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Kent County Council  
County Hall  
Maidstone  
Kent ME14 1XQ

14<sup>th</sup> February 2023

**Re: Consultation: proposed closure of Blossoms Nursery**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as the Chairman of Walmer Town Council, as agreed by its members, at the full council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (minute 375).

I write with reference to the current consultation on KCC community services, and specifically the proposed closure of Blossoms Children's centre in Walmer.

Walmer Town Council strongly urges Kent County Council to reconsider the closure proposal for the following reasons:

1. Blossoms Children's centre contains a Day nursery, Primary School and Sure Start centre on a single site, giving comprehensive cover for families in Walmer. The alternative provision is either not available, or located at some distance, which requires a bus ride (if available), and the manhandling of a pram on and off a bus.
2. Moving the facility to the Deal youth hub, fails to consider the differing needs of 0–8-year-olds and 11–17-year-olds. The Deal Youth hub consists of a single large room, with 3 smaller side rooms for specialised services. There is no room for the younger children on site. The educational material available for 11–17-year-olds is inappropriate for younger children. In our opinion it will be impossible to separate both age ranges within a single building, given the limited facilities available, at the Deal Youth Hub.
3. Where will the specialist equipment located at the light and sound sensory room, at Blossoms be relocated, as this was purchased only recently. There does not appear to be adequate room to relocate this valuable equipment, at the Deal Youth Hub.
4. Relocating the Children's centre to the Deal Youth hub, will require a baby changing facility to be fitted, is this in the relocation plan? Where will it go?

5. Blossoms hosts a weekly visit from a Health visitor, where and how will this valuable service be located at the Deal Youth Hub, as it requires a private room for consultations to take place? This would be a lost amenity to new parents, if it was no longer available.
6. During the holidays when the hub is open to 11–17-year-old children, how will baby classes continue? Losing the baby classes or not catering to the needs of 11–17-year-olds would represent an unsupportable loss of amenity for the children of the area, in both age ranges.

We have met with a group of residents who are against the proposed closure. During the meeting, the residents described the benefits that Blossoms Nursery brought to their mental health and well-being, by the staff and other parents, this will be lost if Blossoms nursery was closed.

At Walmer Town Council we understand the need for Kent County Council to balance its books but feel that this proposed closure will be damaging to current and future users of the centre and may increase the burden on other children's services in Kent.

To summarise, Walmer Town Council would like to register its total opposition towards the proposition of closing Blossoms Children's centre, as we feel it will be taking valued amenities away from the younger children of Walmer, while at the same time undermining the facilities for older children in Deal.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Eddy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cllr Mike Eddy

Chairman of Walmer Town Council.