



Report to the Children's Select Committee

Title:	Children's Short Breaks Draft Strategy Consultation: Select Committee Review and Response
Committee date:	Tuesday 10 July 2018
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Cabinet Member sign-off:	Full Cabinet

Purpose of Agenda Item

- For Members to be briefed on the consultation for the draft Short Breaks Strategies for Disabled Children and Adults as set out in Appendices 1 and 2. This consultation was agreed by Cabinet on 18th June 2018.
- For Members to be aware of the next steps for short breaks as set out on this report.

This report will provide information on the:

- Joint approach
- Consultation methodology and timeline
- Next steps

Background

Children's short breaks: Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) and the Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commission a range of short breaks provision for disabled children and young people within the county. The current provision is delivered across a number of contracts and includes community short breaks (commissioned by BCC) and residential short breaks (jointly commissioned with the CCG).

Our current provision is generally valued by families but lacks flexibility and choice in terms of how families access support. For children who need specialist support our offer relies heavily on traditional building-based, residential respite with insufficient options for families to access other forms of provision to meet their need. We are struggling to meet levels of demand within the

residential elements of the service, whilst at the same time our community based provision is not always fully utilised.

Benchmarking with other authorities indicates that our provision is expensive. Given this, we need to look at options to deliver the service differently to ensure we are providing the best value for money for children and families as well as for local authority.

We want to ensure that the future offer supports children with disabilities to access provision in the communities where they live, because this helps to develop friendships and natural networks of support for parents. At present, the short break offer often keeps children with disabilities separate from their local communities and does not promote inclusion or opportunities for children with and without disabilities to interact.

As our current short breaks contracts are coming to an end, recommissioning provides an opportunity to make some changes in the way our resources are allocated, offering children and families increased choice and access to a wider range of provision, whilst also ensuring we continue to meet our statutory duties.

A Short Breaks Strategy has been drafted to articulate our ambition for short breaks. It sets out how we propose to offer short breaks to support those with low, medium and complex needs. This includes building links with universal provision and special schools alongside more specialist short break provision. We will also aim to build upon the personalisation agenda introduced through the Children and Families Act 2014 by offering a greater range and choice of community based short breaks to improve local connections and access to universal settings.

Once approved, the strategy will inform our future short breaks offer and re-commissioning activity.

Adult short breaks: Short breaks provision in Buckinghamshire is in need of modernisation, both in terms of provision and offer.

There is currently no overarching strategy or policy detailing a county wide approach to adult short breaks. At present, personal care packages are agreed with individuals without reference to best practice in enabling independence, or equitable and sustainable offers of support. This (along with a lack of co-ordination, suitable community alternatives and specialist support) has resulted in inconsistent provision and issues such as the need to pursue expensive out of area placements.

An established strategy would rebalance this providing us with sound principles around which personal care plans can be constructed.

Substantial population growth is anticipated for Buckinghamshire. As people live longer, the population over the age of 65 years is increasing and the Council's approach to short breaks provision needs to meet the diverse needs of these carers and cared for.

The strategy will take into account relevant legislation, particularly Care Act 2014, regarding support for service users and carers and be built on current data, forecasted future data and best practice research. It has been written as part of the wider Transformation Programme for Adult Social Care, which sets out the case for change in our approach to supporting adults with needs.



To inform the development of both draft strategies there has already been engagement work with disabled children and young people, adults with care and support needs, carers and family members.

A public consultation on the draft strategies will provide further opportunity for us to engage with service users, their families and wider stakeholders to ensure that we have agreed a clear vision and set of principles for our short breaks offer. This will help us to achieve the right outcomes for service users and their families.

The draft Children's and Adult Strategies for Short Breaks have been developed in partnership, and have included health, recognising that some children accessing our short breaks provision will continue to access services once they are adults. We want to be able to ensure that young people continue to be able to access short breaks that will meet their needs as they become adults and that they experience a continuity of care.

The draft Children's Short Breaks Strategy development has been supported by and written in partnership with our Parent Forum, FACT Bucks and the draft Adult's Short Breaks Strategy has been developed in partnership with TalkBack and Carers Bucks.

Joint Approach

While each draft strategy ensures the specific needs of either children and young people or adults are met, they are consistent and aligned in several key areas. These are:

- **Shared principles**

Both draft strategies share the same principles, which focus on the outcomes that a greater variety of support can offer, which need to promote greater independence for the cared for person and greater resilience for the parent/carer.

- **Shared approach**

Both draft strategies recognise that we need to change our approach to short breaks, for children and adults and their families.

For disabled children and young people effective short breaks should help to develop their independence, to increase their readiness for becoming an adult and to boost their physical and emotional health, while also enabling them to have new experiences, to learn, to have fun and to meet friends.

Short breaks for adults help create independence, greater self-reliance and more opportunities for vulnerable adults and their carers to build self-sustainable networks of support that connect them to the communities they live in.

At present short breaks for children and adults are often seen in the context of residential overnight respite. The aim of the draft strategies is to develop current thinking, which will ultimately enable the development of a menu of short breaks options. This will widen the variety of short break offers and increase ability for people to be supported in local communities near to where they live.

- **Types of short break available**

Both strategies propose extending the range and choice of short breaks in the county, ensuring children, young people adults and families can access support from universal services, targeted services and specialist or eligibility based services.

- **Supporting carers**

Short breaks support parents and carers by giving them a break from their caring responsibilities, allowing them to rest and unwind (supporting their own emotional and physical health) and to spend time with other family members, so they are able to provide sustainable support to their family. This is true whether the cared for person is a child, young adult or adult.

Resource implications

Buckinghamshire County Council wants to ensure that it delivers services that are sustainable and value for money. It can achieve this by ensuring that available resources for short breaks are targeted at those who most need support and that by developing an offer that is close to where people live, that we build on already established links within communities. This includes support offered by friends, neighbours, community organisers and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

In addition to this, effective commissioning practice will ensure that:

- The best value for money is achieved through the tender process
- Routine contract monitoring is used to continue to monitor value for money

Through the development of our children's and adults short breaks strategies and subsequent commissioning, recommissioning and market shaping activity we will ensure that we provide value for money.

Consultation Methodology

Pre-engagement with service users and their carers has already taken place to inform the development of the draft strategies. This activity used a range of methods to ensure that services users with different needs were able to contribute.

Commissioners have worked with Communications colleagues to develop a consultation strategy to ensure that stakeholders are able to contribute to all short breaks consultation and engagement activity. This includes:

- A survey that the public and other stakeholders will be able to access via the Buckinghamshire County Council website. This will be promoted through key Council partners such as Carers Bucks, FACT Bucks and community engagement providers.

- A series of events held around the county so people can have an opportunity to offer feedback or have conversations with both Adults and Children’s commissioners. These meetings will include case examples to support discussions.

The consultation questionnaire for Adults and Children are provided at Appendices 3 and 4.

Adult consultation

County Location	Proposed Location	Date of meeting	Time of meeting
Buckingham	Community Centre	05.07.18	12:30 – 4:30
Aylesbury	Library	11.07.18	12:30 – 4:30
Seeley’s	Seeley’s day centre	18.07.18	1:30 – 4:30
Burnham	Day Opportunity Centre	25.07.18	12:30 – 4:30
High Wycombe	Library	02.08.18	9:30 – 12:30

Children’s consultation

County Location	Proposed Location	Date of meeting	Time of meeting
Aylesbury	Teaching and Learning Centre	02.07.18	9:30 – 12:00
Amersham	Stony Dean School	03.07.18	9:30 – 12:00
High Wycombe	Merryfields - Residential Short Break Unit	18.07.18	9:30 – 12:00

Next steps

When both strategies have been consulted upon, service users, cares and wider stakeholders will be engaged in developing options for the service offer. This will result in the production of a draft Short Breaks Service Statement for children and a draft Short Breaks Policy for Adults.¹ These will both provide details of the offer to service users and carers and give the practical information and guidance to operational staff regarding assessment of need for short breaks and allocation of provision. They will also help inform the options about the models of service which may be commissioned.

¹ The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 requires each local authority to produce a short breaks services statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for these services, and how the range of short breaks is designed to meet the local needs of families with disabled children.

These documents will then be subject to a subsequent consultation lasting 12 weeks. The outcome of both consultations will inform the final options regarding models of service and procurement and development of these services.

Timeline

Phase 1: Short Breaks Strategies

Key Activity	Adults	Children
Pre-consultation & engagement	Complete - Ended 05/06/18.	Complete - Ended 05/06/18
6 week public consultation on draft strategies	29 th June 2018 – 10 th August 2018 (6 weeks)	29 th June 2018 – 10 th August 2018 (6 weeks)
Evaluate consultation responses and produce final strategies	August 2018	August 2018
Key decision (Cabinet) to approve Children's and Adult's Short Breaks Strategies	October 2018	October 2018
Publication of consultation results and Short Breaks Strategies	October 2018	October 2018

Phase 2: Short Breaks Policy (Adults) and Service Statement (Children's)

Pre-consultation and engagement	September 2018	September 2018
Options developed using results from pre-consultation and engagement	October 2018	October 2018
Key decision to consult for 12 weeks on draft Short Breaks Policy (Adults) and Draft Short Breaks Service Statement (Children's)	October 2018	October 2018

12 week consultation	October 2018 – January 2019	October 2018 – January 2019
Final Policy and Service Statement developed using feedback from consultation and agreed through Key Decision	January – February 2019	January – February 2019
Short breaks recommissioning in line with Short Breaks Strategy	February – September 2019	February – September 2019

Further Considerations

Legal advice has been sought through the development of the draft strategies and the consultation process and will be sought throughout the lifetime of the short breaks programmes to address issues as identified.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) have been undertaken in relation to both the adult's and children's Short Breaks Strategies. These Impact Assessments will continue to be updated through the life of this work.

Further Information

The online consultation for both the Draft Children's Short Breaks Strategy and the Draft Adult's Short Breaks Strategy can be accessed online at:

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/news/new-approach-to-short-breaks-and-respite-for-children-and-adult-social-care-services/>