

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham



# Cabinet

18 APRIL 2011

**CABINET MEMBER  
FOR CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES**

*Councillor Helen  
Binmore*

**PETITIONS: CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

The Council has received a petition from some parents and carers of children who attend children centres opposing the "Spoke and Hub" model and the restructuring of Early Intervention Services.

**WARDS**

**ALL**

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Petitions Officer  
ADLDS

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That officers write to the petition organiser setting out its views about the request in the petition.

## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Between 22 January to 28 February 2011, the Council consulted with residents, service users and professional agencies prior to proposing changes to children's centre. The consultation was on the Council's website and advertised. Hard copies of the consultation were also placed in every Children's Centre and staff actively encouraged parents, carers and childminders to fill them in. 667 full and partial responses were received out of 7,168 registered users of Children's Centres. A series of focus groups were held with a particular emphasis on young parents and fathers. The Cabinet Member visited all the Children's Centres prior to the consultation starting and also held 2 focus groups for parents. Officers also met with two resident led local action groups.

1.2 A petition containing over 2000 signatures was received opposing the "Spoke and Hub" model and the restructuring of Early Intervention Services in Hammersmith & Fulham.

1.3 The Petition stated that:-

"The parents and carers of the children who attend Wendell Park Children's Centre are opposed to the proposed cuts outlined by the council. We are concerned about the future of this important community service.

The proposed new budgets of just £19,000 for 'Spoke' centres does not even cover the heating, lighting or repair costs for these buildings. There would be no money for play equipment and supplies.

Most importantly, £19,000 leaves no funding for Staff salaries. Regular staffing is crucial for maintaining contact with families and offering support. If support only comes via Hubs, this will not facilitate vulnerable families asking for help in London, and the large number of users from all other backgrounds".

The full petition statement is attached as appendix 1 to this report.

1.4 Under the Council's Petitions Scheme, a petition attracting a minimum of 250 valid signatures (of people who live, work or study in the borough) triggers consideration of the petition by Cabinet. This petition meets this criterion.

1.5 A report on the reconfiguration of Sure Start Children's Centres Network is included on this agenda.

## 2. COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE PETITION

2.1 In accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme, the petition organiser (or someone he/she nominates) may address the Council for up to 5 minutes on the subject of the petition. The Council may then decide to take one or more of the following courses of action:

- a) take the action requested in the petition
- b) considering the petition at a Council meeting
- c) hold an inquiry into the matter
- d) undertake research into the matter
- e) hold a public meeting
- f) hold further consultation
- g) hold a meeting with petitioners
- h) refer the petition for consideration by the relevant Select Committee
- i) write to the petition organiser setting out its views about the request in the petition.

## 3. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

3.1 There are no financial implications to this report.

## 4. COMMENTS OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES)

4.1 The petition is valid under the Council's statutory Petition Scheme under Part 1 of the Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and falls to be considered by Cabinet.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

No.	Description of Background Papers	Name/Ext of holder of file/copy	Department/ Location
1.	Petition relating to Children's Centre.	Kayode Adewumi ext. 2499	Finance and Corporate Services, Room 133a, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, Town Hall.
<b>CONTACT OFFICER</b>		<b>NAME:</b> Kayode Adewumi <b>EXT.</b> 2499	