

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for savings identified within the short breaks for disabled children budget

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What's it there for? What's it set up to deliver? What's the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?

Need to achieve a 10% reduction in the budget for the provision of short breaks for disabled children, young people and their families. This is required as part of the need to reduce costs across Swindon Borough Council.

Short breaks for disabled children, young people and their families are provided in adherence to the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations (2011), which prescribe that, in exercising their duty under paragraph 6(1)(c) of schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989, Swindon Borough Council must have regard to the needs of different types of carers in the area.

The Regulations state that Local Authorities must have regard to the needs of different types of carers in their area. The regulations show that a range of different types of breaks should be offered, and refers to when they should be provided. They also recommend how carers should be informed of these services.

Inline with the new Regulations, and following the three year centrally funded investment project – Aiming High for Disabled Children – a period of consultation was undertaken in summer 2011, to develop a new model of short breaks provision. This model was developed in consultation with service users, service providers and other key stake holders.

The new model was published in Swindon's Short Break Statement, following ratification at Cabinet in September 2011. The Short Break Statement detailed how Swindon Borough Council provides short breaks, and how the Regulations are being met. A Diversity Impact Assessment was produced as part of this piece of work.

The proposed reductions will not impact unfairly on any service users, and based on the identified savings Swindon Borough Council will still be able to meet the requirements set out in the Regulations, and the new model of short breaks provision will still be successfully maintained.

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

What equality benefits does it create? (for people, organisation etc...)

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

Short breaks provide opportunities for parents and carers of disabled children to have a break from caring, to enable them to continue to care, or to care more effectively. Short breaks also provide opportunities for disabled children and young people to enjoy social and leisure activities, to spend time away from their parents, relaxing and having fun with their friends.

Short breaks will be available to all families / carers of disabled children who require support to access short break services.

In performing this duty SBC must:

1. Have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them; and
2. Have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks from caring were given to them to allow them to
 - a. Undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity
 - b. Meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively, or
 - c. Carry out day to day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household

Internally SBC will benefit from the close working and communication with providers, parents, carers, families and the children themselves. This in return will ensure that SBC are providing what they feel is needed.

What do you know about them (evidence)?

In Swindon the range and amount of short breaks was increased significantly during Aiming High programme (2008 – 2011). By the end of Aiming High the number of children accessing short breaks in Swindon had increased by over 50% from 384 to 600 children.

Both locally and nationally, it is difficult to determine an accurate number of families that may require support to access short breaks. Estimates for the number of disabled children vary widely and could indicate somewhere between 1000 to 3000 disabled children in Swindon. We know that not all of these families will require support to access short breaks. However, some groups have told us that current services are not meeting the needs of all families.

Currently the issues around data collection mean that we do not have a good breakdown of short break usage by equality group. However, we do know that some equality groups are not well represented in consultation and participation of parents, carers and disabled children. Going forward data collection will be improved to ensure that we are better able to monitor uptake amongst the equality groups.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?

- Input from our disabled young people has not been as wide as we would have liked. The impact has been that we have been unable to ensure disabled young people are active participants and have their say: During the Aiming High programme a participation group of disabled young people was piloted. This Pilot has ended and has meant little link to this group of young people. The outcome is a contract is being implemented to ensure that the participation of disabled young people continues and becomes embedded within Swindon Borough Council. This will feed in to Swindon's Youth Forum and we will work with this group through future consultation and review.
 - Previous consultations have seen little representation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. The impact is that we are not fully engaging with all groups and that some groups may find it difficult to use services or access information. This has been evidenced through lack of attendees at meetings and input in our previous consultations. We also know that our 'Parent and Carers Advisory Group' have the same issue. Currently, translation / interpreters are available, but on request, and we're aware that there may be ways to better embed this. A message offering alternative formats is available on the back of some more widely produced information, but not all documents. Translation / interpreters have very rarely been requested. The outcome has been to work to increase engagement, by working with community engagement teams and carer support services. Recent consultations offered a range of ways to input, to try to be more accessible. Outreach and engagement needs to continue, to further identify and address any additional barriers preventing engagement, and look at how we can be more proactive and engage more fully. We will also look at where it may be appropriate to produce information in alternative languages. Translated material alone may not be enough to engage fully, and we will make use of available local diversity training material and toolkits.
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- Resources have previously only been available in working hours to deal with questions and feedback around services. The impact of this is some people are unable to give input and have a say on the services they require. The outcome is to put forward an out of hours option for future consultation, reviews and to ensure all have access to short breaks information and services. Recent consultations have offered out of hours opportunities for consultation as well, to try to be more accessible.

Do you know why?

As above.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups
 Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

The 10% savings were identified during Summer 2011, during the development of the new model of short breaks provision.

Specific Impacts: Staffing

40.5% of the savings identified are through having better available information to forecast staff costs. This means that the impact of the savings are significantly reduced.

The key risk within the identified savings from staff costs is the reduction in the grading for the Short Break Development Manager's role. This is role of managing the service, which was initially was projected at grade Q3 to reflect experience, but is likely to be appointed at Q1, equalling a saving of £9,700 / year. The risk is that an experienced candidate may not be attracted to the role at grade Q1, which may jeopardise the leadership and success of the provision of short break services in Swindon.

Specific Impacts: Projects Costs

56% of the savings identified are within project costs, which includes the provision and development of services. These are detailed below, with associated risks:

Swindon Parents and Carers Advisory Group (PAG) – Saving identified £1K

PAG are the recognised forum for participation in Swindon, who have developed in partnership with Swindon Borough Council. In 2011/12 they received £10k from SBC and £10k from central government to support their work. Part of their identified remit for this funding was to seek other streams of funding.

In both 09/10 and 10/11 when PAG received a budget of £10k from central government, they struggled to spend it in full. This is also likely to be the case with in 2011/12, with the total of £20k funding. Therefore a reduction of 10% is likely to be an achievable saving for PAG. Further to this, with the £10k received centrally from the Government, this will equate to a reduction of total income of 5%.

The main risk is that PAG may view this reduction as a sign of a lack of support from Swindon Borough Council, which may mean that they are less willing to work positively with us. Further to this due to the current economic climate they may not be able find alternative funding streams.

Extended Schools – Saving identified £10k

In both 10/11 and 11/12, approximately £40k was been invested in short break provide through extended schools provision, as parents and carers have told us that it was a priority to have services after school hours. A £10k reduction in 12/13 would equate to a 25% reduction in services and would require some schools to reduce the level of services that they have offered for the past 2

years. This reduction in available funding may be mitigated by the schools, who may be able to identify funding from other sources. However equally a 25% reduction in services, may lead to pressures on other services as parents and carers look elsewhere for support and services.

Workforce Development - Saving identified £5k

Parents and carers, and disabled young people have commented that having helpful, well trained and aware staff in mainstream settings would enable them to use more mainstream services. Therefore over the past two years, investment has been made in providing training and awareness raising to staff who deliver both mainstream and specialist short breaks. This saving equates to a 50% reduction in the identified budget may mean that more disabled children, young people and their families have negative experiences when accessing mainstream provision, and may therefore lead to the need for more expensive targeted and specialist provision. To mitigate this risk, more work will be done with Learning and Development to develop in-house training, as well as working with professionals within Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon, to source alternative sources of training.

Home and Away (Family Placement Team), costs of the recruitment of short break carers – Saving identified £8k

As part of the development of short breaks in Swindon, investment has been made in overnight short breaks provide by short break carers in their homes – ‘Home and Away’. Over the past two years this has equalled a full time social work post and a small amount for advertising and recruitment of carers. In 11/12, Home and Away received £13k for recruitment and advertising.

An £8k saving has been identified in this area for 12/13, as it is felt that spending on direct services should be the priority. Home and Away will continue to receive funding for a full time social work post. The number of short break carers has increased significantly over the past 2 years due to investment in staff time, and in recruitment. This may slow down if the level of recruitment is reduced.

The use of overnight short break carers has been identified as a key service for Swindon Borough Council going forward due to the low cost for this service (around £40 / night), in comparison to the costs of over night short breaks in a residential unit (around £500 / night). The risk is that the number of overnight short break carers being recruited will not continue to grow due to this saving. To mitigate this risk the staff planning to maintain a successful level of recruitment and advertising, through joint working with other areas of the Family Placement Team, and through the use of alternative advertising options.

Short break services provide for children and young people with higher levels of need – Saving identified £8k

A range of services are provide for children and young people who require a 1:1 or 2:1 ratio (staff to child/ young person) of support, this includes playschemes and Saturday groups. In 11/12 the spend on these short break services was £64k, with an additional £20k allocated for service developments, to ensure the flexibility of the services to meet the children and young peoples needs. In 12/13, only £12k has been identified for service developments.

These are high level services, for children and young people who have the most complex needs, and these services often provide families with specific respite from their caring responsibility. The risk is that many of these families will be unable to find a suitable provision elsewhere due to the complex needs of their child, and therefore families maybe unable to cope and may require higher cost interventions to support them.

Although there is the risk of more families needing more intensive interventions, we are mitigating this risk by the development of the new model for short breaks, which is enabling investment in services in the right area, which are available earlier on, before families start to need higher level interventions. As well as by offering a wider range of services, to improve parental choice, including Direct Payments.

Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved?

(adverse impact)

Services and information should be equally available across all equality groups, regardless of age, disability, sex, marital status, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or political view. We are trying to ensure that everyone knows about the Regulations and Swindon's Statement, and that all groups use services and get involved in giving feedback. However, we know that we are not fully engaged with all groups at present, and more work needs to be done to identify barriers to engagement, and how we can be more inclusive

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?

More work needs to be done to identify barriers to engagement, and how we can be more inclusive. As we consult and review, we should pick up negativity or the need for changes early on. Regular meetings with Swindon Parents and Carers Advisory Group also act as a steering group and give an early indication of any issues.

How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

The new Regulations require that services must be delivered to a diverse group. In doing so the positive impact will be:

- Increased standard of living, by offering a flexible service where choices can be made.
 - Greater physical security, by short breaks in a safe, approved environment.
 - Improvements in health, by access to information and services.
 - Greater participation, influence and voice on how the service should run and what is needed
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Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

As stated above (impacts), different ways of working have been taken into account when considering how best to mitigate against these cuts.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

As stated above a period of consultation was undertaken in summer 2011, to develop a new model of short breaks provision. This model was developed in consultation with service users, service providers and other key stake holders. This model was used to guide where and how savings could be made. More detailed information regarding the consultations is below:

Consultation has taken place since the beginning of the Aiming High programme in Swindon in 2008, and has continued throughout the implementation.

Information about the new Regulations and the development of short break services has been regularly published in Swindon's Aiming High Newsletter, which is circulated widely amongst local families of disabled children as well as via a wide range of services and schools.

During Aiming High a participation group for disabled young people was piloted ('Chatterboxes'), to ensure that disabled young people were able to have their say. A DVD was also made during Aiming High to highlight the views of disabled children and young people about short breaks in Swindon. This information has fed in to the preparation of Swindon's Short Break Statement.

This was followed by a consultation exercise in July 2011, where consultation sessions were held with parents, carers and service providers, to look at the new Regulations and the shape of short break services. This included consultation through visits to local groups, email information requests, and one to one discussions where required. Parents, carers and professionals were further informed about SBC's duty under the new regulations. They were also asked about their

experiences of provision to date and consulted about how to make services work better for them.

Throughout the Aiming High Programme Swindon Parents and Carers Advisory Group have been central in steering the development of short breaks. They have been commissioned to continue in this role, to represent parents and carers across Swindon, and to be the first point for on-going consultation with parents and carers, and this will include short breaks provision.

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you identified?

Specific changes have been identified in the impacts section.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

We currently monitor levels of provision quarterly to identify pressures on services. We will focus more on the identification of gaps within the new model, linked to a flexible approach to commissioning to ensure that we are able to be responsive and develop new services to meet identified gaps quickly.

When will this be reviewed?

Services purchased or provided by SBC are constantly being reviewed, with specific data collected quarterly. The new model of short breaks will be reviewed yearly, through consultation with parents, carers, young people and service providers.

How will success be measured?

Success will be measured by qualitatively and quantitatively.

We will measure service provision to identify increases in the number of service users, and number of hours provided. We gather feedback from parents, carers and service users, with regards to their experiences. We also work with Swindon Parents and Carers Advisory Group, a participation group of parents and carers of disabled children and young people to gather their feedback and experiences.

For the record	
Name of person leading this DIA: Mark Green	Date completed: 1.11.11
Names of people involved in consideration of impact: Martha Quinn	
Name of director signing DIA: Sara Tough	Date signed