

**Consultation on the Future of:  
Compass House Crèche Service,  
Magdalen Street, Exeter**

**June 2016**

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## 1. Purpose of the Document and Consultation

1.1 This document explains the rationale for the proposal to cease to provide a crèche facility within Compass House, Exeter for people using mental health services, this primarily being the Depression and Anxiety service.

## 2. Rationale for Ceasing to Provide the Crèche at Compass House

### 2.1 Current Service provision at the Crèche:

Compass House Crèche operates for children aged 8 months to 4 years and older siblings during the holidays. It is specifically available for parents and carers attending Adult mental health counselling services, depression and anxiety clinics etc. Its opening hours are 10am - 12noon Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 1pm. The total cost of the crèche in a full year is £22,700 (budget is £19,000) and there are 3 members of staff (but not full time)

Parents pay £1.50 per session they attend.

In April 2016 the Crèche was de-registered from Ofsted Early Years register.

Devon County Council took over the management of Compass House Crèche from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 from Devon Partnership Trust (DPT). The agreement with DPT was that the Crèche would continue to operate but would de-register from Ofsted as children would only be accessing the crèche for the time that the parents are on site having counselling/therapy sessions. This meant that no child could be in the crèche for more than two hours and parents were not permitted to go off site and leave the children in the crèche. This change in the way of working has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of children attending the crèche. Attendance for the 8 weeks commencing 4 April 2016 is detailed below:-

	Week	Tuesday		Wednesday			Thursday			Week Total
	Commencing	10am	11am	10am	11am	12noon	10am	11am	12noon	
1.	05/04/2016	2					2			4 school holiday
2.	11/04/2016	1	2	3	3		1	1		11 assessment week
3.	18/04/2016	1		2			2			5
4.	25/04/2016	1	1				1		2	5
5.	02/05/2016		1	1	1		2			5 plus 4 no shows
6.	09/05/2016	1					2			3
7.	16/05/2016	3	1				2			6
8.	23/05/2016	4	2	1			1			8

2.2 The reduction in attendance means that the current model is no longer a viable option due to various factors.

- Good practice is that there should always be two members of staff on duty. This is not cost effective as very low numbers are attending. Only 4 sessions in the period described in the table above had more than 2 children in attendance.
- Appointments with the DAS (Depression and Anxiety Service) do not always run for consecutive weeks.
- Children sometimes fail to attend without notice.
- Staff hours exceed demand leading to high unit costs. For instance in April 2016 the cost per child hour was £81.91 based on costs incurred and attendance numbers.
- The Crèche is only available for limited specific days, where as mental health services operated by DPT are open all week. Therefore parents can only access if their appointment time corresponds with crèche opening times.

### 3. The Proposals

3.1 To formally cease the provision of a DCC Crèche at Compass House, Exeter.

3.2 Devon County Council is proposing a new way for parents to access childcare to support them whilst accessing mental health support. The proposal is that parents who have not been able to make informal arrangements for childcare while they access the services at Compass House identify and arrange their own registered childcare, whether in a group setting such as a nursery , pre-school provision or home based care e.g. Childminders. The benefits of this approach for parents is:-

- That childcare would not be limited to hours that the crèche is available, increasing flexibility for parents.
- Parents can use providers in their local area. Due to short hours this will mean that the childcare will only be funded as required rather than having a staffed provision that is available sometimes with no children present.
- Parents, who have eligible 3 and 4 year old children, can use part of the 15 hours funded entitlement therefore incurring no additional cost.
- It is cost effective and would be needs led.
- All year round childcare options are available for all ages.

3.3 Children's Centre and DISC (Family Information Service) can support parents to access registered childcare as required.

3.4 DCC carried out some initial research in May into the childminders available in the area and, within a mile radius of Compass House Crèche, there were 15 registered providers and 11 of those were anticipating having vacancies in the Autumn Term (September 2016). Within a 5 mile radius there were 68 childminders (including the original 15). This will be subject to change.

### 4. Consultation Timescales

Wednesday 22nd June 2016	Launch of consultation process
Wednesday 13th July 2016	End of Consultation

## Consultation Feedback

It is important that you express any views you may have about this proposal. These will all be considered alongside our statutory responsibility under the Public Section Equality Duty before coming to any final decision. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached and also available at <https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/>

### 4.1 You may respond

(1) In writing using the attached schedule to

Compass House Crèche Consultation  
The Annexe  
County Hall  
Exeter, EX2 4QD

(2) By email to:

Crecheconsultationsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

**Consultation on the Future of (Compass House Crèche)**

**Date**

**QUESTION/COMMENT FORM**

**Name: (optional)**

**Contact: (optional)**

**Question/Comments you may wish to consider.**

**(1) Do you have any comments on the proposal for future arrangements to support individuals with children attending mental health services operated by DPT?**

**(2) Is there anything else you think the council should consider before making a decision?**

**(3) Any other comments/views?**

**Your feedback will be considered as part of the consultation process before coming to a final decision.**

Please return this form to: -

Compass House Crèche Consultation  
The Annexe  
County Hall  
Exeter, EX2 4QD

**(2) By email to:-**

Crecheconsultationsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk