

Equality Impact Assessment Template – Stage Two

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

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

Name of item being assessed:	Budget Proposals regarding Short Breaks for Disabled Children
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Owner of item being assessed:	Juliet Penley
Name of assessor:	Juliet Penley
Date of assessment:	28.12.15 (updated 19.8.16)
Date Stage 1 EIA completed:	30.10.15

STEP 1 – Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment

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

2. Please provide details on how you have used the available evidence, information you have selected as part of your Impact Assessment?
<p>I have taken into account the views and comments provided from the following;</p> <p>Public consultation published on council's website and ran from 1.11.15 – 15.12.15. The public were encouraged to complete an online form. 58 responses received</p> <p>Meeting with providers of short breaks on 30.11.15 and 4.12.15. Further meetings have been held with short break providers on 4.2.16, 15.3.16 and 19.7.16</p> <p>Parents open meeting arranged by Parent Voice (parent participation organisation) 9 parents attended</p> <p>Parents views collated by Mencap and Crossroads -14 comments from parents sent direct to</p>

organisation, copied and sent to council

Petition online (via 38 degrees) with 3,173 signatures. This was to support the case that the council should not make any reduction in funding to the short breaks budget.

Meeting with 2 parents at their home on 12.4.16

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

No

STEP 2 – Involvement and Consultation

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

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

Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic / national origin or nationality.	
Religion and Belief - covers any religion, religious or non-religious beliefs. Also includes philosophical belief or non-belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.	
Sex - applies to male or female.	
Sexual Orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.	

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

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

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

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

In April 2016 transition funding was made available for 2016/17 so grants were awarded to 7 local organisations for the year 2016/17; Mencap, Crossroads, PALS, Swings and Smiles, Homestart West Berkshire, Dingley Promise and National Autistic Society. Guideposts said that it no longer wished to provide services in West Berkshire as it was based in Lincolnshire. Grants were also given to 2 special schools, Brookfield and The Castle.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Update August 16. The reduction in funding has led to a reduction in the variety and number of short breaks available but as can be see from detail below all providers have continued to deliver some short break services

Dingley. Continue to provide 10 places in their holiday clubs for Under 5s. No change

National Autistic Society. Continue to run Befriending service for 20 children and 26 places in their youth club. No change. They do now charge parents

Brookfields school. Continue to run holiday playchemes for 20 children per day. Reduction in number from 30 approx. After school clubs and Youth clubs continue at the same level. Charges have been increased.

Homestart. Continue with no change and provide service to 12 families

Swings and Smiles. They are a new provider and deliver 8 places of holiday club over 20 days a year. They provide 8 places at a Saturday club once a month

PALS. Continue to provide to 16 young people youth clubs and holiday activities. No change

Crossroads. Continue to provide youth clubs for 24 young people. Reduced from 30-40. Also provide overnight breaks to 18 children which is reduced by half. They have increased charges.

Mencap. Stopped their Saturday club, high need holiday scheme and overnight breaks. Continue to deliver 20 places on holiday play schemes but for 2 weeks instead of 4. Their youth club continues unchanged but after school club is reduced to 15 children per day for days. Previously 30 approx.

The services that have continued at Mencap and Crossroads have been those most valued by parents such as holiday play schemes, youth clubs and after school clubs. The short break providers have formed a SEND provider's forum to share learning and increase co-operation and efficiency. Providers have sought and some secured alternative funding. The impact on families and disabled children has been that they have less choice, increased charges and less availability. There are still a similar number of providers of services and a range of short breaks available in terms of type. The greatest reduction has been seen and are likely to be seen in

the provision of overnight breaks which are the most expensive to run.

STEP 3 – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

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

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

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

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

Update

So far all providers have continued to provide short breaks and there has been one new provider this year, Swings and Smiles. As detailed in Section 3, there has been a reduction in service by Crossroads, Mencap and to a lesser extent, Brookfields. Please see below for quarter 1 data return showing numbers. There may be some double counting as children attend more than 1 short break service.

Organisation	2016/17			
	Number of young people receiving a service			
	Total (Q1)	Total (Q2)	Total (Q3)	Total (Q4)
Mencap				
Holiday Play schemes				
Youth Club				
After school club	48			
Crossroads				
Youth Provision				
Play schemes				
Home-StartWB				
Care/Sitting service	11			
National Autistic Society				
National Autistic Society	14			
Oasis club	26			
Oasis Transition Group				
Dingley				
Summer play scheme	26			
The Castle School				
Youth Clubs	15			
Brookfields School				
Youth Club	26			
After School Club	39			

Holiday Club	21			
PALS				
PALS	23			
Swings & Smiles				
Swings & Smiles	10			
TOTALS	259	0	0	0

Short break providers have come together locally and have formed themselves into a group called the SEND providers forum and council officers will become part of this group in September. This group aims to provide mutual support, share good ideas and maximise co-operation and efficiency.

STEP 4 – Procurement and Partnerships

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

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

No

STEP 5 – Making a Decision

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

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

The current short breaks services were commissioned following on from the governments 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' initiative (2008-11) when considerable central funding was available to councils to develop and increase short breaks for disabled children. So the current contracts were awarded to organisations to provide short breaks at an early point of need and to a far greater number of children.

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

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

Update There will be no change to those families eligible for a service from the council. Those below this threshold will likely find that that there has been a reduction in the number of services but that they can still directly access a variety of services.

As detailed in Section 3, there has been a reduction in service by Crossroads, Mencap and to a lesser extent, Brookfields. Other providers such as PALS, Homestart, Dingley, and the

National Autistic Society (NAS) have continued to provide at similar levels. Charges for services have been increased by NAS, Brookfields, Crossroads, and Mencap. Holiday play schemes and youth clubs have been least affected but overnight breaks have been stopped or reduced by Crossroads and Mencap. Mencap as the largest provider of services has shown the greatest reduction and only their youth club continues at previous levels.

STEP 6 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

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

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

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

Update. Transition funding has been used to award grants to 7 voluntary organisations and 2 special schools. Quarter 1 data has been collected and is shown in the table above. Data will continue to be collected and monitored. Short breaks services have continued to be provided and providers are being supported to become more self sufficient and self sustaining. The providers have formed themselves into the SEND forum and council officers will joint their meetings from September. There will also be individual meetings with each provider in October 2016 to further monitor and assess the impact on each short breaks provider.

STEP 7 – Action Plan

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

	Actions	Target Date	Responsible post holder & directorate
Involvement & consultation	Discussions will continue with current providers to mitigate impact of reduction in funding and consider level of ongoing provision	Subsequent to consultation period	Service manager (C&F services)
Data collection	Continue to collect data from short break providers to include numbers of children, places and types of provision.	Every quarter	Service manager (C&F)

Assessing impact	Data will be used to consider any gaps in service provision	Post April 2016	As Above
Procurement & partnership	Award grants to short breaks providers using transition funding	April 2016	As Above
Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing	Grants awarded will be monitored by holding monitoring meetings, gathering data, and holding provider meetings.	April 2016	As Above

STEP 8 – Sign Off

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

Assessor		
Name: Juliet Penley	Job Title: Service Manager	Date: 19.8.16

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

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