

Consultation Evaluation Report

Short Breaks Policy

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1.0 Executive summary

A Consultation on our draft Short Breaks Policy ran from 5th November 2018 to 14th January 2019. During the course of the Consultation the number of responses was kept under review and in late December a second social media campaign was implemented to enhance the response rate. This improved the response rate by almost a third. The Council received 88 consultation responses, compared with 117 responses received for the Short Breaks Strategy Consultation held last year.

Respondents comprised 22% who currently access respite/short breaks. Many of the respondents (48.86%) believe they use or may use short breaks in the future. 12.5% of respondents described themselves as having a disability or having care and support needs. Other respondents included those who had previously cared both professionally and or personally. Respondents who access short breaks reported using a blend of residential and community based activities and with the support of Personal Assistants.

Respondents reported being clearer about what we mean by a Short Break. A key message was the importance of flexibility and being able to access a mixture of long and short term breaks. The choice of a wider range of community activities was welcomed by respondents, with ideas put forward in relation to developing short breaks in social clubs, using activity based holidays and organised day trips.

Access to good information remains a priority and 96.61 % of respondents wanted more information about services and help in identifying those that would meet their needs. To be able to provide short breaks for people with disabilities and care and support needs, universal services must be appropriately trained. It is possible that they can provide short breaks, but not to all service users and individual needs must be fully met.

The draft Policy wording has led to a misconception that there is a maximum 28 day allocation. This is not the case and an upper limit would not be Care Act compliant. However the benchmark of 28 days is an indication of the complexity of needs of an individual identified at assessment or review and more discussion would be required with senior managers to agree a greater allocation.

Annual reviews will continue to ensure that the care plan meets the identified needs of the individual. If a care plan is no longer meeting the needs of a client, a reassessment might be required sooner.

2.0 Background

2.1 About short breaks

Buckinghamshire County Council recognises and values the huge contribution that short breaks can make for both carers and service users.

Carers provide most of the care in our communities and without them our NHS and Social Services would not be able to cope. We know that many carers need to have a break from caring so that they can work, keep in touch with family and friends, have time for their own interests, or simply to recharge their batteries.

The Council want to provide access to a range of short break services that can meet a variety of individual assessed needs. In line with the new Better Lives Transformation Strategy, the service should help adults living with care and support needs in Buckinghamshire to live more independent lives, as well as support carers with their caring responsibilities.

2.2 Types of short breaks

Short breaks are for people who are normally cared for in their own home by a family member or friend who is not paid for their caring tasks. For adults with care and support needs, the right sort of short break can help create independence and allow them to learn new skills. Broadly speaking the types of short breaks are:

- Universal

These are available through resources in the local community that everybody can access. They include activities at leisure or community centres, faith groups and voluntary organisations. Examples are; carer support groups, lunch or social clubs and independent day services.

- Targeted

These are available through resources designed to meet the specific needs of a particular group of people, such as older people, people living with dementia, people with autism or hard to reach groups. Examples are; befriending services, gardening schemes and dementia clubs.

- Specialist

These are for people who have needs which cannot be met by universal or targeted short breaks and where the cared for person or their carer is eligible for support. Examples include; support at home by a temporary care worker, Shared Lives, a temporary stay in a care home, overnight residential short breaks and unplanned or emergency care [when the usual carer is unavailable at short-notice].

2.3 Why we are consulting

Buckinghamshire is developing its new Short breaks Policy. The Policy is intended to help us to make decisions about how we plan and allocate short break services, both now and in the future. Following the consultation on the Short Breaks Strategy, we have developed the draft policy which provides more details of the offer to service users and carers and gives more practical information and guidance to operational staff regarding assessment of need and allocation of provision. Feedback collected through the strategy engagement and consultation, along with focussed pre-engagement with service users and parents/carers helped inform initial development of the draft Policy. We have sought the views of members of the public, including service users and carers in order to finalise the Policy.

2.4 Aim of the consultation

We want to make sure access to short breaks is fair and that services can meet current and future need. As such, we have developed a new draft Policy for adult short breaks.

The aim of the consultation is to understand what people think about the draft policy and how this can help inform the development of the final draft which Cabinet will need to approve.

2.5 Consultation methodology

2.5.1 Method

Comments and views on the draft Policy were invited in the following ways: -

- Completing our survey online via the 'Have your say' page on www.buckscc.gov.uk
- Copies of the survey were available from the services
- Via email at shortbreaks@buckscc.gov.uk
- Via a phone call on 01296 383 122 and leaving a message
- Via letter to adult social care at the County Council
- Attending engagement events held throughout the course of the consultation and at a number of locations spread across the county
- Message boxes were in libraries following each Consultation event and left there until 14th January 2019

2.5.2 How people found out about the consultation

Several methods were used to ensure as many people as possible heard about the consultation and were able to take part: -

- Letters were sent to known services users and their parents/carers who access services at present.
- Letters were also sent to Talkback, Carers Bucks, Healthwatch, Friends of Seeley's House and South Bucks Association For The Disabled to share with their members
- Drop-in sessions were held in public (Library) venues across the county, hosted by Adult Social Care staff
- Commissioners attended operational social work team meetings
- Talkback held 2 face-to-face sessions with people who have a learning disability.
- News release to local media, MPs, councillors and Parish Councils (Appendix 2)
- MyBucks and CHASC newsletter
- Briefing to members
- Facebook and Twitter campaigns (at the start of the consultation, mid-way and a week before the consultation was due to end – as well as live coverage from drop-in sessions)
- Information on the CCG and council website including 'have your say' pages
- Through partner organisations including; BuDS, Carers Bucks, Age UK, Talkback, and Community Action Bucks
- Reminder Press Release as the end date of the consultation approached along with further social media campaigns

3.0 Purpose of this report

The purpose of the report is to summarise the outcome of the consultation, trends and commonalities in the feedback and inform the final draft of the Short Breaks Policy.

4.0 Consultation Process

4.1 A ten -week consultation was held between Monday 5th November 2018 and Monday 14th January 2019.

5.0 Methodology

A quantitative survey method was chosen. This allowed for a large number of individual respondents and a geographical spread across Buckinghamshire. It also provides flexibility in data collection (online and hard copy questionnaire), as well as a range of delivery methods such as email and social media links (Appendix).

Qualitative data to supplement and give further understanding to the survey responses was collected via optional comments sections – and coded (see Appendices 1 and 5).

The survey was offered in alternative formats: -

- completing the questionnaire online
- copies of the survey were made available from the Short Breaks drop in sessions
- comments were invited via email at shortbreaks@buckscc.gov.uk
- comments were invited via 01296 383 122 with callers invited to leave a message
- opportunities to talk in person at a number of informal drop in events
- responses in writing

6.0 Communications

A detailed Communications Plan was developed to ensure that stakeholders were able to contribute to short breaks policy consultation and engagement activity, using a series of drop in engagement sessions across the county and giving people the opportunity to speak to us about the draft policy.

7.0 Community Engagement

A series of session and locations were identified across the County to create as much opportunity as possible for people to engage with us and share their views. The informal sessions were held mostly in public venues across the county and locations have been selected based on geographical spread, as well as feedback and engagement levels from the short breaks strategy consultation and policy pre-consultation.

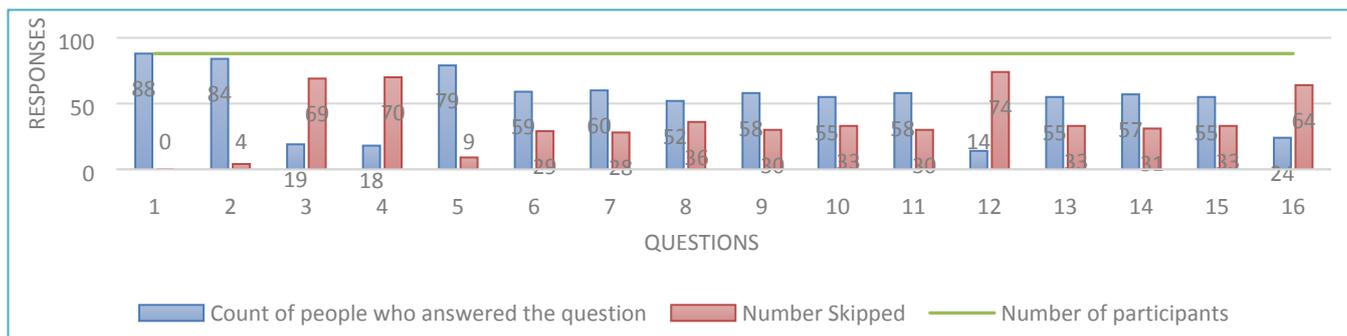
Location	Where	Date 2018/19	Time
Aylesbury	Library (Study Centre)	15 th November	10-12
High Wycombe	Library	15 th November	5-7
Buckingham	Library	21 st November	10-12
Beaconsfield	Seeleys House	10 th January	10-12 & 5-7
Burnham	Library	20 th December	10-12
Chesham	Library	3rd January	12-2

Two separate focus groups were held at Seeleys on January 10th 2019 for those people who participated in the strategy drop in sessions there. This group of stakeholders expressed a wish to be part of the policy consultation and is comprised of carers that have specific experiences and understanding of traditional residential respite.

8.0 Summary of Consultation Responses

The survey consisted of 16 questions and responses to the survey were logged via Survey Monkey. 15 of the 16 questions were multiple choice. 4 questions allowed participants to select as many options that applied to their situation, and 1 question requested participants to select two answers (their top two selection.) The final question provided participants with a free text box for further comments.

88 people took part in the survey and the following chart summarises response rates for all questions. Question 1 was answered by all participants, followed by question 2 (84/88). Question 12 was skipped by 74 participants.



- Respondents:** We received 88 responses. This compared with 117 responses for the Short Breaks Strategy Consultation. 22% currently access respite/short breaks. Many of the respondents (48.86%) believe they use or may use short breaks in the future. 12.5% of respondents described themselves as having a disability or having care and support needs. Other respondents included those who had previously cared both professionally and personally.
- Accessing short breaks:** Question 2 on the survey asked participants, "Do you or your family currently access respite or short break support? This could be overnight residential care, support in your own home during the day or night or other activities." 84 participants responded to this question. Whilst the majority of participants, 74% (62/84), are not currently accessing short breaks or respite, 26% (22/84) are currently accessing the service. A future consideration may be to give families or carers sufficient time to ensure they can support their cared person to participate in engagement and consultation events.
- Services used for short breaks:** Most likely to use residential support services, paid for by BCC with the majority wanting the flexibility of having a combination of short and longer residential options: Question 3 on the survey asked participants, "Which services do you use for short breaks?" Only 19 participants answered this question. 63% use residential support (12/19), followed by 26% who use organised activities (5/19) and 26% who have support from a personal assistant (5/19).
- Funding short breaks:** Question 4 on the survey asked participants, "How are the short breaks or respite paid for?" Only 18 participants responded to this question, 78% (14/18) were funded by Buckinghamshire County Council, followed by 17% (3/18) by Continuing Health Care.

- **What are short break services:** 11.39% of respondents say they still do not know or are unsure of what a 'Short Break' is. Question 5 on the survey asked participants, "From the description above, do you understand better what a 'short break' is?" 79 participants answered this question. 89% (70/79) found the description of a short break gave them a better understanding of what the service is.

2 of the 9 comments on this question were relating to day centres - "Short breaks can only be beneficial to both parties if the short break is given in the appropriate environment for the service user. None of the range of alternatives listed above are suitable for PLMD adults and in the wrong environment neither carer or family will benefit. Building based day centres are needed." 2 people were keen to see residential respite, "My son has profound, complex needs and requires a building-based residential overnight respite. I currently provide 160+ hours of care each week. So a short break for me and my son is vital." 1 person was concerned, "How long is 'Short'? I would hope that you would clarify that in the Seeleys Respite context it could be anything from a single overnight stay to one or two weeks."

- **Short break options:** Less than 50% of respondents felt that the range of short breaks is currently good enough, but over 50% not sure what other activities could be offered. Question 7 on the survey asked participants, "Do you think this is a good enough range of short breaks to meet your needs / the needs of the person you care for?" 60 participants answered this question. 44% (26/60) thought the range of services offered were good enough, although 29% (17/60) were not sure the range was good enough to meet their needs. Ad hoc feedback flagged the need to allow a carer sufficient time to recharge batteries within the short break. Examples highlighted a carer spending the short break sitting in the car waiting to pick the cared for person up.

Question 8 on the survey asked participants "Are there any other activities that you think should be offered as a short break?" 52 participants answered this question. Whilst 22 participants offered suggestions for activities they felt should be offered as short breaks, 54% (28/52) felt unsure they could think of any other activities that should be offered as a short break. In regards to suggestions on short break options, participants are keen for access to day centres and respite care. Social clubs, work experience, activity holidays, day trips, access to gyms and transport were other suggestions. Comments flagged anxieties concerning transport and its importance in facilitating access to short breaks.

Question 9 on the survey asked participants, "Which of the choices below is most important to you about short breaks?" 58 participants answered this question. 71% (41/58) felt that suitability and enjoyment of the activity was more important to them than the proximity of the activity to their home 30% (17/58).

Suggestions for other activities included building based day centres and holidays/weekends away.

Suitability of the activity is more important than proximity

Most would prefer to access information about short breaks on the BCC website or via an email or newsletter

- **Universal services:** Numerous changes to existing universal services would be needed to make them safe and accessible with 96.61% of respondents wanting more information or help where to identify appropriate services. Question 6 on the survey asked participants, "You've told us you would like to be able to use more universal services for short breaks. What factors would help you, or the person you care for, take part in these activities?" 59 participants answered this question. 53% (31/59) would like more information on available activities, 44% (26/59) need help finding suitable activities, and 46% (27/59) require transport to get there and back.

Several comments on this question suggest that universal services are sometimes not appropriate/suitable when someone requires specialist care, for example, accessing toilets: "Unless changing places toilet facilities are introduced to public places these activities are completely inaccessible for many." 1 participant commented, "Generally the "universal" type of short-break services does not work as well as most people who need to be cared for do not have a good fit with the general public. Their needs, aspirations and ability to participate are very different and they are too easily seen as strange, weird, outsiders or similar. To try to participate in "mainstream" activities also turns out to be very frustrating for people with disabilities (hidden or not) as they naturally compare themselves to those who have no disabilities, therefore losing the will and hope to accomplish the activity or challenge. People do not want to stand out, they want to fit in. It is until this day not possible to make something square fit into a round mould and trying to accommodate people with disabilities into mainstream activities is trying to achieve the impossible. It may be feasible and successful on occasion, but on the whole my opinion is that this is bound to fail, create more misunderstanding, despair and loneliness." Another participant was keen to understand, "How would quality of the service be specified and monitored?"

- **Overnight short breaks:** Question 11 asked participants, "Do you currently receive overnight short breaks?" 58 participants answered this question. 76% (44/58) were not in receipt of overnight short breaks.
- **Specialist short breaks:** Question 12 asked participants, "Thinking about how often you currently use specialist short breaks, in the future which of the options below would you prefer?" 14 participants answered this question. 93% (13/14) would prefer a mixture of both, breaks that are shorter but happen more often and breaks that are longer but happen less often depending on individual circumstances.

Question 13 asked participants, "From the description above, do you understand better how specialist short breaks are allocated?" 55 participants answered this question. 82% (45/55) found the description on specialist short breaks clearly defined.

- **Policy:** Question 14 asked participants if they found the Adult Short Breaks draft policy to be fair. 57 participants answered this question. 60% (34/57) agreed that the policy was fair. 40% of respondents were concerned about the fairness of statements.

75% of comments on this question were concerned about the perceived maximum 28 day allocation of overnight respite.

Comments on this question are mainly concerning the 28 day limit or perceived limit, "The length of short breaks should be only determined by assessment of need. It is wrong to state a number of days as 28 days. It suggests an upper limit which is not what the Care Act states. 28 days should be excluded from the policy." 1 participant commented, "What criteria would be used to determine if a person could be allocated more than 28 days? These criteria should be published in the interests of fairness."

- **Short breaks in emergencies:** Question 15 asked the participants, "You've told us how important it is for short breaks to be available to help families cope in an emergency. When would you prefer to consider your plans for emergency short breaks?" 55 participants answered this question. 56% (31/55) felt that short breaks in emergencies should be discussed when developing care plans, whilst 44% (24/55) felt that these should be included in the annual review process. Ad hoc feedback welcomed the inclusion of contingency planning.
- **Final Comments:** Question 16 asked participants, "Is there anything else you would like to tell us about short breaks for adults?" 24 participants answered this question. This question offered participants a free text box for feedback. Building-based day centres, residential respite, transport to short breaks is important, continuity of care, face-to-face and timely assessments, transparency and flexibility are key factors/needs for participants.

"Local, ongoing provision is important where both the environment and people taking part or supporting are familiar. Change causes anxiety and anxiety can cause undesirable behaviour. Consistency and all things familiar are very important for us."

Recommendations

- All information on Short Breaks to be kept and updated on one central source, Bucks CC website, ensuring that links are sent out to Short break providers, charities, voluntary organisations, Operations (Social Workers) and GP surgeries to ensure maximum distribution and accessibility
- Have a Short Break mailbox and update form to ensure updates on contacts and services available can be amended and added regularly
- Build working relationships and communication with universal services to identify the training and support they need to be accessible and to gain Short Break carers and users confidence that they are safe
- Provide further clarity of what a 'Short Break' is and the 3 levels.
- Review wording regarding '28 day overnight respite' to ensure it is clear that each case will be dependent on outcome of assessment and individual need.
- In line with feedback from BuDS, we have strengthened the relevant parts of the policy and referenced the specific elements of the Care Act 2014.

9.0 Summary of all other feedback

9.1 Ad hoc Feedback

Feedback received from Ad hoc sources is covered in the summary.

9.2 Local Groups and Agencies in Buckinghamshire

BuDS

- Highlighted that a Short Break must offer respite to the carer as well as activities that benefit the disabled person and that this was to be appropriately reflected in the Policy.
- Although the draft Policy identifies that both disabled people and carers are entitled to an assessment of need under the Care Act 2014, BuDS point out that the wording of the proposed Policy does not reflect the Care Act 2014 and this statement.

Talkback

Talkback held 2 focus groups in Chesham and Burnham which identified that disabled people would like a wide range of activities appropriate to their abilities and needs. Suggestions included going on holiday/weekends away, dancing, acting, bowling, swimming, to a show and the pub

"I'd quite like to see a show, and maybe a bit of acting"

"I'd like to go swimming and maybe a coffee after"

- People would like the opportunity to be social and extend their friendship group

"It's hard making new friends so I'd like to do that but see the people I know too"

- The term Short Breaks was not familiar to the focus groups or staff at the day centres and associated respite with an overnight stays at Seeleys.
- Overall people were interested in being able to access a range of activities outside of their usual day service.

9.0 Lessons Learned

The majority of responses have been predominantly from people with a learning disability and therefore, we need to consider how underrepresented groups can participate in greater numbers in future consultations.

10.0 Appendices

- Analysis of survey data in presentation and spreadsheet form



ASC



Copy of Analysis of

_ShortBreaksPolicy_sAdults Data 18.01.20