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1		Yes	A reduction of £345,000 is a significant amount to cut. Ceasing these contracts will effectively shut down these existing services which are supported by this funding. The impact to these families and children with additional needs will be devastating as there is already a shortage of services out there at the moment.	This proposal will deeply affect the family & careers of children with additional needs. It is not just the children which are affected, but their family & everyone around who support them who will take on additional stress. Helping these families can be achieved by not cutting this funding especially in such a drastic manner without any concrete transition plans to a replacement service of equal quality & access.	This is hard to say as there are varying services. A clear transition to replacement services would be helpful.			I believe these existing charities & organisation which deliver these services are best placed to as this is their specialist skills. Bring this back in house to the council would create a significant ramp to match the existing services currently available.
2		Yes	Oasis Youth Club for young people with autism would close. I set the club up so fully understand the financials and know that voluntary income will not sustain it. 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.	Yes Young people with autism at the Oasis Club or in Befriending have no alternative provision. Schools or Youth Groups do not give these youngsters the ability to relax and make friends - the fact that they are with neuro-typical people means that the young people with autism remain tense and stressed as they try to conform. They don't need to at Oasis. Befriending is a life line too. The ability to do something with a trained and carefully matched adult allows the child to do things without their parents, building self esteem and confidence. And it is a massive break for parents that otherwise are unlikely to get any break from caring for often very challenging young people.	Both services are already very heavily reliant on volunteers. Reduction or removal of funding would lead to closure.	See above - the services will close. I have dedicated a decade of my life to helping establish and run services for people with autism in West Berks, as have many other parents. There is no more we can give.	Perhaps all members of Council could train as volunteers and take on running Oasis and Befriending! More seriously it is appreciated how much councillors and others do give of their time. West Berks could directly fund these two services in return for the significant West Berks savings made by the work of the National Autistic Society West Berks Branch volunteers	These two services run with extremely limited overhead, no building maintenance and no reserves. If all after-school activities and youth groups are closing, if play parks are all being closed, if all other youth amenities are being shut, if all other support to vulnerable youngsters is being withdrawn - then and only then should support to young people with autism, who have no choice and no alternative, be removed
3		Yes	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!			If there's is anything we can do to help or work with we will! NAS west Berkshire branch!		I am a parent of a child with special needs and I'm also a professional (family support worker) so I see both sides and the frustrations that comes with this! I constantly think of things I can do professionally to help my families I work with and this mainly just by giving them my time to talk etc! As a parent trying to Find the right support is difficult to come by! By cutting what we do have would be detrimental!

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4		Yes	<p>Children with complex needs such as severe learning disabilities, Autism and associated challenging behaviours who function about 10 years below their mainstream peers, accessing standard community activities is utterly impossible. With this level of need, even accessing most of the provision for 'special needs' children and YP is often also almost impossible. However, with the specialised 1-1 support that Mencap playschemes and clubs can provide, such children and YP can access appropriate activities with vital contact with their peers. The 'by product' of these rich, rare but immensely valuable opportunities for the child /YP also comes the almost equally important opportunity for parents and carers to take a break from their relentless responsibilities. Particularly during school holiday periods, such breaks from these immensely demanding duties, is not just beneficial for the parent / carer, I would say that it is utterly essential.</p>	<p>I think that it will affect young people with complex needs and severe disabilities in their teenage years more than the younger children. I believe this because the gap between them and their peers is for ever growing wider and wider, their behaviours can be growing severely anti social, their size makes them even more difficult to manage safely in general community settings and I think that the general public are far far less tolerant and accepting of large teenage children displaying antisocial behaviours than they are of younger, 'cuter' children who may have similar disabilities. I think that it is essential that the After School Club, Youth Club and holiday playschemes continue to be funded but I think that by far the most important provisions are the holiday playschemes as it is during this time that parents lose the vital support of the school team and can be left caring single handedly for their child / YP for days or weeks on end, and I know that delivering consistently high quality care under such circumstances, without a break, is impossible.</p>		<p>I am already a foster carer providing care for only an allowance of roughly £500 a week which can easily include during school holidays over 100 hours of waking care. I used to also provide respite and shared care for other children with disabilities until this became too difficult to manage for my full time placement child. I have no more capacity and need WB to maintain respite provisions to support me in the care of the child they have placed with me.</p>	<p>Maintain and increase funding to support the Special Schools to provide care during school holiday periods. This will prevent parents and carers having to move our children into privately run residential schools.</p>	<p>My child is already in foster care. He has been placed full time with me for 7 years and I know that I am saving the LA an absolute fortune by providing care, single handedly, in my own home. The thought that these services at Mencap are going to be taken away from a child who already has the LA with full parental responsibility seems to me to be beyond short sighted.</p>
5		Yes	<p>This proposal will take away a vital support system to parents with disabled children. Numerous activities including holiday camps, after school clubs will be terminated as a result of this. Disabled children who attend the Castle School will no longer have an after school club which they can attend and be safe at. Every other school and 'non disabled' child has these facilities available to them. I cannot understand how it is fair to remove this from the most vulnerable people in the district. One of the Council's core aims is to 'safeguard vulnerable children and adults'. By even proposing this type of budget cut you have failed miserably in achieving this.</p>	<p>Yes disabled children are going to be severely affect by this where as non disabled children will not be affected at all by the budget cuts. You are punishing children and parents who find life more of a struggle to being with! Re-instate the funding is the only way to help with this.</p>				<p>It is a disgrace the way in which the Council is prepared to shrug off and reduce it's responsibility to disabled children. Proposals like this make it an embarrassment to work for the Council. The people making this decision have no idea of the consequences it will cause and are too narrow minded to listen to how this is going to affect people. In particular the former leader, Gordon Lundie has acted disgracefully in his attack on charities (Mencap). The basis of his attack was formed on a complete lack of understanding of financial accounts. A formal apology for this should be issued.</p>

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6		No	Families in difficulty rely on this service. Looking after a child with disabilities is extremely hard work and without the respite services Mencap provides many families will struggle. Some to the extent that their child may need to be looked after by the local authority (ultimately costing more both in terms of money and in human suffering).	Some individuals rely more heavily on Mencaps services, either because their children have more complex needs or because they have no family support to fall back on. These families will need to continue having respite provided or their families may end up breaking down.				
7	West Berkshire Mencap	No	I will be completing this survey on behalf of West Berkshire Mencap although many of the comments have been agreed by some of the other organisations involved in this cut. We have received a letter terminating all Short Breaks that we provide and this will impact our families hugely. We have over 3000 names on our petition which is still growing and both myself and other staff are being contacted daily by different parents/carers most of whom are desperate at the thought of losing their respite. There are people who will have to give up work and go onto benefits. Some of the families have said that they will no longer be able to keep their children with them which is incredibly hard for them. I believe that this is a very short term cut, the benefits of which will be lost if one child goes into care. These families do not want to lose their children but feel that they have no choice. We are regularly described as a lifeline for the families. The impact will be huge. We will close our children's services except for a couple of projects that have different funding. We will lose our staff and volunteers, many have been with us for years and know the young people very well. We regularly take children that no one else feels able to take because they are too challenging or their health needs are too high. The benefits are not just for the children and families, the children socialise and get to enjoy experiences that children without disabilities may take for granted. Families get to spend time with siblings after school and during playschemes etc and also we have a huge number of young volunteers recruited from local schools that work on a one to one basis with each young person who attends.	It will have a different impact on different individuals as they all have their own needs, complexities and challenges. Not all of the young people and families are currently known to Social Services but they are far more likely to be known once they have their respite and short breaks cut. I would think that Social Services are aware of the more challenging young people ie the 2:1's etc and we would be able to sit with officers to compose a list of those who we think would be most affected. We are often able to see the family as a whole and predict if there are issues that may be putting the family on the verge of breakdown, or indeed things are going well and help isn't needed. We would be prepared to share this information and indeed can direct people to the Disabled Childrens Team for help. Currently we work as a buffer between the family and the Council and we resolve a lot of issues ourselves. However this has become more difficult since 55% of our Family Advisor funds were cut and it will be virtually impossible once the Short Break money is cut. We are spending our reserves on a Family Adviser currently as the role is vital but this won't be sustainable so we will need to be sending more families to Social Care for the help that they need.	I think that the way WB Mencap has been delivering short breaks and respite have worked very well. There are a number of our young people that are not able to access Castlegate because of their challenging behaviour and we take them on. What I understand from the parents and carers is that they need regular respite that can be relied on, they like their young people to socialise as much as possible whilst remaining safe and happy. With us they can socialise with their peers as well as their volunteers. Castlegate offers a good service to the people it takes but we need much more respite. After School club and Play Scheme are the most popular and needed services that we offer and parents have asked if they can have more of these. They have also asked about a transition group which we have tried to start but reached a standstill re transport. The local authority offers it to another organisation but we haven't got very far ourselves in getting transport from Newbury College to The Slater Centre in Bone Lane.	We are fortunate in that we are able to provide a lot of added value to our short breaks/respite through the use of our young volunteers and fundraising. Therefore services which cost over £150 per session are heavily subsidised so that parents only pay £25 per session, this is for the Greenfields playscheme for children with severe health needs that we were asked to provide by Social Services. Because we are a charity we are able to apply for grants that will help give added value to the schemes we provide such as trips out, entertainment, extra services etc. However we need the core element that has been cut as it provides us with sustainability including the ability to retain our trained staff. We are always happy to discuss if you think that there are areas that we could develop that would tie in with something you feel is needed as long as it is within our remit to provide and we have the resources or we believe we can try to grant fund for it.	I would think that you have the best knowledge in that area ie West Berkshire Mencap, Crossroads, Castlegate etc.	To be frank this has been a very difficult time. To receive the letter of termination which was very short and to the point was a shock. We appeared to have been left off the email communications re consultations for a long while and the whole process has been extremely difficult in many ways. We are trying to encourage and support parents who are panicking, trying to keep our staff so that services can continue whilst not knowing anything ourselves. I was sent a copy of an email from Gordon Lundie to a parent which he copied to ALL councillors which had several 'mistakes' in it including naming me personally as contacting the local paper and starting a PR war when in fact the paper contacted me and asked me to respond to Mr Lundie's comments which were personal (and this will stay with me for ever) "Leila Ferguson is cynically using children with disabilities to further her own political aims". That was both untrue and unnecessary and very hurtful. However we need to work together to make provision for the people that need it and we can do it with civility. Personally I feel that this is a dreadful time for all involved, the local authority has to make massive cuts and I truly sympathise but I feel it is very shortsighted to make cuts in this area which is so preventative

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			<p>We offer huge amounts of training and the volunteers return regularly, often choosing careers based on their time with us.</p>					<p>and could lead to huge costs if not provided. These costs would be financial to the local authority and emotional to the families involved. Please don't make these cuts to the short break/respite, life is hard enough for these families and we help them to hang on and even enjoy family life. Both our children's and our adult services are very much needed.</p>
8	Pangbourne Parish Council	No	<p>This service is a life line for many families. it can support parents in many ways and provide much needed respite in a safe environment. It is also vital, in many cases, for other family members to have the full attention of their parents for a period of time,</p>		<p>This service should be rationalised with more liaison with charities and other voluntary agencies which provide help.</p>			
9	West Berkshire Parent Voice	Yes	<p>Parent Voice is West Berkshire parent carer participation charity. It has been running for about 16 months and is funded by the DfE through Contact A Family Nationally It has a website and regularly communicates with parents via Facebook and Twitter. We know many of our members have give feedback directly to the council however we felt it important to offer a evening session for those who wanted to discuss the proposals and be part of the Paent 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 are oversubscribed with waiting lists in place.</p>	<p>Parent present felt children and young people with significant and complex needs receive very few services as it is, they are hard to place and are not able to make changes in placement as easily as other children, therefore any change has a huge and long lasting impact on the children, young people and their parent carers Afterschool and Youth clubs were of great importance to the parents who attended. The Crossroads provision and Mencap was seen as essential services which should not be cut under any circumstances, they are a life line to children, young people and their parent carers. Youth Clubs such as Spectrum, Oasis, and Cosmos provide the opportunity for young people to learn and practice a range of social skills, and for many in West Berkshire, both Mencap or Crossroads are their only services, and without it them will have no social outlet at all. Parents and Young people at the meeting failed to see how the council can adhere to their Short Breaks statement as set out in the extract below should these cuts take place. 'West Berkshire Council is committed to working with its partners to make</p>	<p>Sadly the feeling of the meeting was one of distrust of the council and therefore there was a reluctance to offer any solutions as they feel a distrust towards the council and are concerned any suggestions offered would be seen as an acceptance of any cuts which is not the situation at all. The group were disappointed they had not been approached earlier and given the opportunity to work with the council from the 'get go' as set out in the Short Breaks statement above and supported by the Children Act 2014.</p>	<p>It is not in Parent Voice gift to contribute directly to alleviate the impact of these cuts. We would have like to have been consulted earlier in the process and to have enable to council to acces parent to gain their views and ideas before the consultation process. Of those present at the meeting 100% have used the Short Break service but none had used the Local Offer and only one person had heard of it. We, like the government, see the Local Offer a crucial to parent accessing services. We know the resources for this site are also being reduced which will make it even more difficult to find suitable services. To alleviate the impact Parent Voice would see continue support of the Local Offer is needed.</p>	<p>Council to take it back in house and use their own facilities and staff. Can base usage on known needs from disabled children's team and SEN team. Access lottery funding not just for sports! Increase access to 'normal' provisions for children with milder special needs Afterschool clubs in schools/ castle V disabled kids difficult to place in less specialised setting, set up Buddy families to reduce cost of afterschool care and activities etc. Swings and smiles to provide respite breaks PIP (more expensive for councils and difficult to manage)</p>	<p>a couple of quotes from parents 'Short breaks are so, so important to us' 'The sitting service is the only break I get' The meeting wanted the council to recognise many families are very, very isolated and stuck at home looking after children with very complex needs. Many were not able to attend the meeting as they have no one who can care for their children while they have just an hour off. Short breaks are an essential service not an added extra, parents felt that without this support there would be more family breakdown which in turn would cost the council even more money. The meeting asked that we shout as loud a possible PLEASE DONT MAKE THESE CUTS, THESE ARE SOME OF THE MOST DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES WHO CAN NOT WITHSTAND A CUT IN SHORT BREAKS.</p>

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				<p>sure a wide range and type of short breaks are available to families. The council will;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that we listen to all disabled children, act on their views, and provide them with choices - West Berkshire's Short Break Statement</li> <li>2. Ensure all disabled children and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy local community life, wherever possible using local childcare facilities, leisure and recreational activities</li> <li>3. Ensure that as parents and carers you are supported to become equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities, so we work together to 'get better'</li> <li>4. Ensure we provide you with useful information when you need it</li> </ol> <p>All of the above will help to ensure that we meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts (1995 and 2005). "West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation." Parents at the meeting felt the Short Breaks statement had been totally disregarded. They all felt this has been illustrated by the recent action of the council in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending out letters of notice to providers prior to any consultation with children, young people, parents, carers or providers.</li> <li>• The consultation process entered into by the council taking place over a shorter period than that recommended by the National Governments' Compact guidelines as it is over six weeks compared to the 12 weeks recommended in the guidance</li> <li>• The consultation period is taking place during the very busy run up to Christmas.</li> <li>• No consultation events have been held by the council to gain the views of parent carers and young people.</li> </ul>				

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10		No	Keep KIDS UK & Crossroads - weekend breaks for children/young people with Learning Difficulties - there is no alternative that can take this on. You cannot just access and pay - it would not exist!					
11		Yes	No breaks for families with a young person with Learning Difficulties who do not meet the criteria under the Social Care Disabled Children's Team....or don't want a full service just a little break instead.	Yes - as above. It would cost far more money if these families then requested assessment by DCT and met the criteria....or went into crisis due to losing this small service.	Using the voluntary sector is always far cheaper than using any internal service. Spend a little to prevent crisis...saves loads than reacting to crisis!		This service is vital....so many children & young people have a little break to learn independent skills, away from mum/dad, and the rest of the family have a break to re-charge their batteries to carry on for another year!	
12	West Berkshire Mencap	Yes	Our daughter, xxx, is 6 years old. She is severely disabled and has complex health needs. She has just failed to meet the Continuing Health Care criteria, though she has been eligible for this since she was first assessed when very young, so we are even more concerned about the proposed loss of service from West Berkshire Mencap in Newbury. West Berkshire Mencap has become a core provider of care for xxx over the last few years. xxx has been looked after by a small team of people whom she has come to know and recognise, which is obviously important for her happiness. As she has such complex health needs and she is unable to communicate, it is vital she is looked after by people who have known her for a long period of time, who are tuned in to her. This is because they need to know if she is some discomfort, for example, and very importantly if she is becoming unwell as she can require immediate transfer to hospital. She has had two ICU admissions this year from chest infections. We moved house two years ago so xxx could have adapted living. This has required an increased mortgage and so we both need to work. We are both teachers at Kennet School. My husband works full time and I work part time. The hours I work fit well with hospital appointments and if xxx is ill in hospital it has allowed us to manage this and looking after xxx's younger brother, as well as allowing me to get shopping, housework etc done. As such, we are	This is difficult to answer. For families like us, with a child with such high and complex needs, it removes a vital part of the network of support that gives us the chance to function as a family. For others, who receive no additional support, it removes ALL their support. The thing you need to understand is that an organization like Mencap, as a specialist, can tailor their support to individual needs. It will hit all families very hard. What would be the gain of having someone new learn all about xxx's and other children's needs; and surely it is extremely difficult for children with autism (not xxx) to become familiarised with new people and surroundings.	Not really. Mencap does a good, cost-efficient job, as it is partly staffed by volunteers, and does its own fund-raising. West Berks is a small district, and there cannot be many alternative providers locally. To go out of the area is bound to be costly. We have past experience of respite provided by foster-carers: they are hard to come by, are rarely specialists in children like xxx, the relationship can break down, and it can involve long distances (in one case we had to take xxx to central Reading for short respite breaks provided by foster-carers). Castle School might take on a role in after-school clubs, but it is difficult think of anything else. In-home care has its place, but this option means our daughter will hardly get out of the house, and not be able to access the specialist facilities and social options Mencap has. Social exclusion is a real issue for families like us.	No. As a hard-pressed family we have neither the time nor the financial resources for this.	See responses to question 5	Our understanding is that most of these services under threat actually fulfill your statutory obligations, which Mencap are merely delivering on your behalf as part of a contractual agreement. Some of the confrontational language used by Mr Lundie, on behalf of the council, has been dreadful. Furthermore, we were promised by David Cameron that vulnerable families like us would not be targeted by the austerity measures, and yet this threatens to hit us very hard. The term 'short breaks' can, to outsiders, imply that these are somehow 'holidays' when in fact they are a vital means of support in helping families like us cope, and children like xxx exercise their right to equality.

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			<p>reliant on xxx's place at Mencap After School Club on Mondays and Wednesdays while I am at school. The staff also give xxx her tea and get her in her pyjamas. This takes away some of the high 'workload' we have looking after xxx, as when home she requires medicines, fluid, nappy changes every half hour to hour up until after 10pm. xxx needs to be checked in the night and so we always have interrupted sleep, so this bit of help goes a long way for us. My husband has a high workload and I can get more work done at school due to this help. xxx also accesses the Mencap holiday play schemes three days a week; and Saturday Club once a month. We believe very strongly that xxx has a right to socialise with other children without her parents there. She really enjoys these opportunities, smiling and interacting with others. xxx requires one to one to do anything and so this is very difficult for us to do at home without paying someone (if available) at a great deal of expense. If left she will sleep and then be more awake at night. These play schemes also give us a much needed break. It also allows xxx's brother to spend quality time with us and for us all to be involved with activities we cannot do with xxx. This includes socialising with xxx's friends and participation in exercise, which we find helps our mental wellbeing, which we both have some difficulty with due to xxx's high care needs and fragile health. To be frank, I am concerned about our ability to cope looking after xxx if Mencap's services cease. This is not something I ever thought we would have to explain to somebody.</p>					
13	West Berkshire Green Party	No	<p>It is clear from the comments of people who use this service that it would cause considerable distress to remove it.</p>		<p>The former council leader's grotesquely misjudged and very public attacks on Mencap, which were followed by his swift departure from office, contained the repeated suggestion that the charity should use its reserves to fund the services it provides. We suggest</p>			

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					that the council follows this advice, at least for 2016/17.			
14	Parent	Yes	There is families that use the service that can not get direct payments but do still need respite. I feel that some families that can not get this help are the ones or are just coping at present but without the services, may not cope. So they end up in crisis. How does that benefit anyone.	The people that can not get personal budgets because they will not get the help. The only thing that would help is to change criteria for getting a social worker.			Grants made available and easier to access.	I think a lot of parents with disabled children find life hard enough trying to find people you trust with your children and money is tight because not everyone can go back to work, some people work only because you trust the people you leave your child with. If all these services disappear, what happens to our children they spend all their time at school and home and no social life at all.
15	Parent	Yes	There are families around that cannot apply to have Direct Payments, as they cannot get Social Worker support. These are the people who will really suffer as they have been able to access respite before, but will be priced out by considering to pay privately. Because these families cannot get support from a Social Worker are basically being punished by just about coping with the behaviour of their disabled children.	It will affect the families that cannot get Direct Payments and will therefore have to consider paying privately. Changing the rules to enable Social Worker support to be accessed by more families including those to appear to be coping. Making grants available to those families who cannot get Direct Payments.	If the cuts are carried out, then there are not other ways as Children's Centres are also being closed and staff being made redundant.		Grants to be made available for short breaks as not all families can get Direct Payments.	The council boasts that they look after Carers. If these cuts are carried out, then some families may be put into crisis and their children may be put at risk of harm as some families may not know which way to turn. On the other side, Carers may be put at risk as their children's behaviour may push them to the limit. It is amazing that one day in the holidays can help Carers recharge and get through the holidays. Do the council want injuries or maybe even deaths on their conscience.
16		Yes	Xxx my twelve year old son has autism.He goes to the after school club twice a week and the the holiday clubs during the school holidays. He is a only child and has no friends in the neighbourhood and his only social interaction is going to Mencap. If Mencap ends the facilities for children, he may go backwards in his social development and be in the world autism for the rest of his life.	All disabled children at Mencap. All parents,carers and siblings.	Personal budgets for disabled children through the council.	Would pay a higher contribution for the facility	Feel Mencap have the expertise and value to continue with facility	



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17	West Berkshire Parent Voice	Yes	<p>Parent Voice a participation service based in the Voluntary Sector initiated about 16 months ago, it is funding with DfE monies through the National charity Contact A Family. The service has made contact with all of its users with regard to the consultation, many have replied directly through the councils portal others have emailed or attended an open event held on the 30th Novemeber in Newbury. It is from all of the feedback and on behalf of the group this response if given. 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 services are oversubscribed with waiting lists in place. Of those present at the meeting 100% have used the Short Break service but none had used the Local Offer and only one person had heard of it. the services used were as follows: Mencap – Afterschool Club Crossroads – Shorts breaks Stay at Butlin's Day trips during holidays Pals Afterschool club Daytrips during the holiday clubs Residential holiday trips Buddies Volunteers to accompany child to mainstream activities Dingley Currently provision for under 5's SPECTRUM, OASIS, COSMOS Weekly meetings for ASD so valuable for providing friendship opportunities and developing social skills.</p>	<p>Parent present felt children and young people with significant and complex needs receive very few services as it is, they are hard to place and are not able to make changes in placement as easily as other children, therefore any change has a huge and long lasting impact on the children, young people and their parent carers. The meeting recognised that many parents were unable to attend the consultation event as they were stuck at home caring for their children and young people. Those present spoke on their behalf: there is currently little rest-bite care with many having no break from their care role outside of school hours and for some school attendance was limited as their children and young people were often too ill to attend. It was felt that young people were the most disadvantage in the community with little or no opportunities for socialising. Maintaining the current provision was seen as essential. Afterschool and Youth clubs were of great importance to the parents who attended. The Crossroads provision and Mencap was seen as essential services which should not be cut under any circumstances, they are a life line to children, young people and their parent carers. Youth Clubs such as Spectrum, Oasis, and Cosmos provide the opportunity for young people to learn and practice a range of social skills, and for many in West Berkshire, both Mencap or Crossroads are their only services, and without it them will have no social outlet at all. Parents and Young people at the meeting failed to see how the council can adhere to their Short Breaks statement as set out in the extract below should these cuts take place. 'West Berkshire Council is committed to working with its partners to make sure a wide range and type of short breaks are available to families. The council will; 1. Ensure that we</p>	<p>The feeling of the meeting was one of distrust of the council and therefore there was a reluctance to offer any solutions as they were concerned any suggestions offered would have been seen as an acceptance of any cuts which is not the situation at all. The group were disappointed they had not been approached earlier and given the opportunity to work with the council from the 'get go' as set out in the Short Breaks statement above and supported by the Children Act 2014. The only suggestions offered were to use reserves held by the council to continue to provide the short breaks services.</p>	<p>Parent Voice is currently and will in the future be happy to consult it members and give feedback on all aspects of the councils work. It is fair to say we were disappointed to hear indirectly of the intention to cut service and find it hard to support the council work when the a partnership approach is diluted in such a way. It would have been a lot easier to have managed our member's dismay if we had know earlier and been able to share the council a strategic view</p>	<p>use personal budgets through PIP (more expensive for councils and difficult to manage) Increase access to 'normal' provisions for children with milder special needs Afterschool clubs in schools/ castle V disabled kids difficult to place in less specialised setting put in more resources to enable this to happen Buddy families to reduce cost of afterschool care and activities etc. Swings and smiles to provide respite breaks Council to take it back in house and use their own facilities and staff. Can base usage on known needs from disabled children's team and SEN team Access lottery funding not just for sports!</p>	

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				<p>listen to all disabled children, act on their views, and provide them with choices - West Berkshire's Short Break Statement</p> <p>2. Ensure all disabled children and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy local community life, wherever possible using local childcare facilities, leisure and recreational activities</p> <p>3. Ensure that as parents and carers you are supported to become equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities, so we work together to 'get better'</p> <p>4. Ensure we provide you with useful information when you need it' All of the above will help to ensure that we meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts (1995 and 2005). "West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation." Parents at the meeting felt the Short Breaks statement had been totally disregarded. They all felt this has been illustrated by the recent action of the council in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending out letters of notice to providers prior to any consultation with children, young people, parents, carers or providers.</li> <li>• The consultation process entered into by the council taking place over a shorter period than that recommended by the National Governments' Compact guidelines as it is over six weeks compared to the 12 weeks recommended in the guidance</li> <li>• The consultation period is taking place during the very busy run up to Christmas.</li> <li>• No consultation events have been held by the council to gain the views of parent carers and young people. Parent present felt children and young people with significant and complex needs receive very few services as it is, they are hard to place and are not able to make changes in</li> </ul>				

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				placement as easily as other children, therefore any change has a huge and long lasting impact on the children, young people and their parent carers.				
18	on behalf of West Berks Mencap	Yes	The cuts will affect the most exposed, defenceless and susceptible in society. Also the carers well being and ability to continue their role caring for these vulnerable children/young people.	The individuals are being similarly affected here.	I assume personal budgets are being considered. To me this seems a much more expensive individual option for the council. With West Berks Mencap they provide group settings and also with volunteers which is a cost effective way of providing care to a number of children with disabilities.		If personal budgets are being considered perhaps families could be grouped so they share the same support where appropriate.	
19	Transport Services Team		"The proposals are unclear in terms of the overall effects on individuals and the position of Respite, Castlegate and Mencap. Without more clarity it is difficult to comment on the implications. If the use of Council transport is reduced, it could have significant financial implications on other parts of the Council that operate vehicles. In addition, Mencap and Castlegate have Council fleet vehicles, and there may be early termination penalties if vehicles are returned before the end of their lease."					
20	UNISON West Berkshire	No	This will affect the most vulnerable. The removal of these services is likely to result in more demand for other services, increasing the workload for already overstretched staff. It may also affect the achievement of the Council's ambitions to have a stable CFS workforce that is not reliant on agency staff. If pursued, this could end up costing the Council more than it saves	Children and their families.	No.	No.	No.	No.

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			and will have a longer term impact on staff.					
21	Tilehurst Parish Council							Advice, support and guidance for these families could be managed through the Children's Centres. It is felt that we are unable to comment on the proposal with the information provided, but it would appear that some of the services could be run through Children's Centres and others through Crossroads.
22		No	I think that these services are an important lifeline for people having a very difficult time. I do not need to use them myself (yet...who knows what the future holds?) but I am more than happy that my taxes as a local resident are used to pay for them. I think that if you take away the services, the resulting effects e.g family breakdown, stress, illness, will cost more than it would have cost to keep them going in the first place.	Clearly it will affect families with disabled children the most: probably some of the most vulnerable families of all.				I do not understand why we can't just use the tax system to ensure that those with a higher salary contribute more and the most vulnerable don't suffer the most. I know a lot of people in the area who feel the same.
23		Yes	1.Elimination of social opportunities for a significant number of children and young people. Many young people with disabilities - including my son - cannot access mainstream activities and clubs, and have little or no social life outside their families. Removing short breaks funding will in many cases remove the only opportunity for young people to socialise with their peers, leading to isolation and mental health issues. 2.Childcare. Many young people and children with disabilities cannot access mainstream childcare - after school clubs, holiday schemes and child minders are unable to cater for them. Short Break providers are able to not only provide such schemes, but do so at a cost to parents that is on par with mainstream activities. Removing these schemes means that many families will need to massively reduce their working hours, or will be unable to work at all as childcare will be either unavailable or prohibitively expensive compared to	This will affect all children and young people with disabilities who use short breaks services. It will particularly affect those who have no other options for respite - whether that be because they have no family or friends who can care for their child, or because their child's needs are too great.	If anything, a wider range of short breaks needs to be made available. There are normally waiting lists for the different services. West Berkshire has a duty to provide a wide range of different short breaks to meet differing needs.	Given that most of the short break providers operate on a shoestring with minimum wages and volunteers to run their services, I don't see how much further organisations can help. In order to provide short breaks, carers must be trained, supported, DBS checked and insured. Likewise there are ongoing costs for venue hire and equipment. This cannot be done for free, even if time was provided on a volunteer basis.	Contact parents - family voice, local charities and volunteers to find out what parents need. Local offer is probably a good place to start.	Cutting Short Breaks funding is a false economy. The cost of residential care for a single child with complex needs is likely to be in excess of the entire Short Breaks funding cuts. Cutting Short Breaks funding is destroying a whole community of support. The impact of the short breaks services goes well beyond childhood and into adulthood - helping young people become more confident and independent in society.

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			<p>mainstream. These families will likely require additional benefits if they are unable to work. 3. Family breakdown. Parenting children with additional needs is physically and mentally relentless. The small amount of respite offered by short break providers is often the difference between families surviving, or going into crisis. When a family hits crisis and is no longer able to look after their young person, West Berkshire will become responsible, and more than likely at a greater cost than the short breaks provisioning.</p>					
24		Yes						<p>As parents of a 14 year old girl with special needs, we are writing to you with regard to the proposed cuts from West Berkshire Council which will result in the closure of Mencap's Children's Services. Our daughter has regularly attended the Mencap After School Club twice a week for the past five years. This is the only After School Club that she is able to access. Not only does it have all the specialist equipment that allows her to play — something all children should be able to access — but it is an activity that is especially for her as opposed to her 5 siblings. Invariably she spends a lot of time watching her younger brother and sister playing football, hockey, swimming etc not to mention meeting up with friends and going to numerous birthday parties. She regularly asks if she can take part to which the answer is always 'no' which is heart-breaking for both her and us. With the Mencap After School Club she has a fun activity with her friends which she isn't otherwise afforded. If this valuable service is forced to close our daughter will spend two more evenings a week seeing her siblings have fun while she has to sit and watch. These children are already at a</p>

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								<p>disadvantage so why take something so valuable away from them? They are not in a position to find an alternative because there are no other alternatives available to them. Our daughter also accesses the Mencap Saturday Club and the Summer Play Scheme for the same reasons that she attends the After School Club. The closure of both of these will have the same effect as those we've listed above. There are currently waiting lists for all Mencap Children's Services—the demand for these is genuine and much-needed. We appreciate that cuts have to be made but it seems very unfair to make cuts that will affect such a vulnerable group of young people who already miss out on so much - not least quality of life. We urge West Berkshire Council to find other ways of saving the £135,000 a year needed to keep Mencap Children's Services open — even if it means an increase in taxation such as parking charges — surely the general public would see this as a small price to pay for such an essential service for special needs children in the community. We are aware that Gordon Lundie feels strongly that Mencap has sufficient funds to pay for these services itself. However, having questioned West Berkshire Mencap about this and having been provided with a breakdown of their capital it is fair to say that a large amount of the money they have is restricted and, as such, cannot be used to pay for Children's Services. They also need to keep significant reserves in order to run the charity in a responsible way. The quality</p>

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								of life for our daughter, and many like her, and the rest of our family, will be seriously affected should these closures go-ahead. Yet again we will find ourselves in a position whereby we have to deny our daughter the joy of playing with her friends in a safe and secure environment — please do not let this be the case.
25		Yes	Young people with special needs will no longer have access to any after school clubs, holiday play schemes or Saturday morning play schemes. Not only do the children who attend really enjoy these opportunities (there are no other opportunities available to them) but these services offer the rest of the family some respite time. Equally, as a working parent, time available to be at work will be restricted given there are no other after school clubs available to children with special needs.	I think the more severely disabled children and their families will be particularly affected as looking after a disabled child is incredibly hard work and stressful and puts stress on other members of the family. I think you could help with this by finding a different service to take money from.	No - the service that is currently delivered is second to none as are the staff. The children are happy in a safe and secure environment and are able to socialise which they can't do anywhere else. It is more often than not impossible to take disabled children to mainstream settings. This service should most definitely not be cut - the most vulnerable families and children are the ones who will suffer.	I am not an organisation I am a parent of a special needs child.	Surely the Council is already aware of these services. As a parent I can advise you that there are very few other sources of support and from what I understand, the other organisations such as KIDS are also going to have their budgets cut so we, and our children, will lose out again.	Why was West Berkshire Council so vitriolic towards West Berkshire Mencap? I have looked at West Berkshire Mencap's figures and these do not add up to £800,000 worth of spare cash just sitting in the bank. A large proportion of these funds are restricted and, as such, can not be put towards the general running costs of Mencap's Children's Services. It is also good practice to have reserves in the bank which are not unreasonable once the restricted funds have been taken into account. If they had less money in the bank then they could be criticised for poor financial management.
26	Mencap	Yes	Isolation will be a major factor in their lives also will be a big impact on the parents as it is respite for the parents. the parents will be having to cut their work times and possibly give up their job to care for their child when they are in mencap, following on from this that will be less money for the family and you will find families struggle with money and providing for their child.	yes i do! for example my son as he has no friends around where we live and his only form for socialising is through mencap, also children that are severely disabled. the way you would be able to help this is to not cut the budget, as you promised to look after every single special needs child/ adult in West Berkshire.			this present system is not broken and doesn't needs fixing	just put yourself in the families shoes.... i think these cuts will cause more problems then you are anticipating.
27	Parent	Yes	This proposal would impact on my daughters life SIGNIFICANTLY because she has no other way to socialise with her peers!! She gets to go to the cinema or out for a meal with peers that she won't get to do otherwise. As a young 16 year old lady it is her human right to be able to do what a neurotypical teen can do, BUT she needs the extra help to do so which is what this service provides and provides outstandingly!	I feel it will affect most people the same although some families with more than 1 disabled child will be affected more			Yes!! The likes of 2 charities KIDS and CROSSROADS which are all facing the same cuts so what exactly will there be for he's children?????	

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			!!					
28		Yes	<p>People with disabilities need all the help and support they can get. For many of them Mencap is a life line. It provides Social activities and Family support and information. I have four children the youngest two have ASD. For the past five years they have attended an out of county school. This is a two hour journey to school and a two hour journey home every day. They have no friends or classmates locally, the only social life they have is Mencap. As they attend a special school they are not allowed to attend Spectrum or Oasis groups which provide a service for ASD children. Mencap is our only option. If we do not support and encourage our young people we are going to make life harder for them as they grow older. To take away funding from this vital service is false economy. Our children will need much more care later on if you undo all the good work Mencap has done for them so far.</p>	<p>I feel that families like mine with more than one special needs child will be hit hardest.</p>	<p>Make it easier and clearer to claim for Personal Budgets. Provide better information and support for Families. I had never even heard of Personal Budgets let alone been offered one until I attended a recent meeting at Mencap.</p>	<p>I wish I could!</p>	<p>More publicity? Most families have little information. Organisations need to make themselves known.</p>	<p>Please don't cut the Children's Services budget.</p>
29		No	<p>I have registered concern at all cuts for children and young adults with SEN. Unless you have lived with this difficulty in your family you cannot imagine how difficult it is and how low life can become. I know 6ft police officers who deal with organised crime by day but cry at night for their SEN child and family life. These breaks are lifelines for exhausted parents, siblings and SEN children who target keeping the home running until the next break. Their life cannot be changed. This is how it will be. To remove these services will make life intolerable and lead to greater costs for children being taken into homes, residential schools and mental health care for all.</p>					



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30		Yes	<p>My daughter has severe, multiple and complex physical and learning disabilities. She requires constant care with feeding and toileting. She is blind, and cannot walk or speak. She needs repeated medication throughout the day. Both my wife and I receive counselling to help deal with the stresses of being full-time carers, and my wife is on medication for anxiety. The stress of caring has had a real impact on our relationship. This will have a huge impact on families like us. As I understand it, you have a statutory duty to provide short breaks any way, and I am puzzled why you are making such cuts. It is noticeable that you make no direct mention of what these duties are. Mencap After School Club: this allows us to work. To lose this would mean my wife or I would need to reduce our hours, with substantial financial consequences for us. Saturday Club: Allows us to do 'normal' things with our youngest son, that are just not possible otherwise. Holiday clubs: Allows us to do things with our son, take him to clubs, have friends to play, and have some respite for ourselves. Mencap is my daughter's only chance to have social time and sensory play outside the home. Staff know her and are sensitive to her complex needs. The time before we got the level of support from Mencap that we now receive was a very black time for us. Since we received it, we have been able to cope better. The support we receive allows to a semblance of a 'normal' family life: it is NOT a luxury. The chance for my daughter to be in a group setting is surely a way of helping her access her right to normal things as well.</p>	<p>For some families, the short breaks Mencap provides are the only respite they get, so to remove it would reduce their support to zero. Working parents need the after-school club as Castle School offers very limited provision and mainstream childcare services do not offer services for children like ours. Where else would we go? West Berkshire is a small authority - there are not, to my knowledge, alternative providers around. Families such as us are some of the most vulnerable people in the community, which is why these breaks are statutory in the first place. Please understand the reality of what these breaks mean, and what the effects will be.</p>	<p>Not really. In-home support would not deliver the same benefits in terms of socialising and access to specialised facilities. Mencap are specialists in their field, so they are best placed to deliver the service. Castle School might run an after-school club, but could not help at weekends or the school holidays.</p>	<p>No. As a family we are stretched to the limit already. That is why we need the service!</p>	<p>West Berks is a small place. I doubt there are any locally. Castle School could offer an after-school club on-site?</p>	<p>Please protect us. Short breaks are a lifeline that allow us at least some of the things that families with mainstream children take for granted. As I understand it, you have a statutory duty to provide short breaks any way, and I am puzzled why you are making such cuts. It is noticeable that you make no direct mention of what these duties are. This has been handled in a confrontational way by the council, and has already caused distress.</p>
31	Oasis	Yes	<p>My son who is 14, I have always struggled to encourage him to come out with me to do family activity's and day to day things. He never wanted to do any thing or go anywhere just stay home, which obviously impacted the whole family. When this club came to our attention and my son attended it became clear he was enjoying himself. Hes always excited about going to this</p>	<p>The children who attend will be most affected, by not closing the club I feel this would help them.</p>	<p>No the service is fine as it is.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>

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			club and always talks to me afterwards about what he gets up to and how much fun he has. If this proposal goes ahead I feel my son may sink back into his old ways.					
32	Mencap	No	Carers of severely mentally handicapped people are saving the council/country thousands of £. They deserve some respite from their extremely tough daily lives. If they cannot get this, I fear they will pass the responsibility on to the council, completely overwhelming any budget saving that this measure creates. The human toll should be seen to be believed.	Carers deserve our support	Take all of these handicapped people into full time care and see how much that costs!	Mencap respite care services are an inexpensive way of delivering this service	I don't know of any other way	
33		No	It will severely impact families with disabled children and young people, resulting in an increased demand for statutory services.	It will affect disabled children. The council has a statutory duty to make provision for them to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.	1. Provide families with a personal budget 2. Invest in increasing the capacity of mainstream providers to include disabled children in what they provide 3. Charge a contribution to families using short breaks			
34		Yes	My child has autism and would regress in his social and emotional functioning. They will lose the confidence the Spectrum club has given them. Since receiving support from Spectrum club my son has learnt new skills and pay for things in shops. Because of their autism, they need consistent, specialist, expert support to retain these skills and to maintain the confidence they have gained from attending the club. The impact will be likely to be a loss of confidence and self-esteem, a loss of friends (the only friends they have), and a decrease in mental health. Before attending the club, my son did not go out and had no friends, they had been unable to access mainstream clubs and suffered poor mental health. If they could no longer attend the Spectrum club then they would go back to being socially isolated. The impact of closing this scheme will also be felt by us as the parents – the club has given us essential respite and have allowed us to have a bit of time for ourselves and spend time with our daughter. The	This proposal absolutely affects young people with autism more than others. The proposals by West Berks Council are to shut existing clubs and schemes with the intention of these young people accessing more mainstream clubs and activities. It is part of the condition of autism which means that kids with autism cannot just participate in mainstream activities and clubs. Many children with autism have sensory sensitivities which mainstream clubs and venues don't cater for (ie. Swimming pools, leisure centres too loud and crowded and unpredictable). Young people with autism must have routine, structured activities which they are prepared for by staff/volunteers who are trained in autism so that they know how to communicate with the young people in a way they understand. Young people with autism are far more socially isolated than other groups of young people (42% of children	We are not aware of another provider other than the NAS in the West Berks area who are sufficiently trained in autism to deliver these clubs if they were shut.	We are parents of a child with autism and we have had to fight for every bit of support we've ever received. We find it offensive to be asked to help deliver services for our disabled son. It is the Council's legal obligation to provide short breaks for disabled children. Autism spectrum disorders are a disability and as such the Council must provide services for them. The NAS Branch and other parents already do their best – as volunteers - to help other families affected by autism in West Berks. But they cannot and should not be asked to take on more and start providing services for free which	We can't answer this question as we simply don't know any other sources of support.	Young people with autism were identified as a particular group of young people with disabilities who must not be disadvantaged in accessing short breaks. West Berks Council must take into consideration that children with ASDs have been specifically highlighted as a disadvantaged group who must be able to access short breaks appropriate to them and their autism. The 'Aiming High for Disabled Children: Short Breaks Implementation Guidance' recognised the need for local authorities to provide specialist short breaks provision for children and young people with autism, as it states that a short breaks service should: "provide fit for purpose and age appropriate provision which ensures the following groups are not disadvantaged in accessing short breaks: a) children and young people with

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			<p>whole family has benefited from this scheme – his sister is happier because we have been able to spend more time with her and we are happier because we get some time to do essential household things without having to worry about him. We fear that if the scheme was closed that my other child would suffer as she would have less time with us to herself and would have more caring responsibilities. My son would certainly regress in terms of socialising and confidence and his overall well-being.</p>	<p>with autism have no friends as opposed to 1% of other children). Their autism means that adjustments have to be made to activities and communication. They have to be supported to understand social rules and communications. If these schemes are shut, these young people will not just be able to adapt to mainstream clubs and activities – their disability makes this impossible. They have a disability which is lifelong and extremely complex with the biggest difficulties being around social communication – this means they will be unfairly affected by these closures as they are unable to join other clubs/ activities without the staff and venues making reasonable adjustments and training their staff in autism to make their venues and communication accessible to young people with autism.</p>		<p>the Council has a duty to commission for disabled children.</p>		<p>ASD. These are likely to have other impairments, such as severe learning disabilities or have behaviour, which is challenging.” If these cuts to autism-specific short breaks provision goes ahead, West Berkshire Council will be acting against national guidance and will also be creating circumstances which are likely to lead to much higher spending needs in the near future.</p>
35	Home-Start West Berkshire	No	<p>This proposal will impact the families that we support who have children under 5 with disabilities as we will no longer be able to prioritise their needs within our service. Parents will no longer have respite time to focus on their own needs or the needs of other children within the family. The impact is difficult to quantify as it will be different for each family, for some the lack of respite may have a negative impact on the mental health of the parent and other members of the family.</p>	<p>This proposal will affect those with disabled children. The impact on particular individuals will be dependent on what other support is in place. A planned ending would help, what plans are now in place rather than just ending. If a family has our support and we intend to end we want to ensure they know what universal services there are that they could engage with or what other services offer support even if this would now have to be paid for. Ensuring vulnerable families know what is the current offer even if it no longer includes us would help.</p>	<p>Peer to peer support; potential for those families affected to help one another - take in turns so there is still a period of respite. Paid support. Groups funded by other funders. Means tested access, those who can afford to pay do so while those unable to are supported. Access 'tokens' to ensure fair take up by all with support evenly distributed to every family impacted. Communication between service providers; we have found that we were supporting a family to use another service funded by same funding. We are also aware there are families that access a range of breaks and some who do not access anything.</p>	<p>Providing information to families impacted. Providing names of families supported by this funding to WBC to enable analysis of families most affected.</p>		

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36		Yes	The support offered is invaluable in terms of taking the strain off the rest of the family. If this service was reduced the impact could be detrimental to the entire family putting them at breaking point which would then possibly have a knock on effect on their mental health, requiring them to need support in this area. Therefore the overall expense to the authority will be greater than leaving them as they are at the moment.	Yes, it will affect people with the most complex needs. It is essential that those with the greatest needs do not have their support cut.				
37		Yes	You should be aware that the cuts are hitting the same group of people from many different angles eg cuts to respite services and to camhs are affecting the same families. So the effect is cumulative and therefore catastrophic. A few hours respite a few times a year may not seem like much to you but to a family it is the difference between coping and not coping. If a family can't cope then the costs for social and health services is huge. Short term cuts may mean long term burdens on the services.	Yes. It affects those of us with disabled children more than other people. By targeting respite care for children, camhs and children's centres you are drastically cutting things that families with disabled children rely on to survive. Spread the cuts and be careful of cutting services which affect the same group of people more than once. We can cope with potholes. We can't cope with what are already very difficult situations with very little support anyway being made worse. It's not as though there is an abundance of help to start with. You are threatening to take away the bare minimum.	No. We get help from Crossroads in the form of a few hours respite a year. Organisations that cater for one child's disability and none of the other children's needs from our family are inappropriate as we get no respite and physically taking our children to different clubs according to their needs is not possible, so clubs run by charities to cater en masse are not the answer. Sometimes something is already run on a shoestring and are the bare minimum anyway and can't be cut. Camhs is a joke already with over 2 years waiting list for children who are suffering and families who are suffering. Any cuts to camhs are insane! I suggest maybe cheaper office space for the council? We don't particularly care about Christmas lights or any frivolities in West Berks, so maybe cut spending there rather than on vulnerable groups who are easy to target.		You need to bear in mind that although charities may provide groups for children with disabilities they are not providing the same service and it isn't appropriate for those who currently use Crossroads care, otherwise they would use them.	
38	Brookfields School	Yes	This service gives parents the much needed respite that they need, disabled children are emotionally and physically draining and some of us have no family to help and rely on this service, it also	definitely, those children that need 24 hour care, their parents and carers need that break in order to have some time for themselves, some children do not sleep so these			perhaps contact some of these charities that claim they help children, the lottery fund, children in need, comic relief	

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			helps the children to socialise and learn to adapt to new surroundings and people,	breaks are vital.				
39	Mencap	Yes	this proposal might lead to closure of some services to children with special needs. My daughter will be losing her after school club and holiday play scheme at mencap which she enjoys and needs most as no other organisation or school provides these services for such low prices.	i think it will effect all the individuals using the services.	yes, if schools like castle school can do after school clubs and holiday clubs.	we can pay from the direct payments we get.	yes, if schools like castle school can do after school clubs and holiday clubs.	
40	Mencap/Cross roads	Yes	I am the Mum of a profoundly disabled 13yo son who has Williams syndrome and autism. He uses Mencap and Crossroads regularly and they provide a lifeline to my family. My son thoroughly enjoys going there and he is loved and cared for with kindness in a safe environment. This provides some essential respite for my family. Until you have a disabled child, it is very difficult to appreciate the enormity of the task which faces a family in this situation. Without these essential services, my family and many others like me would be at breaking point. There are very few places available which are able to care for children and young people with complex disabilities so, if these services are withdrawn, many families would suffer terribly. Many of these families are already isolated, struggling and withdrawn and the situation would only be made worse. I feel very strongly that this will have a severe and detrimental impact on some of the most vulnerable and deprived families. This cannot be reasonable or fair in our society.	I think these proposals will affect all young people and there families who use the services form Mencap and Crossroads.	These services need experienced, specialised and dedicated staff often with many years of training to care for these young people with very complex needs. I think it would be very difficult and costly to attempt to provide these services elsewhere and I cannot see how anyone would benefit.	No!	I am an experienced Mum and also a Consultant Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon. Hence, I have a wide experience of children with special needs. The level of care required for these complex children is almost impossible to find and I cannot see, as things stand, that there are any other provisions available.	I feel very strongly that this would cause a very desperate situation to many families with children with special needs. There is nothing else for them and nowhere else to go as they require very specialised care. I understand that the numbers affected are small but the impact on these families would be huge. Surely this is not a reasonable way to treat our most vulnerable.
41		Yes	This reduction will impact very negatively on the children who need additional support and for whom respite provides an opportunity to widen their horizons. This will also impact negatively on the parents and carers of children with Special Needs. This service allows parents and carers to do normal everyday activities that would otherwise not be possible. Simple things like doing the household shopping, cleaning, and self care will be severely impacted. It is impossible to do these things whilst caring for a Special Needs child. In addition to the above this	People on low income or not in work will be hardest hit by this, as there is no other way that they can afford to obtain this care.				Stop trying to shirk your moral duties to the most vulnerable within the council area. Attacking children for cuts is reprehensible, targeting disabled children is just cowardly. Disable children are the most vulnerable part of our society because they are least able to communicate the huge impact this will have on them. If you are looking for cost reductions, try looking at the ludicrously high salaries paid to executives and top managers

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			provides valuable time for parents and carers to take some time for themselves, to recharge their batteries and to be able to continue caring for the child within the home. If this time is taken away it will mean that parents and carers are less able to take care of the child and ultimately will lead to the council being required to assist with more children in care. This time provides a lifeline to parents and carers and is much cheaper than the council having to pay for 52 week care of the child.					within this organisation. How can these people look themselves in the mirror every morning whilst they continue to take these huge salaries at the same time as taking benefits away from the most vulnerable parts of our society. Have you no shame!!!!
42		Yes	What it is like living with a child with additional needs, the impact and strain it has on day to day life. The difficulties we face as the child gets older in accessing places etc	I think it will affect all carers and put a strain on there family life. You can help by not cutting this service				
43	Mencap and NAS	Yes	I have a daughter aged 7 who has autism, ADHD, sensory processing disorder and epilepsy. We love her deeply but the challenges she faces are immense and the repercussions of those challenges on the family unit are immense too. My daughter has no control over her emotional system and is constantly seeking sensory kicks. This means that on an average day she will bite her hand until it bleeds, kick, scratch and bite us and her 11 year old brother, throw shoes, cups, sometimes even knives at us, pour milk over lap-tops, pour water under her brothers door because she wants to get in. We can't leave her on her own for long in case she has an epileptic fit. We can't go out as a family in any kind of relaxed way because everything has to be on her agenda and she will scream and lash out if it isn't. We tried to visit Newbury Show this year but it was too much for her and we ended up as a family in the craft tent huddled under a picnic blanket to create an impromptu "quiet space". Mostly we just don't go to the kind of family events that most of you take for-granted. Most of the time we feel that we are living in a war zone. Think for a second of the effect all this has on my little boy xxx. He has just started at St Barts. Yesterday he was crying his heart out because he had tried to play hide and seek with his sister and she had	I think many disabled children and their families will be affected by these cuts in slightly different ways. For families with children with complex needs and or severe behavioural problems like mine, these cuts are likely to tip many parents over the edge into mental health problems or seeking residential care for their children. For the proposed cuts to clubs for Aspergers children and teenagers as run by the local Branch of the NAS I would say this: These children spend their life struggling with incredible anxiety and low self esteem - much of it caused by feeling out of place and rejected or wrong footed in society. If you went to see the young people at the Oasis and Spectrum clubs you would see them at peace in an environment that gets them and values them. They learn there the social skills to make friends that they carry with them for years. They learn that they are accepted and that they can be happy in the world. This opportunity for these kids is worth more than gold. the vast majority of Aspergers people, when they leave school become isolated and depressed leading them to put a huge burden on social services and the NHS. Groups like these give	I could imagine that in the case of Mencap, children could be moved onto personal budgets. Parents would then tend to chose Mencap as their provider because they have the best facilities, the right staff, social set up and because they are extraordinary value for money.			

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			<p>ended up kicking him in the face. He has a chain lock on his door so that he can have some privacy, but she will stand outside banging on it incessantly or calling him names over and over to get his attention. Sometimes he finds all this just too much. He is frightened and frustrated. We had to seek counselling support for him at school. This isn't the kind of family life my husband and I envisaged. I love being a Mum. I want to be able to spend time with him, talking about his day, helping him with his homework. He has just started a new school and I want to support him through this transition. But when my daughter is around this is not possible. She will demand my attention constantly and if she doesn't get it she will spiral. It takes all evening to get my daughter to sleep too so we don't even have time then. My daughter goes to the Mencap after school club on a Monday which gives me 2 precious hours to spend with my son. Last summer (parents with autistic children DREAD summer holidays) my daughter attended the Mencap summer school twice a week. This gave us as a family unit time to re-ground ourselves before the next onslaught. On one of these days I took xxx for a trip to Bletchley Park. Again the sort of day out that many parents take for granted. For us it was a wonderful and rare gift to be able to relax and enjoy each other's company. Without Mencap children's services none of this would be possibly for my family. These service are not a nice-to-have. For many families, including mine, that struggle to create any sense of family equilibrium, they are the difference between coping and not coping. They are a lifeline. They keep families together. Early last July, things at home were so unremittingly stressful I called the disabled children's team in tears saying that if more support was not put in place we might have to start looking at a residential placement for my daughter. I was anticipating my worst nightmare. There are many families like mine in West Berkshire that use Mencap. It would only take one</p>	<p>them a social network which bolsters their resilience beyond measure. Many of them create their own groups when they leave. Many of these children will not qualify for personal budgets.</p>				

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			<p>family to get to breaking point and ask for their child to be placed at a residential school to wipe out entirely any saving that the council may think they have made through £137,000 worth of cuts to Children's Services. I would say that if you make these cuts, this will be an inevitable outcome. It is financially and socially short-sighted. I know of several families who are on the edge and seriously considering applying for residential placements. If I am going to leave my child it needs to be with someone who is trained in ASD and epilepsy. My friends don't usually offer because they are worried they would not be able to cope. Other respite services can cost about £20 ph. We know one parent whose child uses Mencap who were charged £200 per day by one private provider of respite care because they said that he needed 2:1 care. Mencap charge a pittance in comparison. Mencap staff are extraordinary. Not only have they won a Queen's award for setting up the volunteer scheme which leads many of them to move into a career in a related field, these young people embrace our children with a love and commitment which is wonderful. There are children at Mencap after school club who have been turned down by all other care providers in many areas of the UK. When out with our children we have to endure the tutting and eye rolling and the "can't you control your child". Many of us have known being asked to leave churches and shops. When we pick up from Mencap we are accepted with open arms. It is hard to put into words how important this is. Gordon Lundie has said that you are considering expanding the provision that Castlegate provide. I have significant doubts that Castlegate, however good, can in and of itself meet the need of families requiring respite services. At present it only takes children over the age of 8 and only offers overnight care – not after school, Saturday or holiday provision. For that reason we have been unable to use this service. Our social worker was also very</p>					



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			<p>doubtful as to whether it would suit xxx: we are intending to visit the facility to see for ourselves but she felt that the children there were almost all with very severe disabilities and she was concerned that xxx (who despite her behavioural problems is very bright and verbal) would feel deeply uncomfortable. It is important, when thinking about the council's provision of respite services to meet the demands of the Children's Act, that the provision is varied enough to meet the needs of children with very different profiles and needs: It would be impossible for high functioning Aspergers children to feel at home or stimulated in an environment with mostly children with severe intellectual and physical disabilities – just as neuro-typical people wouldn't want to spend all their social time with people with severe cognitive disabilities. In order for the provision to be respite at all the parents need to be confident that their children are happy. Mencap after school club and holiday club are MASSIVELY oversubscribed. We have only been able to get Estella into one session a week after school and we desperately need more. There are many other parents like us. I know many parents who have found it hard to get places at Castlegate. We need more short break provision in Newbury not less. I do not see how Castlegate could provide anything like the necessary level of service. As parents of some of the most vulnerable members of society this is the most recent of a barrage of cuts we have had to bear. CAMHS has become a not—fit —for-purpose service in the eyes of most people I speak to, the Mencap sitting service and Family Advice Service along with Buddies have also been cut. How much more are we supposed to take? And this year council salaries went up by 12.5 per cent. It is not only parents of disabled children who are horrified and up in arms at this: our neighbours and friends in Newbury are similarly aghast and are asking what they can do to support us in our campaign for a U-turn here. It runs</p>					

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			counter to most people's sense of what a humane society looks like.					
44	West Berks Mencap	Yes	<p>There are, as far as I know, no other services of this kind for children with disabilities and their parents in the area. It will mean that children who have a severely limited ability to access recreational facilities that are available for the general population have nowhere to go that is safe and suitable for them. For their parents, on whom a significant burden of caring falls, the loss of this valuable respite could mean despair and exhaustion, as well as possibly depression. For some, it may mean that they have to give up work (if they are currently able to balance working with caring responsibilities). Clearly, this could have a knock on effect in terms of cost elsewhere (benefits, health service) and, if the bigger picture is considered, I would question whether the proposal is in fact a saving. In terms of the impact on the children/young people who will lose the service, it could impact on their health (the centre provides outdoor exercise and fresh air) and the self-esteem that socialising at the centre provides. The way that they are understood and compassionately treated by the trained staff and volunteers will potentially contrast with the way they will often be treated by those in mainstream type environments (if indeed their parents venture to take them to such places). It is extremely difficult as a parent to take your child where their behaviour or condition attracts comments and stares, which</p>	<p>Yes, it will affect disabled children/young people and their families, but obviously not the general population, who won't access the service anyway. Obviously the more severely disabled the child/young person is, the more they will be affected, since less disabled individuals would be more likely to be able to access (to varying degrees) general recreational facilities. See answer to 3 above. Providing holiday and after school care for disabled children (i.e. replacement services) would be helpful, though it is difficult to see how this would be better done by West Berks Council rather than Mencap.</p>	<p>In terms of after school care, my own view is that secondary schools and primary schools should be obliged to provide after school care, at least 3 days per week (most primary schools seem to do so, but the (incorrect) assumption appears to be that this requirement falls away once a child is at secondary school). If children are disabled, this should not affect their ability to access these services i.e. there should be sufficient staff kept on to provide it. For school holiday care, it would seem that the only way my child could access the facilities available to neurotypical children would be if he had a one-to-one, which would make him stand out like a sore thumb. Many of the holiday clubs available (like the one my daughter attended last summer at St Gabriel's School) are on sites which simply don't have the facilities for children who attend West Berkshire Mencap and where there</p>	N/A	<p>As far as I am aware, there are no alternatives in this area (as it is I drive for 30 mins to reach this venue). As suggested above, for after school care you could look at making much better provision in schools themselves. Personally, I would be prepared to pay for this &amp; it would be in an environment my son is familiar with. I was quite put out that although my local special school has an after school club, my son cannot attend that as an alternative (he is in an autistic unit with no after school care) because it is only for the kids attending that school. Some children therefore fall through the gaps and even the West Berks Mencap provision is out of reach (except in holidays). For holiday clubs I'm afraid I see no easy answer: the mainstream ones I have called say that I would need to provide a one-to-one if I were to book my son in there, which would surely have a cost in excess of £100 per day once the fees were also</p>	<p>The West Berkshire Mencap is an excellent service with dedicated, well trained staff. The venue is good and they organise various activities and outings for the children so that they are well stimulated. I last tried putting my son in mainstream holiday clubs when he was around 8 (he is now 12). He lasted until the second day, when they rang me up to tell me he couldn't stay and they would give me my money back. This was because they only had 3 staff with 20 kids to look after and, since he was not interested in sitting colouring in or playing with the others, he insisted on staying in the playground where they couldn't monitor him properly. I was called back from my work (as a civil servant) and had to take the rest of that week off to care for him. I have managed to work part time (until relatively recently, due to the lack of secondary stage after school childcare) by using West Berks Mencap in the school holidays. I could truly relax leaving him there, knowing they are set up to give the best possible experience to children like him. If this service closes and there is nothing to replace it, I will have little chance of</p>

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			reaction sadly persists in society despite campaigns and general increased awareness from the media. Where, as in my own case, the disabled child has siblings who access a variety of clubs and holiday activity programmes, they are surely likely to feel this loss particularly strongly. My child has autism and it is very difficult and unfair on him to put him with mainstream kids unless he has a one-to-one support as he invariably is picked on and teased by them.		is no security of the perimeter. I cannot see how this service can easily be replaced by e.g. summer camps run in mainstream schools, because they are not set up to cope (however, you could look at whether certain of these could offer disabled services). However, even if West Berkshire was able to find a suitable venue and run these services itself, that would surely not result in a cost saving.		taken into account.	returning to work anytime soon. I would urge those considering making these cuts to pay a visit to the service and observe these beautiful, but very needy children: ask yourselves whether, if your life involved caring for them and trying to fit in work and all the other necessities of life around that, could you do it without support? Please do not withdraw these services, certainly if nothing will be put in which can adequately replace them.
45		No	This proposal will have a significant detrimental effect on anyone involved in the service. The many young people who volunteer with West Berkshire Mencap will lose a brilliant opportunity to work directly with children and young people with disabilities which helps foster a sense of community not often seen in people of this age group, and helps to instill a healthy and inclusive attitude towards people with disabilities. It also provides valuable work experience (particularly for those such as myself interested in careers in a healthcare profession or in education). It will threaten the jobs of staff members, some of whom have spent years developing a highly specialised, effective service. This is a service that is unique to West Berkshire, and losing the expertise of these staff members would be a huge mistake, as it is more than likely that in the future the council will again recognise the need for a well-run children's service and will then have to start again from scratch. Most importantly it will quite obviously affect children and young people with disabilities and their families. Children with disabilities are at greater risk of isolation, and the current childrens' services allow them the opportunity to socialise with the other children and volunteers in a way that they would not be able to at home. Younger children benefit from shared access to play	As mentioned above, this will affect everyone currently involved in running and using the service, but children and young people and their families, especially families with working parents or those where more than one sibling has a disability will be hardest hit. This can be helped by continuing to fund the existing services.	No	N/A	No	I had the extremely valuable opportunity of working as a volunteer at the afterschool clubs and holiday playscheme's provided by West Berkshire Mencap childrens' services when I was at secondary school. I then moved to Wales to go to medical school but when I tried to find similar volunteering opportunities as a student I did not come across any other schemes providing the same level of support for children and young people with disabilities and their families. I am now a qualified paediatric doctor and have worked in several hospitals in Wales and south-west England, and frequently work with children with disabilities. I have seen first hand the immense amount of strain that these families are under, and I often wish that there were local services in my area as good as those that are currently provided by West Berkshire Mencap that I could refer my families to. The services currently available in West Berkshire are fantastic, and to pull the funding from these well established schemes would be incredibly short-sighted and will have a huge

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			<p>equipment and activities, and older children and teenagers get to enjoy some independence from their parents. It goes without saying that their families also benefit. The pressure placed on families with a child with additional needs cannot be underestimated. Taking away after-school clubs and holiday playschemes would take away time for parents to do household chores/ shop/ give siblings time and attention. These key activities obviously become a lot more difficult with a child at home who may have complex and time-consuming medical or behavioural needs. It would of course make childcare arrangements even more difficult for parents who work. Taking away established supportive services from these families is very likely to push some families over the edge, and in the long term the cost of emergency foster care placements for some of these children is likely to far outstrip the cost of running the existing service that helps parents to continue providing the care themselves, as well as providing all the benefits for others mentioned above.</p>					negative effect on the families who use the services.
46		Yes	<p>Oasis club. My son xxx attends this club. I feel is one oif the few times he gets to socialise with others you people in a similar situation. I dont know what he would do if Oasis was to close. It would certainly affect his confidence.</p>	Yes. Some will depend on it more than others.	Voluntary payment from people.			
47		Yes	<p>This would have long term lasting effect this on individuals that currently access the service and their families/carers. The world becomes VERY limited with a disability especially without the right support or access to environments that cater for individual needs with Qualified staff. The long term effect of taking services away from children is the future adults needing greater help and a bigger dependence on services, support i.e. Social services, secure homes, police and NHS. There are a lot of young people who do work experience within these services they are also the future. If these services are cut how will the young of today gain knowledge and experience in these job roles ? Again this will have a lasting impact on our</p>	<p>This proposal will have a wide and varied impact on a great number of families/carers. It will isolate not only individuals who access the services but also their families/carers. The world outside everyone's front door is a difficult and complex one at the best of times, without any disabilities. The continuation of the MUCH needed current services should be top priority for the local authority ! If there needs to be change then a longer and wider consultation is needed ? To just stop things mid flow seems very short sighted.</p>	<p>Why do we need to keep changing things ?????? Maybe once everyone knows exactly what's happening then the fine tuning can begin !</p>	N/A	<p>Talk to the parents, carers and adults who need them. They are the best informed people. Consultation with Social Services would surely give the up to date information that is needed ?</p>	<p>This is a very worrying time for my family and I as we watch and wait to see the outcome of our vital services currently under threat !</p>

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			social services, NHS, mental health services, without the support staff and professionals all of the above will fail.					
48		Yes	<p>This will have a devastating effect on my son with special needs and on us, his parents. For our son it will mean losing his only opportunity to interact with other children and adults outside of his special school environment. Because our son is physically disabled and still in nappies at age 11, the other providers of social interactions will not accept him and we are regularly turned down by these other organisations. Mencap in Newbury and Thames Valley Adventure Playground are the only two organisations that provide us with respite and Daniel really enjoys his time there. If Mencap have to stop their Saturday club (once a month) we will only have one social group for Daniel to belong to (TVAP). Mencap also provide a holiday club which is vital to enable my husband and I to both keep working to pay our large mortgage because we have to live in a bungalow to be able to cope with our disabled son which was more expensive. The devastating impact on my husband and I as carers if we lose this small but vital respite is very worrying. We both work, the rest of our time (24 hours a day for the last 11 years and for the rest of our lives) is spent looking after our son. We don't have family who can help and friends have disappeared over the years as we have no-one to look after our son in the evening - we haven't been out in the evening together for 11 years - just think about that for a minute. If we lose our 3 hours one Saturday a month at Mencap and the 5 hours at TVAP once a month (we pay £30 and £25 for those using direct payments money) we will be totally isolated and I'm not sure how we will cope. WBC have already cut the funding to our son's special school so</p>	I totally disagree with making the cuts to Children's Services. You should look elsewhere in your organisation to make cuts and leave the most vulnerable people alone.	I totally disagree with making the cuts to Children's Services. You should look elsewhere in your organisation to make cuts and leave the most vulnerable people alone.	I totally disagree with making the cuts to Children's Services. You should look elsewhere in your organisation to make cuts and leave the most vulnerable people alone.	I totally disagree with making the cuts to Children's Services. You should look elsewhere in your organisation to make cuts and leave the most vulnerable people alone.	I totally disagree with making the cuts to Children's Services. You should look elsewhere in your organisation to make cuts and leave the most vulnerable people alone.

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			<p>they were unable to provide as much summer holiday club this year. Because we both work we don't have enough annual leave to cover all the school holidays and these holiday clubs are vital to help us manage them.</p>					
49		Yes	<p>Comments (in the Council's own budget proposal) such as "They would have to adjust to considering a reduced range of options from other organisations and through different arrangements rather than the same range of more familiar providers." make me realise how out-of-touch the Council is when it comes to the needs of our disabled children. You make it sound as easy as choosing to shop in Tesco's instead, if Sainsbury's closed down. It is not always easy for an able-bodied, 'typically developing' child or teenager to adapt to change. The children who use Mencap's disabled children's services can be extremely, frighteningly affected by new situations. My son has to have the same spoon to eat his cereal, will only wear one particular t-shirt, has only ever allowed me (and not even his father) to wash his hair (and he is BY NO MEANS the least adaptable of the children who use Mencap's services). He has been going to Mencap's children's groups since he was 2. He knows the staff and the buildings - and they know him, and that's just as important. There is 15 years' worth of knowledge and experience and trust built up on both sides. If we lost Mencap I would not know where to turn and I don't know I have the energy to start again, maybe with new people and different surroundings. SO the impact on xxx would be no more social life. His anxious behaviours such as rocking and rubbing his hands will probably increase. There will be no more days when the other three people in xxx's family can put themselves first for once, instead of</p>					

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			<p>only ever choosing activities and venues that xxx is comfortable with. The impact on me would be that I lose the free time I currently have when xxx is at Mencap. I would certainly withdraw from the volunteering that I currently do with the local Downland Volunteer Group as I doubt very much I would have any energy to think of anyone but myself and my family.</p>					
50		Yes	<p>Individuals who may have ASD services withdrawn (Oasis club) will be at risk of greater social isolation. This, at a young age can lead to lifelong depression and its associated risk factors which might include socio economic and personal problems arising from feelings of isolation and depression.</p>	<p>The cutting back of any services for young people with ASD will effect a lot of those who currently use the service. It is an invaluable lifeline to these youngsters who benefit from a sense of wellbeing and feelings of inclusion and safety amongst likeminded people with trusted staff who are aware of their spectrum of disabilities.</p>	<p>No. It is imperative that Oasis club is able to continue as it has been for many years providing a safe haven for ASD sufferers to socialise with a feeling of independence in a looked after fashion.</p>			<p>My son attended both the Spectrum club and the Oasis club. He is not currently a member as he has now turned 16 years of age. I was very saddened to read in a communication from Oasis club that the club is under threat. My son loved and needed that club. He felt safe amongst like minded people (his own words). He gained a huge amount of enjoyment and sense of fulfilment from participating in the differing activities on offer especially cooking. He used money independently in the tuck shop to buy his own snacks and drink. This little bit of free choice away from his family were some of the first indications of him growing up from a child to a young man. He attended the club every Thursday evening for some years. When he was tired or poorly he still insisted on attending the club because he needed it so much. I am very sad indeed to think that there are other families in West Berkshire with young Autistic children who might not now be offered this great 'Oasis' for their child. Please don't change/end the Oasis/Spectrum ASD youth club.</p>

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51	Oasis	Yes	<p>My son xxx is autistic and attends Kennet School as a mainstream sixth form student, he has never attended a school trip or outing.. He has attended Spectrum club and now Oasis club every Thursday evening since he was seven years old. xxx does not have friends at his secondary school. Spectrum and Oasis have been very important to xxx and his parents. The group is the only activity outside of the school day that xxx attends. He has tried cubs, scouts, sports groups and other youth clubs. Xxx has always felt uncomfortable and threatened when he had attended these groups. The impact will almost certainly be a loss of confidence and self-esteem, a loss the only friends that he has made. He has made games and activities that he has taken to Oasis and Spectrum club so that he can share his idea with his friends there. When he started Spectrum club he felt at ease straight away and has rarely missed a weeks meeting. He has attended every weekend away and shows that he has enjoyed every minute of the group. If he could no longer attend the Oasis club then he would go back to being socially isolated and what provision will there be for these mainstream autistic children that find mixing with others so difficult. Since attending Spectrum and then Oasis group, the support from the staff has been invaluable. The adult helpers are amazing and understand the children's needs. The young helpers are invaluable in breaching that gap between child and adulthood that these precious children struggle with. xxx has learnt new skills that school has been unable or unwilling to teach because of their resources and lack of insight or training. Because of xxx's autism, he needs consistent, specialist, expert support to retain these skills and to maintain the confidence that he has learnt from attending Spectrum and Oasis club.</p>	<p>Xxx and other children like him have sensory sensitivities which mainstream clubs and venues don't cater for. Cinema's, other youth clubs, swimming pools etc. are too loud and crowded and unpredictable nature of other people that children and adults like xxx find difficult. This proposal absolutely affects young people with autism more than others as Young people with autism are far more socially isolated than other groups of young people. Xxx and others like him must have routine, structured activities which they are prepared for by staff/volunteers who are trained in autism so that they know how to communicate with the young people in a way they understand. They have to be supported to understand social rules and communications, so as to no harm not only comes to children like xxx but to other children and young adults as well. xxx needs to be in an environment where he is safe as he does not pick up on the clues of dangers in some situations. If these schemes are shut, these young people will not just be able to adapt to mainstream clubs and activities – their disability makes this impossible. They have a disability which is lifelong and extremely complex with the biggest difficulties being around social communication – this means they will be unfairly affected by these closures as they are unable to join other clubs/ activities without the staff and venues making reasonable adjustments and training their staff in autism to make their venues and communication accessible to young people with autism.</p>	<p>I am not aware of another provider other than the NAS in the W Berks area who are sufficiently trained in autism to deliver these clubs if they were shut.</p>	<p>I wondered whether a small increase in the weekly fees and asking for a larger contribution to their weekend away that they go on once a year.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>I am just so disappointed that yet again I am (as a parent) having to justify and put up a fight for my son. I do not expect the council to pay for my son and his disabilities, he is my son and my responsibility but I expect for there to be provision for activities and groups with appropriately trained staff where the children ad adults feel safe and protected. And if these groups close then what will the provision be?</p>



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52	Oasis Club	Yes	My son xxx is 16 and has Asperger's syndrome. Oasis and Spectrum ( the same club but your younger members) has been the only club xxx has used, since he was 10, and felt he had to leave scouts, as he did not feel safe there as he had in Cubs. Where he as nurtured, and the boys had not reached the loud boisterous stage. Xxx does not make friends really, and he is vulnerable to being mistreated. I once asked him why he liked it as the club, and his reply was "Because it it the only place people understand me." He can be his self there, as much as he can be at home. and there is nowhere else I can say that of. So. If this group is taken away. xxx will lose the only social outlet available he has. I can't tell you how sad that makes me.	The club is aimed at people at main stream school, with Autism in some form. To my understanding, for these people, their autism makes it extremely difficult to socialise, but aware still. that they want to be part of all the things that are going on around them in society. I do not believe there is ANYTHING remotely similar in the area, that xxx and similar people could use, should this club be closed. So, I urge you so very strongly, not to take this away from them. Life is already so tough for them!	This club is already very simply structured, and run with a lot of voluntary help. I can not see how it can really be streamlined to cost less. I believe it is to save money that the club is under threat? I am happy to help in any way I can, and have offered to do so. But if I came helped at the club, that rather defeats the object of giving my son independence. Also, I do not think that is what the club is in need of anyway. So No I do not.	Other than talking to members to help them with the loss of their beloved club, I can think of no way to help alleviate the impact.	No. see above comments.	Xxx will already have to leave this club, when he is a little older, and I find it really sad, as there is nothing else similar out there for him. It has been a social lifeline for him while he has been the ages to attend. It would be a huge loss for others in his situation not to benefit in such a way. In fact I think we should be extending the service to a wider age group, and so making it impossible to run!
53		Yes	As it has been helping with practising independence for my son's, they will probably end up with a life just behind their computer desks and all of the potential health problems that this can incur, ie; Scheunmens Disease, also for Autistic Spectrum Children non compliance	They need Befrienders, who are neutral to the family as a bridge to independence	No the current way works just fine		Befriending helps the children allot, they can be taken to places, or practice elements of independence, with ie; practice run on the bus with the Befriender	
54	National autistic society OASIS	Yes	My son has autism and would regress in his social and emotional functioning. he will lose the confidence the Oasis club has given them. Since receiving support from OASIS and SPECTRUM before that Ben has learnt new skills and made lots of friends. The impact will be likely to be a loss of confidence and self-esteem, a loss of contact with his friends outside of sitting at his computer - when not attending the clubs he rarely goes out. I would expect to see a marked decline in his mental health and the onset of depression (which he has already had) The impact of closing these schemes will also be felt by me as the parent – the clubs have given me essential respite and have allowed me	Definably young people with autism more than others. Autism means that our children cannot not access and just participate in mainstream activities and clubs. Many children with autism have sensory sensitivities which mainstream clubs and venues don't cater for. I believe that you are also going to axe the NAS befriending service and PALS - I hear that many parents use these to supply a friend to take their child to a main stream club. Young people with autism must have routine, structured activities which they are prepared for by staff/volunteers who are trained in autism so that they know how to	There is not another provider other than the NAS who are well enough trained to deliver these services if they were shut.	Through the years we have had to fight for every bit of support we've ever received - from appointments with CAMHS (which you are also hitting with cuts) to getting support in school. I already volunteer with other activities to help my child It is the Council's legal obligation to provide short breaks for disabled children. ASD are a disability and as such the Council must provide services for		If you axe autism-specific short breaks you will be acting against national guidance and will also be creating circumstances which are likely to lead to much higher spending needs in the near future - do you really want to have to spend more money when families and children reach crisis point.

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			to have a bit of time for myself - even if it is only to get the shopping done in peace	communicate with the young people in a way they understand - if these services are axed they will not be able to adjust to mainstream clubs and activities. ASD is a lifelong disability and is very extremely complex - the biggest difficulties being around social communication – this means they will be unfairly affected by these closures as they are unable to join other clubs/ activities without the staff and venues making reasonable adjustments and training their staff in autism to make their venues and communication accessible to young people with autism. Young people with ASD are more socially isolated than other groups of young people (42% of children with autism have no friends as opposed to 1% of other children). Their autism means that adjustments have to be made to activities and communication and they have to be supported to understand social rules and communications		them. The NAS Branch and other parents already do their best – as volunteers - to help other families affected by autism in the area. They cannot and should not be asked to take on more and start providing services for free which the Council has a duty to commission for disabled children. Some of us are already at the end of our tether - asking us is quite frankly offensive		
55								I read today on the medium that the whole world can read that you are to cut funding to several local charities that help children with disabilities. Shame on you. In one of the richest countries you cannot arrange the publics funds to provide Aid to these children and their parents. I have worked in public and court offices a d experienced the waste. Over warm rooms with the windows open. Huge courtrooms , redecorated on the whim of a magistrate on over generous expenses. Have another look for savings that are not so cruel.

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56		Yes	I don't think you have any idea of what these services mean to families of disabled children. My son has days out in holidays and a 3 day break every year with Crossroads. The location of his school means he has no local friends and even though he is 13 it is not safe for him to be out and about without supervision even if he did have. This means that the only place he goes to without me or Crossroads trips is school. These trips contribute hugely to developing social skills and independence. The short break is the often the only time he has a holiday and is the only time me and his brothers have a break as there is no-one else that I can trust to look after him and meet his needs.	Obviously it is going to affect the vulnerable again. Not only that, it will affect their families as this is the only break they get from caring for a child with disabilities. This could lead to increased mental health issues in carers, families and so on.				Again you are removing services from the most vulnerable in our society.
57		No	Im not a user but have benefited personally and am who and where I am today because of the services west berkshire mencap provide. I started as a volunteer with west berkshire mencap while still at school, it taught me to appreciate life, treat everyone with respect and gave me a real appreciation of life. This service does not only benefit the service users and their families, but also the young volunteers, their friends, acquaintances, family and future employers.	This will affect every resident of west berkshire, now and in the future.	Reverse the 16.5% pay increase given to councillors and through other efficiencies.		You shouldn't need too, west berkshire mencap provide the best possible service	Gordon Lundie should be ashamed of his comments and how he has dealt with this. Is it why he has stood down?
58								THE CASE OF XXX XXX THE MOTHER OF A CHILD THAT THE COUNCIL THAT YOU BOTH REPRESENT YOU BOTH WANT TOO CUT OUT THEIR NEEDS FOR THEIR CHILD TO CUT FUNDS FOR HEALTH CARE THAT THEY NEED FOR MENCAP. THIS IS NOT THE WAY TO ACT TOWARDS CHILDREN IN THIS DAY AND AGE, I URGE YOU TO HAVE SOME COMPASSION FOR THESE PEOPLE AND OTHER PEOPLE IN THESE SITUATION.