

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Mencap Family Advisor Service

Consultation Summary Report

Why we consulted?

Over the last nine years we've had to make savings of £60 million as our central government funding, the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), has reduced and the need for social care support has increased. We've done this by becoming more efficient at what we do, by reducing some of our administrative functions and increasing our income. Throughout this period we have done our best to protect your services.

Six years ago, the RSG was worth £24 million to the council and was reduced to just £100,000 last year. In 2019/20 there will be no grant and our costs will exceed our income. As a result, we'll need to find a further £7 million in savings or income generation. Much of this will come from becoming a more efficient council, however, 14 proposals, amounting to approximately £300,000, have been identified from services that will impact the public.

It was these proposals that made up the Budget Proposals 2019/20 consultation.

Approach

We published all the public facing proposals on our website on 12 November 2018 with feedback requested by midnight on 23 December 2018.

Respondents were directed to a central index pageⁱ, which outlined the overall background to the exercise, and provided links to each of the individual proposals on our Consultation Portalⁱⁱ.

Each individual page included further details on the specifics of what the proposal contained and what we thought the impact might be, along with any other elements we'd taken into account. Feedback was then invited through an online form and a dedicated email address. Hard copies of the proposal documents and surveys were also made available on request.

As well as publishing the consultations on our website, we also emailed members of the West Berkshire Community Panel (around 400 people), notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions. The Learning Disability Partnership Board was also approached. Heads of Service also made direct contact with those organisations directly affected prior to them being made publicly available.

Finally, we issued a press release on the 12 November 2018, and further publicised our consultations through our Facebook and Twitter accounts. We also placed posters in our main offices and other council properties e.g. libraries, leisure centres and family hubs, and made them available to WBC Councillors and Parish and Town Councils to put up in the wards/parishes.

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Mencap Family Advisor Service

Consultation Summary Report

Proposal Background

The Mencap Family Advisor Serviceⁱⁱⁱ works with people with learning disabilities and their parents, carers and families to help them access the services and support available to them. This could include help with benefits, respite care, transport, social and leisure opportunities, transition, moving out of home and finding suitable employment. They also provide an advocacy service for parents, carers and service users.

The service employs four members of staff; one Family Support Manager and three Family Advisors.

In 2017, 164 people used this service.

We currently provide the Mencap Family Advisor Service with annual funding of £15,750.

Legislation Requirements

The Care Act 2014^{iv} sets out duties relating to the provision of information and advice, advocacy and services required to meet care and support needs. These duties are met by a number of services including those provided by the council through the Adult Social Care teams and commissioned from other providers such as the Citizens Advice West Berkshire.

Proposal Details

To reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 (a proposed saving of £3,000 or 19%) from 1 April 2019.

We propose to retender for an information and advice service for the families of people with learning disabilities with this reduced level of funding once the contract with Mencap ends on 31 March 2019.

Consultation Response

Number of Responses

In total, 19 responses were received. One of these responses was incomplete.

Four of the respondents identified themselves as a user of the service, 11 as residents, one as a Parish/Town Councillor, three as District Councillors, one as a service provider, two as partner organisations, and three as other.

We also received one petition from the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Mencap Family Advisor Service

Consultation Summary Report

Summary of Main Points

None of the respondents were in favour of this reduction. 13 of the respondents strongly disagreed and two disagreed with the proposal.

The main focus of the objections were:

- The absence of suitable alternatives
- The preventative benefit of the service, particularly as this is one of the main priorities in the NHS Five Year Forward View and the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Strategy
- The vulnerability of the affected group
- The argument that the service alleviates pressure on statutory provision

The petition from the Learning Disability Partnership Board had 64 signatures against this proposal.

Summary of Responses by Question

1. Are you...?

(N.B. respondents were able to tick more than one option)

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Or anyone you care for, a user of this service	4	16.7%	21.1%
A resident of West Berkshire	11	45.8%	57.9%
Employed by West Berkshire Council	0	.0%	.0%
A Parish/Town Councillor	1	5.9%	7.7%
A District Councillor	3	12.5%	15.8%
A service provider	1	4.2%	5.3%
A partner organisation	2	8.3%	10.5%
Other	3	12.5%	15.8%

2. How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	0	.0	.0
Agree	0	.0	.0
Neither agree nor disagree	3	15.8	16.7
Disagree	2	10.5	11.1
Strongly disagree	13	68.4	72.2
Total	18	94.7	100.0

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Mencap Family Advisor Service

Consultation Summary Report

Not answered	1	5.3	
Total	19	100.0	

3. What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?

The people affected by this proposal have learning disabilities or care for people with learning disabilities. Respondents felt strongly that this is a vulnerable group whose lives are already very difficult.

4. If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.

Retendering the service at a lower cost
Staff a new council department to help these vulnerable people.
The remaining respondents offered no other option and wanted to retain the service in its current form.

5. Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.

The main suggestions related to lobbying the government, using business rates income and increasing council tax. One suggestion was to reduce the salaries paid to council staff. There was a strongly worded suggestion that the council should seek legal support to challenge the Clinical Commissioning Group's decisions regarding Continuing Health Care Funding in that this could potentially generate very significant savings for the council if successful.

6. If you, your community group, or organisation think you might be able to help reduce the impact of this proposal, if the decision is taken to proceed with it, please provide your name and email address below.

One respondent provided their contact details.

7. Any further comments?

Respondents argued strongly about the negative impact this proposal might have on the relevant families.

Officer conclusion and recommendation can be found in the associated Overview of Responses and Recommendations document.

Paul Coe
Acting Head of Adult Social Care

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Mencap Family Advisor Service

Consultation Summary Report

Adult Social Care
27/12/2018

Please note: *In order to allow everyone who wished the opportunity to contribute, feedback was not sampled. Therefore this wasn't a quantitative, statistically valid exercise. It was neither the premise, purpose, nor within the capability of the exercise, to determine the overall community's level of support, or views on the proposals, with any degree of confidence.*

The feedback captured therefore should be seen in the context of 'those who responded', rather than reflective of the wider community.

All the responses have been provided verbatim as an appendix to this report. Whilst this summary seeks to distil the key, substantive points made, it should also be read in conjunction with the more detailed verbatim comments to ensure a full, rounded perspective of the views and comments are considered.

ⁱ <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetproposals>

ⁱⁱ <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/consultations>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.wbmencap.org/our-services/family-advisor-service/>

^{iv} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Mencap Family Advisor Service			Head of Service: Paul Coe		5 March 2019
			Author: Paul Coe		Version 1 (Full Council)
Proposal:	To reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019.				
Total budget 2018/19:	£15,750	Initial proposed saving 2019/20	£3,000 (19%)	Recommended saving 2019/20	£3,000 (19%)
No. of responses:	<p>In total, 19 responses were received. Of those that responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four identified themselves as users of the service • 11 as residents of West Berkshire • 0 as council employees • One as Parish/Town Councils • Three as District Councillors • One as service providers • Two as partner organisations • Three as other <p>We also received one petition from the Learning Disability Partnership Board – 64 signatures</p>				
Key issues raised:	<p>None of the respondents were in favour of this reduction.</p> <p>13 of the respondents strongly disagreed and two disagreed with the proposal.</p> <p>The main focus of the objections were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of suitable alternatives • The preventative benefit of the service • The vulnerability of the affected group • The relatively low cost of the service • The argument that the service alleviates pressure on statutory provision 				
Equality issues:	This proposal affects people with disabilities and this is covered in the Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.				

NB: This Overview of Responses and Recommendations paper should be read in conjunction with the Consultation Summary Report and Verbatim Responses received in relation to this proposal. These can be found in the agenda pack or on our [Consultation Portal](#).

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response
	Reduce the impact by retendering, but see what others can do for the existing amount.	The tendering process will be open to all appropriate bidders.
	Staff a new council department to help these vulnerable people for whom you have a legal duty to care for.	The council funds many services for people with learning disabilities including residential services, supported living and day activities. Care management teams work closely with eligible learning disabled adults.
Suggestions for saving money or increasing income:	Suggestion	Council response
	Increase Council Tax, holding a referendum if necessary	The raising of Council Tax will be one of the options that Members will consider as part of setting a balanced budget for 2019/20.
	Lobby central government for a fairer, more sustainable and decentralised system for funding local government	Long-term funding for Adult Social Care is being considered by the government in the Green Paper expected in early 2019.
	Reduce demand on services through investment in prevention	The council aims to support people to help themselves wherever possible.
	Work with other bodies including health, criminal justice etc., to pool resources and invest in longer term benefit, particularly in prevention.	The council is mindful of its prevention duties and there are a number of forums through which we cooperate with partners including Health services.
	Use Business Rate income.	Despite a range of income sources the council continues to require further actions to manage the budget.
	Fundraising	Voluntary organisations are able to fundraise and this can be an important funding stream alongside other types of funding.
	Review of benefit payments	The Council Tax Reduction Scheme is reviewed annually. This

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Overview of Responses and Recommendations

		<p>is a scheme to assist council tax payers help pay their bills due to low income, disability, vulnerability etc. Changes to the Housing Benefit Scheme can only be prescribed by central government. The fraud function within Housing Benefit is performed by the Department of Work and Pensions. Overtime all Housing Benefit claims will potentially move to the new Universal Credit process.</p>
	<p>Decrease WBC staff salaries</p>	<p>Staff are employed on contracts of employment which set out the rate of pay. It is not legally possible to unilaterally change those contracts to reduce the rate of pay. Therefore we are unable to act on your suggestion. For information, the council does not pay more than the 'going rate' for similar jobs in the public or private sector. If we did we would find that we received very many applicants for posts that we advertise externally and this is not the case.</p>
	<p>Organisations need to stop spending money on cosmetic and unnecessary projects and get their priorities right e.g. new bus station.</p>	<p>The new bus station in Newbury was constructed using developer funding. Its opening will enable the redevelopment of the Market Street area, which is a key part of the Newbury Vision 2026.</p>
	<p>Employing legal experts to fight the NHS from refusing to provide Continuing Health Care for some of the local disabled people who have deteriorating health conditions. I believe Dorset Council did this and saved hundreds of thousands of pounds, which easily pays for the legal team and still saves the council a fortune.</p>	<p>The level of funding through Continuing Health Care is extremely low in Berkshire and has been for some time. This is an area of concern.</p>
<p>Conclusion and recommendation:</p>	<p>All of the respondents to this consultation are against the proposal. There is concern about the effect on this vulnerable group of people. Nonetheless, there is a need to identify savings for the council. This is a relatively small reduction and the service will still be available. Other sources of advice, information and advocacy are also available.</p> <p>It is recommended that this proposal is progressed.</p>	

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Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA 2)

What is the proposed decision?	<p>To reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 (a proposed saving of £3,000 or 19%) from 1 April 2019.</p> <p>We propose to retender for an information and advice service for the families of people with learning disabilities with this reduced level of funding once the contract with Mencap ends on 31 March 2019.</p>
Summary of relevant legislation	The Care Act 2014 places a range of duties on Local Authorities to support vulnerable people. These include the provision of advice, information and support to people with disabilities and their carers.
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the council's key strategic priorities?	No
Name of budget holder	Paul Coe
Name of assessor	Paul Coe
Name of Service and Directorate	Adult Social Care
Date of assessment	28/12/2018
Version and release date (if applicable)	Version 1.0
Date EqIA 1 completed	18/10/2018

Step One – Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment

1. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this EqIA 2?			
Service targets		Performance targets	
User satisfaction		Service take-up	X
Workforce monitoring		Press coverage	
Complaints & comments		Census data	
Information from Trade Union		Community Intelligence	
Previous EqIA		Staff survey	
Public consultation	X	Other (please specify)	

2. What are the findings from the available evidence for the areas you have ticked above?
<p>In 2017/18, c.160 people accessed the service. Satisfaction data is not available.</p> <p>Public consultation received 19 responses and a petition with 64 signatures. 13 of the respondents strongly disagreed and 2 disagreed with the proposal.</p> <p>The main focus of the objections were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of suitable alternatives • The preventative benefit of the service • The vulnerability of the affected group • The relatively low cost of the service • The argument that the service alleviates pressure on statutory provision
3. What additional research or data is required, if any, to fill the gaps identified in question two? Have you considered commissioning new data or research e.g. a needs assessment?
None



Step Two – Involvement and Consultation

4. How do the findings from the evidence summarised in Step One affect people with the nine protected characteristics?	
Target Groups	Summary of responses and type of evidence
Age – relates to all ages	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
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.	The service is available to people with learning disabilities and their families and this group may be adversely affected.
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.	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
Marriage and civil partnership –.protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
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	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.



Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic or national origin or nationality.	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
Religion or 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.	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
Sex - applies to male or female.	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
Sexual orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.

5. Who are the main stakeholders (e.g. service users, staff) and what are their requirements?

The main stakeholders are people with learning disabilities and their families. Other stakeholders include professionals working with those families.

6. How will this item affect the stakeholders identified above?

The funding available to support this service will reduce slightly and this will impact upon the availability of the service. This proposal may compound reductions to Mencap made over the last few years.

Step Three – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

7. What are the impacts and how will you mitigate them?

The proposed reduction is relatively small and it is anticipated therefore that the impacts will be modest. Other services (such as advocacy and care management) continue to be available and will minimise the impact.

Step Four – Procurement and Partnerships

8. Is this item due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

Yes

This provision is currently provided by Mencap. They are aware of the proposal.

Step Five – Making a Decision

9. What are your recommendations as a result of the EqIA 2?

In making your recommendations please summarise your findings.

The decision shows a negative impact but can be justified by the availability of other services with a similar function although it must be noted that responses to the public consultation express significant concern about the impact.

Step Six – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

10. How will you monitor the impact on the nine protected characteristics once the change has taken place?

Adult Social Care teams carry out care management functions and will share intelligence relating to service user impacts.

Step Seven – Action Plan

Categories	Actions	Target date	Responsible person
Involvement and consultation			
Data collection			
Assessing impact	Discussion with Provider to review impact	1 September 2019	Paul Coe
Procurement and partnership			
Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing	Regular engagement with LDPB	Ongoing	Paul Coe

Step Eight – Sign Off

<p>The policy, strategy or function has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.</p>		
<p>Contributors to the EqIA 2</p>		
<p>Name:</p>	<p>Job Title:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>Head of Service</p>		
<p>Name: Paul Coe</p>		<p>Date: 28/12/2018</p>

Number of responses: 19 (including 1 incomplete)

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reason(s) for your response.				
1	Neither agree nor disagree	We acknowledge that the Council is in a challenging financial situation and will therefore need to reduce its expenditure. We do however have some concerns about the areas highlighted below, particularly because prevention is one of the main priorities in the NHS Five Year Forward View and the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Strategy. We would also like to continue to explore how we can work together through the Berkshire West 10 to maximise economics of scale across our area. These are the areas of concern and questions we wanted to highlight: This is the only service that truly reaches out to people with LD and a useful community resource. We acknowledge the intention to retender this service in the new financial year. We would like to be informed of the outcome of the tender process in terms of the capacity of the successful bidder. Mencap is the conduit between the CCG and local authority to promote inclusion, access to services and welfare rights for people with learning disabilities and their carers that links into Transforming Care Programme.				
2	Strongly disagree	Members of Tilehurst Parish Council discussed the proposed 14 budget cuts and, whilst they have concerns over the reduction of these budgets, do understand why this has to be done. Members felt that many of the proposals highlighted a duplication or overlap in services, which is costly, and considered that a number of services could be co-joined in a bid to cut costs. There was a strong objection in the reduction of funding to MENCAP as it was considered there were no suitable alternatives to this vital service and Members urge West Berkshire Council to reconsider this proposed budget cut. Members were concerned that insufficient information was provided for them to make an informed comment. No information has been relayed about the outcome of the visits to the various groups to gauge whether the contributions are being used wisely i.e. what was the success rate? What has been the impact on local residents of Tilehurst?				
3	Strongly disagree					

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reason(s) for your response.				
4	Strongly disagree	This is trying to save money by adversely affecting people who already suffer more than most in our society, including from implicit and explicit discrimination. It is suggested that a retendered service might be provided at lower cost. That is, perhaps, something that should be explored (while taking into account possible impacts on quality – presumably the biggest costs are staff costs, so would a lower cost service just mean people being paid less?). However, this is proposing a cut regardless of whether that can be achieved. To say that “The proposed reduction is small considering the totality of the support provided” is disingenuous at best. This is a 19% reduction in the service, and each individual will be affected just as much as if it were 19% of a larger amount.			I do not have sufficient information about the workings of the rest of the council to be able to suggest any better area for cuts. More general options for increasing income would be to increase council tax, holding a referendum, as required by central government, if necessary. The council might also wish to lobby central government and inform them of the harm being done by their cuts. It could also lobby, directly and through the LGA, for a fairer, more sustainable and more decentralised system for funding local government, which increased the extent of local control. One way of reducing costs longer term would be by reducing demand on services through investment in prevention, which is the opposite of what these cuts are doing. The council should be considered social costs more broadly and working more effectively with other bodies, including health, criminal justice etc. to pool resources and invest for longer term benefit, particularly in prevention.	
5	Strongly disagree	This is an appalling proposal.	This could have severe mental health implications.	Reduce the impact by retendering, but see what others can do for the existing amount.	Use Business Rate income.	No further comment.
6	Strongly disagree	This is a small enough budget anyway, but no doubt still helps many families live more tolerable lives with mental handicap. They need all the help they can get.			I imagine that most residents would be prepared to pay a little more council tax in order to cover this very minor item of expenditure but vital helpline	
7	Strongly disagree	Reductions in funding for this will lead to a reduction in the services provided by The Family Advisor team. The service supports people through many different situations and life opportunities. Our qualified staff give individual support to parents, carers and people with learning disabilities. We help with a variety of issues including employment, leisure, housing, transition, benefits advice, behaviour management, and many other enquiries that come our way. We provide advocacy through Child Protection, and can also be an Appropriate Adult at the local Police station. This service helps to alleviate pressure on West Berkshire Council and its own services.	This will affect any number of people and families who utilise our services - these will be people with learning disabilities and their families and carers. This will also have an effect on the council as this service reduces pressure on the council itself			

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reason(s) for your response.				
8	Strongly disagree	Mencap do an awful lot for people with special needs and again it's always the needy that suffer stop cutting money for the people that really need it	Again it's people with disabilities that always suffer with cuts.	Just don't cut their funding	Stop doing so many road works and building cycle lanes that no one uses	
9	Strongly disagree	This is ludicrous!! This service is TOTALLY invaluable to families like ours. As carers of disabled young adults we have already had to deal with cuts to services, and yet again it's the like of our families that face more cuts	This proposal will affect everyone the same in my opinion. Myself and my family have used this service on a number of occasions and for you to say a like for like service MAY be available, but waiting lists will be longer is just unthinkable. It's hard enough being a carer, and for our disabled young adults as it is. How much would it cost the LA if many families can't cope and have to put their young adults into care? This is the reality of cutting this service	Yes DONT CUT THE SERVICE!!!! For people that don't have to live the life of a carer they have NO idea how this will affect families	I know of people under this LA who are addicted to drink or drugs. They have groups to go to, support from different areas etc and all this is funded by the LA. Yet for disabled people, WHO DID NOT CHOOSE TO BE DISABLED, constantly face cuts in 1 way or another. Is this because they haven't got a voice maybe??? Disgusting that you don't penalise people who CHOOSE what they do to their bodies, yet for people who are born with disabilities you slap them around the face with a wet fish and we as carers are left to get on with it	When are disabled people going to come 1st?? As I said before if you suddenly have parents/carers that cannot care any more how much would the cost of care be for the LA!! By keeping these vital services you are reducing the risk of these parents/carers no longer being able to cope. By helping them you help yourselves on costs. No brainer really!!!!!!
10	Strongly disagree	You're basically taking away the independence from people with disabilities. they can't get normal jobs, they are treated despicably in town by the public and cutting funding would mean less projects would be able to be ran for them. People with learning disabilities are not able to do "normal" activities like a lot of the public and without all the projects west Berkshire mencap runs they would be sat at home bored. Would you like to be sat at home all day, no one really to talk to, nothing really to do? No. I have seen how positive the effects of these projects are and you're basically threatening them to take it away. What is going to reduce the cuts for people with learning disabilities going to do. What you should be doing is actually cutting money on places that need cutting. You will be ruining the lives of many people with this cut and it won't end there, it never does. Don't you think people with learning disabilities have enough prejudice against them? Why would you want to take away their joy. You may see this budget cut as a small thing and everything can still be run but that's not the case at all. The cuts will mean that some will lose their places in these projects and it means you are ruining innocent lives.	Projects won't be able to be ran, the cuts before have made several projects stop and that effectively means you're ruining people with learning disabilities lives by taking away something that means so dearly to them. It will have such a negative impact. As many people with learning disabilities struggle to get their voice heard I am making this complaint as making cuts in all the wrong places will not help. These poor vulnerable people will have less and less to do and it will be all your fault. That 19% makes a lot of things happen within mencap and every penny makes the difference. If you think this is the right cut to make then you're clearly heartless and have never experienced the joy these people get from mencap	You could go tell all the people with learning disabilities what horrible decision you've made and how it will close projects and stop some of them from being able to do anything	-fundraising -Look into what people are spending their benefits on and the people that waste it should have reduced benefits - Maybe decrease the salaries in west Berkshire council -don't build a brand new bus station when the old one is perfectly fine	If you go through with it, you will ruin the lives of many vulnerable people with learning disabilities

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reason(s) for your response.				
12	Neither agree nor disagree					
13	Strongly disagree	<p>Advice and support services for those specifically with Learning Disabilities are having funding reduced across the board and so this service will be even more necessary. Funding has been reduced for the LDPB, as well as the removal of all of the funding for the It's My Life Self Advocacy Group. These vulnerable people and their families are going to struggle to find specialist advice in the future.</p>	<p>I think it will impact people and their families at every stage in their lives. It's an incredibly difficult struggle to cope with the demands of caring for someone with a learning disability from the minute they are born and for the rest of their life, it's one battle after another and so proper advice is crucial</p>	<p>Retain the service as it is</p>	<p>I appreciate it's difficult, strong representation needs to be made to the Government to recognise the problems that Social Care services across the board are experiencing due to insufficient funds from central Government.</p>	<p>As a Carer of an adult daughter myself I do understand the need for proper advice and support to allow families to continue with their caring roles. If we all cave in and hand our loved ones over to the council to provide full care, things would be far worse - support and advice are a vital part of continuing a caring role.</p>
14	Strongly disagree	<p>A 20 decrease in the service provision will obviously have an impact on parents who need all the support they can get whether that is direct from the organisation or being signposted specifically. Longer waiting times for this support can be very distressing for parents and could force people into crisis situations.</p>	<p>it will affect whole families. Family and parent carers need all the support they can get to ensure that benefits are not stopped. If the parents are under additional stress this will have a knock on effect to the whole family and could force them into a crisis situation.</p>	<p>Nothing.</p>	<p>No</p>	
15	Strongly disagree	<p>You have already made huge and sustained cuts to many support services over the last few years which in many cases have hit the needy the hardest. It's time to stop this, and to focus limited funds on those who need them most. I cannot support any of the above cuts and urge you to find savings elsewhere or re-allocate funds from areas that will not impact the disadvantaged.</p>				
16	Strongly disagree					
17	Disagree	<p>I am most in favour of many services whereby they assist people who by no fault of their own have a dependency or rely on another service to get through daily life</p>				

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Mencap Family Advisor Service from £15,750 to £12,750 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reason(s) for your response.				
18	Neither agree nor disagree	<p>The Council Leaders should go to Mencap and see for themselves how valuable this service is to the carers and disabled people of all age groups. The Council would save money if it keeps supporting the vital services of Mencap Family Advisor Service as it helps carers apply for Continuing Health Care CHC so that the cost of caring for a very severely disabled person can be paid fully or partly by the NHS CHC, saving the Council hundreds of thousands of pounds every year. It's disgusting that the West Berkshire Social Services Dept refuse to help the carers of severely disabled people to fight for CHC funding. There are many severely disabled people in West Berks with deteriorating health conditions which legally should be funded by the NHS CHC not by Social Services, but Social Services break the law and fund these disabled people who should legally be funded by the NHS. Social Services Dept just say they are short staffed and won't fight the NHS. Save money the same as other Councils and employ some good legal experts on CHC and save a fortune, local Soc Serv are incapable of fighting their corner against the NHS, Soc Serv just giving in to the NHS every time which is illegal.</p>	<p>See my previous answer. It will impact on the most vulnerable people in our Society the very people that the Head of the Council Graham Jones said he wants to protect. The Mencap Family Adviser helps these vulnerable people claim benefits that they are legally entitled to but are unable to apply for themselves due to their mental disability, these people will be in crisis if they do not receive these Government benefits. If these very vulnerable people get into crisis it will then cost the Council far more sorting out the problems. Mencap Family Adviser is a life line to these people. There is no one else these some vulnerable people can turn to, they've grown up with Mencap and trust Mencap to always help them in their time of need.</p>	<p>If you proceed with this proposal you could staff a new Council Dept to help these vulnerable people for whom you have a legal duty to care for and you would end up spending even more money doing the job Mencap Family Adviser did at far less cost.</p>	<p>See my previous answer save money by employing some legal experts to fight the NHS from refusing to provide CHC for some of the local disabled people who have deteriorating health conditions. I believe Dorset Council did this and saved hundred of thousands of pounds, which easily pays for the legal team and still saves the Council a fortune. Stand up to the NHS stop giving in to them, they are laughing at you.</p>	<p>Lets see some action get a good Legal Team and fight the NHS get NHS CHC funding for these disabled people, invest now it will save the Council a fortune.</p>
19	Disagree	<p>This service has already been cut beyond what is humanely acceptable.</p>	<p>Families will be further cast adrift from support structures. The quality of the support will be further diminished.</p>	<p>No suggestions.</p>	<p>Lobby the government. Ask our local MP to do a little bit of Mencap volunteering on a regular basis...</p>	