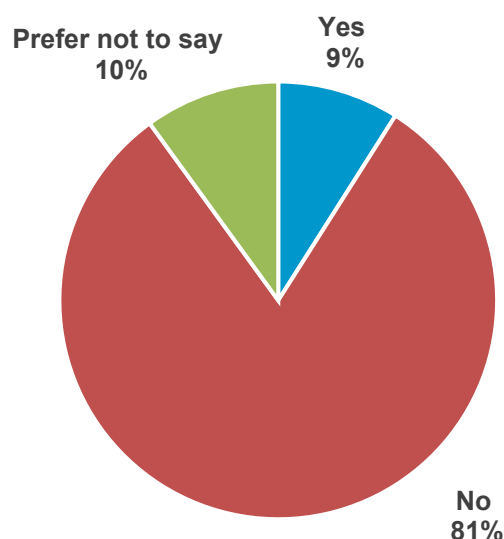
Figure 41 – What is your ethnic origin?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (70)



- 3.1.12 The majority of respondents did not have a long term disability (81%) and 9% said that they did.

Figure 42 – Do you consider that you have a long term disability?

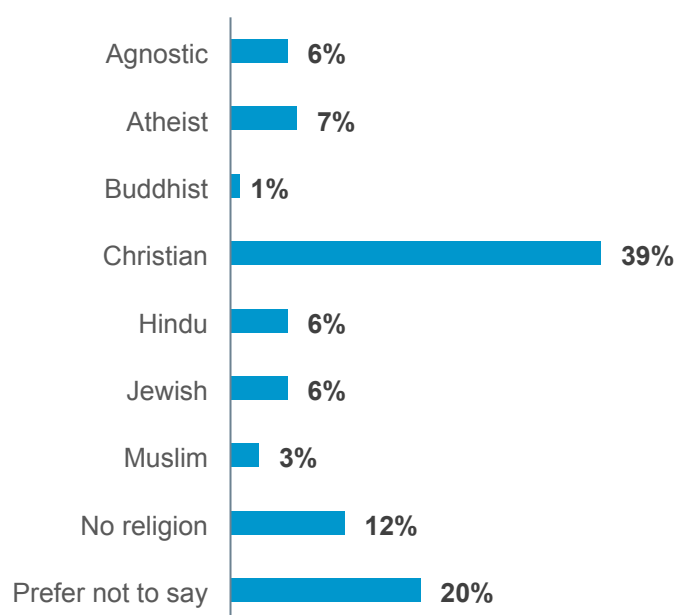
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (70)



- 3.1.13 The five respondents who said they had a long term disability were asked to indicate their disabilities. Two said they preferred not to say, one said it was reduced physical capacity, one learning difficulties and one mental illness.
- 3.1.14 Respondents were asked to identify their religion or belief. Four in ten (39%) said they were Christian and 12% said they did not identify with a religion. A further fifth (20%) said they preferred not to say.

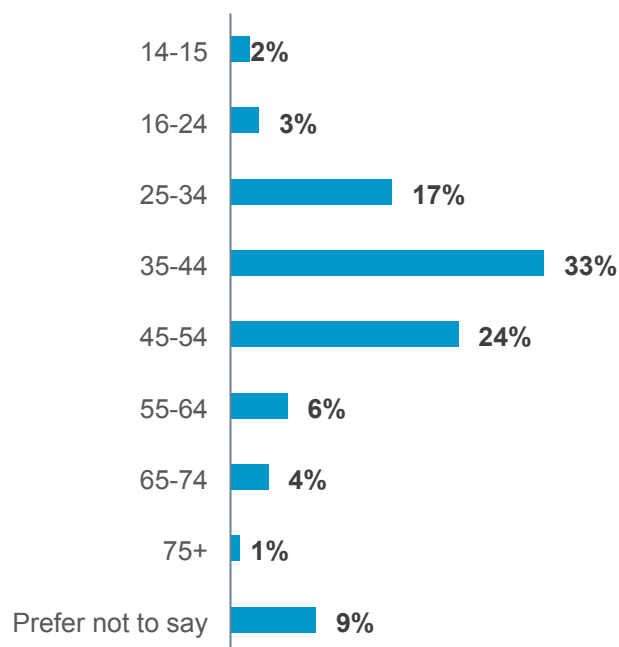
Figure 43 – What is your religion or belief?

Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (69)



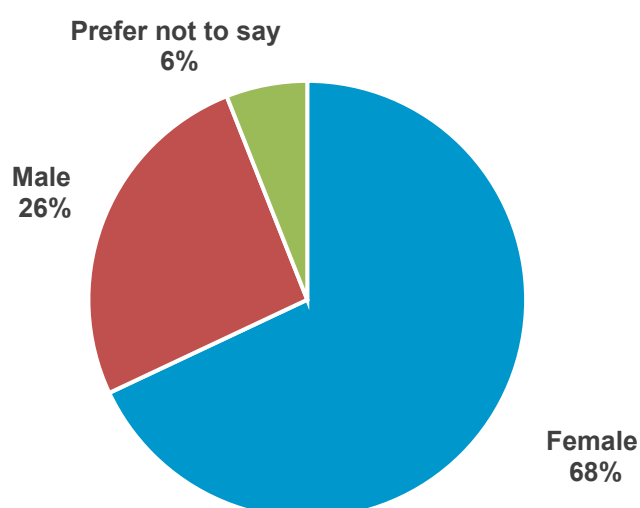
3.1.15 A third (33%) said that they were aged 35-44 and a further 17% were aged 25-34. A quarter (24%) were aged 45-54.

Figure 44 – In which age group to you fall?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (70)



3.1.16 Two-thirds (68%) of respondents were female and 26% were male.

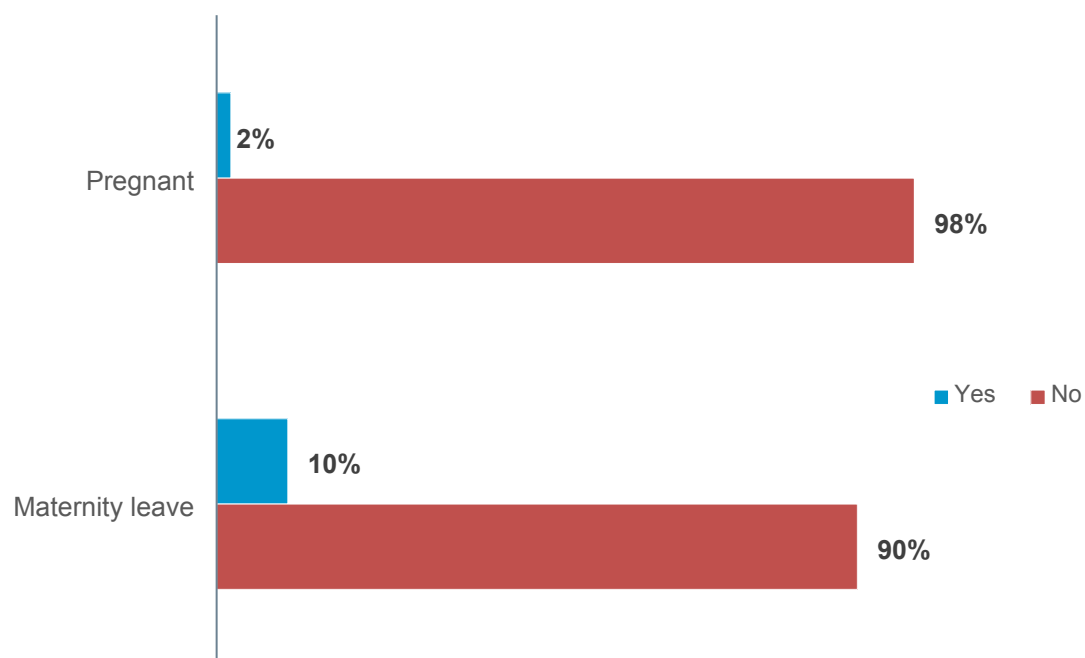
Figure 45 – Are you?
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (72)



3.1.17 Female respondents were asked if they were pregnant or on maternity leave. One in ten (10%) said they were on maternity leave and 2% were pregnant.

Figure 46 – Are you pregnant and / or on maternity leave?

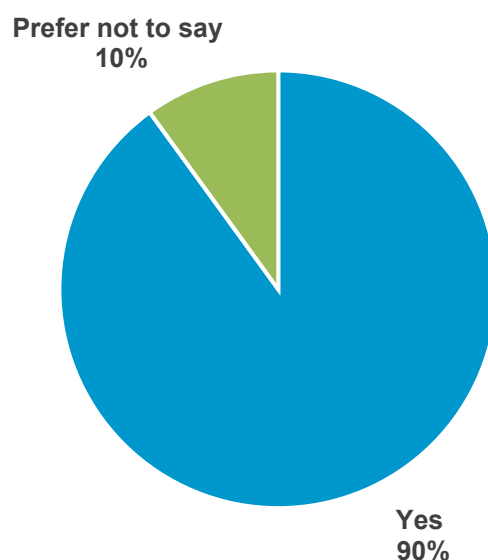
Base: Respondents who were female and provided a valid answer (Pregnant: 43, Maternity leave: 40)



3.1.18 Nine in ten (90%) said that their gender identity was the same as they were assigned at birth and a further 10% said they preferred not to say.

Figure 47 – Is your gender identity the same as you were assigned at birth?

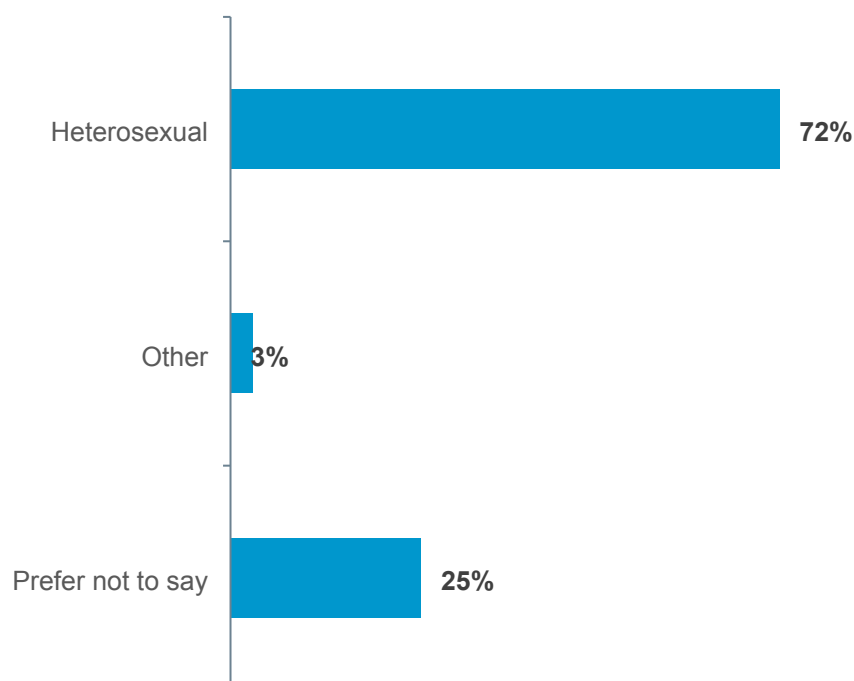
Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (67)



- 3.1.19 Respondents were then asked to identify their sexual orientation. Seven in ten (72%) said they were heterosexual and a quarter (25%) said they preferred not to say.

Figure 48 – What is your sexual orientation?

Base: All respondents providing a valid answer (67)



3.2 Focus group participant profile

- 3.2.1 The table below presents the stratification of the focus groups.

Group	Target group	Stratification
1	Young people aged 12–16 currently using Youth Centres and Youth Services	Males and females Mix of age groups and ethnicity
2	Parents / Carers using Children's Centres in South Barnet	
3	Parents / Carers using Children's Centres in West Barnet	
4	Parents / Carers who do not use Early Help Services	
5	Parent / Carers whose children have a disability or special needs and have used Early Help Services	
6	Parents / Carers using Children's Centres in East Central Barnet	
7	Parents / Carers using Family Support Services	

4. Conclusions and recommendations

- 4.1.1 The following conclusions and recommendations are based on Enventure Research's interpretations of the findings and do not necessarily reflect the views of the council.
- 4.1.2 Although a larger proportion of people agreed with Proposal 1 than disagreed, there was still a fifth that disagreed. Questionnaire respondents and focus group participants that disagreed with the proposals expressed the following concerns:
- It could have a negative impact on the quality of services;
 - It could be difficult for children and young people of all ages to use the same facilities logistically;
 - There is a safety concern about children and young people of all ages using the same facilities;
 - Children's Centres are already at capacity at certain times, with staff overstretched;
 - Without investment in a robust system to share information effectively and appropriately, and investment in training and re-locating staff, the proposal might not work and benefit families.
- 4.1.3 As with Proposal 1, a larger proportion agreed with Proposal 2 than disagreed. However, a third of respondents disagreed. Questionnaire respondents and focus group participants that disagreed with the proposals highlighted the following concerns:
- It could have a negative impact on the quality of services;
 - It could lead to a loss of access for families to specialised staff;
 - It could be difficult for the Early Help Services to guarantee families the continuity of having access to the same support worker all of the time, as there might be staff illness, annual leave and staff may leave;
 - Although the proposal might benefit some families who receive support from the Early Help Services, it might have a negative impact for other families who use Children's Centres on a casual, regular basis as services become more stretched.
- 4.1.4 The council could look to communicate how these concerns in relation to Proposal 1 and Proposal 2 will be addressed in order to reassure service users.
- 4.1.5 There is widespread opposition to exploring the use of other buildings to host Youth activities, with many people's perception being that there is little provision for young people in Barnet and that the facilities are widely used and beneficial. Instead, people were more likely to agree with the council's option of recovering costs for the centres through paid use by other organisations. The council could therefore look to explore this option further.
- 4.1.6 Questionnaire respondents and focus group participants were more likely to agree with the option to support schools to contract with other licensed providers to deliver the Duke of Edinburgh Award support and facilitation service, than the option to reduce costs and increase charges for schools. There was a consensus at the focus groups that alternative providers might be able to provide an efficient service, which could bring the costs down for schools, who have their own budget pressures. The council could therefore consider this option further.

- 4.1.7 Many felt that the council should look for the early help mental health services to cover the cost of clinical supervision (at no charge) for the face to face counselling service for young people. People also felt that, although the online counselling service should be promoted, it should not replace face to face counselling. Face to face counselling is seen as being important for young people and removing the service could be detrimental. The council could therefore explore the option of the early help mental health services covering the cost of clinical supervision (at no charge) and promoting the online counselling service, but not at the expense of face to face counselling.
- 4.1.8 More people disagreed with the option of reducing costs and increasing charges for the Alternative Education Service than agreed. By contrast, more people agreed with the option to find an alternative provider than disagreed. Focus group participants thought that an alternative provider might be able to provide an efficient service which could keep the costs down for schools. However, the importance of schools using an alternative provider that has a good track record and can provide a good quality service was highlighted. If this option is explored further, the council should take this into account.
- 4.1.9 Opinion was split in regards to the options of reducing costs in the delivery of childcare places at Newstead Children's Centre and of seeking an alternative provider who could deliver the service more cost effectively. Focus group participants highlighted that seeking an alternative provider might ensure that the service is delivered cost effectively and is sustainable in the long term. Therefore the council could consider this further.
- 4.1.10 Some questionnaire respondents and focus group participants suggested that the council could maximise use of Youth Centres and Children's Centres to hire out meeting room and hall space to paying organisations and individuals outside of the usual operating hours. This would generate income and help with running costs.
- 4.1.11 Children's Centres and Youth Centres are well used by many in Barnet and people praised the facilities. However, focus group participants felt that awareness of the services and facilities was low amongst the general public. The council could look to promote the services and facilities more widely through working with schools and social workers, and through the use of social media and websites.
- 4.1.12 Youth Centre and Children's Centre users cited a lack of relevant activities as a barrier to using the centres more. Youth Centres and Children's Centres could consult further with users and potential users about potential activities and sessions that people would attend to drive more widespread usage of the centres.

5. Acknowledgments

- 5.1.1 Enventure Research would like to express its gratitude to everyone who took part in the online questionnaire, the focus groups and the public meetings. We would also like to thank Jill Barnes and Rosie Evangelou from the London Borough of Barnet Council for their help and assistance throughout the consultation process.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Consultation document

Appendix 3: Focus group discussion guide

Appendix 4: Verbatim responses to open questions

Full consultation comments

If you disagree with Proposal 1, please tell us why

Concerned that using existing Children's Centres to provide services up to the age of 19 will result in a dilution of services overall. How will the existing centres provide the facilities required by a larger age range (age appropriate play equipment, toileting facilities etc) without increasing the physical space? I would anticipate that parents of younger children would be worried about the impact of older children's behaviour and/or language in front of young children. This option could be seen as an attempt to squeeze services into a smaller space.

Because the area (East Central Barnet) is very large and staff will be sacked. This implies less people doing more work.

Teenagers need their own space. Their requirements are different from pre-schoolers and for some they would want to be treated as more grown up. Have centres for 0-13 and others for 11-19, with an overlap as they develop at different paces, separate from chronological age

Children and young adults are not a homogenous group and is one reason why the NHS treats each age group differently in providing paediatric services. The nature of the services to be provided from these hubs are so wide that the hub is only defined by the age of the client group. This is not a recipe for good targeted services but sounds instead, like a bureaucratic wheeze to shave some costs of Barnet services. It is actually a good idea to keep a critical mass of expert services together because it improves efficiency and efficacy. That is my experience in the NHS and Higher Education.

On the surface of it, a 0-19 hub sounds efficient, and for some practices or short-term/purely information-based delivery projects it may be. Hubs seem to cater for information giving and case management/crisis intervention, but far less for the building and nurturing of long-term relationships and the predominantly social educational approach that takes place through other practices, such as youth work. This may well become a case of cheap becomes dear, or of a model which is weighted too much to one or two practices. It is essential to consider that, as much as they fall within the same strategy area, 0-19s are in reality not a homogenous group, and that they do not approach services in the same way. Children are brought to services by their parents. Parents come of their own accord. Teenagers, especially if dealing with serious vulnerabilities, will not come along as children, and may be questioning a great deal about safety and authority, and, regardless, not yet feeling established as adults who would be comfortable to walk in and talk about their personal needs. As is widely understood from research and practice, teenagers need a separate place to call their own, which they can have a part in defining, and where they can develop their own autonomous adulthood, away from their original family unit. This is especially important if they are dealing with sensitive issues, which they may not want to discuss with their parents around. The hub model also seems to have been devised from a social care perspective, without taking into full consideration the benefits and needs of other approaches - again, the fact that youth work is not a social care intervention, and yet is highly valuable, particularly for those individuals who are flying well below the radar with vulnerabilities, need to build trusting relationships and feel like a person in the round, (rather than just a case), first, are unlikely to walk into a hub to jump straight into discussing problems, and, critically, who may not qualify for the threshold of social care intervention. By generalising practice in this way, and moving away from dedicated spaces, you are effectively cutting specific professional youth work practice, which, as mentioned, may result in cheap becomes dear. It is well understood that youth work is true early intervention, particularly for those who do not qualify for social care, or who would not feel comfortable talking in a stigmatising or formal way that is de-rooted

from relationship.
The children's centre environment for younger children is a completely different environment to that required for older youths. I am in favour of keeping these separate.
Where there is wonderful support for troubled and challenged kids going on in the tiny number of Barnet youth centres that remain, please KEEP this work going, and KEEP these centres. My child (now 19) attended Finchley Youth Theatre until last year, and it is a wonderful support for kids with bereavements, learning difficulties, and lack of self-esteem. This magic cannot be simply shut down and rebuilt somewhere else. It could take years to replicate the magic that is being done there. And it would be traumatic for kids who are already suffering. If it ain't broke, don't fix it!
Existing children centres are not designed for nor inclusive of teenagers
This proposal has three significant flaws: 1) The East Central Barnet Zone is too large to provide the necessary localised services required by families, especially those in the outer edges - such as East Finchley. 2) Finchley Youth Theatre is a specialist arts space. It is essential that it remains as a facility for the wider community. Combining a range of other activities/support services in there will take up space and reduce its availability as an arts space. A better suggestion would be to work in partnership with Archer Academy who could, with the right agreement, provide useful management, lettings and income generating activities, thereby increasing the use of this important resource amongst local schools and community groups. 3) Your proposal suggests that if you cannot find a partner for FYT then you would seek to direct schools to other suppliers of services. This is not practical or desirable. FYT is currently hired by Archer Academy for 2 days per week but there is huge potential to increase formal and informal usage. There are no alternative spaces within the vicinity providing the facilities required for arts and performance.
The removal of the designation of children's centres, and therefore the OFSTED inspection requirements will further dilute the services already suffering from central government and local government cuts. Access to multi-agency services delivered in children's centres are already limited with long waiting times, which will only be stretched further when increasing to 0-19 provision.
because I am extremely concerned about the idea of removing CAMHS workers out of the NHS and making them answerable to Barnet Council instead. This will mean that they lose the huge advantages that they have from having access to the NHS database and resources and supervision. It will increase risk and decrease usefulness. It really bothers me (I am a Headteacher).
The words might sound nicer as the reality will appear - as often with re-locations
Whilst I understand that families comprise of children of different ages, the needs of teenagers are vastly different to that of under fives and there would be little overlap in staff needed.
I would like the centres to be reviewed annually by central government and existing regulatory body.
Not enough room to co-locate services in all children's centres and it can be intimidating for little children if the place is full of bigger older children.
Not suitable
Largely adults and children services should be kept separate. There would be too much pressure on resources in one area.
It seems that this proposal is just designed to make cuts to an already stretched service
Some children's centres such as Coppetts Wood are part of an unsuitable site. Coppetts Wood is part of a primary school site and as such opening it up to more people could create safeguarding issues for the school affecting its OFSTED. In addition Coppetts Wood is set up for early years and if you extend to 19 years at least half of the site would have to be redesigned to suit older children's need. Thus limiting the opportunities for early years provision which has proven to be integral to children's development. I can see that money needs to be saved but hope you consider each site individually and don't just close those

that cannot be made fit for up to 19.
I understand that it is helpful for services to be in a nearby area. However the services that are required for each age group are very different and should not be watered down. What is on offer for young children and for young people has been diluted and cut continuously over the years and there is such a minimal service now anyway. My concern is that by joining them together they are watered down even more. How would you have a children's centre service in the same building as a youth service and a job centre? It would not be safe or appropriate.
My main concern is fit for purpose. Are the Centers themselves fit for purpose to support through to 19? How will it be co-ordinated or is it just an excuse to save money by corralling more people looking for support into a smaller space? How will these centers be funded to adequately support all of those up to 19, or is it another excuse to cut staffing levels to a skelaton service? If no longer subjected to "Early Years" regulations, then what legal guidelines are in place? Will the centers be subjected to "first come/first served" such as the Ed Psych department which can/does lead to waiting for the actual service regardless of it being considered "available"?
Introduces an extra layer in between parents and provision for children with complex needs.
I think that Barnfield Children Centre do an excellent job. They are a life line to the local community. I worry these changes will include changes to this children centre and the amazing work they already do.
For First time mum looking for a home from home setting for myself and young baby. I am fully supported by my local Children's Centre but would not be comfortable with lots of youths or troubled young adults being around. If I wanted my child around that environment, I would live in Watling Park!!!
These are cuts hidden in language of change
The children's centres provide essential early intervention and support to families in need. We all know as fact that early intervention is key in preventing all sorts of family and educational issues. Lots of families who need early help and support would not have the same sense of belonging in a 0-19 unit. Lots of the signposting and interventions would need to take place elsewhere meaning that vital opportunities will be missed to strike whilst the iron is hot and catch these parents quickly during / at the end of sessions that they are accessing (eg right now, you can easily speak to parents following a group or activity and signpost them to the right support or discuss with a family support worker an issue there and then. All of that would fall away.
Will create a muddying of service identity and service provision to the detriment of customers

If you disagree with Proposal 2, please tell us why

Although I like the idea of a keyworker who can help families navigate services for children of different ages and needs, I would be concerned that it would be difficult to recruit professionals who can deliver a specialist service across a wide age range. I would see a keyworker role as supporting families as advocates and signposting to more specialist input.
Many people are better suited to working with younger than older children and vice versa, and the skills required are so varied and so different that it is better to have high-quality specific staff than mediocre all-rounders.
This is watering down the specialism staff may have with different age groups. The organisation should be able to communicate with all staff and consider a family as a whole, but individual members of a family should have access to staff members that specialise in their age group. The needs of 2 year old are completely different from those of 19 year olds. By specialising with different groups, staff increase their understanding of that group. Barnet has a large enough population to be able to do this and should aim for specialising to give improved service
You will be mixing physiology and pathophysiology. By that, I mean that youth services are for healthy young people whereas social care is for people with problems. Best to keep them separate and not mix them because they deal with "youth"
0-19s are not a homogenous group and have specific needs according to their age group. Furthermore, within each age group there are different levels of need. For example, teenagers go through a specific form of neurobiological growth and accompanying separation-individuation which means that they have specific relational needs, a strong desire to establish their own peer relationships and a very strong period of questioning that takes place during that time. Specialist youth workers are highly skilled at engaging with this age group from a specific social pedagogy, and are also able to spot early on signs of vulnerability or safeguarding risks, and draw them out in a way that protects relationship and autonomy, and helps young people not to disappear. Research and practice has show clearly that this approach has enabled young people to develop emotional and relational healthy in the face of unprecedented societal pressures, and it has even led to the uncovering of serious risky behaviour - through the context of safe youth worker relationships that are long-term. Reducing specialist approaches, will effectively de-skill the workforce and is not the same as addressing silo working. Silo working is addressed through mutual understanding, not by preventing staff from being able to practice with a depth of professional expertise, but forcing them to generalise.
Staff are specialised at working with specific age groups. Expecting them to then broaden the age group they work with isn't fair and would reduce the quality of service provided.
Teenagers like my daughter don't want to go to a nursery-like centre, and new mothers (sleep-deprived, learning to breast-feed and vulnerable) don't want to go to a youth centre for loud, active teenagers. This is not conducive to efficient, well-used services targeted at the different stages of a child's life.
Small children and teenagers require different expertises. Staff who work with young children, may not have the skills or approach to also work with teenagers
Whilst the principle of combining services into a 'one-stop shop' is important in enabling access the reduction of resources is likely to exacerbate difficulties in timely access to services. Further, FYT is a specialist arts centre and should be used to enhance this, with use by non-arts related staff will likely detract from this resource.
In order for children and families' interests to be protected we consider it would be necessary for staff to receive high quality training to prepare them for the changes in their roles - supporting a young person is very different to providing support in the early years. We have some concerns that, given the assertion that budgets will be reduced, this may result in professional staff being asked to 'do more with less'. The local

authority (â€œLAâ€œ) must ensure they are meeting requirements set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, in particular the need to consider how this will impact children and young people with highly specialised or low-incidence needs (para 3.68 onwards) and the requirement to support preparation for adulthood (para 1.39 onwards).
Feels like this does not give as much value to the end customer.
Does not provide the best value for customers
Experience of particular age ranges is highly determinant of effective service: making support staff work across all the 0-19 range will dilute the experience.
There is little if no evidence on the consultation document that there will be savings by restructuring of services, nor that front line services will not be reduced. Children's centres are already structured to have access to multi-agency services, however this has not necessarily led to quicker access to other agencies. For example, when a recent referral was made for my grandson to SALT by the GP, this resulting in being referred to a children's centre and being placed on a waiting list to attend a workshop which was over three months waiting time. this is despite having already paid for an independent SALT assessment showing severe delay in social, and speech and language delay. How is increasing the age range to 0-19 going to make already stretched services more accessible?.
It is a wide age range with differing needs. Current staff have training and experience of their own age groups and the problems they face therefore can offer bespoke advice. The cost to train all remaining staff to offer a full range of advice for 0-19 yrs will be costly and time consuming. Use what you have already !
Using less staff will make a big difference in the quality of the service and you will find that the remaining staff will be overwork, overtired and off sick more often, so temporary staff will need to be employed so more money will be needed otherwise the service won't be provided
0-19 is a vast age range, each age presents its own issues and challenges for staff. It is far better to continue with the existing system as staff with the expertise to work with specific age ranges, managed by staff with experience in those age ranges are maintained.
Some staff would be more experienced in working with the different ages - 0/19 is a very big age range
Staff will have specialisms and expertise in dealing with different age groups. This would become weaker under your proposals
Hasn't this all been tried before, it just doesn't work
Different skill sets needed to deal with such a large age difference.
Less staff- less help out there for us
Expertise is surely needed with different age groups...
It will lead to people who are not specialised in certain areas dealing with the children. I think a central starting point with someone who knows all the services available is best and then distributed to specialists as needed.
Dilution of skills and specialisms. Also it makes it easier for Barnet Council to implement yet more cuts to services under the cloak of efficiency savings.
Management will not have the specialist skills to develop and support the professional groups, which will increase risk to clients and also effect retention of staff.
This proposal appears to be purely a cost cutting exercise and is not focused on what families in Barnet need
Workers have specific knowledge and speciality and this could be lost if a generic worker is created. a family of a new born baby will need a skilled worker that has a specific knowledge as would a 16yr old.
Schools are the one of the best places to have 0-19 services as it's a natural way of serving families. CC's are best managed by schools.

I think that the early years staff who have worked with my family have benefitted from being solely focused on early years. Early years provision is decidedly different to older families needs and its importance is often overlooked. The restructuring you propose can only result in redundancies or diluting the staff's professional knowledge of this age group and therefore will ultimately lead to a lessening in the availability and quality of care received by early years families. I can see that it will save money by restructuring but I hope you have taken into account the effect fully qualified early years staff have on families and that you have someone on the decision making team who has a good understanding of the value and professional knowledge required by early years staff in delivering effective provision. It is not something that a lay person can do and it will not support your staff by asking early years specialists to extend their work up to 19. Ultimately all ages will lose out here. However the idea that support does not end/transfer at 5 is also appealing.

The complexity of different needs at different ages mean that although integrated oversight and programming is beneficial, it's highly beneficial to have specialists too - ie specialist children's workers, specialist youth workers. The difference between engaging a 17 year old and a 3 years is obviously massive, and specialists should not just deliver but also design and manage projects.

Again this is a similar point to my answer for proposal 1. My view is that this is simply about saving money and cutting services. It is very hard for people to be trained across a broad range without losing the specialisms and skills that they have. They would need a high level of training and supervision in order to carry out their jobs well enough to support all of the complexities that each age group entails.

This is nothing more than a cost saving proposal. By generalising the staff supporting families, instead of focusing on year groups or SEN/Disability, etc, Barnet is Diminishing the expertise of the Staff! Someone supporting Early Years will have more knowledge of those years than anyone who can offer general "family" support! This becomes incredibly more imperative when considering SEN/Disability especially in the years 0-5! How can someone support all years 0-19 and offer a good level considering the knowledge and expertise needed to appropriately support those children? They cannot, it is that simple. So therefore this "family" supporter will eventually be faced with a family situation that they do not have enough knowledge of and the family will be faced with inadequate support, be "referred" to someone with the knowlwdge, therefore waiting for support and wasting valuable time, or at worst, be left with NO Support. All of this when the family, could have had support initially from staff with expertise in the year group as it is now. How is this adding value to any resident in Barnet when at best it will be tying up families in a system of "general support" versus actual expertise? Consequentially wasting much valuable time for any family with any issues/difficulties/situations out of what is deemed "general family care", leading to an increased length of time to actually recieving the Right support. How is that fair, right or actually caring for the people of Barnet? With population growth comes growth as comparable in the numbers of disability and SEN, as a disabled parent with a disabled child, I find this proposal horrifying that it is even being considered. The numbers of families with disability or SEN, under this proposal, in my opinion have a real danger of "falling through the cracks" of this system and at worst will experience a longer and more frustrating wait for the right support. This proposal is unfit for purpose in my opinion and needs to be discarded immediately.

In your proposal you are not mentioning about provision of breastfeeding services across the borough. Barnet Breastfeeding services are currently being decommissioned. The new proposed plan is to integrate the service "in house" and to be delivered by volunteers. The money saved from this service will be used to employ 5 to 7 health visitors who, they claim, will be able to provide breastfeeding support along side volunteers and breastfeeding buddies (whatever this means). I must disagree with this proposal as it is a unrealistic expectation to expect to run a service through volunteers. The service will lack continuity and professional expertise, as volunteers will probably have a limited time

available to give towards delivering this support and they will lack the commitment that comes along with a paid position, meaning a compromise to turn up at work, to be held accountable and receive support and supervision from a infant feed specialist. Mothers across the borough have not been consulted in regards to these proposals. We would like to be involved in the decision making process as the provision of breastfeeding support is vital in improving health outcomes in mothers and babies, address health inequalities issues and comply to the guidelines issued by NICE, BFI and Public Health England, and that local councils need to have in mind when designing the provision of their services.
I feel that our parents benefit from the expertise that is delivered by staff specifically qualified in early years and similarly by staff who are specialised at working with older children. 'Jack of all trades but master of none' comes to mind.
Children's centre staff do a fantastic job in supporting parents and children. I believe if it isn't broke, don't fix it
Children Centre managers are crucial to their role of managing the ins and outs of a children's centre with a great deal of partnership with different professionals. There needs to be that link and a manager based at all children centre's however Locality managers are not as essential if each centre is managing to run itself.
These are just cuts to services
I disagree with proposal 2 due to the possibility of staff being over worked and having too many families with such a broad age range. I also feel management posts play a vital role to the services and this proposal states fewer management posts.
This is driven by the need to save money. It will degrade the quality and speed of service delivery for families who need help.

If you disagree with any of the proposals for each of the services within Proposal 3, please tell us why

Concerned that with any of these proposals that services to children and young people will suffer as a result of cost saving and/or increase the costs to families
I do not want East Finchley Youth Theatre to be disposed of, and I fear that if current users are encouraged to find services elsewhere this is what will happen. FYT is a fantastic community resource and should be kept in the community for the community. I am aware that the Archer Academy are hiring this facility two days a week and believe that they would be well placed to take over and run the space. The school has strong links within the community and with local schools and youth groups and is a local partner who could actually expand the use of the facility and potentially attract extra income. Please do not dispose of this fantastic facility; let a local school take it over and make it a success.
Finchley Youth Centre must continue to be used to provide performing arts activities for young people, and the Council should continue to provide such activities at a low cost so they are affordable for as many people in the community as possible. The building and the community around it provide comfort, enrichment, support and togetherness to young people and their families and even the wider community. Without it running as it is, Barnet would be losing one of its only high-quality theatre spaces, its young people would be losing a place of safety, education and creative and self-discovery, and families would be left in dire need of support for their young people outside of school environments, which themselves are often hugely inadequate or not suited to individuals.
Do not close Finchley Youth Activity Centre. It has been operating for over 70 years and is a well established, well run place for teenagers and is accessible to many by public transport because of where it is. It is a focal point for teenagers. Why destroy this? Barnet Council are increasing the numbers of people living in Barnet considerably but are not providing the services for the population of the borough. Why do you consider that an "alternative provider" can deliver a service "more cost effectively"? Have you not learned from other contracts that they often fail and reduce the level of provision and also cost more as the organisation has to make a profit? Why does this survey have so small boxes that it's near impossible to read what I have typed?
Regarding the Finchley Youth Centre; I strongly disagree with the option to explore use of other buildings to host youth activities and not utilise Finchley Youth Centre to the maximum. Finchley Youth Activity Centre was purchased in 1947 by Middlesex County Council. It has been running in the capacity of a youth activity centre since 1948 (that's 70 years!). In 1996, to support the work being done here the Friends of Finchley Youth Theatre was set-up as a charity. This is a partnership which the council could use to their advantage. For example, to apply for additional funding support available to charities and other organisations. Finchley Youth Activity Centre has unique selling ideas that no other venue the council owns have. It is located in a Central location; has a dance studio with sprung flooring, full-length mirrors and air conditioning; a 68 seater black-box theatre with a lighting desk, mixing desk, stage lanterns and a projector. The building has also been recently altered by the council to include a private one-to-one counselling space. There is also space for parents or young people to wait, there is a computer space for young people who may not have access at home AND an office space that could be used by council employees. The art-specific aspects the council is highly unlikely to find in other buildings. It is also unlikely to ever be another hub with so much to offer the youth service. I hope that by recovering the running costs and not using other buildings the council and other organisations could continue to deliver non-statutory inclusive and accessible sessions in art and drama, as well as statutory sessions. Also, that these non-statutory sessions would continue to be at a price point that is accessible to all.
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Spending on these key services should be maintained.

For both Greentops and Finchley Youth Activity Centre, I agree in principle that the idea of reducing overheads is a good one. However, there is a great risk in reducing the capital the borough owns and has as a dedicated space for young people, particularly those who are vulnerable or struggling with SEND needs. Losing capital premises forces the service to be at the mercy of the market in searching for less costly premises. It also means that there is not a sense of permanency for service users and staff - this is especially important for young people, who have a particular need for dependability and premises that they can make their own and feel safe in and that they can rely on. For the DofE, the council may well cater to a specific group of young people who do not want to access through their school for a range of reasons. Through the Council they will be led by professional youth workers, which is extremely valuable, especially for those who struggle with vulnerabilities. A licensed provider may not have the skillset to support vulnerable young people and to help them stay the course. Critically, a licensed provider will also not be looking out for cross-referral opportunities in the same way as a Council youth worker. Again, this may be a case of cheap becomes dear for certain user groups, who would benefit from long-term relationships built up with youth workers, who are able to support them over various projects, including the DofE. Barnet's mental health care has not been represented well in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The council needs to ensure that cheap does not become dear by cutting services, where, in fact, additional support is required. I am not convinced that online engagement will be an adequate support for vulnerable young people who (as research amply demonstrates) are in particular need for help in building strong, face-to-face relationships. CAMHS provision ends at 18, whereas, the Youth Service can support beyond this age, and can help users not fall through the cracks after 18. The Youth Service's AP caters to a specific group of young people who are particularly vulnerable to seriously risky behaviour. Cost-effectiveness is not simply about reducing outgoings, but it is about addressing ingrained problems that play out over the long-term, and may also present further cost to the council down the line if not dealt with now. Perhaps the delivery of the AP can be reconfigured, but I urge the council to closely consider the benefit that the Youth Service brings in the level of expertise of its staff in working with the user group, and the invaluable cost-effectiveness of cross-referral that naturally takes place. I also object to the use of the term 'running at a loss' that has been used - if a quality service is provided, then this is not a loss, but a gain. Granted, the idea of developing sustainable income streams is a good one, but it is important to not be misleading in the use of the term 'running at a loss' - these are outgoings, not losses, per se.

We pay our Council Tax so that local children are supported properly. If Barnet can't afford to do this, then Barnet should, finally, raise it from Council Taxes. That is what Council taxation is for. There are a lot of very rich people in Barnet, and many would pay a bit more to have teenagers supported so that they are less likely to get involved in gangs, drugs, knife crime and jail. This would also be cost effective for society. Barnet has a responsibility to support children.
1. Youth activities including space for their provision is essential. Tarling Road is an alternative to Finchley Youth Centre, but only if there is sufficient community space. 2. DoE is important for university applications and should be funded. 3. Mental health support for young people in the borough is severely lacking and needs more investment. 4. Pupil Referral Units are expensive, but children excluded from school are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. They need investment. 5. Newstead provides a valuable service. Co-location within the building should provide an income stream for Newstead.
Youth services may be non statutory, however the benefit to individuals and wider society of access to provision such as the performing arts at low or no cost is huge, measured in better attention at school, mental health, fitness, inclusion, fun, happiness. Why is there no alternative to invest in some of these services such as the Youth Theatre to increase their impact?
It is not remotely feasible to increase the costs to schools for the provision of alternative education. School budgets are under extreme pressure and such a move will lead to more NEET students. The only appropriate way to address management/cost control of Finchley Youth Theatre is to partner with Archer Academy - who already hire the facility two days per week. They bring the infrastructure to increase lettings (to a range of users) both daytime and evening, as well as capacity to attract new funding.
We consider the premise of the proposals relating to Alternative Education is incorrect, as it is wrongly described as a non-statutory service. Under s. 19 of the Education Act 1996, each LA is obliged to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them. This education must be full-time education, unless for reasons which relate to the physical or mental health of the child, it would not be in the child's best interests for full-time education to be provided for the child. Additionally, for children and young people with EHC plans, under s. 42 of this Children and Families Act 2014 the LA must secure the special educational provision specified in that plan for the child or young person "this duty ultimately rests with the LA, not the school, and continues to apply when a child is out of school for whatever reason. As such we think the wording of the proposal is misleading. The responsibility for sourcing alternative education cannot be passed entirely from the LA to schools. The LA must ensure that alternative education is available for all children out of school for whatever reason, including those who are not on the roll of a school. With regards to the counselling proposals, we believe it is vital for the Council to retain face-to-face counselling rather than moving to an online-only model. Many children and young people with SEN may not be able to access online counselling because of the nature of their needs. The service available needs to take into account differing needs of children and young people.
Does not deliver value to the end customers
The East Central Barnet area is far too big. It is essential that services to the East Finchley community are not lost and that vulnerable families are forced to travel further to access them. Furthermore provision should be locally based. Any partner agency should be a local organisation - such as a local school, Martin or Archer - and not for profit. Local assets must be protected and any proposal must ensure these are maintained for community benefit in perpetuity.
strongly disagree with the option to explore use of other buildings to host youth activities and not utilise Finchley Youth Centre to the maximum. Finchley Youth Activity Centre was

purchased in 1947 by Middlesex County Council. It has been running in the capacity of a youth activity centre since 1948 (that's 70years!). In 1996, to support the work being done here the Friends of Finchley Youth Theatre was set-up as a charity. This is a partnership which the council could use to their advantage. For example, to apply for additional funding support available to charities and other organisations. Finchley Youth Activity Centre has unique selling ideas that no other venue the council owns have. It is located in a Central location; has a dance studio with sprung flooring, full-length mirrors and air conditioning; a 68 seater black-box theatre with a lighting desk, mixing desk, stage lanterns and a projector. The building has also been recently altered by the council to include a private one-to-one counselling space. There is also space for parents or young people to wait, there is a computer space for young people who may not have access at home AND an office space that could be used by council employees. The art-specific aspects the council is highly unlikely to find in other buildings. It is also unlikely to ever be another hub with so much to offer the youth service. I hope that by recovering the running costs and not using other buildings the council and other organisations could continue to deliver non-statutory inclusive and accessible sessions in art and drama, as well as statutory sessions. Also, that these non-statutory sessions would continue to be at a price point that is accessible to all.

Finchley Youth Activity Centre: I am a local resident of East Finchley and also have 20+ year of property experience. I am confident that I could find a way to keep open the FYT permanently by utilising other parts of the building. I am happy to discuss and can be contacted at james@langleyrooms.com or 07974 776377.

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Reduced cost means reduced service or overstretched service. These are areas that should have more investment not less. Alternative buildings won't be as local. Online mental health services are not as effective as face to face. Alternative provision is likely to see increased demand, not less, so needs additional funding.

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The questions for 5 do not provide enough context in order to make an informed answer to what is being asked. For example, Barnet Council has already reduce the childcare provision it is responsible for therefore reducing any possibility of economies of scale. Why is it that Barnet Council cannot run alternative school provision service than another organisation, and what would barnet schools prefer? These questions remind me of a consultation carried out by Islington Council some years ago where they asked would residents prefer subsidise childcare or lower council tax? I wonder what the residents with no children under five voted for?

Early mental health services - important that children are able to access mental health services as soon as possible to prevent problems becoming worse. Access to mental health services should be a priority. Kooth on-line service should be promoted and made available as well as keeping the above service. Young people need all the help they can get to ensure good mental health. Long term cost of mental health problems, if they are helped early, will be far worse for the person, for our community, for educational outcomes, and cost to the NHS mental health services. Alternative school provision is extremely important. If costs are reduced the children that need this service will be further disadvantaged. If schools are charged more then they will be more reluctant to refer a student to an alternative provision. Children who use this service need it. Without it they are at a huge risk of not attending school and the long term cost of children not

succeeding in education is far greater. Children attending alternative provisions are already at a disadvantage, to change the provision would be to disadvantage them (and their families) even further.
We should retain the face to face counselling services for our most vulnerable. Retaining in house services usually means higher quality provision and more experienced staff as the pay is better. And work terms and conditions are more secure. we need to ensure equality provision and consistency for families to forge secure relationships.
Mental health services are already stretched - you can't just add more costs to them. Leave CAMHS workers in CAMHS and sort out costs by a different route. You should not have NHS workers transferred to the Council
It seems that working people who pay their taxes religiously and fees for clubs and other activities get less and less services from the council. If the buildings could be used by other organisations to do other activities e.g. Sunday schools, scouts groups, neighborhood associations, local charities at a competitive price, you could recover some money to fund the staffing costs to run the services. Also you could ask for volunteers, apprentices, university students etc to help to run the clubs. I believe that couching could also be done by phone, my employer provides this service and has proved very useful, although I understand that people with mental health problems will need highly trained specialized support e.g. psychotherapists, psychologists etc, is the NHS providing this service? I believe that people without mental health issues could benefit from a couch approach, can this be done externally by charitable organisations?
If the Council cannot continue to support FYT and the services it runs, then the option should be given to support the running costs of the theatre, including the building, to be maintained through a charity / trust. The council should avoid the option of selling the building to private developers before giving the residents of East Finchley and Barnet the opportunity to raise funds and set up a charity / trust for the Theatre if the council feels unable to continue to support it.
The Finchley Youth Theatre should be kept alive and should be much better funded by the council as a unique token of the great times of small regional theatres.
The role of the council is to fund some community space / services and manage them properly. You can't just sell it all or shut it down - what are we paying for? Why is Newstead childcare not being run within budget? Other nurseries have to manage. I have just commented on Finchley based services that I know.
Due to personal experiences that online support is not as beneficial compared to face to face support
I do not believe that an online programme can replace face to face service.
I think the DofE award gives much more to the community than just the pure cost, with confidence and a sense of duty to the community, so weighing it up in a pure cost exercise does not give it the value it deserves, so the council should help provide it to as many children as possible!
As the largest publicly funded provider of services with a historic tradition of being the main elected community provider it behoves the council to desist in continuously striving to find ways to reduce its responsibilities to the community it is elected to serve.
Another provider at reduced costs I would be concerned about the continuity of contract and consistent quality of care
All of the above to which I disagree would be detrimental to young people having access to and receiving help and services
Not all services have to be money oriented because in the long run saving money in youth provisions costs more long term.
On order to make early intervention useful for families it's essential that there are services for them to access. These services should be provided by the council and not included in cost cutting.
Schools are already strapped for funding and may not see this as a priority

I believe that particularly at this time we should be developing council run youth and childrens services, particularly to be proactive and not just reactive. There is great scope for third sector organisations like myself to partner and deliver more targeted work, but no cutting back of current services would serve the complex needs of our borough well.

Again this feels as if it is about cutting services rather than investing in why they are not being well utilised currently. Services and staff need support, children and young people need to be encouraged to attend and consulted on what they would like to see there. The more these services are reduced or sold off the more difficulties will be seen in mental health services and unemployment and crime. This is short sighted cost saving.

The choices given are appalling. How about the senior staff members of Cambridge Education take a pay cut to raise much needed funds instead of looking to cut "non legal" support and services? So, Barnet/Cambridge Education now only perform the services deemed legal? Every SINGLE service above is a much needed service with no alternatives available if they are stopped. Barnet can imply through this survey that there are alternatives out there for it's families but the reality is much different with the cuts affecting the NHS, schools, charities etc, So who does Barnet believe will be able to pick up the peices if these services are dropped? Where will these families go to for these services? Why is Barnet not considering corporation sponsorship to help fund these services? Why iisn't Cambridge Education getting involved to raise funds if the budget is so bad? Why is the FIRST thought to cut services, cut staff, make things harder for the families of Barnet versus cuting wages of the senior staff members of Barnet/Cambridge Education who I know earn far more than the average Barnet resident? I wonder how much money Cambridge Education will make out of this joint venture with Barnet in the end versus all of the support, schools, centres, services including "non legal" ones, cut and the families left struggling. Unfortunately, my growing distrust in Barnet is proving valid as seen by this survey. Over the last 8 years I have witnessed massive cuts to education as well as children services, including SEN/Disability, combined with the introduction of a corporation taking over departments of Barnet Services. All of this has led me to believe these "proposals" are just another cost cutting exercise and not driven by the desire to actually serve anyone in Barnet better in any way. It is apparent that Barnet/Cambridge Education cares far more for finances than it does the people they serve. I find that disgusting.

These are cuts to important services that support young and keep them out of statutory services

When will Barnet Council provide leadership. When will Barnet stop endlessly seeking to do and spend less and less and less.

Do you have any additional or alternative suggestions for improvements to Early Help Services which can be delivered cost efficiently?

Look at making better use of school premises e.g. special schools for playschemes and after school clubs for children with SEND. Also support voluntary organisations to provide some services by allowing them to operate using school premises at a favourable rate e.g inclusive sports clubs
How am I to know what you are on about when you have not provided your budgets? Where is the evidence to demonstrate that Finchley Youth Activity Centre is expensive to run? Cost should not be the major consideration - value to the community and benefits to the individual are more important. Cost needs to be considered but these factors are more important. Your question 10 does not permit previous users or parents of previous users to be considered. Reflection of the past is very helpful when considering the future. You have failed to identify these important groups. Why?
The council could improve their services at Finchley Youth Activity Centre by utilising the Friends of Finchley Youth Theatre. As a charity they could apply for funding that the council may not be able to if the council was to share specific targets with them. The council could also make use of free means of advertising sessions to increase the revenue by putting information on the boards at the front of the centre or by using social media. They could also look at maximising revenue by utilising the building to capacity by making sure that it is hired to its full potential
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Maintain the funding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a more in-depth look at the long-term benefit of professional youth work. For example: a) it takes a specific social pedagogical approach to working with young people, which has been shown by wide-ranging international research to be of particular value in supporting healthy development of adolescents, b) youth work's social pedagogy is different to a social care approach, and the former provides valuable wrap-around support for the latter (through additional educational, enjoyable, and 'de-escalation' activities for example), and, arguably, in a very cost-effective way that is truly joined up, c) youth work is able to engage with young people at the earliest onset of issues, without the need for a young person to qualify for a social care threshold, or a more costly intervention. - Carry out a thorough audit on the particularities and value of the skillset available through the council's various professions/delivery arms. The YouthZone, for example, (effectively the council's approach to 'open access youth work' may not provide quality professional youth work, volunteers require training and overseeing, and volunteers may also have a higher turnover/be less available than permanent staff, which may provide additional trust issues for vulnerable young people needing reliable adults. Budget solutions must be properly audited for a long-term approach to the best provision for future generations. Detached youth workers, for example, require a specific form of management input, and are specialists building quality relationship with hard-to-reach young people - this may not be easy to replicate with a generalist approach or an under-qualified, under-supported staff member. - Provide more youth work posts - Barnet has the second largest youth population, increasing racial diversity, and an increased incidence of the seriousness of crime (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment). I strongly urge the council to consider again the value of professional youth workers and the long-term cost-effectiveness of them as an

'overhead', in the light of our youth population's current and future needs. Especially, as young people face issues today which have evolved more quickly than policy has. Youth workers can respond quickly and in a nuanced way to a wide range of issues, and can help build preventative resilience, and/or help young people access more specialist intervention if needed. - Quality youth work provision acts as a societal leveller/strengthens social capital - young people are growing up in a socio-economic reality that is far more challenging than even a generation ago, and youth work can mitigate the risks around this, in a way that is cost-effective for the borough. Research shows that youth work helps young people stay at school, learn better, access and persevere with healthcare, gain clarity over career options, avoid substance misuse, and develop positive activities and positive relationships as alternatives to other negative draws, or imbalanced/dangerous online usage. - Maintain youth work as a specialism, and have youth workers visit hubs, rather than be based in hubs. Permanently separating specialists from their team and from adequately specialist management means that they are far less able to engage in the daily practice reflection that is required for fast-moving or nuanced situations, as is the case with vulnerable young people, in particular.

A complete change in attitude by the Conservative councillors running Barnet towards children. Children should be invested in and supported.

Supporting local delivery of diversionary activities rather than investing in large projects like Youth Zone. Increasing social housing stock (housing is the third leg of the health and social care tripod). Offering training to people who work with children and young people in safeguarding and mental health eg in sports clubs or private gyms so that they can be the eyes and ears of the community, and know how, when and where to refer to.

Get MORE people involved in the Youth Theatre rather than proposing combining services for teenagers with toddlers. Think theatre performing arts, who can we involve? Consult the people who run FYT. Invest in the building and organisation running the theatre.

Use locally based partners with a track record of community engagement

Partnerships sound like a reasonable approach provided the partners are local, and have a track record in the community

Support local not for profit organisations to deliver services, maintain community assets and support local communities.

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The council could improve their services at Finchley Youth Activity Centre by utilising the Friends of Finchley Youth Theatre. Consult with the FoFYT rather than override them!

Multi-agency "superstructure" covering education, health & social services, with child-following funding.
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confirmation of what's going to happen the children centre's in the future.
Firstly, I would suggest proper consultation where face to face discussions take place where residents can have a fuller understanding of what the issues are that local authorities are facing, the value of the service that are being provided, the decisions that have been taken to date which effect how services can be provided in the future, and what options have been explored to get to this point. This way residents can make informed comments on the future of services rather than being railroaded to an inevitable conclusion with Barnet Council officers have already concluded on.
Ensure that whichever model that is chosen is watertight. Families lose confidence if services do not deliver the promises made. The first I knew about this consultation was today so make sure it has been a true public consultation and not just lip service!
Best option is to provide as many as possible Early Help Services very local to families so it's easier for all families both low income and high income.
As above, please leave CAMHS workers in the NHS. We are extremely worried about what will happen to the secondary project, and are shocked not to be consulted before this happened (they are being TUPE'd as I type, aren't they?). Why unscramble something that is working well and move it to a system where they are removed from Health oversight?
Use charitable organisations? Train volunteers on counselling, coaching courses, promote activities for young people e.g. scouts, cadets. Liaise with local charitable organisations and churches etc
As suggested in my previous answer
Using schools instead of other locations is a good use of resources. Schools are currently well located to serve the whole family. Although some schools do not have the space, facilities and resources, others do and are looking to increase their revenue source to counter the effects of cuts to spending on education. Services could be relocated to places like Underhill as it is the centre of needs and there is no need for money to be spent on other locations.
Stop Brexit to increase available public money for spending
Have more visual promotion in schools and work with SENCOs to deliver this message. Have more notice board info about services available in schools use their websites/local news letters/papers
There is really a big shortage on the speech and language and OT therapy. We should have more staff in this area and more sessions including in home sessions.
you can charge for these services. please do not close the centre.
With the closure of childcare spaces, community halls for children's activities and closure of libraries to children, I am very angry - it feels as though Barnet is discriminating against young families. The money must be found, and can perhaps be saved if services were better managed, and less went to management consultants, well-meaning as they may be.
Encourage staff to turn up to clinics not hung over so that they can run to time more easily. Especially when their appointments turn up early and they are available
Calculate the full real world value of these services, not just the cost base it has in the budget as some services prevent children being led down the wrong paths in life and also

increase future engagement in the community and civic responsibility for the future generations.
yes provide community leadership by resisting central government ideology of denuding public services of funding
Recognizing and Maintaining professionals specialists skills, rather than spreading all staff to cover all areas without having the specialist training and skills to identify and manage clients needs . the provision should not become and administrative tick box service
Barnet Borough should not try to save money by taking away from children services! That's one area that you should fully support. Remember? Children are our future! What society are you trying to create??
I feel that you as a borough are completely out of touch with reality it's all about cost saving, for example there is always restructure taking place but for what last none with troubled families in the last ousted report saved no money and was pointless but the consultants made a lot of money from that and all restructures please keep things that work in place not to change for change sake. Capita are a private company more interested in making money then thinking about the residents of Barnet. This is coming from a Tory voter.
Stop providing free travel and heating to pensioners who can already afford it
Cost cutting and efficient services are not always the same thing. A comprehensive and effective service should be well funded.
Use apprenticeships and involve parents and professionals in volunteer to get budgets sorted. Organise jumble markets, donations to acquire support. Organise dancing/ singing/ music/ courses for toddlers which it could be popular and increase the business for a little fee. Yoga for pregnant, coffee premises in the building where parents carers can connect or have a read. Whith a coffee area you could have a sense of unity and business too as every parent , staff would have a drink sandwich at the premises. I've no doubt of this
The proposed Early Help model is positive but it would be stronger if there was more focus on the role played by organisations that support adult family members, especially mental health, autism, drug and alcohol services, to complement JCP, etc.
Front line staff jobs need to be protected
Work collaboratively and provide funding for charities or non profit services already providing these services often within a specific community by a specific community effectively.
I think there could be a donation scheme parent who can afford to could contribute to electronically. At the moment we pay a voluntary donation of Â£1 each time we attend activities at coppetts wood and I wouldn't want any parent put off by a higher charge, however it is reliant on me having cash and actually I could pay a monthly amount electronically as a donation much more conveniently. Obviously this is not an idea that could be relied upon in any way to alleviate the cuts you are facing but could be used to fund supplies etc that are needed for the day to day activities of the centre.
Focus on positive outcomes for young people rather than costs. The community benefits, reduction in crime and preventative work far outweigh the financial costs.
Staff need more supervision. Although this does cost money it will reduce costs in more effective services being offered. Encouraging the local communities to engage in what is happening so that their voice can actually be heard and meaningfully listened to. Allow young people to shape the services they want. Learn from other authorities and how they manage rather than just trying to cut costs.
I've already stated an alternative to these proposals in the survey. But I will suggest Barnet/Cambridge Education thinks more creatively of ways to address these financial issues or have the senior staff of Cambridge Education take pay cuts. To cut services of the people you serve is unacceptable because of "cost efficiency". It is the senior members of staff's job to work it out. It is not a reason to make families suffer even further while senior staff continue to take home the level of pay that they do and Cambridge

Education, a corporation, makes any kind of profit.
There was a significant restructure only two years ago which must have been a costly process including new posts being created as a result. It would be a concern if the amount of staff dealing with families was reduced further at the same time as trying to maintain quality of services.
As a parent of two small children (now 3yr and 1yr) we found that during the first year of our daughters life, the play group offering by children centres in the New Barnet area was quite limited. The borough could consider offering more play group slots. This could be cost efficient if some parents can be trained as volunteers to host the session. Keeping in mind that many parents are only off work for one year, early engagement would be key.
Charging for play sessions at children's centre and giving that money to the youth services.
Stop cutting services
yet another re-organisation/ restructure with the promise of improving services whilst saving money. This is an empty vacuous promise.
Get rid of the appalling LADO (Sheimatie) and stop wasting wages on people who are incompetent.
I have read about Accountable Care Partnerships maybe this is the option to have a mixture on external provision and in-house fte's in partnership arrangement. It is clear that external providers, deliver excellent services and have means to alternative funding and provisions not as easily accessible to LA's and that by forming an alliance relationship the benefits this could deliver to young people of Barnet has the potential to be innovative and exciting. also involving young people and their families in the co-design of services will be hugely beneficial.

