

Appendix 2 – Consultation summary

Approximately 50 Fostering Services colleagues and 375 fostering households were targeted by direct email or letter in the consultation, although responses could have also come from outside this demographic as the consultation paper was available to the public on the Council website.

Carers and staff were also invited to face-to-face briefing sessions with the Group Manager and Service Manager. Three events were arranged for staff, and three for Foster Carers.

The consultation was open from 21st October 2015 to 25th November 2015 (35 days).

62 responses were received in total, of which 23 (37%) were NCC Employees and 39 (63%) were Foster Carers.

The response rate was therefore approximately 14% of the target demographic.

Consultation questions

As well as some demographic questions, respondents were asked:

1. Will the proposed structure sustain service delivery?

Of 60 responses to this question, 51 respondents thought that the new structure **would not** be able to sustain service delivery. 7 respondents were unsure, and 2 respondents thought that the model **would** sustain service delivery.

2. How will the proposed structure impact on service delivery?

Of 62 responses to this question, 55 respondents felt that the proposed structure would have a negative impact on service delivery, 5 respondents felt there would be no impact, and 2 respondents were unsure of the impact.

3. To suggest other ways that the Council could work differently in order to maintain the service delivery with less staff?

Some carers expressed interest in the Mockingbird Family Model¹ which is currently being trialled across the country in seven local authorities, and is based on a community fostering approach.

Interest was also expressed in relying more on e-communications from emails for newsletters and magazines, to using Skype as opposed to face to face supervision.

Council response:

Following concerns raised during the consultation regarding reduced SSW capacity and the possible impact on Foster Carers, their families, and the children and young people they care for, the initial proposal has been amended. It is now proposed that 5 SSW posts will be deleted from April 1st 2016, and that these will come from deleting unfilled vacancies. A review will take place later in the year to assess the impact of Fostering Support Officers on capacity, and a decision will then be made as to whether further SSW posts can be deleted.

¹ <http://mockingbirdsociety.org/index.php/what-we-do/mockingbird-family-model>