

Grounds for Councillor Call for Action

Dear Cllr Holt and all

I am writing to request a Councillor Call for Action. I would like 'the Children Centre Re-design- recommendations following Public Consultation' report to be scrutinised at our O&S before it is reviewed by the Cabinet (scheduled for [15 January 2020](#)).

As you are aware, Havering Council ran a consultation on proposed changes to the way that children's centres and libraries operate in the London Borough of Havering.

Havering Council plans to close the following children's centres; Chippenham Road, Hilldene, Ingrebourne and Rainham Village. The proposal states that activities will be moved to community venues and the three other children's centres in the borough.

Residents and I are concerned by the proposals which will close Children's Centres in deprived areas where they are urgently needed. A review by the Council found that 60% of children who live in the most deprived areas were not seen at children's centres in 2017/18.

The data suggests that the Council's outreach and publicity needs to be improved. I believe dispersing activities across the borough will mean that many lower and working-class families will be unable/struggle to access services, due to low pay, insecure work, changes to their benefit, health issues, time and travel constraints.

Research suggests that what happens in a child's early years has a defining impact on their life chances, educational attainment, economic security and health. Havering Council should be investing in children's centres. I believe early intervention and prevention are always cheaper than a cure.

We must review this proposal and ensure children living in Harold Hill and Rainham are not adversely affected by the changes, which I fear they will be. For the future of children in Havering I urge you all to agree.

As this decision is being brought forward due to reduced funding from central government, we should also encourage the Cabinet member to write to the Secretary of State about the impact of cuts to early years provision.

Kind regards

Tele Lawal

Councillor Tele Lawal | Heaton Ward
Committees: Crime & Disorder | Children Services