

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support (SNACS) 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), plus the provider of the SNACS Service, notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions. 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, and made them available to WBC Councillors and Parish and Town Councils to put up in the wards/parishes.

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Proposal Background

The Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support (SNACS) Serviceⁱⁱⁱ is specifically for parents or carers of children with disabilities. Caring for a disabled child can be very challenging and takes its toll psychologically and emotionally on parents. Parents sometimes suffer with depression / low mood as a result of the pressures and challenges they face, and this potentially impacts on their ability to support their child. Whilst counselling can usually be accessed by those who need it through the NHS, the SNACS Service was set up to respond to the specific needs of parents caring for a disabled child. Counsellors are recruited who have specific knowledge and experience in disability, and an understanding of the impact on families of having a disabled child.

We currently provide the SNACS Service with annual funding of £10,000. Counselling sessions cost £50 per hour to run, so there are 200 hours of counselling available per year. The number of counselling sessions offered to an individual parent varies according to need, but on average a block of 10 sessions is offered. This means that approximately 20 people can use the service per year.

Demand generally exceeds supply, so the funding usually runs out before the end of the financial year. When this happens, parents who wish to access the service will be signposted to other services and agencies which may be able to offer support, such as the NHS and voluntary organisations.

Legislation Requirements

There is no statutory duty to provide this service.

Proposal Details

To reduce annual funding to the SNACS Service from £10,000 to £8,000 (a saving of £2,000 or 20%) from 1 April 2019.

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Consultation Response

Number of Responses

In total, 15 responses were received.

Two of the respondents identified themselves as a user of the service, 11 as residents, one as a Parish/Town Councillor, one as a service provider, one as a partner organisation, and five as other.

Summary of Main Points

There were no respondents in favour of this proposal. The points made by respondents can be summarised as follows:

- The SNACS Service is aimed at families who are already disadvantaged / vulnerable and will be made more so by any reduction in service.
- The service helps to prevent mental health problems and potential family breakdown for carers of disabled children. The cost of supporting families with disabled children could be much higher if this preventative service was not available. Prevention was cited as one of the main priorities in the NHS Five Year Forward View and the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Strategy
- The other services which are cited as alternatives may also be overstretched and do not have specific expertise in disability.
- Those who can't afford or readily access alternative services will be more badly affected than those who can.
- The service needs more money not less.

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	2	9.5%	13.3%
A resident of West Berkshire	11	52.4%	73.3%
Employed by West Berkshire Council	0	.0%	.0%
A Parish/Town Councillor	1	4.8%	6.7%
A District Councillor	0	.0%	.0%
A service provider	1	4.8%	6.7%
A partner organisation	1	4.8%	6.7%
Other	5	23.8%	33.3%

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2. How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support Service from £10,000 to £8,000 from 1 April 2019?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	0	.0	.0
Agree	0	.0	.0
Neither agree nor disagree	0	.0	.0
Disagree	3	20.0	20.0
Strongly disagree	12	80.0	80.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0
Not answered	0	.0	
Total	15	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?

Those who can't afford or readily access alternative services will be more badly affected than those who can.

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.

- Monthly drop in clinics
- Reduced time for counselling sessions

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.

- Increase Council tax
- Turn off lights in council buildings at night
- Sell more surplus places on school transport for children with SEN
- Run a local lottery
- Use business rates income to fund this service
- Increase council property portfolio and generate rental income

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.

Two respondents provided their contact details.

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7. Any further comments?

- SNACS is an outstanding service which the council should be proud of.

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

Jane Seymour
Service Manager, SEN & Disabled Children's Service
Education Service
07/01/2019

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 <http://www.westberkssendiass.info/en/SNACS>

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support (SNACS) Service		Head of Service: Ian Pearson		5 March 2019	
		Author: Jane Seymour		Version 1 (Full Council)	
Proposal:	To reduce the annual funding to the Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support Service from £10,000 to £8,000 from 1 April 2019.				
Total budget 2018/19:	£10,000	Initial proposed saving 2019/20	£2,000 (20%)	Recommended saving 2019/20	£0
No. of responses:	<p>In total, 15 responses were received. Of those that responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two identified themselves as users of the service • 11 as residents of West Berkshire • 0 as council employees • One as a Parish/Town Council • 0 as District Councillors • One as a service provider • One as a partner organisation • Five as other 				
Key issues raised:	<p>There were no respondents in favour of this proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SNACS Service is aimed at families who are already disadvantaged / vulnerable and will be made more so by any reduction in service. • The service helps to prevent mental health problems and potential family breakdown for carers of disabled children. The cost of supporting families with disabled children could be much higher if this preventative service is not available. • The other services which are cited as alternatives may also be overstretched and do not have specific expertise in disability • Those who can't afford or readily access alternative services will be more badly affected than those who can • The service needs more money not less. 				
Equality issues:	This proposal affects parents and carers of children with disabilities and could indirectly affect children with disabilities. 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
	Drop in clinics	This will be raised with the service provider as an option for consideration.
	Reduce session time	This will be raised with the service provider as an option for consideration. However, 45 to 55 minutes is generally considered necessary for a productive counselling session, with some time needed for the counsellor between sessions, do it is unlikely that there is much scope for reduction of session length.
Suggestions for saving money or income generation:	Suggestion	Council response
	Raise Council Tax	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.
	Run a lottery	The council is planning to operate a local lottery, which will be launched shortly.
	Turn off lights in council buildings at night	The lights are turned off at night. Some external footway lights around the building and internal low level emergency lighting may be visible. Once security checks have been completed, automatic sensors turn off any remaining lights.
	Increase council's property portfolio and raise more rental income	The Council approved Property Investment Strategy has set a limit on the amount of capital that can be invested in Commercial properties. The council's overall Capital programme has to fund highways maintenance, street lighting, building of schools etc. and the size of this programme is determined by the amount which the council can afford to borrow after taking into account other sources of capital funding.
	Sell spare places on SEN transport to families of children who do not qualify for free transport	Spare spaces on SEN transport are already made available for purchase by families whose children do not qualify for transport.

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Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Conclusion and recommendation:

It is acknowledged that users of this service have found it very beneficial. It is also acknowledged that it is helpful for parents who have disabled children to be able to access support from a counsellor who has specific knowledge of disability.

A reduction of £2,000 would mean a reduction by 20% of families who can access the service. Whilst this is regrettable, there is access to counselling through other sources, including the NHS, via GPs, and through voluntary agencies.

This is a service which is not available in other areas, as far as we know.

It is recommended that this proposal is not progressed.

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](#).

Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA 2)

What is the proposed decision?	To reduce the annual funding to the SNACS Service from £10,000 to £8,000 (a saving of £2,000 or 20%) from 1 April 2019.
Summary of relevant legislation	There is no statutory duty to provide this service.
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the council's key strategic priorities?	No
Name of budget holder	Jane Seymour
Name of assessor	Jane Seymour
Name of Service and Directorate	Education Service, Communities Directorate
Date of assessment	14/01/2019
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	X	Service take-up	X
Workforce monitoring		Press coverage	
Complaints & comments		Census data	
Information from Trade Union		Community Intelligence	
Previous EqIA	X	Staff survey	
Public consultation	X	Other (please specify)	

2. What are the findings from the available evidence for the areas you have ticked above?

User satisfaction surveys consistently show a high level of satisfaction with the service.

There is a high level of service take up. The number of counselling sessions which can be purchased from the available budget are always utilised; in fact the budget generally runs out before the end of the financial year.

The public consultation in November / December 2018 generated 15 responses, which is a small number, but a large number of responses would not be expected for a service such as this, which is aimed at a minority of the community. The points raised by respondents were as follows:

- The SNACS service is aimed at families who are already disadvantaged / vulnerable and will be made more so by any reduction in service.
- The service helps to prevent mental health problems and potential family breakdown for carers of disabled children. The cost of supporting families with disabled children could be much higher if this preventative service is not available.
- The other services which are cited as alternatives may also be overstretched and do not have specific expertise in disability
- Those who can't afford or readily access alternative services will be more badly affected than those who can
- The service needs more money not less.

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?

N/A

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 SNACS service is aimed at the parents and carers of children with disabilities and not children with disabilities themselves, i.e. the group with the protected characteristic, although any lack of access to suitable emotional support could have an indirect effect on the disabled child because of the potential effect of emotional/ mental health issues on parenting capacity.

The service will be retained, but the proposal is to reduce the budget by 20%, and therefore 20% fewer counselling sessions would be available and 20% fewer parents / carers would be able to access the service each year. On average the service can currently support 20 parents / carers per year. The proposed reduction in budget would mean that an average of 16 parents / carers per year would be able to access the service.

Parents who have completed satisfaction surveys, and respondents to the consultation, have commented on the value of having a counselling service specifically for parents / carers of children with disabilities, as counsellors understand the specific issues they face as families with a disabled child.

Parents / carers who need counselling should be able to access it through their GP if they are unable to access it through SNACS. Whilst counsellors who are available through the NHS may not be specialists in disability, a trained and competent counsellor should be able to empathise with and address a range of life experiences which may be affecting their patients.

Some respondents referred to possible waiting times to access counselling through their GP. However, there can also be waiting times to access SNACS.



<p>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.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership –.protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic or national origin or nationality.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Sex - applies to male or female.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>

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

The main stakeholders are parents / carers who access the service.

Their requirement is to have support for their emotional / mental health needs from a suitably trained and competent counsellor.

It is arguable whether there is a need to receive counselling from a counsellor with specific expertise and experience in disability issues, or whether this is an additional benefit.

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

See Section 4

Step Three – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

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

There is not a direct impact on a protected group, e.g. people with disabilities, as this service is not aimed at children with disabilities themselves, it is aimed at their parents and carers.

The reduction in service could potentially impact children with disabilities if parents / carers are unable to access suitable support for their emotional / mental health needs.

Measures to mitigate impact will include:

- Exploring with the SNACS service whether development of some group support sessions may be appropriate (although it is acknowledged that most people who contact the service want one to one counselling)
- Monitoring the waiting list for SNACS closely with the service provider and identifying agencies which may be able to support parents while they are waiting for a service, such as the Disabled Children's Team (if the child is known to DCT)
- Where appropriate and necessary, supporting parents to access alternative services such as counselling through their GP.



Step Four – Procurement and Partnerships

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

Yes

There will be no additional requirements placed on the contractor as a result of this change.

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 council will continue to meet its statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act. The SNACS service is not a service for people with disabilities. It is aimed at the parents / carers of children with disabilities.

The decision will have a potential negative impact as fewer parents who would benefit from the service will be able to access it. However, the decision can be justified as:

- Any parents / carers who cannot access the service will be able to access counselling if it is needed through their GP
- Whilst counsellors who are available through the NHS may not be specialists in disability, a trained and competent counsellor should be able to empathise with and address a range of life experiences which may be affecting their patients.
- Arguably, receiving counselling from a counsellor with specific expertise and experience in disability issues is an additional benefit rather than a requirement.
- Measures to mitigate the effect of the reduction in service will be put in place, including monitoring the waiting list for SNACS closely with the service provider and identifying agencies which may be able to support parents while they are waiting for a service, such as the Disabled Children's Team (if the child is known to DCT). Where appropriate and necessary, parents will be supported to access alternative services such as counselling through their GP.



Step Six – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

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

It is not anticipated that any of the protected characteristics will be impacted, other than possibly disability.

The impact on parents / carers of children with disabilities, and on their children, will be monitored by identifying the most appropriate agency to support families while they are on the waiting list for SNACS and requesting feedback from the agency on impact on the family and on measures which have been taken or could be taken to support the family.

Statistical data will also be monitored, with the service provider, to identify numbers of families accessing the service per year, numbers referred who are not able to access the service and waiting times.

Step Seven – Action Plan

Categories	Actions	Target date	Responsible person
Involvement and consultation			
Data collection	Work with the service provider to monitor numbers of families accessing the service per year, numbers referred who are not able to access the service and waiting times.	Quarterly from June 2019	Jane Seymour / Service Provider
Assessing impact			
Procurement and partnership	Explore with the SNACS Service whether development of some group support sessions may be appropriate	April 2019	Jane Seymour



Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing	Monitor the waiting list for SNACS closely with the service provider and identify agencies which may be able to support parents while they are waiting for a service, such as the Disabled Children's Team (if the child is known to DCT)	Monthly starting in April 2019	Jane Seymour / DCT
	Where appropriate and necessary, support parents to access alternative services such as counselling through their GP.	Monthly starting in April 2019	Disabled Children's Team or other relevant agency

Step Eight – 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.		
Contributors to the EqIA 2		
Name: Jane Seymour	Job Title: Service Manager, SEN & Disabled Children's Service	Date: 14/01/2019
Head of Service		
Name: Ian Pearson		Date: 15/01/2019

Number of responses: 15

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support Service from £10,000 to £8,000 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? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	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 reasons for your response.				
1	Disagree	<p>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.</p> <p>These are the areas of concern and questions we wanted to highlight: Demand for the service currently exceeds supply. The cost to the system of a family deciding that they are unable to care for their disabled child can be huge and will far outweigh the proposed cut in funding. Newbury Family Counselling, Cruse and the Samaritans have been cited as alternative providers. The Samaritans offer a listening rather than counselling service.</p> <p>How assured is the Council that Cruse and Newbury Family Counselling have appropriate skills and knowledge to meet the needs of families with a disabled child?</p>				
2	Strongly disagree	Short term & dsicriminatory				

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support Service from £10,000 to £8,000 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? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	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 reasons for your response.				
3	Strongly disagree	This service provides limited help (in the sense that demand exceeds supply) for a group in particular need who already suffer more than the general population in many ways. This will increase their mental pain and suffering, for the sake of £2,000. This only serves to hurt those already worse off and increase health inequalities.	This will affect disabled children and their carers, two groups who already suffer disproportionately.		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.	
4	Strongly disagree	We are particularly angered and saddened that austerity cuts aimed at vulnerable people are still being pursued in West Berkshire, one of the wealthiest areas in the country. Caring for a disabled child can be very challenging and takes its toll psychologically and emotionally on parents. Parents sometimes suffer with depression / low mood as a result of the pressures and challenges they face, and this potentially impacts on their ability to support their child. The current proposal will reduce the approximate number of counselling sessions available per year from 200 to 160. The number of people able to access the service would reduce from approximately 20 to 16 and result in the rest being pushed around from one place to another.	Obviously Burghfield & Mortimer Branch Labour Party think this proposal by West Berks Council will impact some parents and carers very badly. Some of them will be affected more than others depending on their financial circumstances and their ability to access other advice and counselling.	We do not believe there is any way that the impact can be reduced if West Berks Council proceed with this cut to the service.	We believe that the cost of this service should be met by apportionment of some of the Business Rate income that West Berks Council should receive.	West Berks Council should not proceed with these proposed cuts.

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support Service from £10,000 to £8,000 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? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	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 reasons for your response.				
5	Strongly disagree	Families with special needs members need all the help they can get, to maintain functioning and sanity			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	
6	Strongly disagree	I have grandchildren with SEN and friends also with grandchildren. The reduction of this service will hit families already struggling and we should support them.	It will affect already struggling families and have an impact on their mental health with on-going costs.	Don't make the cut	Run a local lottery Turn off the street lights when the Christmas lights are on Turn off the lights in the council offices at night	
7	Disagree	Good mental health is paramount for anyone, but for those who have additional responsibilities and difficulties because they care for someone with a disability - even more so, because their health affects more than one person.	If a main carer is unwell then this has a knock on effect to the whole family especially the cared for.	My concern would be that the recommendation is to signpost people to other overstretched organisations who also may not have experience of disabilities which is what makes this support so unique.		
8	Strongly disagree	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.				
9	Strongly disagree	It's already been identified that the service lacks funding, it is nonsensical to reduce the funding further.	Support for parents of disabled children is so poor anyway, I believe This will affect parents of lower financial means who are unable to fund private counselling as the NHS offering from personal experience is often inappropriate.	I can't see how you could mitigate the impact on those affected		I think it's pretty disgusting that you would be expecting charities and volunteers to pick up the slack for you
10	Strongly disagree	The above information says that demand is greater than current supply, so any reduction will cause further pressure on this service provision.	Those who cannot afford to pay for equivalent services.			
11	Strongly disagree	The parents of young people with SEN need all the help they can get and it seemed to me when I worked at Castle School, were for ever competing with each other for limited funds. You are proposing to make that competition even harder. This will hit those least able to help themselves - they need specialist help for their child and for their family.	The parents who miss out on the use of the missing £2000.	I can only suggest choose another area affecting less vulnerable members of our community.	Own more of your own properties, both business and housing, and pull in rents.	No thank you.
12	Disagree	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				

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Special Needs Advice and Counselling Support Service from £10,000 to £8,000 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? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	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 reasons for your response.				
13	Strongly disagree	Snacs is a very much needed service. Parents and carers are faced all the time with more budget cuts to services for their special needs children, and school, work and family pressures mount. This service can literally be a life line to some parent/carers who are the end of their tether. It is my belief that more money than the current £10,000 is needed to support parent carers. It can be very difficult and soul destroying being in this situation, and being able to talk to someone non judgmental who can help you see the light at the end of the tunnel is sometimes all you need. To reduce the funding for this service would mean less help for those who are truly struggling to cope, and without help for parent/carers, what then happens to the children, and other services? Please keep Snacs, and if at all possible, give it more money to carry on the amazing work they do.	There are no negatives for this service. All parent/carers who are in need of help should be able to access this provision. If is reduced, the criteria for applicants will have to change, and that will bring it's own issues. This service is open to all parent/carers and should continue to be regardless of their personal situation. Being able to self-refer is fantastic as you get to talk to someone who understands immediately without going through a GP, who actually doesn't get it at all.	With this service it is very difficult to offer an alternative as it is such a specialised provision, with specially trained staff, and is normally set over a time period to obtain the best results. If anything perhaps a drop in clinic could be held once a month where specific topics are discussed, and advice is offered by the professionals.	Let those people who provide their own transport to Special Schools join in on the taxi services. Most parent/carers are willing to pay as they have children at other schools and juggling this can be very stressful and very costly to the family. This could reduce the one child per taxi situation, and fill empty spaces on the mini buses. This could also help children make new friends and improve social skills. I really think the transport issue could be changed to be much more efficient.	
14	Strongly disagree	Snacs provides over and above what's its budgeted to do. The service and support my family got from snacs saved my marriage, my son and actually at the time saved my life. I cannot put into words the skills and expertise I benefited from by meeting xxx.	The send system is breaking at the seams as we all know. By supporting individuals, snacs actually supports many others in a tertiary way. This in turn saves the time and resources of other areas of health if they weren't there eg. CAMHS, GP's etc.	It's impossible to say. Perhaps reduce times allocated to counselling sessions, but in my experience they always ran over the allocated time already.		Please don't make cuts to snacs. To think they are surviving on £10,000 per year is really laughable in the first instance. They are an outstanding service and one which West Berkshire council should be extremely proud of.
15	Strongly disagree	Families with need especially SEN need support. It's obvious. Reduce the funding and they get less support. It's not fair. Mental health issues in children & adults are increasing in the UK so reducing funding I'll not cease this.		I am sure you already know how this will affect families	I understand the need for funding cuts however I feel you should increase my council tax so that these services do not suffer.	