

**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

BUDGET COUNCIL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

4.30PM, THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2015

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR BUDGET COUNCIL

ITEM	Page
60 CHILDREN'S CENTRE CONSULTATION SUMMARY	1 - 56

Note: Please find attached a comprehensive report into the consultation responses in respect of the proposed savings for children's centres. The size of the report means that it is not practical to circulate it as part of the budget papers, but Members should consider this as essential reading to inform their decision in relation to the proposed savings to the budget for children centres. A summary of the responses is also contained in supplementary information contained in the budget papers regarding proposals for children's centres (Agenda Item 60 – appendix 22). The budget proposals have been revised as a result of the consultation responses, and the supplementary information in the budget papers sets out the basis upon which any savings approved will be made.

Children's Centre Consultation Summary

V1.0 - February 2015

Produced by: Ben Miles

Tel: 01273 295209

Email: ben.miles@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk

Contents

Children's Centre Consultation Summary.....	1
1. Introduction & purpose of report	3
2. Methodology.....	3
3. Response and response rate	3
4. Key Findings	15
5. Results and findings	16
5.1. Rationale for proposals to change children's centre services	16
5.2. Giving priority for service to families with the highest level of need	18
5.3. Proposals to merge children's centres.....	20
5.4. Proposals to merge advisory groups.....	22
5.5. Proposals to change the way baby groups run.....	24
5.6. Proposals to change the way toddler/stay & play groups are run	26
5.7. Proposals to no longer run drop-in groups in libraries and other community venues	28
5.8. Proposals to reduce the number of home visits offered by children's centres.....	30
5.9. Proposals to reduce funding for childcare for children in need	32
5.10. Proposals to review targeted and referral groups.....	34
5.11. General comments.....	36
Appendix A	399

1. Introduction & purpose of report

The following report summarises responses to the consultation on the proposal to change the way some children's centre services are run. The views of respondents can be used to inform any changes in the way services are prioritised and delivered.

2. Methodology

The survey was open from 11 December 2014 to 2 February 2015 and was hosted on the council's Consultation Portal and available in hard copy. Parents were notified of the consultation by email, text, leaflets, posters and discussion at children's centres, and were able to respond either online or by completing a paper copy. Support was provided by centre staff to help parents complete the questionnaire.

The consultation was made public so that any resident of Brighton & Hove could respond. The priority was to get the views of families who use children's centres, as they would be most affected by the proposals.

3. Response and response rate

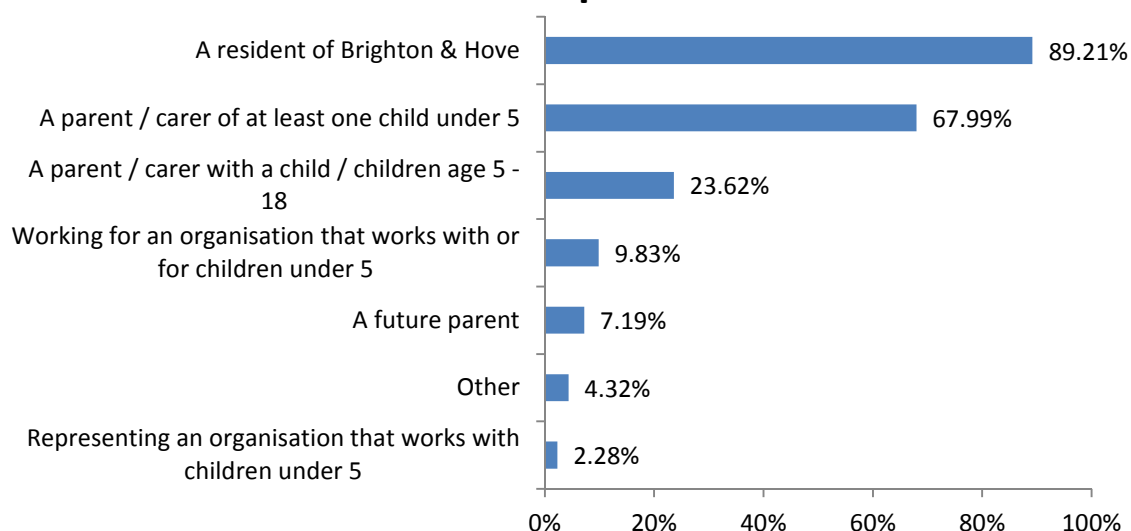
A total of 842 people responded to the consultation. 115 respondents completed the consultation on paper and 727 respondents completed the consultation online. Some parents responded on behalf of their household. In addition, Simon Kirby MP wrote to oppose the proposals.

For comparison, there are 10,160 adults registered with children's centres across the city. Approximately 2,800 attend centres on a quarterly basis.

Respondents were self-selecting rather than forming part of a random, representative sample of the population. Self-selecting respondents tend to be more engaged in the issues being consulted on and have stronger opinions than the general public.

Responders were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposals and whether they would like to make any comments. Each comment was categorised by up to three themes for each question and then ranked by order of frequency for analysis purposes.

Who responded?



Respondent categories	Number	Percentage
Representing an organisation that works with children under 5	19	2%
Other	36	4%
A future parent	60	7%
Working for an organisation that works with or for children under 5	82	9%
A parent / carer with a child / children age 5 - 18	197	23%
A parent / carer of at least one child under 5	567	67%
A resident of Brighton & Hove	744	89%
Total respondents to this question	834	100%

Respondents were able to select more than one category. The percentage represents the proportion of respondents who selected each category out of the total number of responses.

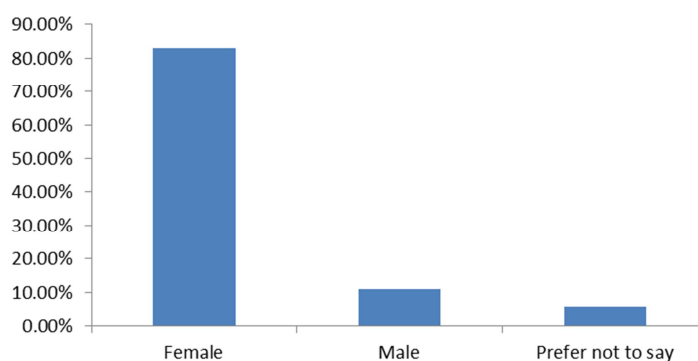
The table below shows the organisations which responded to the consultation and the number of responses from each

Organisation	Responses
Bluebird parent and under three group	1
Brighton And Hove Mummy Club	1
CEDP children's club	1
Cherry Tree Nursery	1
Childminder	2
Coldean primary school	1
Early childhood project	2
Volunteer at one of the groups affected	1
Lingo Chicos	1
MOSAIC	1
Puffin Community Nursery	1
Rudyard Kipling Primary School	1
Seaside View	1
Total	15

31 respondents selected 'Other' as the category they belonged to. This included:

- Grandparents
- Teachers
- Other relatives
- Concerned citizens
- Members of Parliament

Response by gender

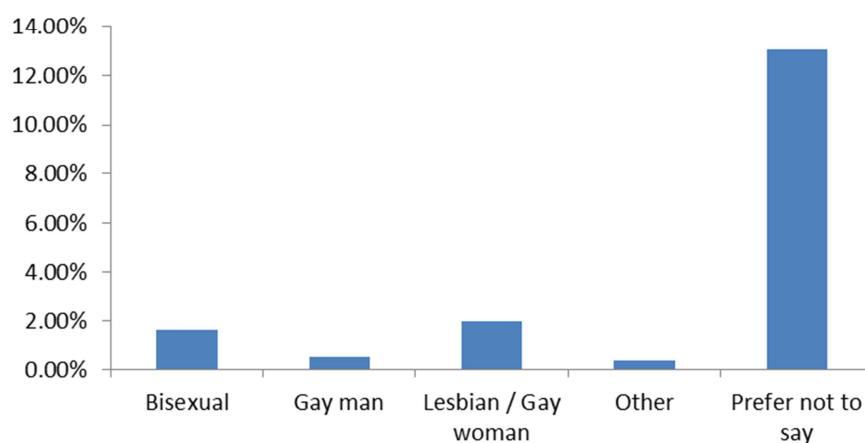


Gender	Responses	Percentage
Female	681	83%
Male	91	11%
Prefer not to say	48	6%
Grand Total	820	100%

Females represented 83% of respondents, which is reflective of the gender profile of regular centre users

In addition, 12 respondents (1.42%) did not identify with the gender they had been assigned at birth.

Response by sexual orientation

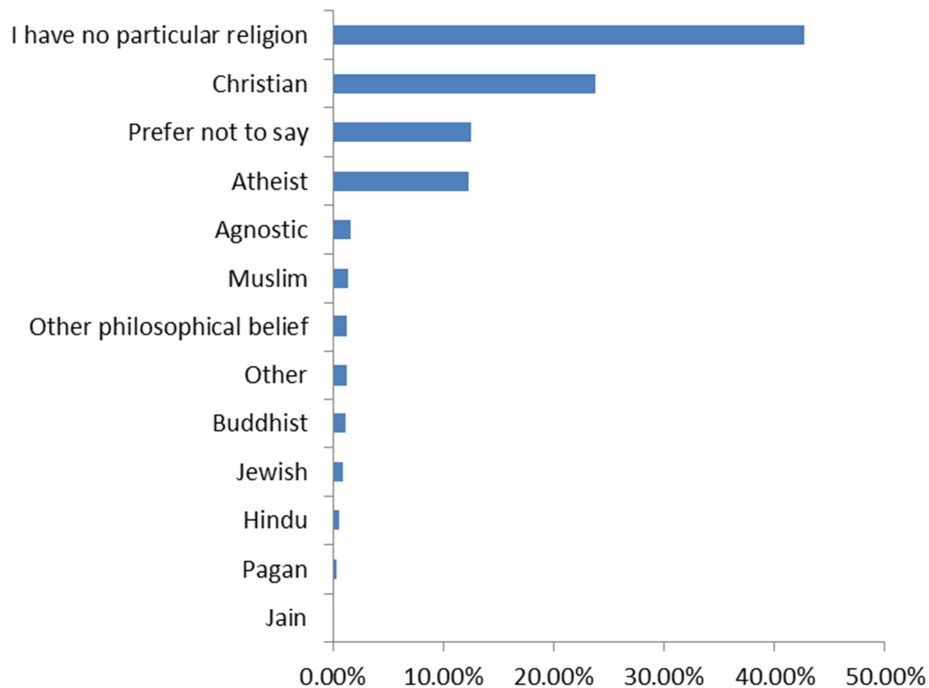


NB – responses from heterosexuals have been removed from the graph because of the relatively low number of people with other sexual orientations completing the consultation.

Sexual orientation	Responses	Percentage
Bisexual	13	2%
Gay man	4	1%
Heterosexual / Straight	658	82%
Lesbian / Gay woman	16	2%
Other	3	<1%
Prefer not to say	104	13.3%
Total	798	100%

At least 10% of Brighton & Hove residents are LGBT, however it is not clear what proportion are caring for a child under the age of five and so it is difficult to judge the representativeness of the response profile.

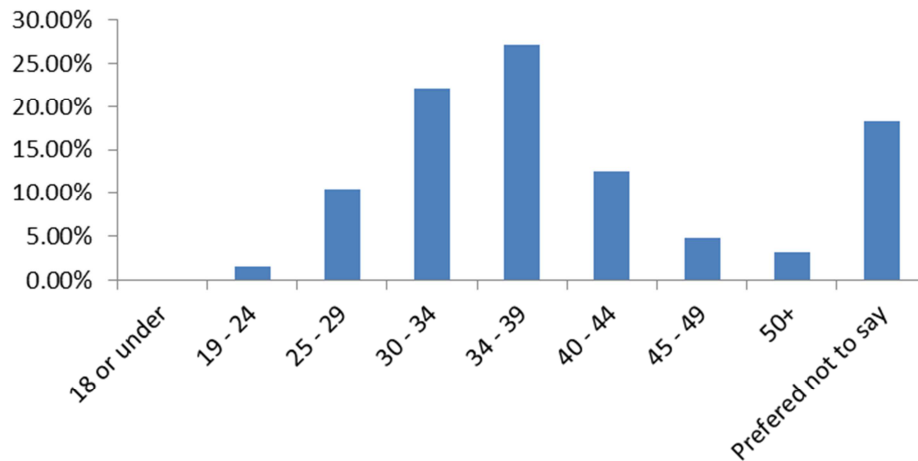
Response by religion or belief



Religion or belief	Responses	Percentage
I have no particular religion	348	43%
Christian	194	24%
Prefer not to say	102	13%
Atheist	100	12%
Agnostic	13	2%
Muslim	11	1%
Other	10	1%
Other philosophical belief	10	1%
Buddhist	9	1%
Jewish	8	1%
Hindu	5	1%
Pagan	3	<1%
Jain	1	<1%
Total	814	100%

The percentage of respondents with no particular religion (42.75%) was similar to data from the 2011 census, which was 42.4%. However, the percentage of respondents who are Christian (23.83%) was significantly lower than the census (42.5%) as was the percentage of responses from Muslims; 1.4% compared to the 2.2% recorded in the census.

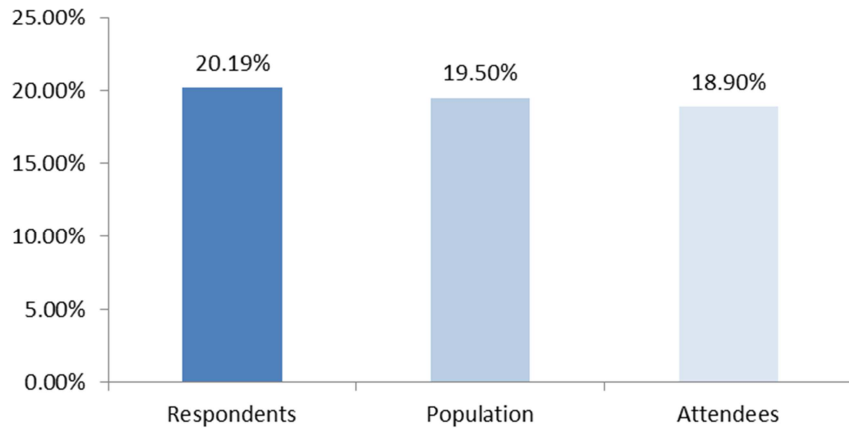
Response by age



Age	Responses	Percentage
18 or under	1	<1%
19 - 24	13	2%
25 - 29	88	10%
30 - 34	186	22%
34 - 39	228	27%
40 - 44	105	12%
45 - 49	40	5%
50+	27	3%
Prefer not to say	154	18%
Total	842	100%

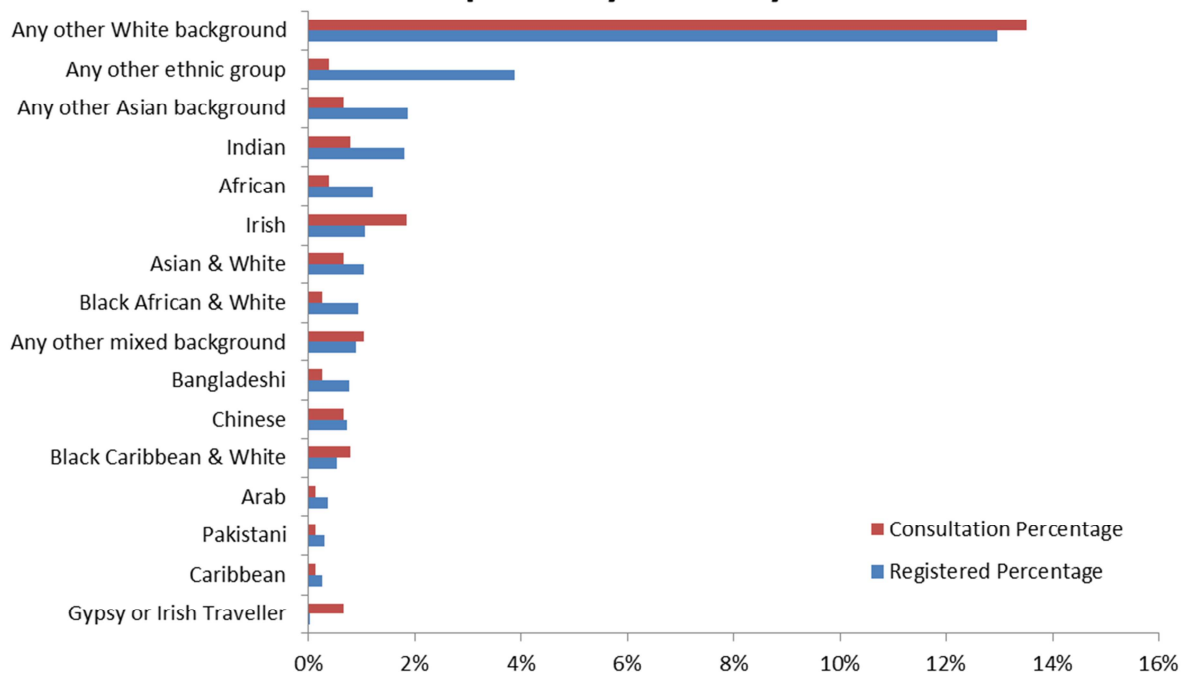
The age profile of respondents was representative of the people who are registered at children's centres.

BME response



The chart above compares the proportion of respondents from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, with the census ethnic profile, and the ethnic profile of children's centre users or attendees. The BME population figure was taken from the 2011 census. Attendance figures are taken from the council's ChildView database and rely on self-declaration. Many parents / carers choose not to provide this information, and so the percentage here is indicative rather than absolute.

Response by ethnicity

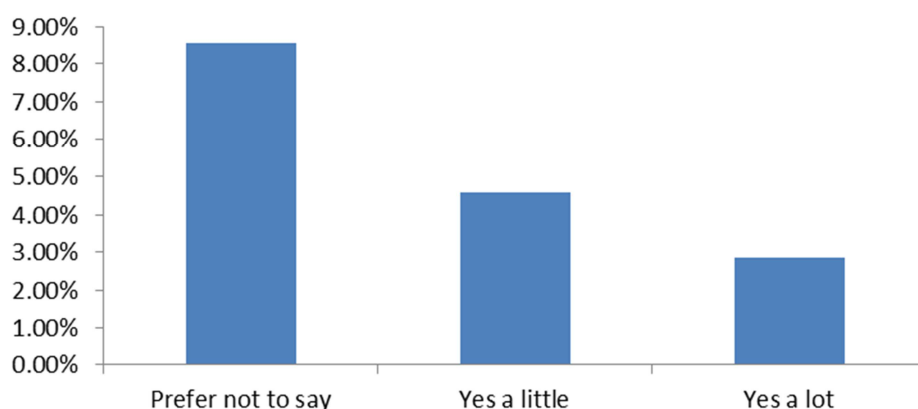


Ethnicity	Registered Adults	Registered Percentage	Consultation Responses	Consultation Percentage
English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	5330	71.40%	592	77.69%
Any other White background	967	12.95%	103	13.52%
Any other ethnic group	289	3.87%	3	0.39%
Any other Asian background	139	1.86%	5	0.66%
Indian	134	1.80%	6	0.79%
African	90	1.21%	3	0.39%
Irish	80	1.07%	14	1.84%
Asian & White	77	1.03%	5	0.66%
Black African & White	70	0.94%	2	0.26%
Any other mixed background	66	0.88%	8	1.05%
Bangladeshi	57	0.76%	2	0.26%
Chinese	54	0.72%	5	0.66%
Black Caribbean & White	40	0.54%	6	0.79%
Arab	27	0.36%	1	0.13%
Pakistani	23	0.31%	1	0.13%
Caribbean	20	0.27%	1	0.13%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	2	0.03%	5	0.66%
Total	7465	100.00%	762	100.00%

The above table and graph compares the response by ethnicity to the ethnicity of all parents/carers who are registered with children's centres. Significant differences between the percentage who responded to the consultation and the percentage registered with children's centres have been highlighted in the table.

Respondents and registrants who preferred not to say what their ethnicity was have been removed from the figures.

Response by disability and health problems

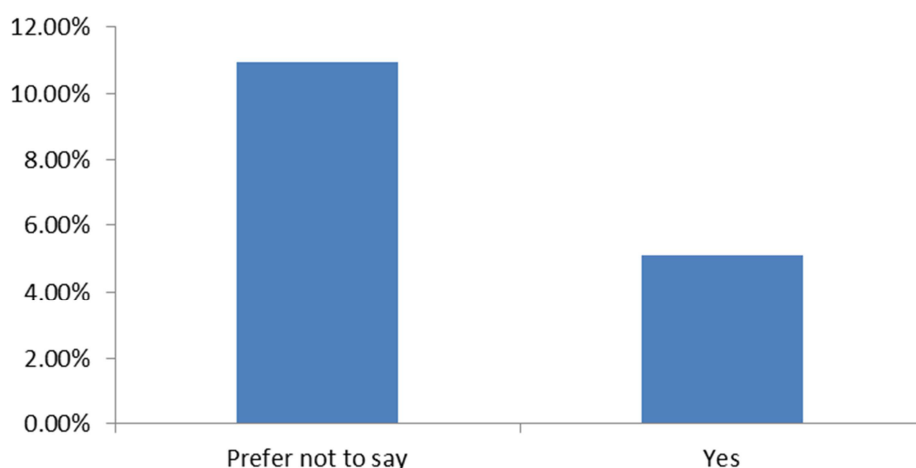


NB – people with no disability or health problems have been removed from the graph because of the low number of people who have a little or a lot of difficulty managing day to day activities due to a disability or health problem.

Limited day-to-day activities	Responses	Percentage
No	676	84%
Prefer not to say	69	9%
Yes a little	37	4%
Yes a lot	23	3%
Total	805	100%

Children's centres rely on self-declaration of disability, which the majority of people choose not to provide and so it was not possible to compare consultation responses with those regularly using the service. However, these figures are broadly similar to the 2011 census data.

Response by carers



Carers	Responses	Percentage
No	707	84%
Prefer not to say	92	11%
Yes	43	5%
Grand Total	842	100%

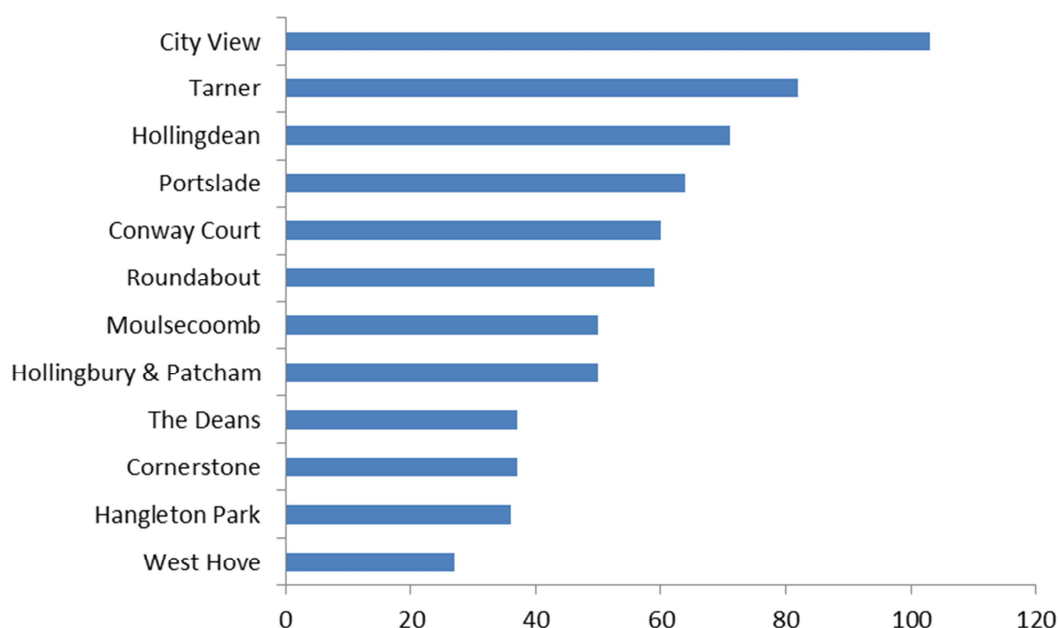
The percentage of respondents providing unpaid care to a family or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse issues was high compared to the city's 2011 census results (1.7%). However, it should be noted that the census specifies at least 50 hours of care a week must be provided and there was no such parameter on the children's centre consultation.

The majority (41.46%) of respondents who identified themselves as carers were caring for a child with special needs. 29.27% were caring for a parent, while the remainder were caring for other relatives. No respondents said they were caring for a friend.

Armed Forces

Two of the respondents were serving in the armed forces at the time of completing the consultation. Seven respondents had previously served in the armed forces and nine respondents had a partner who was serving in the armed forces at the time of completing the consultation.

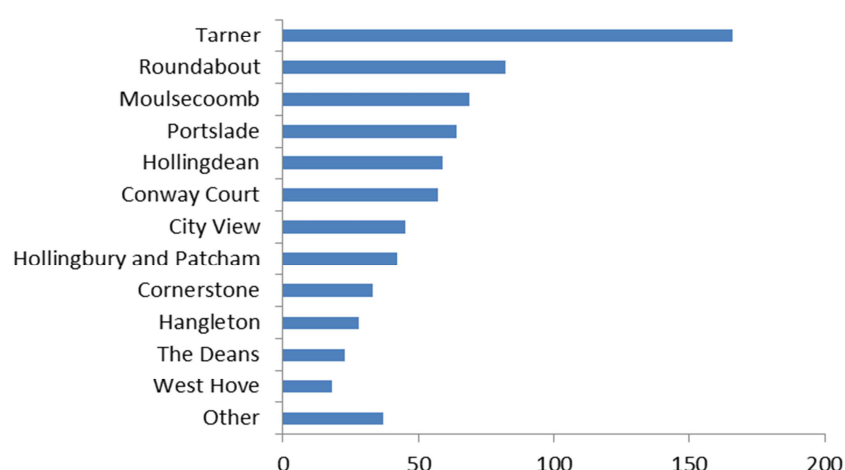
Where respondents live



Children's Centre Area	Respondents	Percentage
City View	103	12%
Turner	82	10%
Hollingdean	71	8%
Portslade	64	8%
Conway Court	60	7%
Roundabout	59	7%
Hollingbury & Patcham	50	6%
Moulsecoomb	50	6%
Cornerstone	37	4%
The Deans	37	4%
Hangleton Park	36	4%
West Hove	27	3%
Out of area	14	2%
Unknown	153	18%
Grand Total	843	100%

Respondents were asked to provide their postcode so that they could be mapped to their children's centre area. The graph above summarises and ranks the number of responses from each children's centre area. In addition to this 14 respondents lived outside of Brighton & Hove and 153 did not provide their postcode.

Where respondents attend



Children's Centre Attended	Respondents
Tarner	166
Roundabout	82
Moulsecoomb	69
Portslade	64
Hollingdean	59
Conway Court	57
City View	45
Hollingbury and Patcham	42
Cornerstone	33
Hangleton	28
The Deans	23
West Hove	18
Other	37
Total	723

Respondents were asked which centre they used most regularly. They were able to select more than one. The graph and table below summarises and ranks which centres respondents used most regularly.

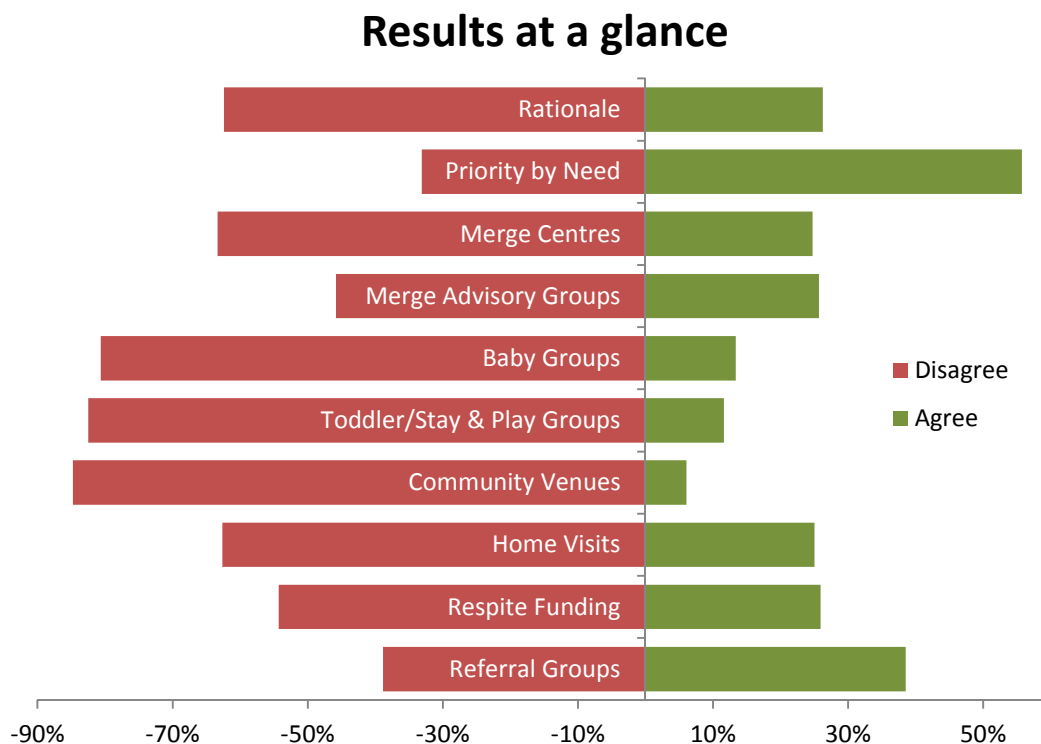
There is a discrepancy between where respondents live and where respondents attend children's centres.

40 out of the 103 respondents (38.83%) who live in the City View area listed Tarner as one of the centres they attend regularly. 16 out of 37 respondents (43.24%) who live in Cornerstone area also listed Tarner as one of the main centres they attend. 13 out of the 27 respondents (48.45%) who live in West Hove listed Conway Court.

Conversely, of the 50 living in Hollingbury & Patcham only 6 (12%) listed Hollingdean as a centre they attend regularly.

4. Key Findings

The graph below shows the percentage of respondents who disagree or agree with each proposal in the consultation. A detailed analysis of the response to each proposal is provided in section 5 of the report. A copy of the consultation can be found in Appendix A at the end of this report.



Overall respondents disagreed with the proposals, with the exception of the proposal to base priority on need. The proposal to review referral and targeted groups divided opinion.

The proposals to change Baby groups and Toddler/Stay & Play groups, and the proposal to stop running services from community venues received the strongest opposition.

5. Results and findings

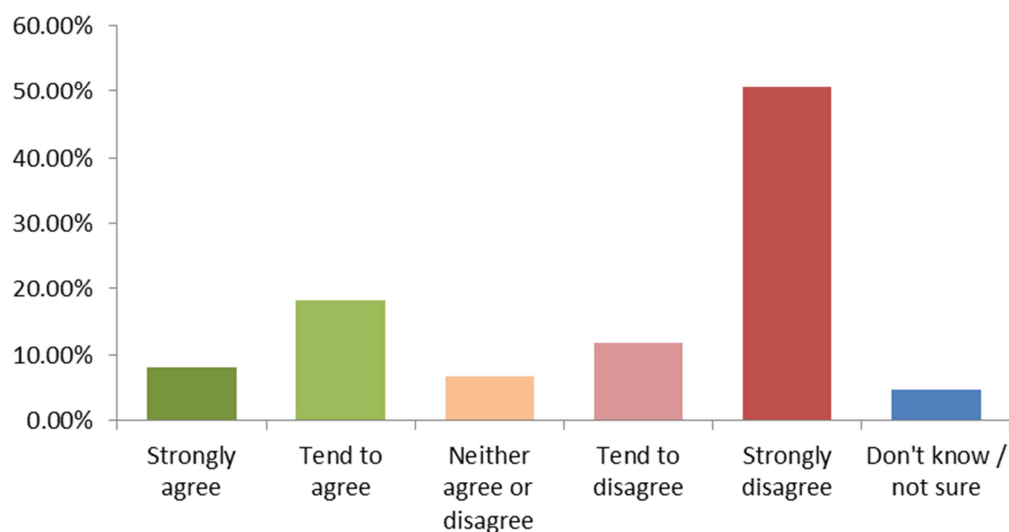
5.1. Rationale for proposals to change children's centre services

The rationale for making changes to services offered by children's centres is set out at the start of the consultation (see Appendix A). This included needing to change services to reduce costs because of the size of the saving proposals.

Q1. Do you agree or disagree with the rationale for the proposals to change children's centre services?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	66	8.%
Tend to agree	149	18%
Neither agree or disagree	55	7%
Tend to disagree	96	12%
Strongly disagree	415	51%
Don't know / not sure	38	5%
Grand Total	819	100%

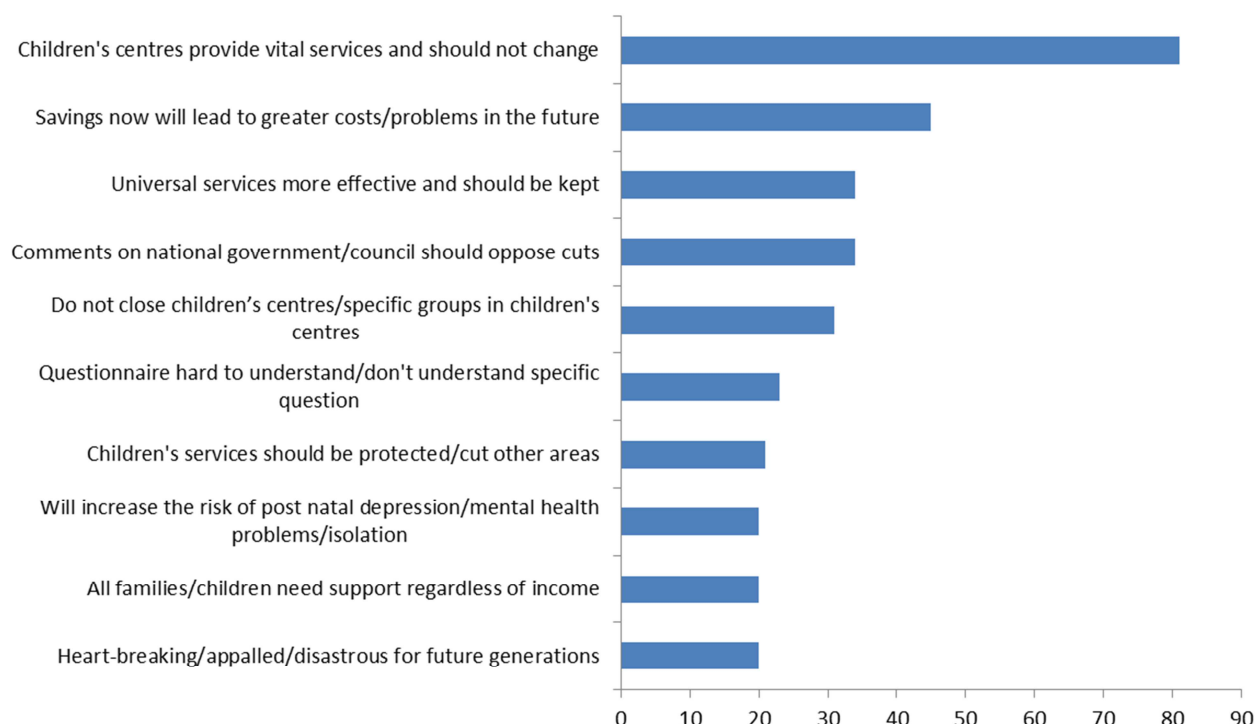
Q1. Rationale



62% of respondents disagreed (selecting either 'tend to disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the rationale behind the proposals to change the way some children's centre services are run and more than half of respondents strongly disagreed. This compares to 26% of respondents who agreed with the proposals. Respondents who agreed were more likely to tend to agree than strongly agree.

Q2. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the rationale for the proposals to change children's centre services?

Q2. Rationale comments



Respondents were invited to make comments in support of their answer, and 289 chose to do so. The chart above summarises the most frequently mentioned issues referred to. Comments were categorised by up to three themes and then ranked by order of frequency for analysis purposes. The graph below shows the 10 most mentioned themes.

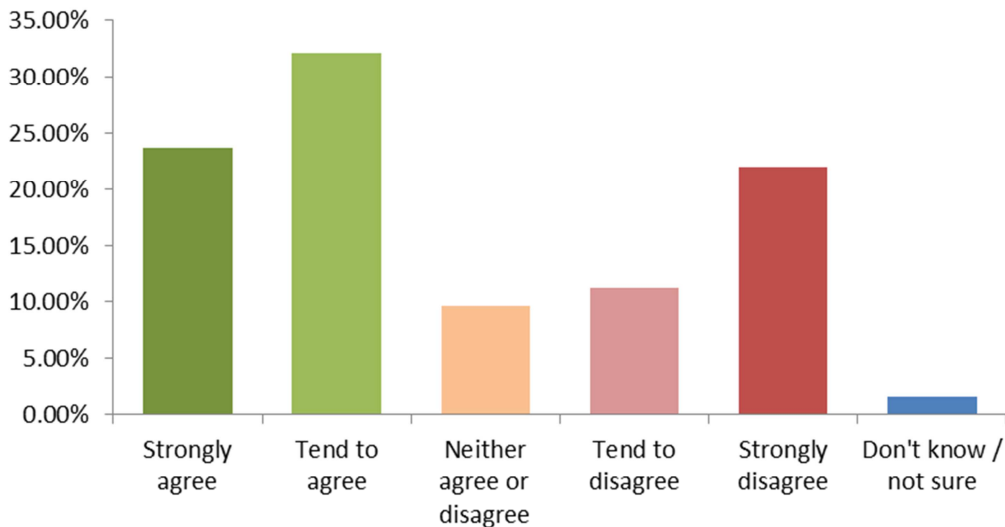
5.2. Giving priority for service to families with the highest level of need

To narrow the gap in outcomes between high and low need areas, the consultation proposed to offer different levels of service at different children's centres with the greatest reductions in low need areas and for families with the lowest needs.

Q3. Do you agree or disagree that children and families who need the most help should be given priority for services?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	195	24%
Tend to agree	264	32%
Neither agree or disagree	79	10%
Tend to disagree	92	11%
Strongly disagree	181	22%
Don't know / not sure	13	2%
Grand Total	824	100%

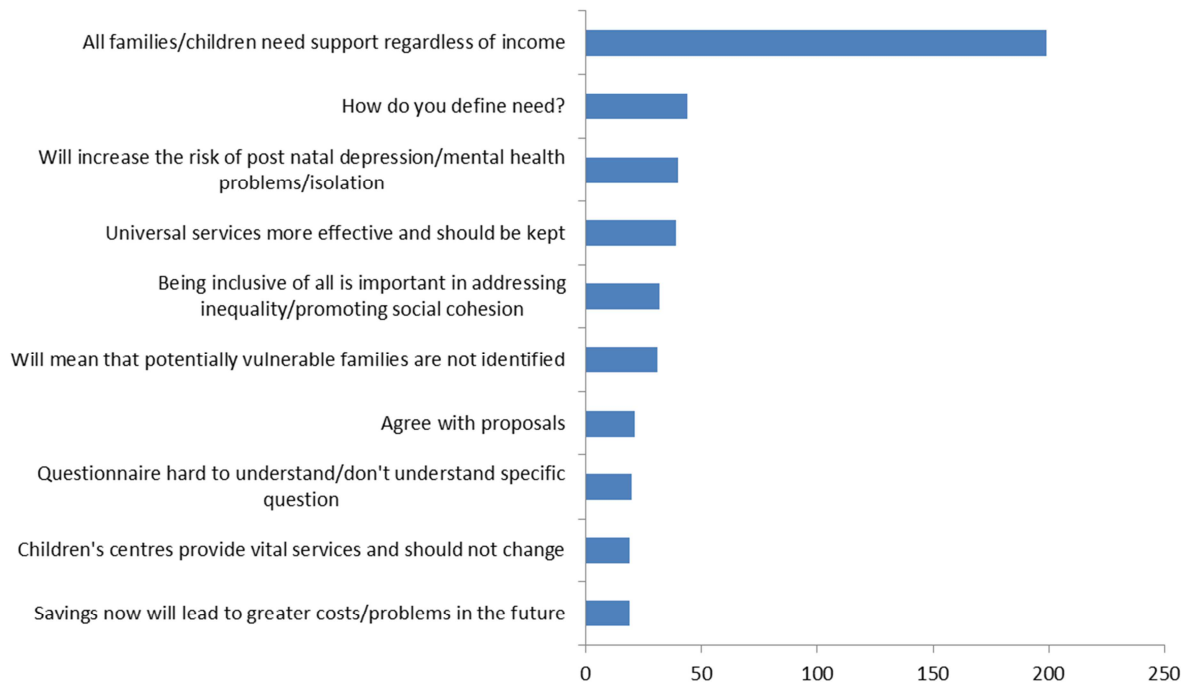
Q3. Priority based on need



The majority of respondents (56%) agreed with the proposal to give priority access to those most in need in the context of the rationale. A significant minority (33%) disagreed with the proposal, and respondents who disagreed were more likely to feel strongly about their answer. Comparative numbers of respondents both strongly agreed and strongly disagreed.

Q4. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about prioritising services for those with the most need?

Q4. Priority based on needs comments



The most common comment on the proposal to prioritise services for those most in need was in relation to working families requiring support as well as families in receipt of benefits and on low incomes. This was linked to the second most common comment where responders asked how need was defined and whether this was based on economic factors.

5.3. Proposals to merge children's centres

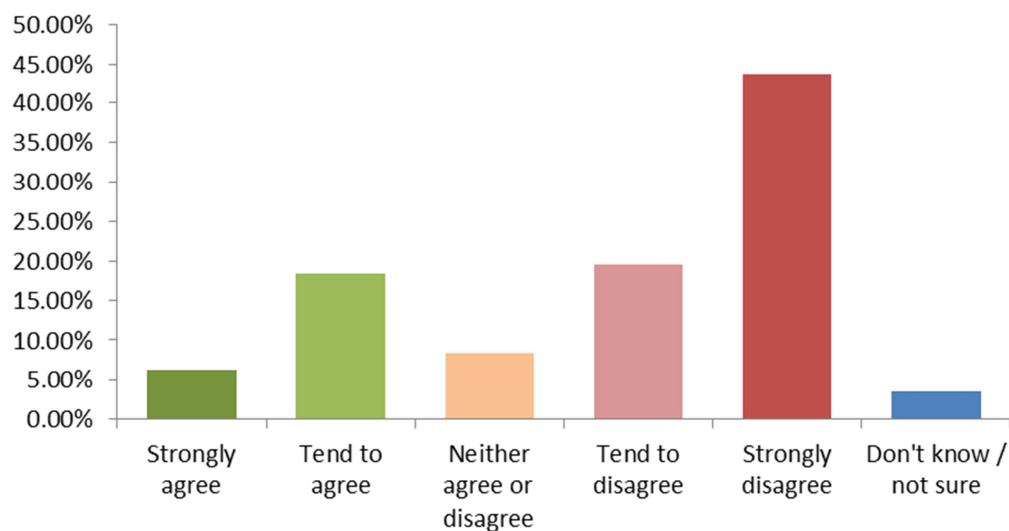
The consultation proposed to merge four children's centres into larger areas:

- Cornerstone and City View with Tarner (Tarner as the main centre)
- Hollingbury and Patcham with Hollingdean (Hollingdean as the main centre)
- West Hove with Conway Court (Conway Court as the main centre)

Q5. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to merge the identified children's centres into eight main children's centres?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	52	6%
Tend to agree	153	18%
Neither agree or disagree	70	8%
Tend to disagree	162	20%
Strongly disagree	363	44%
Don't know / not sure	29	4%
Grand Total	829	100%

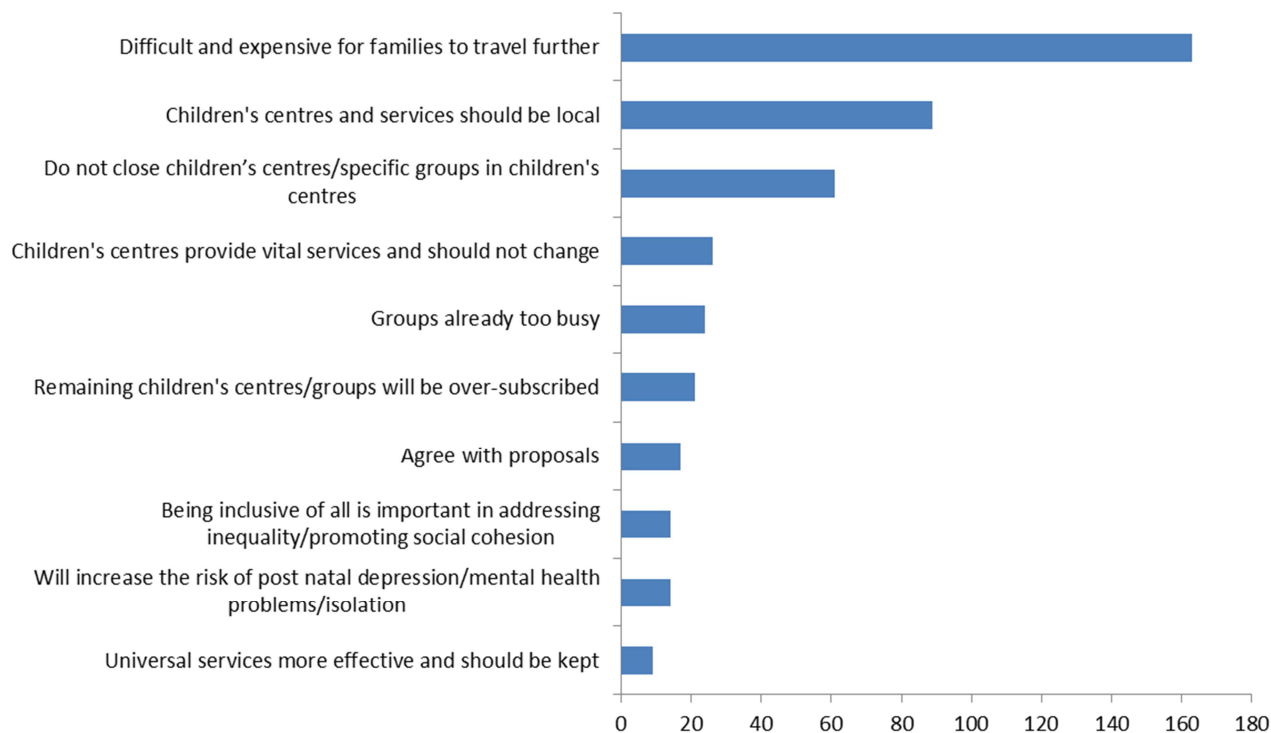
Q5. Merge centres



The majority (63%) of respondents disagreed with proposals to merge sites into eight main centres, with those who disagreed were more likely to feel strongly about their answer. Those who agreed (25%) were more likely to tend to agree with the proposals than strongly agree with them.

Q6. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to merge children's centres?

Q6. Merge centres comments



The graph shows the most frequent themes to emerge in comments made about proposals to merge centres. The most common comment was in relation to the difficulties and expense of having to travel further to attend sessions. This was backed up by the second most common theme, where respondents felt that children's centres were most effective when they were part of the local community.

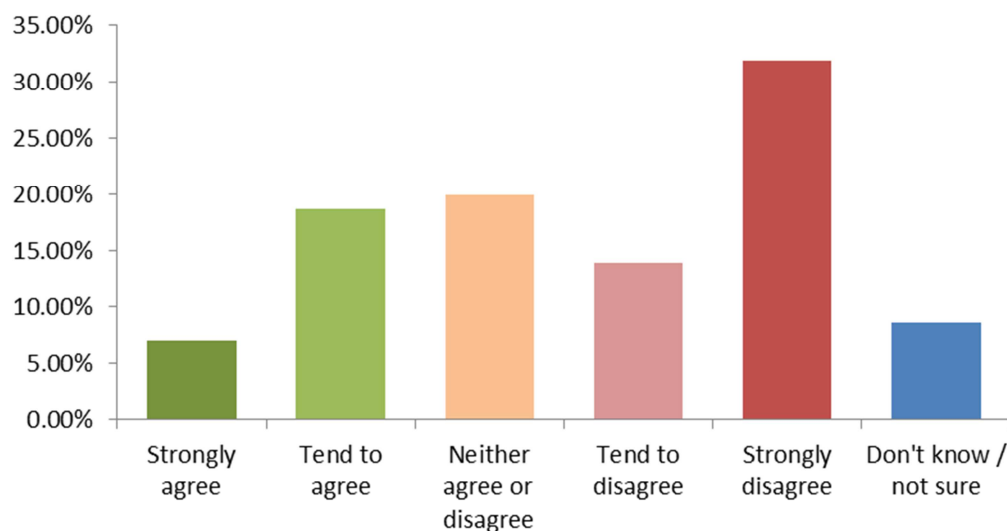
5.4. Proposals to merge advisory groups

The consultation also proposed to merge advisory groups for the children's centres that would merge, with the exception of West Hove and Conway Court, which already operated under a joint advisory group.

Q7. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to merge the identified children's centre advisory groups?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	58	7%
Tend to agree	154	19%
Neither agree or disagree	164	20%
Tend to disagree	115	14%
Strongly disagree	263	32%
Don't know / not sure	71	9%
Grand Total	825	100%

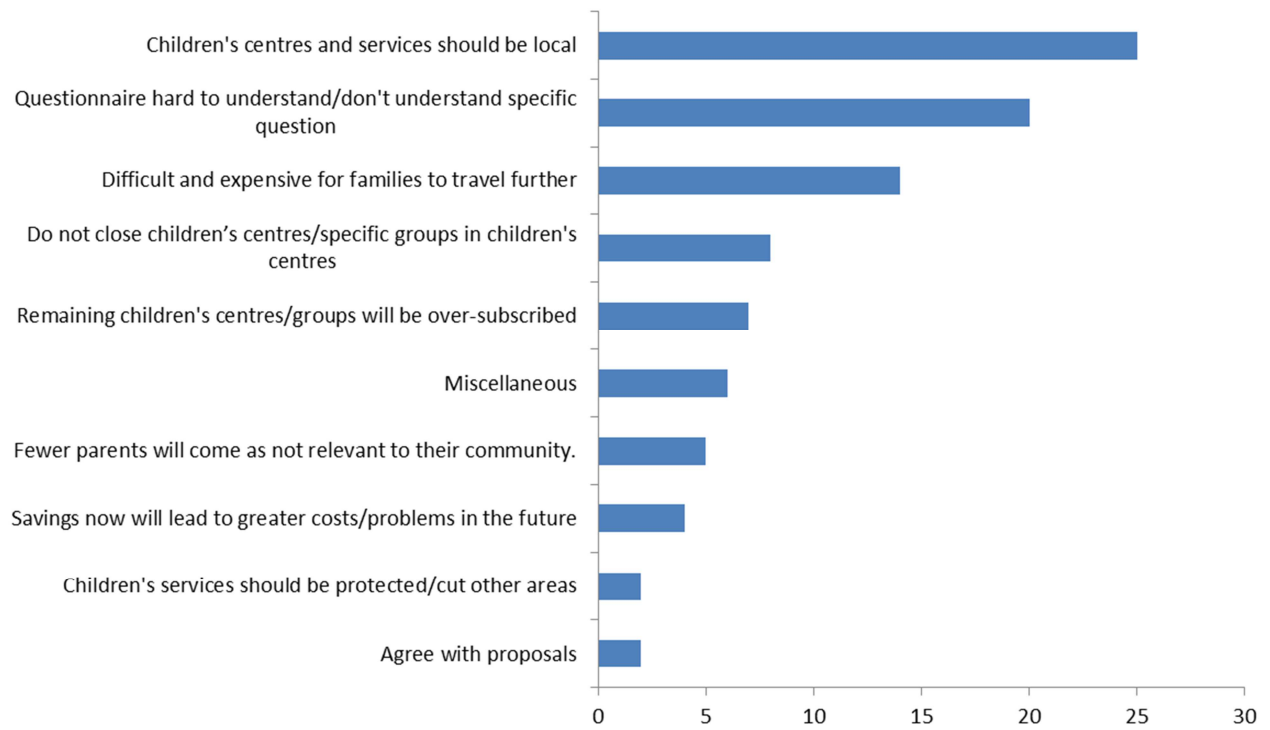
Q7. Merge advisory groups



More respondents disagreed with proposals to merge advisory groups than agreed (45% compared with 26%). There was a high percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, or weren't sure (22%). This could reflect that people did not know what the purpose of an advisory group was.

Q8. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to merge some advisory groups?

Q8. Merge advisory groups comments



The high frequency of comments relating to the theme of not understanding the question relates to respondents not being clear about the role and purpose of an advisory group. A significant number of comments were made about advisory groups for larger areas struggling to represent the needs of the local community.

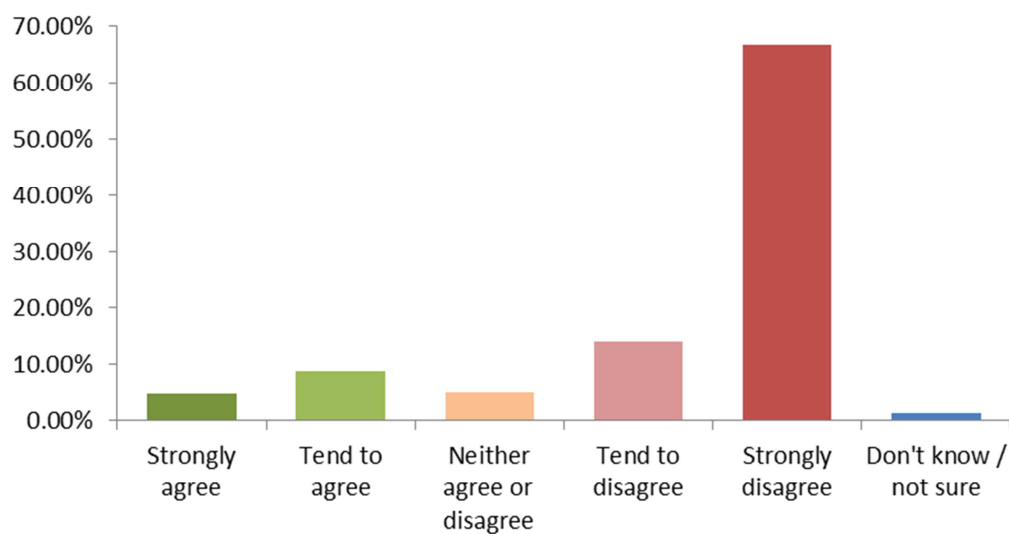
5.5. Proposals to change the way baby groups run

The consultation proposed to no longer offer on-going baby groups in all areas. Instead parents would be invited to attend an eight week course. Parents who needed additional support would be invited to attend more sessions if required.

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to change the way baby groups are run?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	38	4%
Tend to agree	73	9%
Neither agree or disagree	40	5%
Tend to disagree	117	14%
Strongly disagree	554	67%
Don't know / not sure	10	1%
Grand Total	832	100%

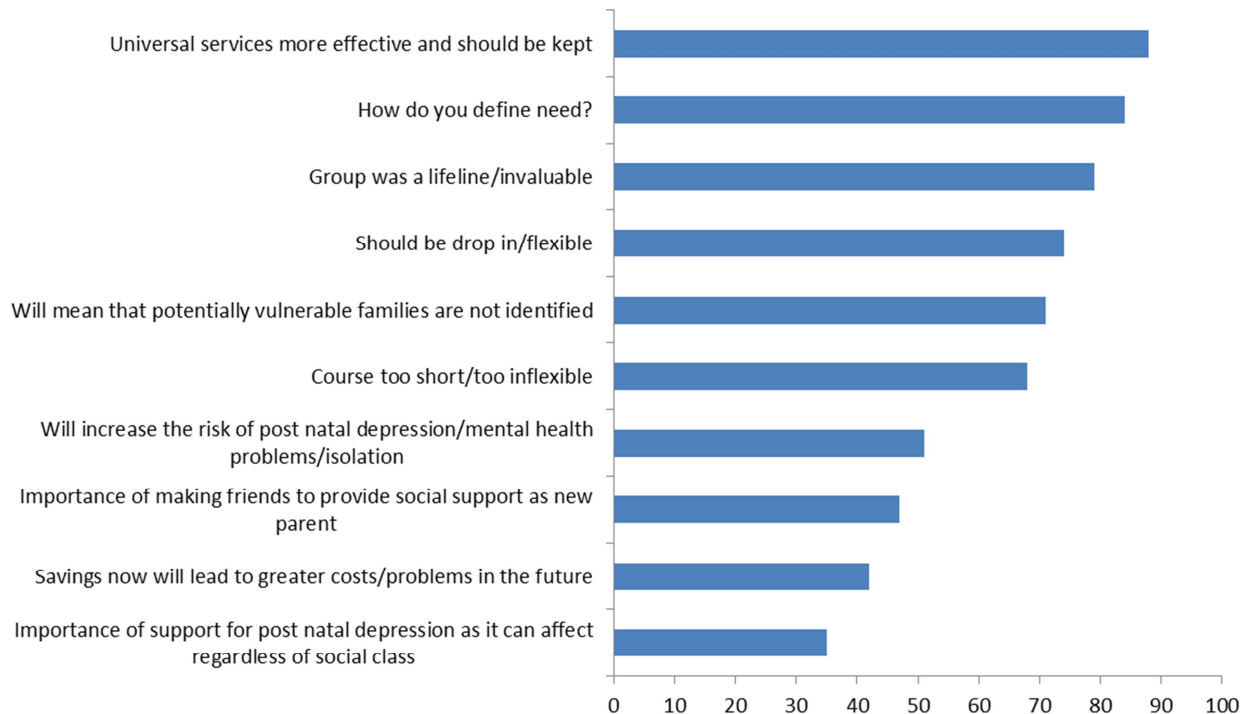
Q9. Baby groups



Respondents overwhelmingly disagreed with the proposal to change the way baby groups are run (81%). Of these, respondents were far more likely to strongly disagree with proposals. Respondents who agreed with the proposals (13%) were more likely to tend to agree than strongly agree.

Q10. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to change the way baby groups are run?

Q10. Baby groups comments



This question had the most comments. There were a significant number of comments relating to the importance of providing services that were available to all families. A common theme across many of the questions was around how need is defined. Many respondents assumed that the definition of need would be based on whether a family was in receipt of benefits.

This question also led to many comments about how important the baby groups had been for them. Responders felt that a time limited course would increase the risk of post natal depression and isolation, which respondents felt universal drop-in groups were important in helping to prevent.

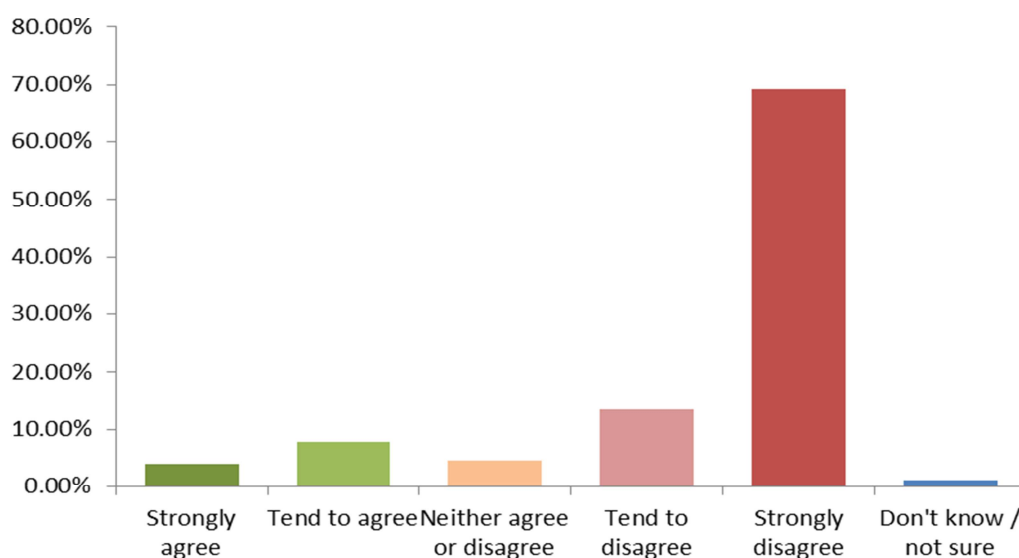
5.6. Proposals to change the way toddler/stay & play groups are run

The consultation proposed to stop running on-going drop-in toddler, stay and play and jump for joy groups, which are open to everyone. Instead parents would be invited to a time-limited group aimed at children under two which would run for a term. A booking system would be implemented to manage demand and extra support would be provided to families with high need.

Q11. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to stop running on-going drop-in toddler, stay and play and jump for joy groups and to run time limited groups which are open to everyone?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	32	4%
Tend to agree	64	7%
Neither agree or disagree	37	4%
Tend to disagree	112	14%
Strongly disagree	572	69%
Don't know / not sure	9	1%
Grand Total	826	100.00%

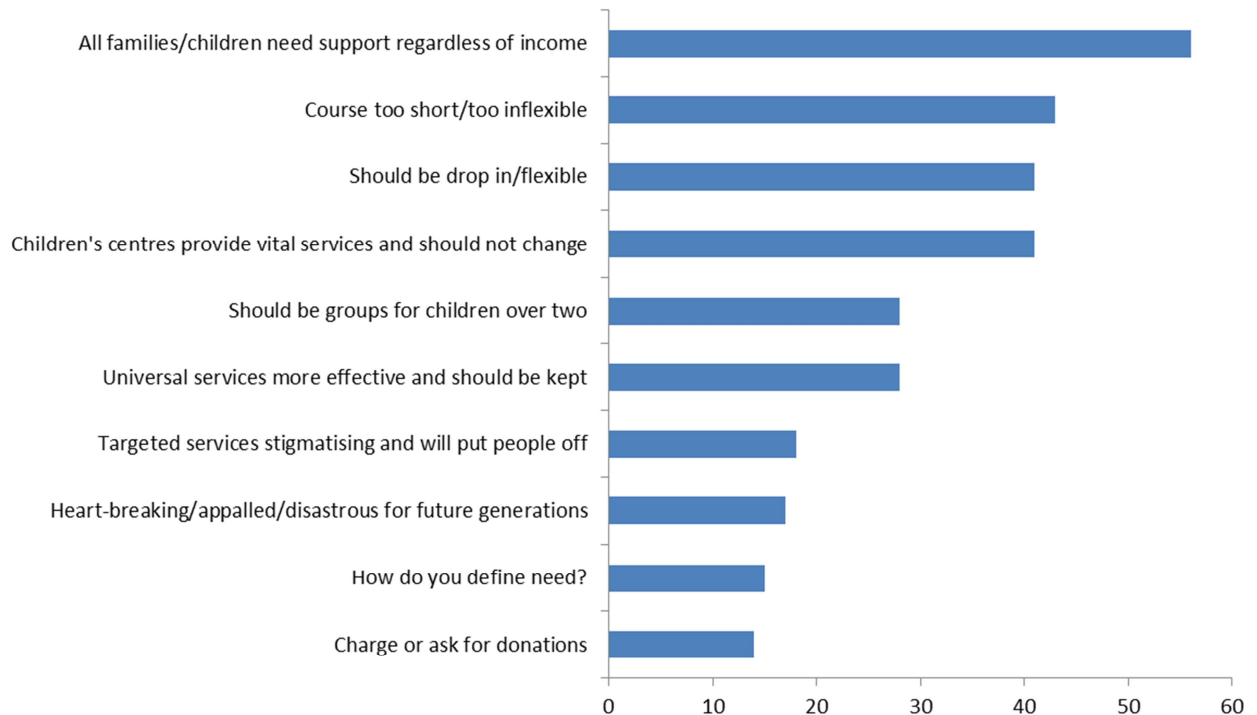
Q11. Toddler / Stay & Play groups



The response pattern to the proposals to change the way toddler groups are run is similar to that of the questions about baby groups. The vast majority (83%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal, with most of them strongly disagreeing. The respondents who agreed with the proposal (11%) were more likely to tend to agree than strongly agree.

Q12. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposal to stop running on-going drop-in toddler, stay and play, and jump for joy groups and to run time limited groups?

Q12. Toddler Stay & Play groups comments



The themes that emerged from comments relating to proposals to change the way toddler groups are run were similar to the themes relating to baby groups. In addition, there was concern around the lack of provision for children who were older than two. There were also a significant number of comments about the proposal not being flexible enough, and that the current drop-in format was more practical for families with young children.

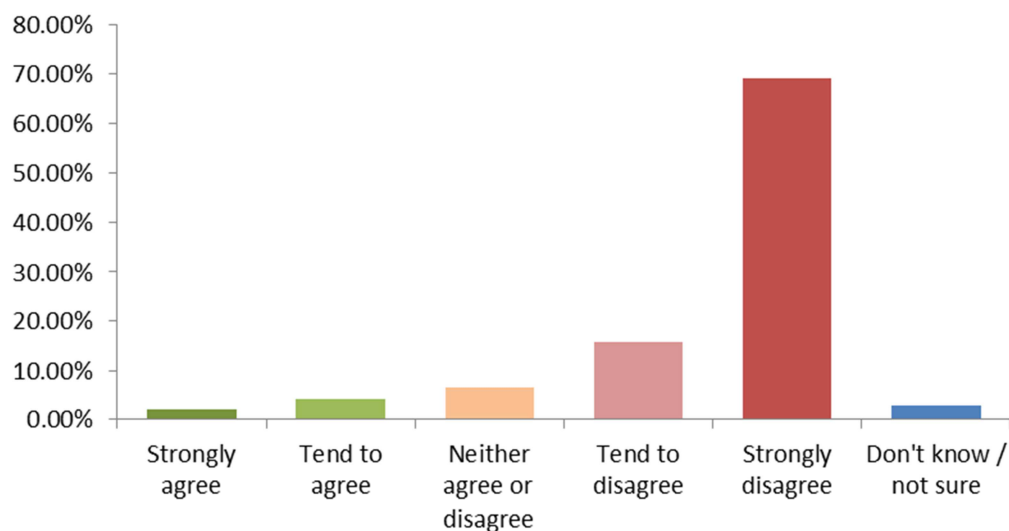
5.7. Proposals to no longer run drop-in groups in libraries and other community venues

The consultation proposed a reduction in funding for voluntary sector partners in line with the changes to stay and play groups. Under the proposals, drop-in groups would no longer run in libraries and other community venues.

Q13. Do you agree with the proposals to no longer run drop-in groups in libraries and other community venues?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	17	2%
Tend to agree	33	4%
Neither agree or disagree	53	6%
Tend to disagree	129	16%
Strongly disagree	572	69%
Don't know / not sure	23	3%
Grand Total	827	100%

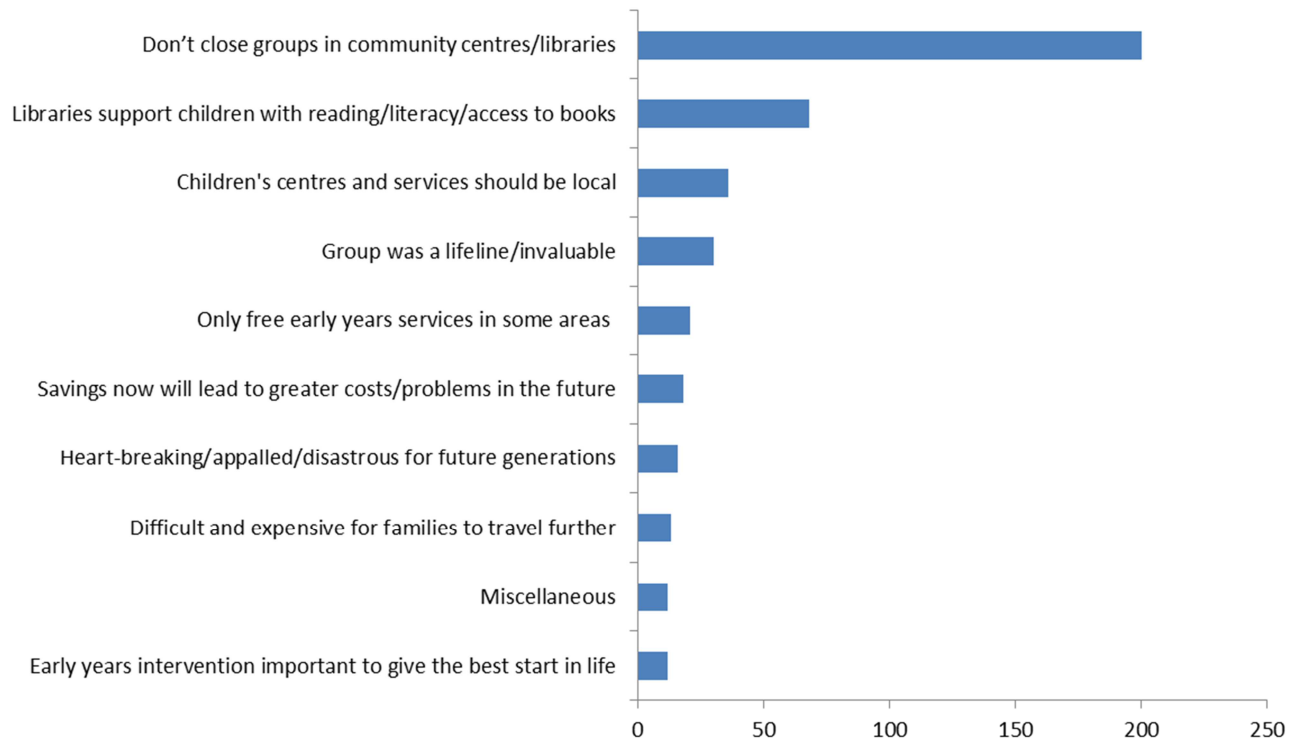
Q13. Community venues



The majority (85%) of respondents disagreed with proposal to stop running drop-in groups from community venues and libraries. Those that disagreed were more likely to feel strongly about the issue. This question had the lowest rate of respondents agreeing with the proposal (6%) and only 2% strongly agreed.

Q14. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to no longer run drop-in groups in libraries and community venues?

Q14. Community venue comments



There were 200 comments that were against closing universal groups in community venues, which supports the high percentage of respondents who strongly disagreed with the proposal.

The second most common theme related to the added benefit of using libraries as a venue and how that encouraged young children to read.

There were also a significant number of comments relating to larger catchment areas where having a single venue to attend would be impractical.

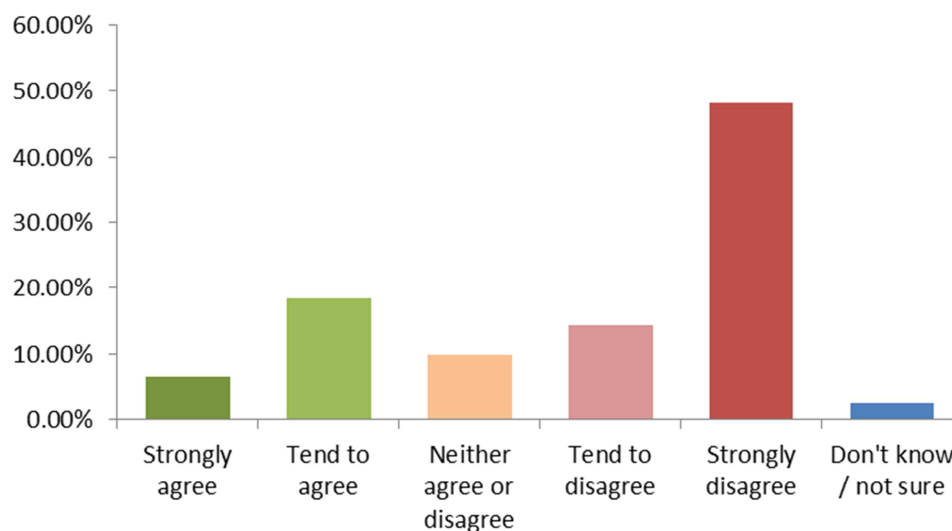
5.8. Proposals to reduce the number of home visits offered by children's centres

The consultation proposed to encourage more parents to attend groups in children's centres to get support instead of receiving resource intensive home visits. Parents who needed it most would continue to receive home visits.

Q15. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to reduce home visits and encourage families to attend groups in children's centres?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	54	6%
Tend to agree	153	19%
Neither agree or disagree	81	10%
Tend to disagree	119	15%
Strongly disagree	399	48%
Don't know / not sure	21	3%
Grand Total	827	100%

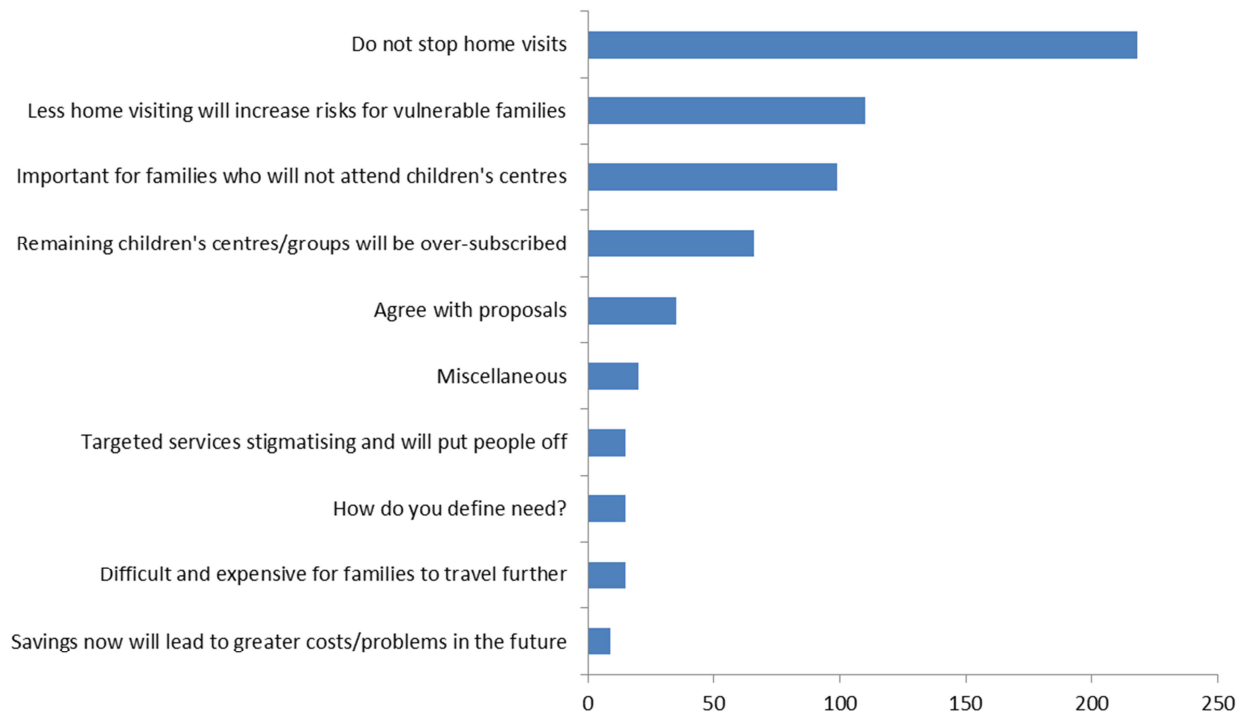
Q15. Reduce home visits



The majority (63%) of respondents disagreed with proposals to reduce home visits and focus on encouraging families to attend their local centre. Those who disagreed tended to disagree more strongly. 25% of respondents agreed with the proposals, and of these, they were more likely to tend to agree than strongly agree.

Q16. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposal to reduce home visits and encourage families to attend groups in children's centres?

Q16. Home visit comments



The most common theme relating to the proposal to reduce home visits was the feeling that it would increase risk for the most vulnerable families and those who would not otherwise attend a centre.

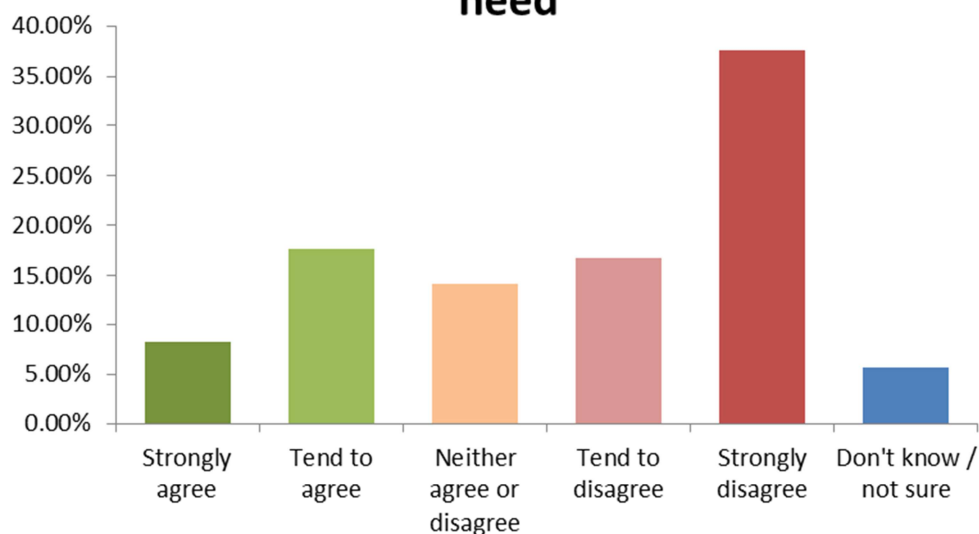
5.9. Proposals to reduce funding for childcare for children in need

The consultation proposed to reduce childcare care funding in line with the recent increase in two year old children eligible for free childcare places. There would still be funding for childcare places available for children under two for the families who need it most.

Q17. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal around funding childcare places for children with high levels of need?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	68	8%
Tend to agree	144	18%
Neither agree or disagree	116	14%
Tend to disagree	137	17%
Strongly disagree	307	38%
Don't know / not sure	46	6%
Grand Total	818	100%

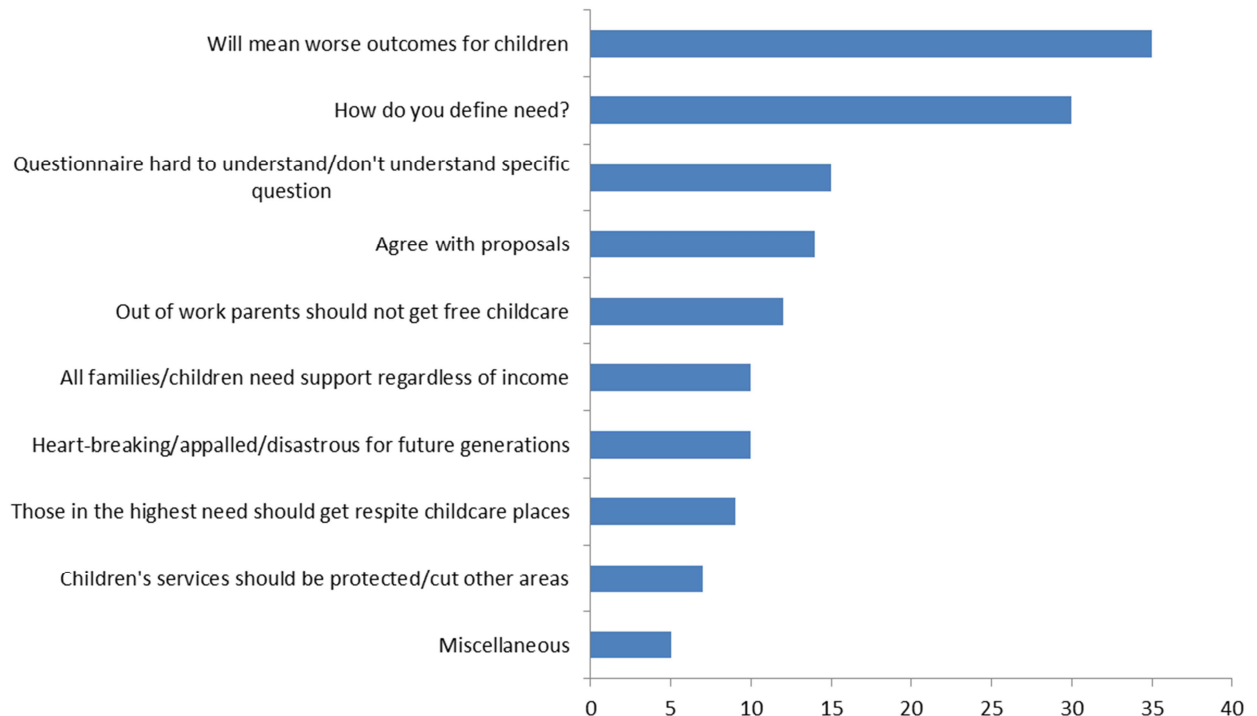
Q17. Funded childcare for children in need



While the majority (55%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to offer funded childcare places to families most in need, a fifth (20%) neither agreed nor disagreed, or weren't sure about the proposal. This could be due to the number of people who did not know what the funding was, or what the current criteria for receiving it were, as suggested in the comment summary below. In addition, 26% of respondents agreed with proposal and those who agreed were more likely to tend to agree.

Q18. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals around funding childcare places for children with high levels of need?

Q18. Funded childcare for children in need comments



Most respondents who commented on this question felt that changes to the way childcare funding for children in need is provided would lead to worse outcomes for children. However, there were also a significant number of comments around not fully understanding the definitions and process of funding allocation.

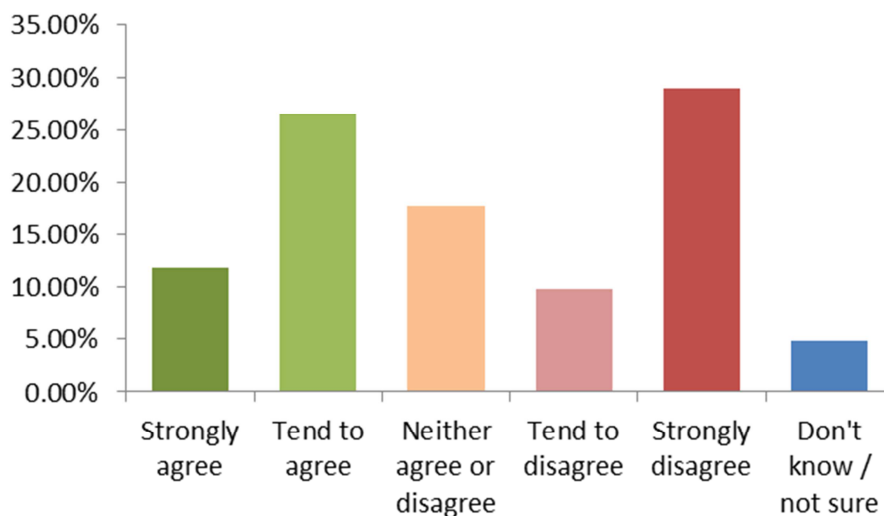
5.10. Proposals to review targeted and referral groups

The consultation proposed to review existing groups aimed at families who need extra help to make sure they were effective and the children and families who need most help can access them.

Q19. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to review referral and targeted groups?

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	97	12%
Tend to agree	217	26%
Neither agree or disagree	145	18%
Tend to disagree	80	10%
Strongly disagree	237	29%
Don't know / not sure	40	5%
Grand Total	816	100%

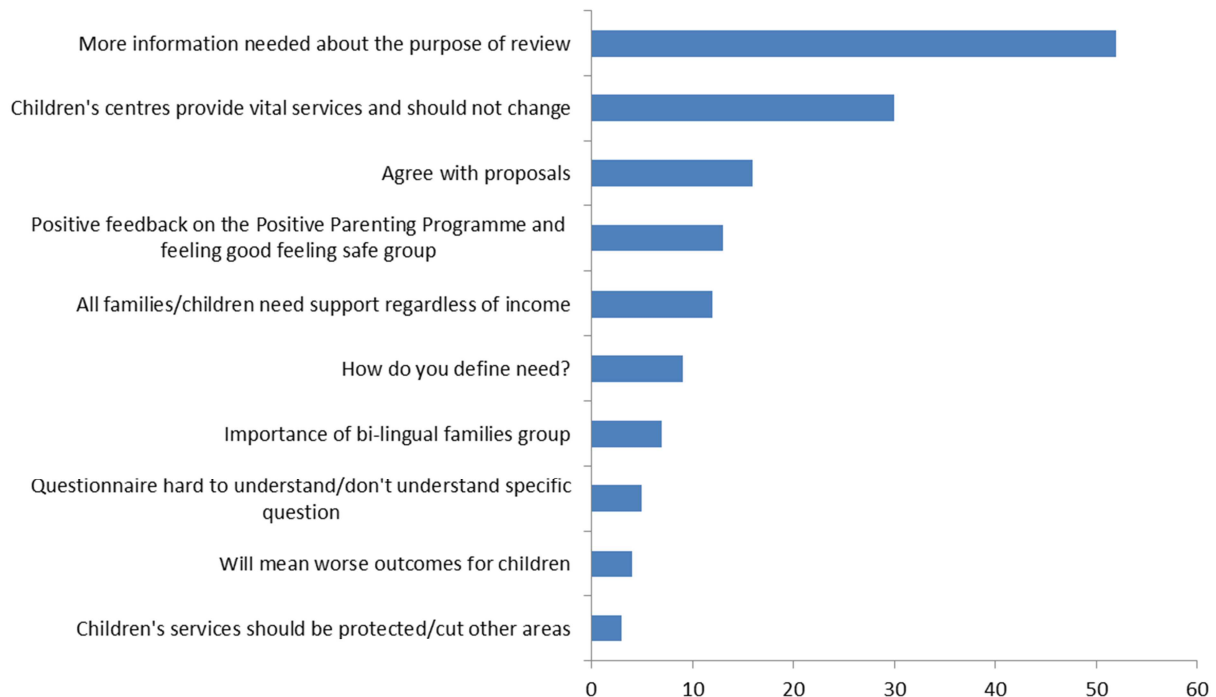
Q19. Review targeted groups



There was a fairly even split in the percentage of respondents who agreed and disagreed with proposals to review how targeted and referral groups are run. 38% of respondents agreed with the proposals while 39% disagreed. However, respondents who disagreed did so more strongly than respondents who agreed.

Q20. Do you have any comments or suggestions in relation to referral and targeted groups?

Q20. Review target/referral groups comments

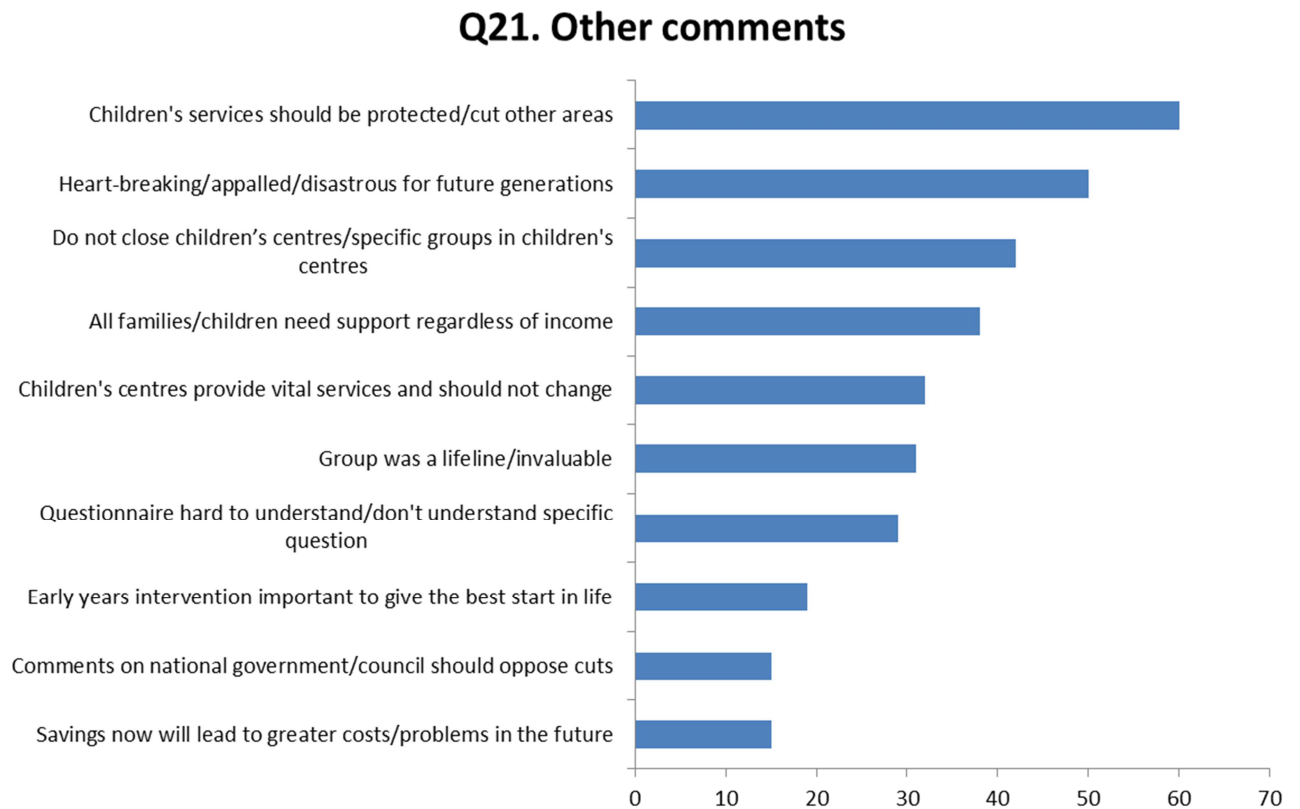


The majority of commenters felt that more information was needed about what the proposal to review the way targeted groups are run means. In addition there were a significant number of comments about how services offered by children's centres are excellent and should not change.

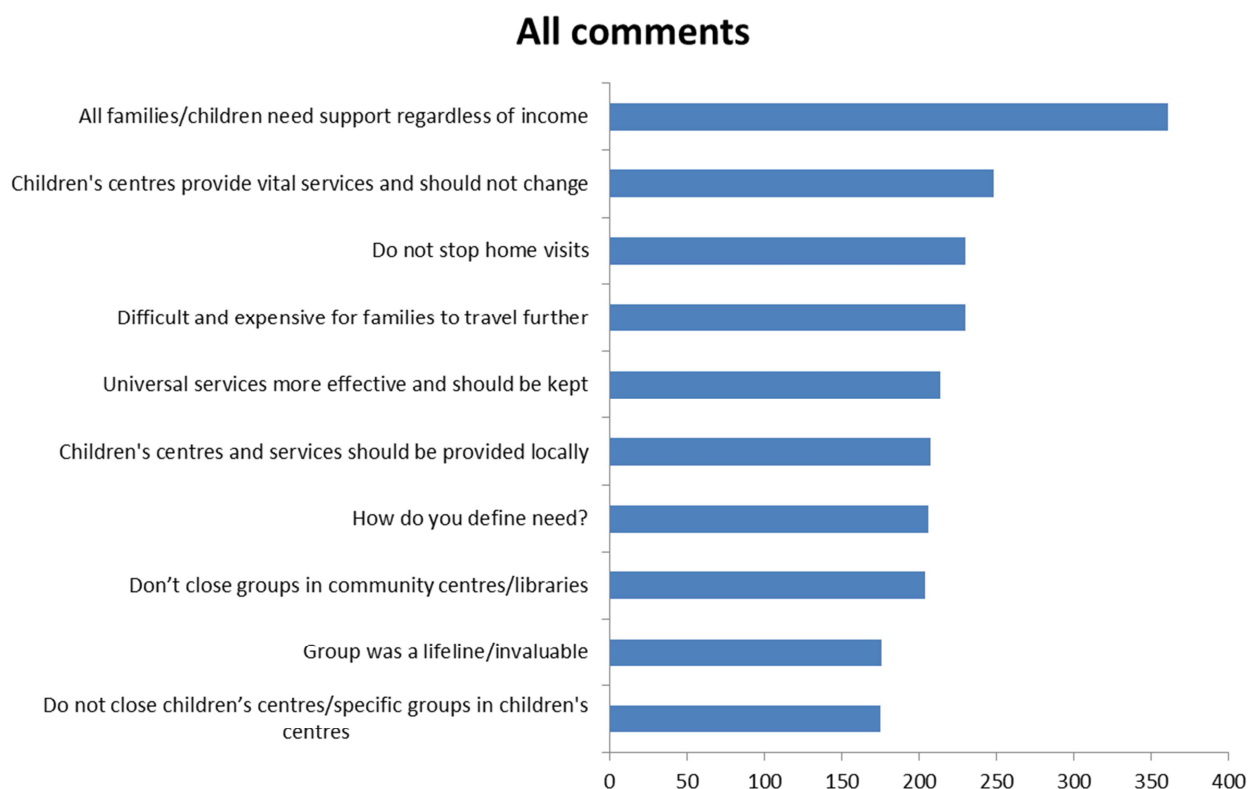
This question saw the highest number of positive comments about the way children's centres currently operate and there were particular mentions for several of the parenting courses that run, including the Positive Parenting Programme and Feeling good, feeling safe groups.

5.11. General comments

At the end of the consultation, respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to say about proposals to change the way some children's centre services are run. The following graph shows the most common themes to emerge from this question.

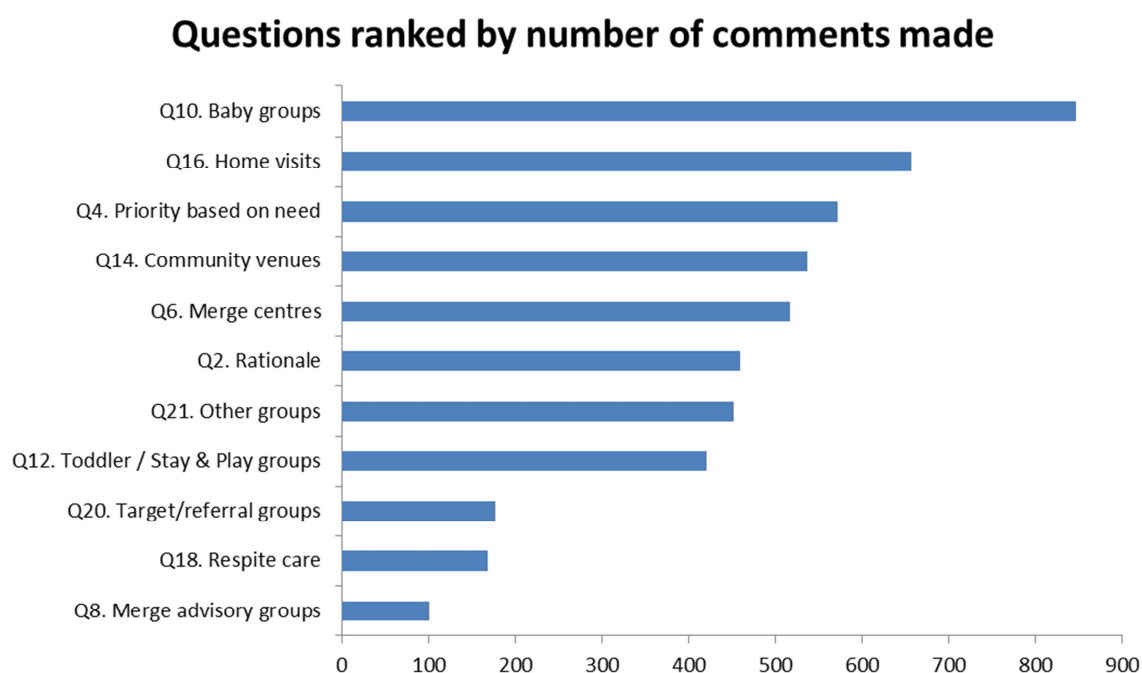


The chart below summarises the frequency of all the themes identified in the comments.



The above graph shows the most common comment themes to occur throughout the entire consultation regardless of which question they were made under.

The graph below shows each question and the total number of comments made for it.



Consultation on changes to children's centres in Brighton & Hove



We want **your** views on plans to change children's centre services to take account of the Council's budget proposals for 2015/16.

We will use your responses to help plan changes to children's centre services from April 2015.

Please complete the questions at the end of this document and return to your local children's centre.

You can also reply on-line at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cc-consultation

Please reply by 2 February 2015.

Interpreting or help to fill in this questionnaire

If you need help with interpreting this information or help to fill in this questionnaire please ask a member of the children's centre team.

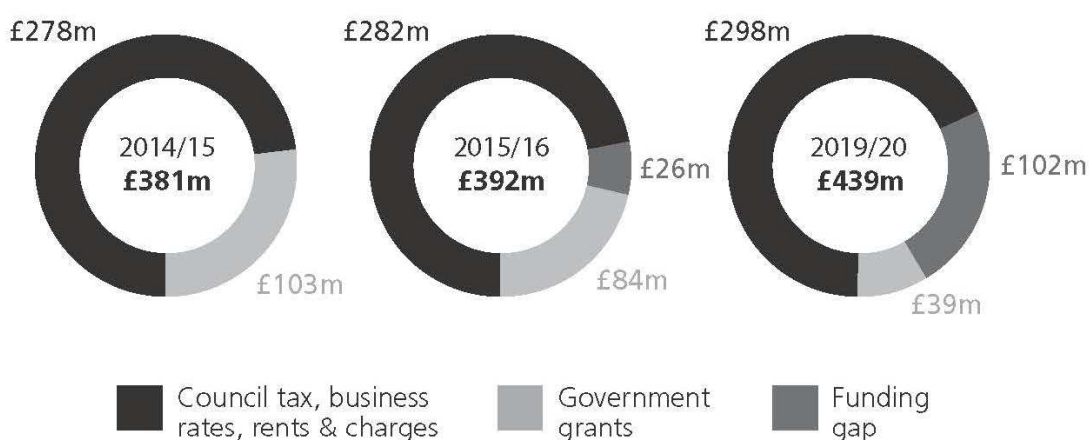
The council's budget

Our budget over the next five years will be challenging:

- Costs will increase due to inflation, population change and rising demand for our services.
- Funding from central government will be severely reduced.

This will result in a funding gap of £100 million in five years' time.

Total cost of council services



The council has to consider how to make these savings including changing or stopping services. For more information about the council's budget, please go to www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/bhbudget.

This questionnaire is part of a wider consultation about the council's budget proposals. You can let councillors know what you think about council spending by completing the budget tool at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/budgettool before 12 January. There will also be a consultation with council staff.

Each of the main children's centres has an advisory group with parent representatives. We will consult the advisory groups at their January meetings. Ask at your local children's centre if you want to find out more about the advisory group meetings.

Children's centres

The council wants all of our children and young people to have the best possible start in life – growing up happy, healthy and safe. We know that children's experiences in their early years can influence the rest of their lives.

The purpose of children's centres is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities for the families in greatest need in the areas of:

- a. Child development and school readiness
- b. Parenting aspirations and parenting skills
- c. Child and family health and life chances.

In Brighton & Hove there is an integrated citywide children's centre service with health visiting. Midwives are based in the larger centres. All centres provide baby and stay and play groups for children and parents, healthy child clinics, parenting groups, volunteering opportunities and information about training or getting back to work. Some of the activities are drop-in sessions and available to all local families and others by appointment or referral. Children's centres also provide home visiting for families who need more help.

There are currently 12 main children's centres in Brighton & Hove. Services are also provided from a number of other sites, including smaller children's centres and community venues.

Children's centre services are important to local people and are valued by them. We gather the views of parents through local advisory groups and citywide questionnaires. The report from the last questionnaire is available from www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/childrenscentres. Our centres have been rated by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) as good and outstanding. We want to make sure we continue to provide quality services that offer good value and respond to the needs of the Brighton & Hove families who benefit most from early years support.

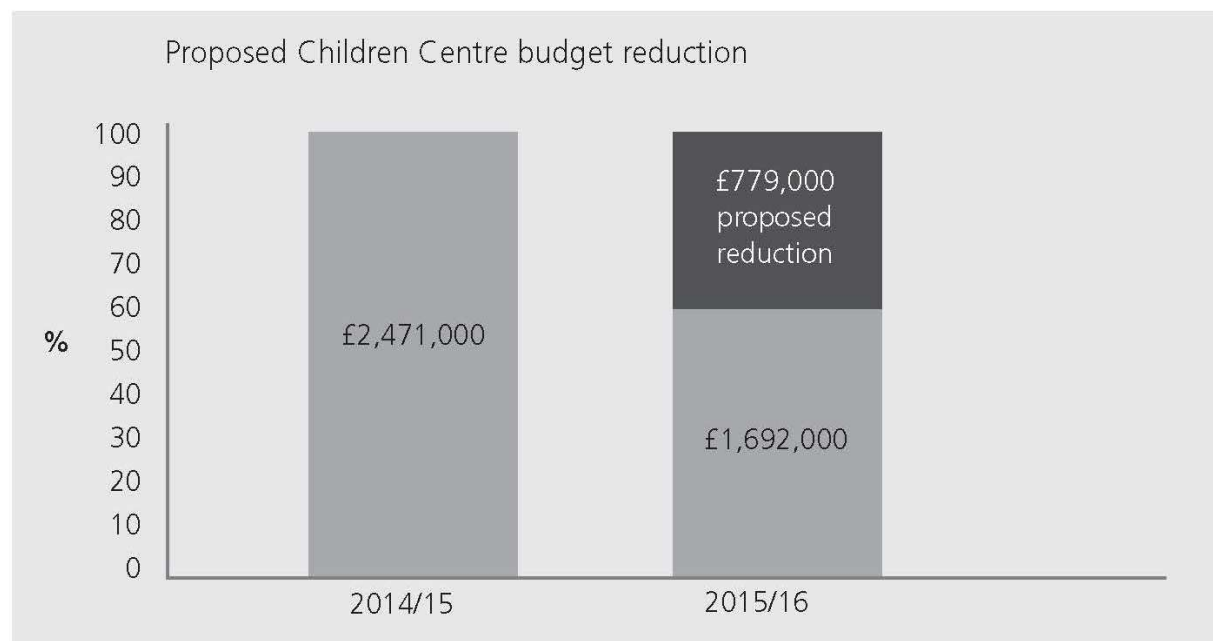
In the summer we consulted on charging for some services delivered from children's centres. We are no longer planning to charge for services. Respondents to the consultation told us they did not agree with the proposals and the potential income was small in comparison with the savings we now need to find.

To find out what is being proposed and to let us know your views please fill in this questionnaire.

Proposed budget savings for children's centres

As part of the council budget plans for 2015/16, there is a proposal to reduce council funding for children's centres. The children's centre budget is currently £2,471,000.

The proposed reduction is £779,000, which would reduce the children's centre budget to £1,692,000



Children's centre nurseries

Some of our main children's centres include nurseries and the council contributes to their costs. The council is planning a review that will look at the future of the nurseries, including their opening hours, staffing and how they are run. The total council subsidy for the nurseries

is £608,000 a year. The proposal is to reduce this amount by £100,000 in 2015/16, and by £300,000 a year in the longer term. We will consult parents about changes in the new year. It is likely that there will be different options for each nursery.


Parents and carers

Please note that when we mention parents we are also referring to carers.

Rationale for the proposals to change children's centre services

In developing our proposals to change children's centres services, we have considered the following factors:

- To achieve the size of saving we need to reduce our costs, including staff costs, and change how we deliver services
- The views of staff, service users and residents are essential in shaping services and managing the impact of any changes
- The government's statutory guidance for children's centres

- 
- Children's centres and nurseries are inspected and judged by Ofsted
 - National research on the importance of focusing support for parents and children in the critical first two years of life
 - The expansion of free childcare places for two year olds for families on out of work benefits and low income working families
 - Having health visitors integrated into children's centres delivers services to all children and families and means we can identify needs early
 - The increase in the number of health visitors from 63 to 82 by the end of March 2015 and the new offer of face to face Healthy Child Programme reviews for children at age one and two
 - The council's Early Help Strategy (www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/early-help) by using council funding to help those most in need and by using the most effective services

Q1. Do you agree or disagree with the rationale for the proposals to change children's centre services?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q2. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the rationale for the proposals to change children's centre services?

Need

Children's centre services already vary across the city to take account of the needs of their local communities. There is a significant variation in need across the city:

- Moulsecoomb, Roundabout (Whitehawk), Hangleton and Tarner children's centres serve communities with the highest levels of deprivation, child poverty, poor health outcomes and numbers of children needing a social work service.
- Children from the Moulsecoomb, Hangleton and Roundabout areas have the lowest level of achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- Cornerstone, Conway Court, West Hove and Hollingbury and Patcham children's centre areas have the lowest need in the city overall but include smaller areas of higher need.

To narrow the gap in outcomes between high and low need areas we plan to offer different levels of service at different children's centres with the greatest reductions in low need areas and for families with the lowest needs. We will still support high need families wherever they live.

Q3. Do you agree or disagree that children and families who need the most help should be given priority for services?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q4. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about prioritising services for those with the most need?

Proposed mergers of children's centres

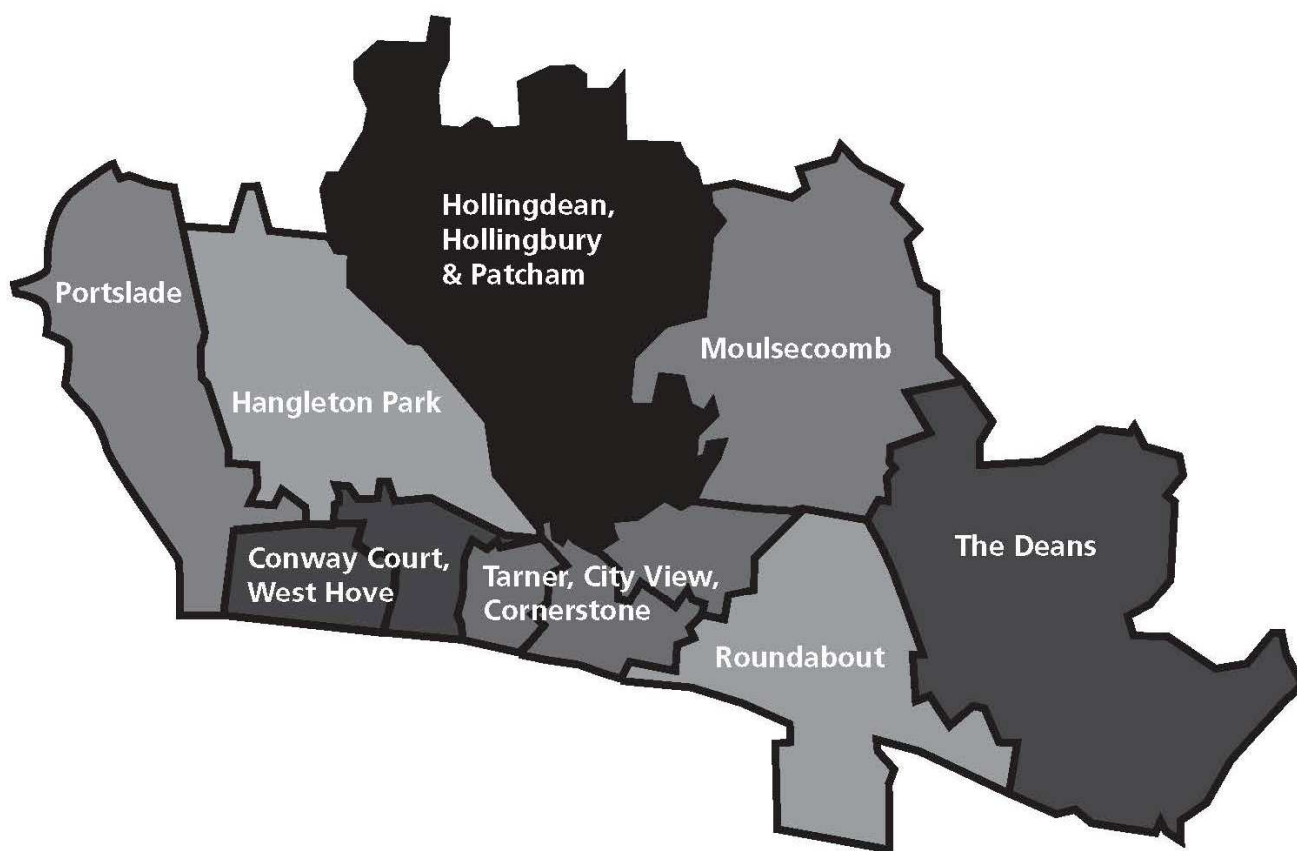
We have looked at the children's centres which families go to most. The majority of children's centres tend to be used by families who live nearby. However, there are four main centres (City View, Cornerstone, Hollingbury and Patcham and West Hove) where the majority of families go to other centres for services:

- City View families to Turner
- Cornerstone families to Turner
- Hollingbury and Patcham families to Hollingdean
- West Hove families to Conway Court

We are therefore proposing to merge these centres:

- Cornerstone and City View with Turner (Turner as the main centre)
- Hollingbury and Patcham with Hollingdean (Hollingdean as the main centre)
- West Hove with Conway Court (Conway Court as the main centre).

Proposed children's centre areas



This will mean that there will be fewer council funded services, including groups delivered from West Hove, Cornerstone, City View and Hollingbury and Patcham. Some families will have to travel further. There will still be health visiting services delivered from these buildings. Families will be able to access the revised council services from the main children's centre. We will discuss the detail of the changes for each children's centre with the local advisory group.

The following children's centre areas would not be changed under this proposal:

- Roundabout
- The Deans
- Moulsecoomb
- Portslade
- Hangleton Park

Q5. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to merge the identified children's centres into eight main children's centres?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q6. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to merge children's centres?

Advisory groups

We also propose to merge the advisory groups for Turner and Cornerstone and City View and the advisory groups for Hollingbury and

Patcham and Hollingdean. There is already one advisory group covering West Hove and Conway Court.

Q7. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to merge the identified children's centre advisory groups?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q8. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to merge some advisory groups?

Proposals for changes to services available to all families

If agreed, the budget proposals would mean that there would be fewer council staff working in children's centres. We have looked at how the remaining staff could be used to make the most difference. We are also consulting council staff about these changes.

At the moment, there are a large number of drop-in, on-going baby, toddler and stay and play groups run from children's centres across the city. These are the groups which the largest number of children and families attend. We know that the families who attend these groups value them but the majority do not have a high level of need. We propose to reduce the number of these groups run in children's centres and to limit the time that families without additional needs can attend. We also want to ensure that families who need most help can use the groups.

Baby groups

We propose to change the way that baby groups are run. We propose that we will no longer offer on-going baby groups in all areas. Instead parents will be invited to attend an eight week course. We will invite parents who need additional support to attend more sessions if needed. We will offer additional or different groups in high need areas. We will continue the existing parent led drop-in groups and encourage more.

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to change baby groups?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q10. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposals to change the way baby groups are run?

Toddler, stay and play and jump for joy groups

We also propose to stop running on-going drop-in toddler, stay and play and jump for joy groups which are open to everyone. Instead we propose to run time limited groups aimed at children under two and their parents which would last for a term. We would operate a booking system in some areas, and identify places for families who need more help.

All parents could attend for one term, with families who need extra support invited to attend extra terms if needed. We will offer additional or different groups in high need areas and will continue to support parent led drop-in groups.

Q11. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal to stop running on-going drop-in toddler, stay and play and jump for joy groups and to run time limited groups as described above?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q12. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposal to stop running on-going drop-in toddler, stay and play and jump for joy groups and to run time limited groups?

We propose to reduce council funding for voluntary sector partners in line with the changes to stay and play groups. We propose to no longer fund or run drop-in groups in libraries and other community venues.

These include groups run in Moulsecoomb, Whitehawk, Coldean, Woodingdean and Rottingdean Libraries, and Meadowview Community Centre.

Q13. Do you agree or disagree with these proposals to no longer run drop-in groups in libraries and other community venues?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q14. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposal to no longer run drop-in groups in libraries and community venues?

Proposals to change services for families who need more help

The aim of the proposals is to give priority to families who need most help. We need to make sure these services are delivered in the most effective way.

At present there is a large amount of home visiting by council staff. We will not be able to provide the same level of visits with fewer

staff. We propose to encourage more parents to attend groups in children's centres to get support. We will also review these groups to ensure they provide the most effective help. We will continue to offer home visiting to parents who need it most.

Q15. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal to reduce home visits and encourage families to attend groups in children's centres?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree or disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know / not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q16. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposal to reduce home visits and encourage families to attend groups in children centres?

Childcare funding for children in need

Children's centres have also funded childcare places for children with high levels of need in council, private and voluntary nurseries, playgroups and creches. The funding for these places will be reduced, taking into account free

childcare places for two year olds available for families on low incomes. There will still be funding for childcare for children under two for the families who need it most.

Q17. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal around funding childcare places for children with high levels of need?

Strongly agree ☐

Tend to agree ☐

Neither agree or disagree ☐

Tend to disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know / not sure ☐

Q18. Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about the proposal around funding childcare places for children with high levels of need?

Referral and targeted groups

Children's centres run some groups which are aimed at families who need extra help. We will review these groups to make sure they are effective and make sure that children and families who need most help can use them.

This will include Chatter Box, bilingual families groups, Triple P parenting groups and Feeling Good, Feeling Safe groups. We will continue to support post natal depression groups and groups for children with disabilities.

Q19. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal to review referral and targeted groups?

Strongly agree ☐

Tend to agree ☐

Neither agree or disagree ☐

Tend to disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Don't know / not sure ☐

Q20. Do you have any comments or suggestions in relation to referral and targeted groups?

Any other comments?

Q21. Do you want to make any other comments about the children's centre consultation?

What happens next?

Please return your completed questionnaire to us by 2 February 2015. We are also holding consultation meetings with children's centre advisory groups in January and are consulting our partner organisations. There is a separate consultation for council staff.

The final decision on the proposals will be taken by the full Budget Council on 26 February 2015. Changes will be implemented from April 2015 onwards.

About you

A resident of Brighton & Hove ☐

A parent / carer of at least one child under five ☐

A future parent ☐

A parent carer with a child / children aged 5 to 18 ☐

Working for an organisation that works with or for children under five ☐

Representing an organisation that works with or for children under five ☐

Which children's centre do you attend most often (please circle)

Roundabout / The Deans / Moulsecoomb / City View / Tarner / Cornerstone / Hollingdean /
Hollingbury and Patcham / Conway Court / West Hove / Hangleton / Portslade /

other:

If you are working for or representing an organisation please give its name

What is your postcode?

What age are you in years?

Prefer not to say ☐

What gender are you? (please select one answer)

Male ☐

Female ☐

Other, please state:

Prefer not to say ☐

Do you identify as the gender you were assigned at birth? For people who are transgender, the gender they were assigned at birth is not the same as their own sense of their gender.
(please select one answer)

Yes ☐

No ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

Bisexual ☐

Heterosexual / 'Straight' ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

Gay man ☐

Lesbian / Gay woman ☐

Other (please specify)

White

- ☐ English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ Other White

Black or Black British

- ☐ African
- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ Other Black

Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Other Asian

Mixed

- ☐ Asian & White
- ☐ Black African & White
- ☐ Black Caribbean & White
- ☐ Other Mixed

Other ethnic group

- ☐ Arab
- ☐ Other ethnic group
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Other (please specify)

What is your religion or belief? (please select one answer)

- ☐ I have no particular religion
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jain
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Pagan
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Agnostic
- ☐ Atheist
- ☐ Other philosophical belief
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Other (please specify)

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? (please select one answer)

- Yes a little ☐
- Yes a lot ☐
- No ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Please state the type of impairment which applies to you. If you have more than one impairment please indicate all that apply. If none of the categories apply, please mark 'other' and state. (please select one answer)

- Physical Impairment ☐
- Sensory Impairment ☐
- Learning Disability / Difficulty ☐
- Long-standing Illness ☐
- Mental Health Condition ☐
- Developmental Condition ☐
- Other, please state ☐

Are you a carer?

A carer provides unpaid support to family or friends who are ill, frail, disabled or have mental health or substance misuse problems. *(please select one answer)*

Yes ☐No ☐Prefer not to say ☐**If yes, do you care for a....? *(please select one answer)***Parent ☐Child with special needs ☐Other family member ☐Partner / spouse ☐Friend ☐

Other, please give details:

Armed Forces Service: *(please select one answer for each question)*

	Yes	No
Are you currently serving in the UK Armed Forces? (this includes reservists or part-time service, eg: Territorial Army)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever served in the UK Armed Forces?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a member of a current or former serviceman or woman's immediate family/household?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The data controller for this form is Brighton & Hove City Council.

Thank you for completing this form

- it will help us improve our services for everyone.