

Equality Impact Assessment Template – Stage Two

Please complete this template if completion of the Stage 1 template has identified that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Before proceeding with the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment, you should discuss the scope of the analysis with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the equality impact assessment guidance.

Name of item being assessed:	Budget Proposals regarding Short Breaks for Disabled Children
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Owner of item being assessed:	Juliet Penley
Name of assessor:	Juliet Penley
Date of assessment:	28.12.15
Date Stage 1 EIA completed:	30.10.15

STEP 1 – Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment

1. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this Equality Analysis? Please tick all that apply.			
Service Targets		Performance Targets	x
User Satisfaction	x	Service Take-up	x
Workforce Monitoring		Press Coverage	
Complaints & Comments		Census Data	
Information from Trade Union		Community Intelligence	
Previous Equality Impact Analysis		Staff Survey	
Other (please specify)			

2. Please provide details on how you have used the available evidence, information you have selected as part of your Impact Assessment?
<p>I have taken into account the views and comments provided from the following;</p> <p>Public consultation published on council's website and ran from 1.11.15 – 15.12.15. The public were encouraged to complete an online form. 58 responses received</p> <p>Meeting with providers of short breaks (contracts) on 30.11.15 and 4.12.15</p> <p>Parents open meeting arranged by Parent Voice (parent participation organisation) 9 parents attended</p> <p>Parents views collated by Mencap and Crossroads -14</p> <p>Petition online (via 38 degrees) with 3,173 signatures</p>

3. If you have identified any gaps in relation to the above question, please detail what additional research or data is required to fill these gaps? Have you considered commissioning new data or research? If 'No' please proceed to Step 2.

No

STEP 2 – Involvement and Consultation

1. Please use the table below to outline any previous involvement or consultation with the appropriate target groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested in this policy, strategy, function or service

Target Groups	Describe what you did, with a brief summary of the responses gained and links to relevant documents, as well as any actions
Age – relates to all ages	
Disability - applies to a range of people that have a condition (physical or mental) which has a significant and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out 'normal' day-to-day activities. This protection also applies to people that have been diagnosed with a progressive illness such as HIV or cancer.	Consultation was undertaken with parents of children with a disability as detailed in 2 above.
Gender reassignment - definition has been expanded to include people who chose to live in the opposite gender to the gender assigned to them at birth by removing the previously legal requirement for them to undergo medical supervision.	
Marriage and Civil partnership –.protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.	
Pregnancy and Maternity - protects against discrimination. With regard to employment, the woman is protected during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. It is also unlawful to discriminate against women breastfeeding in a public place	
Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic / national origin or nationality.	
Religion and Belief - covers any religion, religious or non-religious beliefs. Also includes philosophical	

belief or non-belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.	
Sex - applies to male or female.	
Sexual Orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.	

2. Who are the main stakeholders and what are their requirements?

In addition to families, the main stakeholders are the 8 providers who hold contracts with the council to provide short breaks. It is these contracts that the council have given notice on and are having to consider in terms of future budget savings.

The 8 organisations who hold contracts are Mencap, Crossroads, Dingley, PALS, Guideposts, KIDS, National Autistic Society and Homestart. Guideposts have said they do not wish to continue to provide any short break services

The 7 remaining organisations need the level of council funding to continue in order to continue to provide the same level, range and standard of short breaks going forward.

3. Amongst the identified groups in the previous question, what does your information tell you about the potential take-up of resulting services?

The ceasing of the councils funding via contracts for short breaks will have a significant impact on the capacity of the organisations to continue to provide services to families. If there is no future funding then most organisations are likely to continue to provide a very limited range of services and will need to increase charges to cover costs. For larger organisations like Mencap and Crossroads who provide services to the greatest number of children with disabilities, they say they will need to make staff redundant and close some services completely.

All feedback from families has said how much they value and rely on these short breaks services. The following comments are representative of all those received;

'Crossroads has been a lifeline for our family, its peace of mind to know she is being cared for by competent staff. My daughter is very physically disabled and this is the only social opportunity she has and the only break for my family.'

'My son has severe autism and has been with Crossroads and Mencap for many years, it is the only social life he has. He has no friends.'

'I have 3 boys with autism and a husband with mental health problems. Somebody giving me a break, just once during school holidays, to give me the space to think and recharge has made the difference to facing school holidays with dread and finishing them with exhaustion and illness to having the strength to enjoy and have fun with the children.'

'Oasis Youth Club for young people with autism would close. Befriending for young people with autism would close. And what else is there for young people with autism in West Berks - nothing. This will detrimentally impact around 30 young people with autism and another 100 or so parents and siblings.'

'The social impact this will have on the family as a whole! By cutting all these services you are at risk of putting more families at crisis point due to not having enough or any support!'

'Parent Voice is West Berkshire parent carer participation charity. We know many of our

members have give feedback directly to the council however we felt it important to offer an evening session for those who wanted to discuss the proposals and be part of the Parent Voice community feedback. We held the meeting on 30th November at St Johns Church rooms; it was advertised widely through our networks and those of our partners. The feeling of the meeting was that the provision offered through short breaks is currently a minimum and would not withstand any cut. Without maintaining the current service children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or a Disability will be significantly disadvantaged and will not be given the opportunity to 'live ordinary lives' as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equalities Act 2010. Accessing services currently is a challenge as the families service is oversubscribed with waiting lists in place.

STEP 3 – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

What will be done to improve access to and take-up of, or understanding of the policy, strategy, function or service? (these are the measures you will take to mitigate against adverse impact)

Those Childrens and families with the highest level of need will be eligible for an assessment by Childrens Social Care and will be provided with services such as short breaks to meet their needs.

There is likely to be a reduced amount of short breaks funding available so this will be used to support those services most valued by families. The overnight breaks are very costly to provide and are delivered to a smaller number of children. The services most needed by families (according to their feedback) are holiday play schemes, after school clubs and youth clubs so it is planned that the remaining money can be targeted to those services.

Some organisations have advised that they will continue to offer short breaks and will either increase charges or seek funding elsewhere.

STEP 4 – Procurement and Partnerships

Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? Yes/No (please delete)

If 'yes', have you done any work to include equality considerations into the contract already? Specifically you should set out how you will make sure that any partner you work with complies with equality legislation.

No

STEP 5 – Making a Decision

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy, strategy, function or service will meet the authority's responsibilities in relation to equality and support the Council's strategic outcomes?

The council has to make very difficult decisions regarding budgets. It is clear from the consultation that short break services are very valued and needed by families and there has been a huge amount of feedback which all disagrees with the proposal to make reductions in funding. There is a risk that by ceasing or reducing the funding to these early help services that families with go into crisis and eventually cost the council and other services much more.

The current short breaks services were commissioned following on from the governments 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' initiative (2008-11) when considerable central funding was available to councils to develop and increase short breaks for disabled children. So the current

contracts were awarded to organisations to provide short breaks at an early point of need and to a far greater number of children.

Although councils would want to provide prevention/early intervention as well as statutory services, it is not now possible given the savings required so this proposed budget savings is to those short breaks at 'preventative' level

Short breaks will still be provided by the council to those families who are assessed as being in the greatest need.

STEP 6 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

Before finalising your action plan, you must identify how you will monitor the policy/function or the proposals following the Equality Impact Assessment and include any changes of proposals you are making.

What structures are in place to monitor and review the impact and effectiveness of the new policy, strategy, function or service?

There will be a procurement process with the remaining funds which will offer a smaller amount of support for 2 or 3 services. The contract monitoring processes will continue and impact monitored and reported to council management

STEP 7 – Action Plan

Any actions identified as an outcome of going through Steps 1-6 should be mapped against the headings within the Action Plan. You should also summarise actions taken to mitigate against adverse impact.

	Actions	Target Date	Responsible post holder & directorate
Involvement & consultation	Discussions will continue with current providers to mitigate impact of reduction in funding and consider level of ongoing provision	Subsequent to consultation period	Service manager (C&F services)
Data collection	Continue to collect data from short break providers as currently	Every quarter	Service manager (C&F)
Assessing impact	Data will be used to consider any gaps in service provision	Post April 2016	As Above
Procurement &	Award contracts with remaining funds	April 2016	As Above

partnership	under the 'quick quote' process through portal		
Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing	New contracts awarded will be monitored as part of contract arrangements	April 2016	As Above

STEP 8 – Sign Off

The policy, strategy or function has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.

Assessor		
Name: Juliet Penley	Job Title: Service Manager	Date: 29.12.15

Service Director or Senior Officer (sign off)		
Name:	Job Title:	Date:

Please email a copy of the EIA to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality & Diversity): Rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk