

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

26 January 2016

Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services

The Aiming High Derbyshire Offer – (Children's Services)

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation on proposals to change the current Aiming High Derbyshire Offer
- 1.2 To seek approval from Cabinet to proceed with the implementation of proposals consulted on for the future delivery of the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet agreement to consult on further proposals to provide short break services to eligible families only following a formal assessment that identifies that additional services are necessary.

2. Information and Analysis

2.1 Background and Context

The Comprehensive Spending Review and associated Local Government Finance Settlement, announced in December 2015, provide clear indications of likely levels of Government support up to 2019-20.

The ability of the Council to fund services is influenced by a number of factors, one of the most significant of which is the availability of support from Government in the form of Revenue Support Grant (RSG). Throughout the current period of cuts in public sector spending, since the global financial crisis in 2008, the Government has consistently reduced its support to local authorities and by 2019-20 it is forecast by the Department for Communities and Local Government that the Council's support through RSG will have fallen to around £13m and the Council is expecting this support to end in totality in the following year (2020-21). By way of comparison the Council received £98.050m of RSG in 2015-16.

This will bring to an end decades of support to local authorities through the allocation of a large non-ringfenced Government grant; other, less significant, grant streams are also expected to reduce and some to end over the forthcoming five years. By 2021-22 it is envisaged the vast majority of the Council's funding will come from Council Tax and Business Rates, topped up by direct charges for services where appropriate.

The reduction in Government grants is only part of the problem faced by the Council; there are significant pressures, particularly in Adult Care which require the Council to allocate approximately £20m to that service alone in each of the next five years and probably around £15m a year thereafter. The pressures in Adult Care are a combination of additional cost arising from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement about the introduction of a National Living Wage and increasing numbers of clients requiring support and the increasingly complex needs of those clients.

In mitigation, the Government have announced that councils will be able to increase their Council Tax by an additional 2% per annum in each of the next four years and there is provision for further payments to be received from the Better Care Fund, potentially reaching £25m per annum by 2019-20. However, neither of these measures will offset the pressures in Adult Care on an annual basis and are not available to help prevent savings being required in other service areas.

Overall, the Council's revised Five Year Financial Plan which is also on the agenda for approval at this Cabinet Meeting indicates cuts of at least £115 million are still required from 2016-17 until 2020-21. This is in addition to cuts identified in the period 2010-11 to 2015-16.

In the last five years the Council has had to face unprecedented reductions in its finances. During this period Children's Services has seen its budget fall from £126.8m to £95.3m, a reduction of almost 25%. The Council needs to make further cuts means that the Children's Services budget could ultimately reduce to circa £70m, around half of the 2010-11 budget. Consequently, the Service has no alternative but to consider implementing savings in key service areas. It is important to note that the pressing financial position is the driver for the changes set out in this paper; the services themselves are of a high quality and are valued by service users.

Short breaks are intended to give:

- Disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, thereby contributing to their personal and social development and reducing social isolation;
- Parents and families a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities.

Derbyshire offers a menu of short break provision. The 'Aiming High' short breaks form one strand of the wider short breaks offer. The 2011 Regulations do not require that Local Authorities provide access to short breaks without an assessment, although this is recommended as good practice. If the proposals were implemented, there would, at this stage, continue to be access to some universal short break provision in Derbyshire without an assessment, including the Council's Youth Service provision.

There have been two consultations which proposed changes relating to the Aiming High Offer. The first consultation took place between October and December 2014. The outcome of this consultation was reported to Cabinet in July 2015

Consideration of the responses to the first consultation, alongside further analysis of newly acquired data, led to the report presented to Cabinet on 28th July 2015 seeking approval for a further consultation on revised proposals.

Following Cabinet agreement a second period of consultation took place. The revised proposals were:

- To retain the current criteria for families to access Aiming High flexible one-to-one support, without the need to request an assessment by MATs or Social Care. There would however be a reduction in the maximum hours available to families from 80 to 40 per year;
- To continue to give families the option of choosing a short break grant as an alternative to one-to-one support, with however a reduction in the maximum grant from £800 to £400 per year. In addition, there would no longer be an option for families to use the grant to fund family holidays.
- To consult on the options of either (a) implementing these changes for all families from 1st April 2016, or (b) implementing these changes for new applicants from 1st April 2016, and allowing existing service users to step down to a maximum of 60 hours/£600 in April 2016 and 40 hours/£400 in April 2017.
- Reduce the budget for group activities from £300,000 to £150,000 with one provider per district commissioned to provide group activities for disabled children.
- No longer offer one-off funding to voluntary organisations to provide summer playschemes as providers already offer a range of activities during the summer holidays, therefore the removal of this small grant was unlikely to have an impact on access to summer activities.
- Strictly apply the expectation that (i) families will not be able to access flexible one-to-one support or grant if their child is able to attend group provision without one-to-one support and (ii) families will not be able to receive both Aiming High and social care provision at the same time.

2.2 Outcome of the consultation.

The consultation on revised proposals to the Aiming High Offer took place between 17th August and 6th November 2015.

- All families known to be accessing Aiming High short breaks were sent a letter informing them about the consultation and how to respond and offering support to help their child or young person to give their views directly.
- Group consultation took place with young people in special schools and Derbyshire County Council targeted youth groups and commissioned providers.
- The Derbyshire Parent Forums were asked to promote the consultation through letters, notices, meetings and focus groups attended by a local authority officer.
- Key stakeholders, such as, schools, colleges, GP surgeries, Children's centres etc. were written to, invited to contribute and requested to publicise the consultation using enclosed leaflets and posters.

Consultation was comprehensive and aimed to encourage as many people as possible who may be affected by the proposals to give their views. Over 940 families were contacted and 103 individual responses were received.

The feedback can be summarised as follows:

- There was significant opposition to any proposal that would reduce, or make it more difficult to access, support for disabled children and their families.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the cost of any additional assessments resulting from families' needs not being met by the reduced offer, the capacity of services to respond to requests for assessment and the potential for increased demands on other Council budgets.
- Many respondents expressed a view that limited resources should be focussed on supporting those with greatest need and that there should be greater accountability, in particular for how the grant is used.
- A small majority expressed preference for a gradual reduction in support for current users; many of these responders commented that they opposed any reduction. Others felt, however, that it is fairer if everyone receives the same offer and that the level of support should be based on need.
- Just over half of the respondents disagreed with only one provider for group activities as it would limit choice and may not cater for varying needs.

Many respondents took the opportunity to describe the additional difficulties experienced by families with disabled children and the benefits experienced from the current Aiming High Offer.

In response to the main points described above; it is understood that many current users will receive a reduced service as a result of these proposals. However, those families whose needs cannot be met through the reduced offer would be able to request an assessment in order to identify the appropriate type and level of support needed. On this basis it is also proposed that everyone should receive the same initial offer and any support over and above that should be based on assessed need. There will be a cost associated with the assessment. However, a formal assessment would ensure that limited resources are targeted on families with an identified need. With regard to the concerns about having only one provider of group activities: a provider would be expected to offer as wide a range of choice as possible.

The Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice produced a report in response to the proposals and made recommendations for consideration which reflected many of the points identified above and also proposed working with parents to reconsider the Aiming High offer. The report asked that consideration be given to the impact on the whole family, including siblings.

The Parent Carer Voice report is included in the consultation report which is available as **Appendix 1** of this document and also includes reports from the online consultation, parent forums and young people's group sessions.

Cabinet will want to carefully consider the findings of the consultation report in conjunction with the Equality Impact Analysis.

2.3 Equality Impact Analysis

An Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) has been completed to consider the potential impact of the proposed changes and the extent to which any adverse impact could be mitigated and

is available as **Appendix 2** of this report. Members are asked to ensure that they have read the full document.

EIA Summary

The proposals will have an adverse effect on families currently accessing support; families currently accessing the maximum amount of support available through the Aiming High Offer will be most affected.

Families expressed concern that 40 hours per year of flexible one-to-one support would not equate to one hour per week and would impact on the development of a positive relationship between the support worker and the child/young person and affect the maintenance of relationships with peers as the one-to-one support is used, in some instances, to enable a young person to access friendship groups.

These proposals would, however, continue to offer some flexible one-to-one support to families who meet the existing criteria, without the need for an additional assessment. These proposals would also continue to provide the option of choosing a short break grant, which many families said they wanted.

Analysis of users of Aiming High identified that a significant proportion live in the most deprived areas of Derbyshire. The reduced offer is likely to have an impact on those families; however, the individual circumstances of those families may vary significantly.

Responders to the consultation expressed concern about families no longer being able to use the Aiming High grant to fund a family holiday which could result in some families not being able to afford an annual holiday. Whilst this is a concern, family income had not previously been considered as part of the criteria for Aiming High and the authority is under no obligation to fund family holidays, in addition, family holidays do not necessarily provide carers with a break from caring responsibilities. Charitable bodies do provide support for families with disabled children to take a family holiday and could, to some extent, mitigate the impact for some families.

Whilst not alleviating the full impact of these proposals for all families, those families whose needs cannot be met through the reduced offer would be able to request a formal assessment from Children's Services. An assessment would take account of individual family circumstance and identify the nature and level of support required.

Feedback from users of Aiming High support is in the main positive, however, a detailed analysis of the benefits to individual young people and their families is limited by the current process which does not require a formal assessment to identify individual needs.

The processes resulting from the introduction of the SEND Reforms continue to evolve. It is anticipated that further consideration will be given to how Education Health and Care needs assessments and reviews for children and young people can incorporate a single approach and reduce the need for any separate assessment for families whose needs cannot be met by the reduced offer.

Numbers attending DCC targeted youth groups is less than would be expected in comparison with the number of young people in receipt of support from Aiming High. The

reasons for this require further analysis. Many young people accessing Aiming High are aged 13 years and older. Consideration will, therefore, be given to how targeted youth groups can be better promoted and, if necessary, better meet the needs of disabled young people, to ensure that they are as inclusive as possible and that young people are fully informed about local facilities.

During the consultation many young people expressed an interest in days out and enjoying physical activities: the potential for businesses or charitable organisations to arrange or sponsor has not yet been fully explored. Super Sunday is an example of an event that was previously arranged and funded by Derbyshire County Council for children and young people with additional needs and their families to have fun and try new adventurous activities and which in 2015 was delivered as a result of partnership between Network Rail, AMCO and Accessible Derbyshire. The authority should commit to further exploration of similar opportunities.

3. Recommendations following the second consultation (Aug– Nov 2015)

It is recommended that the following proposals are introduced from 1st April 2016:

- Reduce the annual budget for Aiming High group activities from £300,000 to £150,000 with one provider per district commissioned to provide group activities for disabled children. As further consultation is being proposed and it is recommended that contracts are extended for a six month period the Aiming High group activities budget for April 2016 to September 2016 would be £75,000.
- To retain the current criteria for families to access Aiming High flexible one-to-one support, without the need for an assessment by MATs or Social Care. There would however be a reduction in the maximum hours available to families from 80 to 40 per financial year.
- To continue to give families the option of choosing a short break grant as an alternative to one-to-one support, with a reduction in the maximum grant from £800 to £400 per financial year. In addition, there would no longer be the option for families to use the grant to fund family holidays.
- To implement changes for all families, including current users, from 1st April 2016. As further consultation is being recommended on proposals that, if implemented, would affect Aiming High provision from September 2016 onwards the flexible one-to-one support and the grant option will be pro-rated to take account of this.
- No longer offer one-off funding to voluntary organisations to provide summer play schemes as providers already offer a range of activities during the summer holidays, therefore the removal of this small grant was unlikely to have an impact on access to summer activities.
- Strictly apply the expectation that (i) families will not be able to access flexible one-to-one support or grant if their child is able to attend group provision without one-to-one support and (ii) families will not be able to receive both Aiming High and social care provision at the same time.

- Triage requests for Aiming High through Starting Point in order to apply a more consistent approach.
- Extend current contracts with Aiming High providers for a further period of six months, until 30th September 2016. This will enable further consultation to take place; however, variations to contracts would be necessary to reflect decisions taken by Cabinet in respect of a reduced Aiming High Offer from 1st April 2016.

It is considered that the proposed changes are consistent with the Council's with statutory obligations in particular those imposed by the Short Break Regulations 2011 and associated Statutory Guidance.

In addition, if these proposals are agreed the Derbyshire Short breaks Services statement will be reviewed with the involvement of parents/carers and re-published in order to reflect the changes to the offer.

4. Proposal for further consultation

4.1 Context

The financial scenario described earlier in this report identifies that the need to make savings will continue until at least 2020-21. Overall, the Council's revised Five Year Financial Plan which is also on the agenda for approval at this Cabinet Meeting indicates cuts of at least £115 million are still required from 2016-17 until 2020-21. This is in addition to cuts identified in the period 2010-11 to 2015-16.

In the last five years the Council has had to face unprecedented reductions in its finances. During this period Children's Services has seen its budget fall from £126.8m to £95.3m, a reduction of almost 25%. The Council's need to make further cuts means that the Children's Services budget could ultimately reduce to circa £70m, around half of the 2010-11 budget. Consequently, the Service has no alternative but to consider implementing savings in key service areas. It is important to note that the pressing financial position is the driver for the changes set out in this paper; the services themselves are of a high quality and are valued by service users.

The Council appreciates that families have benefited from and value the provision made available through the Aiming High Offer, however, the Council will need to determine which services it can continue to provide and which it can no longer afford to. It is with reluctance that further consideration will need to be given to the provision of services to disabled children and young people and their families for whom there has not been a formal identification of the level of need.

The current budget for short breaks services provided as a result of an assessment conducted by social care is in the region of £3,455,256. The limitations of the Children's Services budget are such that priority must be given to ensuring that these resources can continue to provide support to those families with the most significant needs.

Completion of the Equality Impact Analysis following the most recent consultation highlighted that, although the Council holds a wide range of data about the number of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Derbyshire and their needs. However there is relatively little detailed information about the specific

individual needs and circumstances of children and young people benefitting from Aiming High short breaks and their families. This is because access to Aiming High short breaks does not currently require a formal assessment of need.

Parents/carers have identified that there is confusion about the services received as part of the Aiming High offer and the services provided following a social care assessment: the nature of the support can be very similar and delivered by the same providers.

A single pathway that enables eligible disabled children, young people and their families to access appropriate levels of provision following an assessment would address the confusion caused by the two separate approaches. The assessment would: better identify the specific nature and level of any necessary support, tailor support to meet identified needs, enable better monitoring of progress towards identified goals and ensure that, where possible, young people move on to access other universal and targeted activities without the need for one-to-one support. Formal assessment would better ensure that limited resources are targeted at those with greatest need.

The single pathway would utilise current Derbyshire assessment processes. It can be assumed, however, that not all current users of Aiming High provision would be eligible for a short break services.

All universal services have a duty to ensure that they are accessible to disabled children and young people. Universal services can act in a preventative way, reducing the demand for specialist short break services.

The Council will continue to review the Derbyshire Local Offer to ensure families have access to information about short break opportunities that would not require additional assessment by the local authority.

4.2 The proposed model for consultation

It is proposed that a period of consultation takes place on proposals that, if implemented, would:

- Cease the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer, associated branding and criteria. Aiming High group activities, flexible one-to-one support and/or grant would no longer be available.
- No longer provide a budget for the delivery of Aiming High group activities: making a saving of £150,000.
- No longer commission Aiming High activity weekends (these are contracts to provide occasional short break weekends, which disabled children and young people can access via a Social Care panel)
- Offer a formal assessment to those families with disabled children and young people who are unable to access universal services without short break services/support.
- Short break services would only be provided after the completion of a formal assessment carried out by Derbyshire Children's Services.

- Provide a range of short break services that are responsive to individual family circumstance and assessed needs.
- Give eligible families the choice to access short breaks services using a direct payment.

4.3 Proposed consultation arrangements

It is proposed that the authority involves the Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice in the development of proposals for a short breaks offer that delivers support based on formal assessment and identification of needs.

It is proposed that consultation takes place between February 2016 and March 2016 and involves families, children and young people using Aiming High and provides a range of opportunities to respond, including on-line questionnaire and Parent Carer Voice forums. The consultation would be publicised through the County Council website, libraries, schools, colleges and NHS services. Key stakeholders such as special schools and representative groups will also be invited to contribute.

There will be a need to ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations.

Anticipated timeline for future proposals:

Date	Action
26 th January 2016	Cabinet meeting
1 st February 2016	Start of Aiming High renewals process for 2016/17
	Consultation on future short breaks offer begins
March 2016	Consultation finishes
24 th May 2016	Report to Cabinet

5. Financial Considerations

5.1 A summary of the anticipated budget and associated savings for the delivery of the revised proposals is below.

In 2014-15 the budget was £965,946. In 2014-15 the actual spend was £900,817. Whilst the number of Aiming High users has increased, the actual costs were less than anticipated due to more families opting for the grant: grants cost less than flexible one-to-one support.

The figures below are based on implementation of the proposals which have already been consulted on, which are identified in section 3 of this report, for all families from 1st April 2016 for the full financial year:

	2014-15	2014-15	2016/17	2016/17
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	Baseline budget	actual spend	Budget for full year delivery	Savings compared to actual spend in 2014-15
Playschemes	0	0	0	0
Groups and 1:1 contracts	755,946	519,333	331,125	188,208
grant	210,000	375,462	187,800	187,662
TOTAL	965,946	894,795	518,925	375,870

Note: The Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Groups contribute £39,455 per year to the budget for Aiming High short breaks. The CCGs will need to consider the level of their financial contribution for 2016-17. The table above assumes that the CCG contribution is maintained at the current level.

The figures below are based on implementation of the proposals in section 3 of this report from 1 April 2016, and implementation of the further proposals detailed in section 4 from 1 October 2016:

	2014-15 actual spend	2015-16 Budget	2016/17 Budget for 6 months delivery	2016/17 Savings compared to actual spend in 2014-15
Playschemes	0	0	0	0
Groups and 1:1 contracts	519,333	645,946	165,563	353,700
Grant	375,462	320,000	93,900	281,562
Activity weekends	88,056	77,414	44,028	44,028
TOTAL	982,851	1,043,360	303,491	679,290

The above table represents maximum savings in 2016-17. If the proposals were to be implemented following consultation, the actual savings would be net of:

- i) Any additional cost of assessment, as there would likely be an increase in the number of requests for assessment;
- ii) The cost of any short break provision agreed following an assessment of need; and
- iii) The CCGs' financial contribution

6. Legal and Human Rights Considerations

The Council is obliged to consult with all those whose service may be significantly affected by proposals.

In respect of the proposals that it is proposed to implement following consultation an Equality Impact Analysis has been carried out and is included in the report at Appendix 2. Members will wish to carefully consider the potential detriment on protected groups, identified in the equality analysis particularly in relation to the Council's disability equality duty, under the Equality Act 2010. Cabinet Members must carefully consider the findings of this analysis as well as the consultation report with a view to considering whether in light of

the findings of the analysis it should go ahead at all or if further mitigating steps or monitoring should be put in place prior to making its decision on this issue.

Members will also wish to be satisfied that the proposals are compliant with the Local Authority's duties under the Children Act 1989, the Children and Families Act 2014 (which defines and prescribes the content of the 'Local Offer'), the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and associated guidance.

The Short Break Regulations 2011 require that Local Authorities provide, as part of the range of services they offer to families, breaks from caring for the carers of disabled children to help them continue to care for their children at home and allow them to do so more effectively. The regulations require Local Authorities to:

- Ensure that they have regard to the needs of different types of carers, not just those who would be unable to continue to provide care without a break;
- Provide a range of breaks, as appropriate, during the day, night, at weekends and during the school holidays; and
- Provide parents with a short break statement detailing the range of available breaks and any eligibility criteria attached to them.

Article 8 of the Convention on Human Rights provides for a (qualified) right to family life and to a private life. Members will wish to consider any implications this may have on the proposals.

7. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity; and environmental, health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

8. Key Decision

Yes

9. Call in; is it necessary to waive the call-in period?

No

10. Officer Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- Approves the implementation of proposals consulted on and identified in section 3 of this report

- Agrees the revised Aiming High Offer should be the same for all eligible families and that a staged reduction for current users will not be introduced.
- Agrees to an extension of contracts with current Aiming High providers;
- Agrees to a further period of consultation and a further equality analysis of proposals that would, if implemented, provide access to short break services following a formal assessment and identification of need.
- Agrees to a report being made to cabinet following the further consultation

Ian Johnson
Strategic Director for Children's Services

CONSULTATION REPORT ON THE AIMING HIGH DERBYSHIRE OFFER

1. Purpose of report

A report was presented to Cabinet on 28th July 2015 to provide an update on the outcomes of the consultation held between October 2014 and January 2015 on potential changes to the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer. In light of the consultation feedback the paper also sought Cabinet agreement for a further period of consultation on a revised set of proposals that would, if implemented, make changes to the Derbyshire Aiming High Offer.

Consultation took place on revised proposals between 17th August and 6th November 2015.

This report explains the detail of the consultation and the feedback received.

2. Methodology and Approaches

Formal consultation on the proposed changes took place between 17 August and 6 November 2015. This report will summarise views, opinions and suggestions submitted by respondents to the consultation.

The consultation used a mixed method approach by offering both qualitative and quantitative ways to gather responses on the proposed changes. Officer's planned for as many people as possible to take part by offering a range of ways in which people could share their views:

- i. Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice provided 11 local forum events for parents to attend during September and October 2015 to discuss proposed changes to the Aiming High Offer. Each of the events was attended by an Officer of Derbyshire County Council. The events took place across the county with varying attendance, approximately 60 parents took part and other parents were enabled to give their views to Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice by other methods. Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice has produced a written report in response to the consultation which can be found at **Appendix A** of this document. In addition to direct contact from Parent Carer Voice, information on these forums was made available via the internet and parents were also encouraged to give their views by taking part in the online consultation.
- ii. Current Aiming High providers and service user families were written to and invited to respond to the online consultation. They were informed that alternative methods

were available through Call Derbyshire: callers could request a paper copy of the questionnaire, with a free post return address, or provide their responses directly on the telephone. Geographical locations of those that responded can be found at **Appendix B**. There were 103 responses in total: the responses are summarised in this report and graphs showing the number of responses along with public comments are at **Appendix C**.

Included in the letter to families was an invitation to inform the council if their child or young person would like to give their views face to face and a request that they provide details of the school or groups that their young person attends, as the Council planned to consult directly with young people in school and through youth groups. 1 family responded to this request and the views gained are included in the targeted consultation, which can be found at **Appendix D**.

- iii. Officers were keen to ensure that children and young people had opportunities to give their views whilst recognising that the complexity of the proposals might result in some children/young people needing assistance in either understanding the proposals or formulating a response. The Independent Advocacy Service conducted tailored consultations; visiting a range of specialist provisions where the children/young people felt confident and comfortable and supported by familiar support staff: this included specialist youth groups, special schools and commissioned providers. Sessions took place during the day, weekends and evenings and throughout Derbyshire. The results from these targeted consultations can be found at **Appendix D** of this document.
- iv. In order to reach as many interested parties as possible the consultation was publicised widely; letters, posters and information leaflets were sent to Derbyshire GP surgeries, Libraries, schools, colleges and children centres who were asked to display posters and leaflets in prominent areas.
- v. People were directed to the Derbyshire webpage which provided additional information and access to the online consultation.

3. Summary of the Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice Forum Events

Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice has produced a written report in response to the consultation which can be found at **Appendix A** of this document. The following observations were provided by officers attending the forums.

Parent/carers identified that there is confusion about what services are received as part of the Aiming High Offer and the support provided following a social care assessment as the support may be delivered by the same provider.

Parents would welcome a review of the terminology and clarity around Aiming High and social care support.

There was an appreciation that families had been listened to during the previous consultation, however, they were concerned about the impact of any proposed reduction in services to families with disabled children and opposed to any reduction in support. The summary below identifies common themes that were raised during the sessions:

One to One Support

There was a general agreement that the proposal of 40 hours flexible one to one support would not be beneficial to families. It was viewed that 40 hours would not be enough time to allow regular, weekly, contact with support workers and that it did not take account of the amount of time required for the young person and the support worker to build an effective relationship.

There were concerns about the capacity of services to carry out additional assessments and the potential for delays to receiving services. In addition the cost of additional assessments would mean that demands on other services' budgets would increase.

Grant

There was some agreement that families should not use the short break grant to fund family holidays and that there were alternative sources of support/funding from charitable bodies that could support families to take a holiday. However, some thought that there may be exceptions when a holiday might be the best way of supporting a family. There was agreement that use of the grant should be more closely monitored to ensure the funds are used effectively.

Group activities

There were concerns regarding the proposed reduction in the amount of targeted group provision available and the impact on the frequency and regularity of young people being able to attend. There were views that most universal groups were not inclusive, resulting in families with disabled children having fewer opportunities and choices and less flexibility and a higher risk of social isolation.

Staged approach for existing service users

It was agreed that a staged, step down approach for existing service users would make adjusting to any reduction in support easier for families. There were specific concerns raised regarding a lack of experience of disability amongst some staff in Multi Agency Teams resulting in poor quality support for families. It was viewed that these services may not have the capacity to respond to additional demands, causing delays and preventing families from accessing sufficient support.

Consultation Summary

There were a total of 103 responses gathered from the online and paper consultation.

Q1.How strongly do you agree or disagree that in order to access flexible one-to-one support over 40 hours per year, there should be an assessment identifying the need?

49% of the respondents agreed there should be an assessment identifying the need to access over 40 hours of flexible one-to-one support. Respondents who agreed with this proposal predominately saw this as a fair way of ensuring access to an appropriate level and type of support. Comments reflected a view that families' and children's needs vary, and that funding and support should be directed at those with greatest need and therefore an assessment seems reasonable. Access to some support without further assessment was valued.

39% disagreed with the proposal. Comments reflected a view that families were having to jump through 'another hoop' and that assessments/evidence were already in place; concerns about the increased demand this may have on social care and other services, cost implications and possible delay in support which could increase family anxiety were raised. It was suggested that any assessments should be integrated into the Education Health and Care plan processes.

12% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Comments that any assessments should take account of information already available and not be too daunting for families were made by those agreeing and disagreeing with the proposals.

Q2.How strongly do you agree or disagree that in order to access a short break grant over £400 there should be an assessment identifying the need?

43% agreed with this proposal, some commented that £400 was a significant sum of public money and therefore an assessment was reasonable. Some commented that the money should be used for an actual break from caring rather than for the family activities/outings and that those in most need should be able to access it.

41% of the respondents disagreed with this proposal. Many respondents referenced use of the grant for family holidays and outings and raised concerns that some families may no longer be able to afford a family holiday, the additional expense of taking a disabled child on holiday and that some children/young people are unable to access 1:1 support. Concerns about being subject to further assessment was raised and that assessments and evidence were already in place, the potential for further stress for families and increased pressures on other services and budgets.

Some respondents chose not to comment on the basis that they had not accessed the grant. However; there was a general theme to the comments from all respondents that services should not be reduced in general.

Q3. How strongly do you agree or disagree that Aiming High Short Break Grants should no longer normally be used to help fund family holidays?

26% agreed with this proposal with a sizable number of respondents commenting that using the funds for a family holiday does not provide ongoing support or development throughout the year and does not allow a break from the role of carer.

53% disagreed with the proposal that short break grants should no longer normally be used to help fund a family holiday. Many respondents stated that this proposal would result in them no longer being able to afford a family holiday; some commented that this particular use of funds was valued over regular short breaks and that to remove this option would take away choice.

22% neither agreed nor disagreed with this proposal however there was a consideration that use of the funds would depend on individual circumstances.

Q4. How strongly do you agree or disagree that all families meeting the current criteria receive the reduced offer from 1st April 2016?

27% agreed that all families meeting the current criteria should receive the same offer from the 1st April and expressed views that this was fair to all who access the support and that if families need the higher level of support then they need some form of assessment.

64% disagreed that all families meeting the current criteria receive the reduced offer from 1st April 2016. Many expressed that they oppose any proposed reductions but if they must happen: a gradual reduction would be preferable and allow families time to adjust and manage the impact of change.

Many used this section to further express concerns about any reduction in support and describe the benefits they have experienced from Aiming High services.

10% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

Q5. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal that families who currently have flexible one-to-one support or grant would have support reduced in two stages: stepping down to a maximum of 60 hours or £600 in April 2016 and to 40 hours or £400 in April 2017

Despite the responses being fairly equal with 40% agreeing, 41% disagreeing and 19% neither agree nor disagree with the proposal to reduce support gradually, there was a clear theme throughout respondent comments opposing any reductions in general. Even though the greater percentage outcome for this question opposed the proposal, more views were expressed that a gradual change would be preferable which would also allow families to adjust to the change.

Q6. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities?

21% agreed with the proposals, some stating that there could be alternative means of funding activities and accepting that savings may need to be made.

55% disagree with the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities as it was viewed this would also reduce choice and frequency of access to a group provision and could lead to the breakdown of friendship groups and impact on young people's socialisation.

25% neither agree nor disagree agree however many respondents commented that they did not access these group activities

Q7. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to have one provider per district commissioned to provide Aiming High group activities?

22% agreed with the proposals, comments included: one provider would enable better overview, avoid dates clashing, provide a more co-ordinated approach, consistency and continuity, be more streamlined and provide better oversight and management.

52% disagree with the proposal to have one provider per district as it was viewed this would limit choice and will not cater for the varied needs and disabilities. There were concerns regarding covering such a large geographical area and the size of groups.

27% neither agree nor disagree agree with the proposed with many respondents commenting that the success of this proposal will depend on the provider or that they have not utilised this service and are therefore unable to comment.

Q8. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to no longer offer one-off funding for summer play schemes?

17% agreed with the proposals.

55% disagree with the proposal to have no longer offer one-off funding for summer play schemes. Comments focussed on the views that the proposal will not only have an impact on friendship groups and socialisation but also on those families that rely on the schemes during school summer holiday periods to either have a break from the caring role or enable them to continue work*.

29% neither agree nor disagree agree with the proposed with many respondents commenting that they have not utilised this service, therefore unable to comment.

** It should be noted that providers offer a range of activities during the summer holidays and that the one-off funding is not the main source of funding for activities taking place over the summer: this 'one-off funding' to voluntary organisations incurred no costs in 2014/15 and was not included in the 2015/16 budget.*

Q9. Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the council to achieve savings:

There were a range of suggestions on alternative ways for the council to achieve savings, predominately by making the savings from other budgets and a general theme that savings should not be made by reducing short break provision. Other suggestions included: an

increase in Council Tax charges to fund short breaks and joint working between services and other Local Authorities to reduce delivery costs.

Ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable included: more robust monitoring, stricter criteria and clear guidelines for referral in order to ensure funds were spent appropriately.

Additional suggestions were for support to be accessed through formal assessment or to be means tested, cutting the short break grant completely but equally having access to a list or a Framework of providers allowing family choice of support.

Many also used this final section to express the view that the proposals will affect vulnerable children and that overall resource for disabled children and their families should not reduce.

In addition to the on-line consultation young people were asked for their views. Twelve settings were visited and a total of 64 young people participated in small groups within a familiar environment. A report from these group sessions can be found at **Appendix D** of this document.

Conclusions

Consultation was comprehensive and aimed to encourage as many people as possible who may be affected by the proposals to give their views. Over 1000 families were contacted and 103 responses were received.

The feedback can be summarised as follows:

- There was significant opposition to any proposal that would reduce, or make it more difficult to access, support for disabled children and their families.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the cost of any additional assessments, the capacity of services to respond to increase requests for assessment and the potential for increased demands on other Council budgets.
- Many respondents expressed a view that limited resources should be focussed on supporting those with greatest need.
- There should be greater accountability, in particular for how the grant was used.
- There were mixed views in response to the proposal for a staged reduction in support for families currently receiving Aiming High; some felt it fairer to give families longer time to adjust, whilst others felt it fairer if everyone received the same or support based on identified needs.
- A majority disagreed with only one provider for group activities as it would limit choice and may not cater for varying needs.

Many respondents took the opportunity to describe the additional difficulties experienced by families with disabled children and the benefits of the current Aiming High Offer.

The responses from the young people attending these sessions enable us to conclude that young people value the time they spend socialising. They want to take part in the same

sort of activities that other young people access and would like to have more opportunities available and to socialise with friends.

During the targeted group sessions involving young people, many participants stated that they are able to meet with friends outside of school because, currently, activities and groups are supported and facilitated to enable them to do so. For many, attending targeted support groups or accessing activities with support from a provider or from a family member is the only time they are able to socialise outside of school. Those who currently attend groups identified that they would feel sad if they were not able to attend as many sessions in the future, although 50% of the groups indicated that they did also like to do some things alone or with a small number of people.



Aiming High Consultation Report

Background

Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice provide a forum for parents to discuss proposed changes to services. Officers from Derbyshire County Council attended to present information on the proposed changes to the Aiming High offer. Eleven local forum events took place during September and October across Derbyshire covering Glossop to Swadlincote where around 60 parents took part; other parents contributed views by other methods. The consultation followed on from the 2014 consultation with some proposals remaining, while others had changed. Information in this report focuses on the additional proposals and is provided in addition to our previous report (Appendix a) where points remain relevant and of concern to parents and carers.

Parents were pleased to hear that some information from the last consultation had been listened to and acted on to inform this consultation. However they were still unanimous in their voice that cuts to disabled children and young people's short breaks are unfair and detrimental to both the child's and young person's current and future life. Parents reiterated the immense stress experienced and the positive impact short breaks made to their own lives enabling them to continue caring for their child/young person. Parents also reported that before receiving support through Aiming High, they were like 'pressure cookers', 'sleep deprived' and 'depressed' and that short breaks had helped to protect their mental health. For their family, short breaks had helped protect siblings from the emotional, physical and social impact of having a sibling with a disability, allowing siblings to lead lives akin to their peers.

Parents raised concerns that information was not available on the number of children/young people in Derbyshire who have a statement or EHC plan who are known to Social Care. There are approximately 3500 statemented/EHC plan children/young people in Derbyshire with 800 currently accessing support through Aiming High. This leaves 2700 children/young people with sufficient needs that are either not being met or being met elsewhere. Parents wanted to know what is happening to this group of children/young people to support them and their families, as this may be an opportunity to share good practice. Parents were still finding out for the first time about Aiming High, and this leads to the concern that there are a number of children/young people who are isolated and not accessing enriching social experiences.

Flexible one-to-one support

The proposal to reduce the amount of support from 80 hours per year to 40 hours per year was based on the premise that only 30% of children and young people use the full 80 hours currently. This proposal still reduces the average use of 60 hours down by 20 hours per year. In reality this means that a child accessing a youth group once a week for an hour will now have to choose which weeks to go and which to miss, as a minimum of 52 hours would be required to meet this need. With an average day trip lasting six hours, children would only be able to access six per year, one every eight weeks, building no consistency for the child/young person and no regularity of caring breaks for parents/carers. Families highlighted issues around children being more anxious about attending due to the lack of good relationships being forged but crucially their children/young people would only get six opportunities a year for social experiences, offering no comparison to the full social calendar experienced by their aged matched peers.

Although parents are aware that community groups are required by law to be inclusive, in practice this does not make a group accessible for their children/young people. Their child/young person's only access to social inclusion is through the Aiming High scheme. Not fostering and encouraging these experiences will lead to children growing up

unable to access the community and without a network of social inclusion. There was no recommendation in the proposal on improving this situation; therefore the reduction will have a negative impact on children/young people's social growth.

Parents emphasised that the confidence their children/young people had gained through one-to-one activities, and the measurable outcomes such as the child who had gone from being unable to be in a room with parents and a one-to-one worker, to being taken out into the community alone with their worker. The impact on the child/young person's self-esteem, confidence and sense of community is reiterated in the parents' increased mental wellbeing, their confidence in their child's independent abilities currently and the prospect for independence in adulthood, as well as their relationships within the family. However the impact of a 50% reduction would mean parents are forced to save hours for challenging times such as school holidays, therefore the relationships with workers will not be built up and these measurable outcomes will be less impactful. While those parents choosing to spread the support across the year will have no support in school holidays resulting in children/young people being socially isolated for six weeks. This in turn will make their return to school more difficult for teachers and support staff, aside from the additional strain on the child/young person and family and the impact on their educational outcomes.

Parents noted they had tried to use and indeed wanted to use all 80 hours, but had not been able to because providers were full. There were also reported cases of providers not being able to reliably provide the support requested, when support workers are regularly leaving, children/young people have to wait for recruitment and allocation, time where hours cannot be used. There seems to be no understanding of why hours have not been fully taken. Additionally, there are currently 30% of families who are using all 80 hours. These families will be pushed into crisis and will require Social Care input, which quite possibly will be more costly. Won't any saving in Aiming High just increase budgets elsewhere? No real saving made.

Short Break Grant

Parents did agree that the grant should not ordinarily be used for a family holiday, although they thought exceptions may exist that required case by case consideration. Parents felt it was reasonable to be held accountable for how the grant was spent, but saw nothing in the proposals which indicated a level of accountability. Parents suggested a system whereby receipts and invoices for the previous year's expenditure are submitted before they can access the current year's grant. This would hopefully look to cut down on misuse, and still focus on its purpose of 'social experiences' and 'short breaks'. Parents welcomed the flexibility of the grant to be able to decide what would best meet their child/young person's needs.

Group Support

Parents pointed out they were unable to use all their allocation at some groups as their area provider was full, while spaces in neighbouring providers existed but support could not be moved. There appears to be contracting issues for some providers as parents were able to spot purchase support from them, suggesting they had capacity but were tied by Aiming High's set up.

How many of the hours not taken up as a result of these issues is unknown.

The proposal to commission one provider per area also further reduces the support parents are able to access, especially when they have multiple children with disabilities. Some siblings are not able to access the same providers at the same time for emotional reasons. It also offers no independence for the children/young people to be 'followed around' by their sibling who may be considerably younger. Practicalities of providing support in an area that is accessible for all families, with activities that can cater for the whole age range will require considerable input.

Existing service users

Parents felt that the transition would be easier for existing users to step down from 80 hours to 60 then to 40, and likewise with the grant, however they are fundamentally opposed to the cut taking place at all. Parents note that while the assessment has been removed from these proposals there are still discrimination issues. If your child has

the wrong diagnosis, i.e. ADHD, you will not receive any support, even if you demonstrate substantial need. This needs addressing so that the focus is on family need and not diagnosis. Parents also noted that the Multi-Agency Team do not understand the needs of families with children with disabilities, and therefore although unassessed for the proposed 40 hours of support, families in need of further support will have a battle with professionals who are not sufficiently trained or equipped to support them. There is no proposal to address this. Parents are also concerned that nothing is in place to deal with an influx of new Multi-Agency Team or Social Care assessments, and that the nine-month wait which currently exists is likely to increase, all while a family is falling further into crisis.

Engaging young people

Parents were astounded to hear that basic engagement with children and young people had still not occurred in this consultation, and while the offer had been provided through the letter to parents, there had been no active consultation with the children/young people currently attending groups affected by the proposals. Parents found this perplexing. We hope before the information is presented to Cabinet these groups have been engaged with in a meaningful way allowing them to participate in the consultation about cuts to their social experiences.

Conclusion

Availability of information on short breaks, who may want to access them and who currently accesses them is still not available. On several occasions the forum has sought answers to questions on short breaks which still remain unanswered. Given the lack of data, there can be no way to monitor the impact of these uncalculated cuts. The long-term and open-ended effects of such cuts cannot be quantified, and the impact on families will force them to seek help from Social Care budgets. Parents struggle to see how the approximate saving of £500,000 will make any difference to the £30 million to be saved, and that on balance the cost to their children/young people and family life will ultimately be payable through increases in Social Care requests, a more costly option than Aiming High support. Given the strength of feeling, Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice feel that the proposal should not be accepted and consideration should be given to using the Aiming High budget to better meet the needs of parents/carers and children/young people.

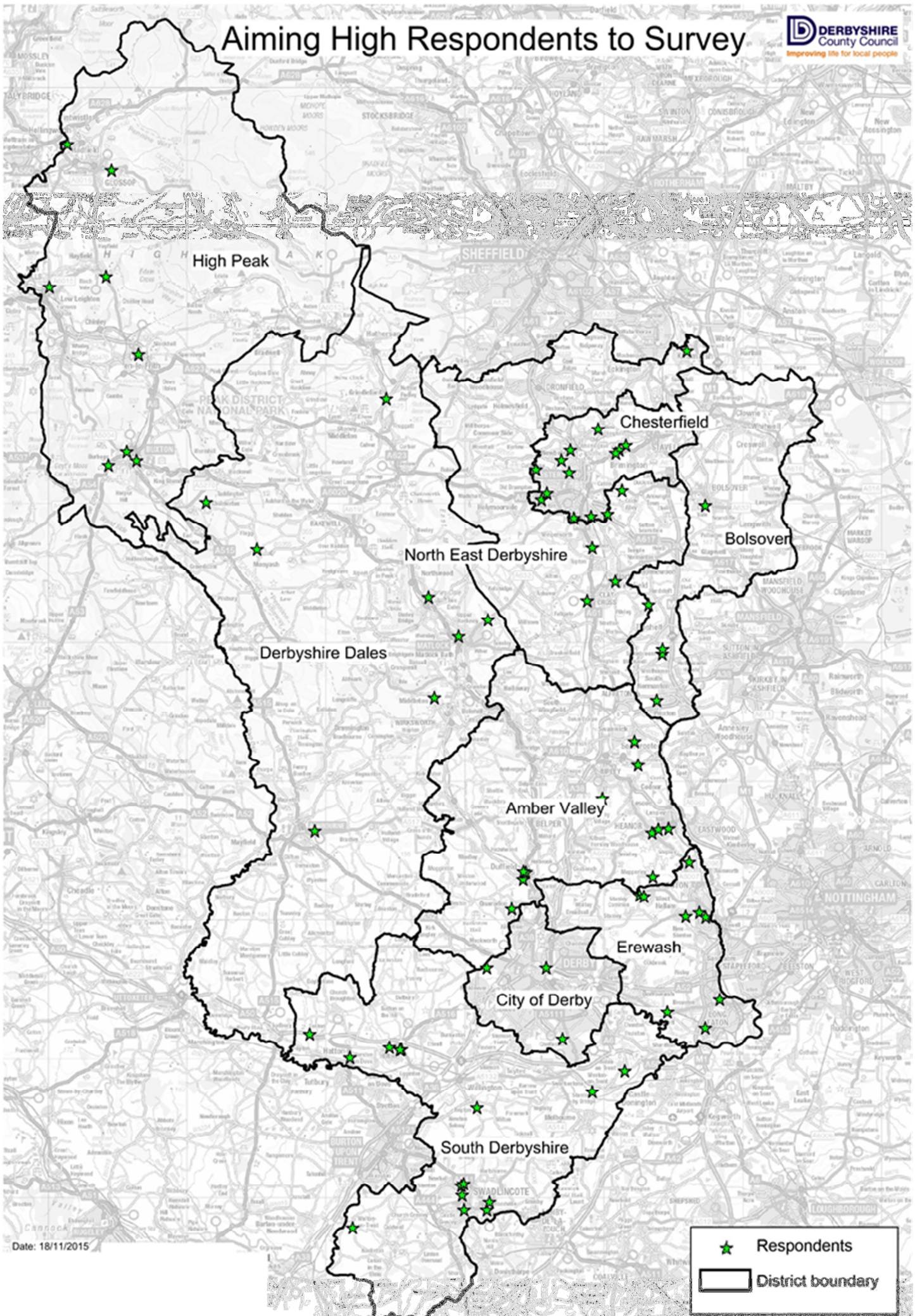
Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice Recommendations:

- The Aiming High offer should be wholly reconsidered with a focus on meeting the child's/young person's social needs and the family's need for short breaks from caring. Rather than reducing the budget, it should be put to better use, requiring commitment from Derbyshire County Council to work with parents to offer a system that is mindful of families.
- Savings are considered within the impact of the whole family, including the impact on siblings' emotional and social wellbeing, the impact on mental health services when parents reach crisis due to lack of support and the child's/young person's future social inclusion.
- Any savings reported are considered in the wider context of increased requests for Social Care and Multi-Agency Team assessments, and additional cost of providing support through this means, as well as the readiness of the Multi-Agency Team and Social Care team for an influx of requests from 1st April 2016.
- The evidence on the level of need of children/young people and their families is not sufficient to make these decisions. An investigation needs to be carried out to better understand the population before reductions can be made, including understanding why allocated hours have not been fully used and how many would have used them if they could have. Without this information a judgement is a best guess that has serious and lifelong consequences for children/young people.
- The commissioning of one provider per area will require a serious investment of time to meet the needs of the whole range of ages and areas within localities ensuring they are given fair access to support, and that this cost is also considered in the 'savings'.

- Any assessments for short breaks form part, where appropriate, of the Education Health and Social Care plan assessment process, i.e. as one single assessment. Support should be offered openly, and not as a result of parents being in crisis or hearing about it from other parents.

Finally, parents want to thank you for taking the time to read and consider this report. They are happy to meet to discuss the impact of further changes, however please consider if £500,000 of savings is worth a Derbyshire where children/young people are not part of a community and have no social resilience.

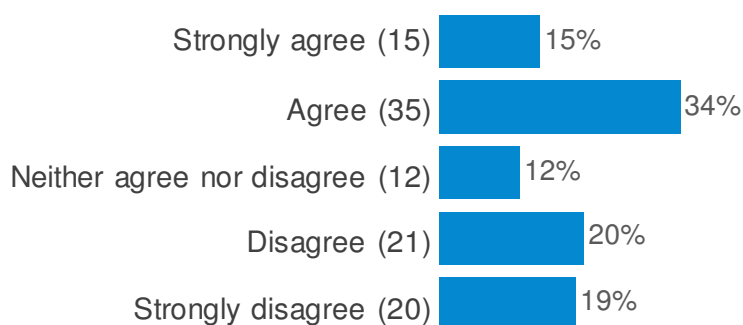
Aiming High Respondents to Survey



This report was generated on 18/11/15. Overall 103 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

How strongly do you agree or disagree that in order to access flexible one-to-one support over 40 hours per year, there should be an assessment identifying the need? (... option 1)



Please give us the reason for your response to the one-to-one flexible support proposal:

We need to ensure that service is equitable and we aren't offering some families lots and others nothing

I disagree as, if the family's/child's needs have already been assessed, that is the reason they have been referred in the first place. Those involved in giving the support should then be able to refer back for further assessment if they judge that the young person no longer needs the support. In practice, I think this situation would be very rare.

Disagree with lowering the available hours to 40 - this is less than an hour a week.

The suggestion means that there is some care available without additional supporting information, but if this level is insufficient, there is still the possibility that more hours could be available. This seems reasonable in the current funding climate

I agree that this one to one support should continue but do not think the hours should be cut. An assessment should be able to determine additional hours up to 100 hours a year.

Umbrella meet up with possible participants already before accepting them, so the assessment is already in place, but reducing the available hours to 40 will have a huge impact on families as the current 80 hours means a child has at least one day out each month to look forward

Some children, young adults needs more specialised care than others. It is essential that the support they are given away from the comfort of the safe environment to which they have become accustomed to. To access their needs first makes the preparation more easier.

As long as the 40 hours is given without additional assessment, this would be ok. One of the problems was that not everyone needs 80 hours, but used them up in case they lost them the next year. However, some parents desperately needed all the hours and ran out of them before the year was up. So having two limits to the hours is a much better idea, and I would hope that the assessment is not too strict or formal as this can be off putting for stressed or depressed parents to have to deal with - it is awful feeling you have to beg for help.

Understand that most severe cases deserve most support but are aware that family do need support in general.

Please give us the reason for your response to the one-to-one flexible support proposal:

80 hrs gives a young person just 1.5 hrs of support a week...its not enough as it is..we want these children to become independent adults in the future

It is imperative that no family 'takes advantage' of this service. If you do not carry out an assessment and monitor this, how can you not guarantee this will happen? The criteria for being able to access more than 40 hours - how can you define a 'higher level of need' which would be regarded as fair by all?

It depends what the assessment would involve, what criteria are used and how fairly the decisions are made.

More in-depth assessments would be relevant for most families struggling on the new proposals and in need of additional help. I fully accept that cuts need to be made.

Depends on what relevant evidence is already available. Families already have to spend a lot of time answering similar questions

This service is rare for the severely disabled and an assessment should be carried out so the severely receive the one to one first.

It would be costly to do the assessment and there are other ways of assessing need such as listening to families

TO MAKE SURE THAT THE FAMILIES WHO APPLY FOR MORE HOURS REALLY DO NEED THEM SO THAT OTHERS DON'T MISS OUT

This makes no sense apart from being a cost cutting measure and adding more hurdles, stress and difficulties to families of children with disabilities, who frankly have enough on their plates already and little time to jump through yet more hoops. Families who qualify for the 40 hours support should also qualify for additional hours, so why spend the money on yet more assessments for families who already are constantly being assessed for every bit of support they need?

These services that are suggested to do the assessments are being cut themselves. It would take too long and put these services under increased pressure, meanwhile families go into crisis.

I agree that there should be an assesment for those requesting over 40 hours of care dependant on the level of disability and the effect that this has on the family unit. There needs to be a clear pathway for parent carers who need to access this service. The question that springs to mind is how do families in need of extra hours get refered/ who will be able to referer them to an already overloaded MAT team.

For some families this is the only support they get and this one size fits all approach does not work. Some of these children will also be able to access mainstream holiday clubs and others cannot. Some parents need more than 80 hours just to be able to work part time.

families already provide significant evidence of need. If further assessments are needed this just produces barriers for most people in getting help, Families do not have the energy or inclination to have to participate in yet more assessments and the threshold of social care now at substantial is limited in terms of what they will offer anyway. This will put further stress on families.

As the funding is being cut it needs to be utilised and given to those who require it most

I dee it is unfair that just because a child may appear to have less compled needs the family will be forced to jump through more hoops

I dont believe that the cuts should come from this area of help and support

Because some peoples need will be greater than others.

My experience is you only apply for any form of aiming high grant through the MAT team and I wasn't aware you could ask for any hours without an assessment

Children SHOULD be assessed, but it is difficult to contact the people and ask for an assessment. I think parents of all disabled children should be contactacted and all children assessed regularly as they get older their needs increase. However this system yopu are suggesting at the moment just seems a quick way to cut down hours NOT help children by getting them assessed. Also I think OTs could assess for social needs.

Please give us the reason for your response to the one-to-one flexible support proposal:

assessments take a long time and can delay the family from receiving the support that they need

You are just passing the assessment onto MATS or social and cutting the hours will create increased demand on these services that take months to access. Why not have an automatic right to more hours if the child has a statement? Your assessment has been done for you as these child have already been assessed for extra help in the education system.

Obviously cuts need to be made. Whilst reducing the hours is drastic the extra hours may still be available following an assessment

I do not agree that another hoop for parents to jump through to get the 80 hour support they require for their children is at all useful. Fair and balanced assessment of all applications must be essential and could save money if administered efficiently. The LA must take responsibility for giving the maximum support to each child rather than passing back the responsibility to parents to get further assessments done to qualify as we are already stressed and over worked parents who all have disabled children constantly battling with the whole judicial service, LA etc to get our children's needs met and can do with another hurdle to jump through that has to be instigated by us and not owned buy the provider or the local offer.

This would depend on each individual case as needs can be very complicated and specific. However, in many cases additional assessment would not be necessary as you can trust parents/carers and service providers to communicate successfully.

To prioritise support & enable providers to be aware of the need

To assess individual needs and make it fairer

The needs of children who are currently receiving 80 hours per year are well known and documented. There should be no need for a formal assessment for these children to be able to access the hours that they have already been allocated without formal assessment. This seems to be simply a way of putting a potential barrier in place to prevent claims for additional hours. I would have to question whether we really ought to be requiring vulnerable children to demonstrate that they are indeed vulnerable.

This is changing the goal posts. If a child requires this service an assesment should make no difference to the outcome already in place. The funding is still going to be needed to provide the service wether from Aiming High or Social care. Extra finance will need to be in place to pay for these assements to be carried out and processed.

Although I have agreed with the proposal for assessment, I have some anxiety about the subjectivity of the assessment and the criteria used. At present, flexible one to one is the only support that we are able to access. It provides a lifeline to our family and I am extremely worried about the future support.

I think some checks need to be done to insure it's not being Miss used but on the other hand you have to understand how much pressure a parent of a disabled child is under.

Action for Children's experience is that 40 hours does not meet the vast majority of young people who meet the criteria for this service. 40 hours over the year is effectively less than an hour a week and providers have to undertake assessments with these children/ young people to consider their needs. With such limited contact the services need to be renewed frequently, which further detracts form the service delivery. This may make he viability of service provision unsustainable.

Social care and other teams are pushed to the limit as it is and trying to get an assessment of needs would probably incur a lengthy wait to be assessed and result in the child missing out on much needed flexible support hours needed, we supply enough evidence with supporting documents from paediatrician etc to support our need.

It depends on the child in question and whether this would be helpful or more stressful to the parent and child

The hours could be given to children who need more hours. The assessments can easily be done through the right people or specialists.

Please give us the reason for your response to the one-to-one flexible support proposal:

Parents of non disabled children do not have to go through lengthy and difficult processes for their children to access activities. A child with a disability is often unable to access the routine services and they need more support, which costs more. Parents spend longer looking for this too. Many clubs cannot support children who need a 1:1 support. I include after schools activities in this. For example premier school sports are a company who provide after school activities. Children who need 1:1 support cannot access this. Parents already have more to do, often they have given up work or reduced hours to look after their disabled child. Without family support its almost impossible to work. Disabled children and their families are already assessed through the EHCPs

Cutting these hours in half is complete madness - for many of these children this is the only opportunity they get for a social life and their families get for a break from caring, so I don't think the hours should be cut at all and savings should be made from elsewhere in the county's budget.

Every child that goes through the process is in need of support so ONLY in extreme cases should they be assessed to gain additional hours over the allocated amount. It is stressful enough for the child and the parent(s) to request this help.

Most children applying have either been assessed already for DLA and/or an EHCP/Statement, it is already virtually impossible to get a disabled children's assessment from social services DESPITE this being a statutory obligation. It is ridiculous and time consuming to add yet another assessment to the process

Children with EHCPs should be able to have this as part of their annual review. At the moment, the social and medical side of my son's needs are being ignored in his EHCP which is against the Code of Practice and the 'Tell It Once' principle. There should be better communication between professionals so that it all comes together properly in EHCPs.

Most children who already access the service have a need. do we really need to put our children through extra assessments

i use this and feel that the amount of money been spent that a assessment should been completed to make sure the right children and their families receive it.

Children and families have to have so many assessments when disability is involved! 80 hours support over a year is not a lot to ask when we are providing round the clock care for these children, some of us with no additional support from family members because we are the only ones who can cope and meet their needs

If a family is in receipt of 80 hrs then their need for 80 hrs will still remain. Also the cost of assessing everyone will cost the Government money, as well as putting extra load on Social Care. Families are sometimes fed up with being assessed when their need has already been identified.

The need for one to one support should always be based upon need criterion and not an indefinite award.

Providing the costs of assessing the needs are less than the costs of providing the support I see this as an opportunity to target the support more effectively

40 hours is a huge reduction in support. Families with disabled children are assessed as a matter of course, due to the disabilities. A further assessment appears to be intrusive and is taking away from the ethos of the valuable scheme. For those children with EHCP can this not be incorporated into the joined up single assessment. Coupled with the above, how timely would your proposal be? What about the cost of incorporating into MAP/Social Care? Not sure this is best value.

40 hours seems generous

I feel that it would be difficult to access assessments needed to support applications for higher number of hours support and this may delay families getting the support they need as quickly.

If you provide details of diagnosis and medical evidence why have an assessment. Equally both my sons who access aiming high can't talk and explain things clearly so an assessment may not be effective

Please give us the reason for your response to the one-to-one flexible support proposal:

Once a child has been assessed and has a diagnosis organisations like CAMHS tell us that other than monitoring, there is little they can do to support the child and so access to your provision becomes critical to the further development and well being of the child. Children that have yet to be diagnosed can find themselves waiting for up to 2 years at present to receive that diagnosis and to them and their family it can be a lifeline.

Caller feels that this will lead to families falling through the net and being unable to access the care they need.

As a parent of a child with Autism, you have enough assessments just to get the diagnosis. I think that once you have your diagnosis paperwork, your CAF paperwork and all the other results paperwork that should be enough to determine that your eligible. More assessments would cost money which could be spent on the Aiming High budgets they are trying to slash.

40 hours per year is an extremely small amount of hours. Consideration needs to be given to the assessment process - this must be as seamless as possible. Consideration must be given if the original lead worker has left role or is no longer in contact with the family who will carry out the assessment. Does the Council have capacity and knowledge to undertake assessments for specialist services eg MAT.

an assessment will enable this service to be given to those in need - too many well paid parents see this service as a cheap way of getting support when they should be paying their own way

As parents we should not have to jump through hoops to obtain support when many of us will have already done this to get an official diagnosis for our child. We should not need to prove that the help is required and that our child is worthy of this funding.

The voice of the parent and supporting professionals should be heard not challenged

everyone should be assessed to ensure that those most in need get the help having a disabled child does not always require more work than having any child

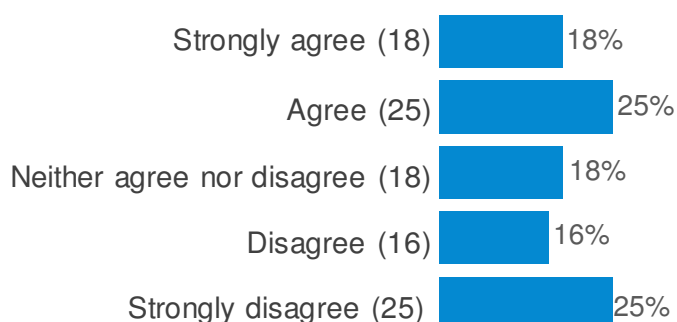
To begin having to assess all the children/families will incur further costs for the council. There'll be a higher demand on social care services which are already stretched. MATs have already been slashed and funding removed from them, how on earth are they supposed to support/assess even more families with fewer staff and resources?!!

We should take public monies seriously it is not a wish list it is real money. Have you tried operating joint services with Derby City Council I am sure some of your families move between the two councils therefore an assessment is needed each time.

This seems like an unwise use of limited resources. Surely the money spent on assessment should be used to provide support to families who need it.

Everyone should. E able to access it

How strongly do you agree or disagree that in order to access a short break grant over £400 there should be an assessment identifying the need? (... option 1)



Please give us the reason for your response to the assessment proposal:

It's still a reasonable amount of public money and it isn't unreasonable to ensure its used by families who really require it

This would allow families in most need to receive the support they need as opposed to funds being automatically spread over a larger number, not all of whom might need the support. It would separate needs from "wants".

As per previous answer

I agree that there should be an assessment and that funding should be paid directly to the supplier of appropriate services or equipment provider to ensure that the child/young person gets the identified support. A family holiday or days out should not be agreed via this funding. Families get DLA and other income to provide this.

we dont use this option

I was unaware of a short break grant. This would benefit my child as she doesn't like going anywhere without a family member. This sometimes adds extra pressure on both Mother or Father as our child lives in a rural area without any siblings to play with. Other family members live some 200 miles away. Putting that aside, I feel that £400.00 is enough for any parent to have a break from family pressure and the child could take a break away from stressed family members.

I have not used the short break grant.

this is not a service i have used as my son refuses to travel

Again this needs to be based on an assessment. I appreciate resources within the Council are extremely stretched, more so than ever before, but you will always get individuals/families looking to 'cash in', i.e. helping to pay off a loan, a holiday for someone other than the individuals affected, etc.

Again, depends upon assessment method, criteria and fairness of decisions made.

I cannot see a problem with relevant assessments as long as they are carried out in a timely manner and the child does not have any unnecessary delay in support. Does the council have a strategy in place to respond to a potential deluge of assessment requests - going off this year's application process, I would suggest not...

I am disgusted at the suggestion that there should be a blanket block on using the grant for family holidays. This disadvantages 'copers' and fails to acknowledge the additional holiday costs some families may have - why should the only support be for separation? Again, wasting money doing a substantial assessment when the evidence is available seems a poor idea - but the evidence needs to be there.

I don't know if I'm misunderstanding but why would you give money to someone without any assessment?

AS BEFORE, NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY DO NEED MORE SO OTHER FAMILIES DON'T MISS OUT

I think the short break grants for family holidays or activities should be means tested. I think the money is best used to give families/carers an actual break from caring and time to spend with siblings of disabled children as well as giving the disabled children themselves a chance to engage in social opportunities and activities that they don't otherwise have. I don't think the money should be used to fund family outings or family breaks unless this is something that a family couldn't afford to do without the grant.

I agree the money should not be used for holidays as families can get this support through other organisations such as family fund. The priority must be the 1:1 support

Cutting cost by 50% is unacceptable

I do not disagree with the reduction without the need for assesment I do however think that the removal of the holiday option should remain in force as sometimes there are families who are not eligible for other grant funding so this is the only chance they get to afford a holiday together. I do think it should bemore closely monitored and reciepts should be followed up to prevent abuse of the system

Please give us the reason for your response to the assessment proposal:

Respite time is much more precious to a family than money so they can go on holiday!

We have used the short break grant for several years and it has been a life saver for families such as ours. We have used the money wisely and carefully and it has enabled us to access many mainstream opportunities that we would not normally be able to. Families such as ours are under huge stress and pressure bringing up a disabled child in a climate which offers little resources and support. We are often struggling to keep our heads above water managing the day to day issues. The idea of having to be formally assessed for the grant is stressful, time consuming and often intrusive in an ongoing situation where we feel constantly judged and assessed by others. Social care criteria have increased to substantial and there are limited resources available via social

As Q1

To find a suitable holiday that suits your needs, within the permitted times allowed by DCC ie within school holidays costs will always be very expensive and out of most families budget, a family holiday can in some cases be very beneficial

again, cuts in this funding are only making things more difficult for families that already have enough problems as it is.

We have not used this service, but our circumstances will not be the same as other people's and I have no right to comment on situations I know nothing about.

I for the first time used a high this year, the 800 was such a welcome and needed support I have two sons. Both severely disabled, and we have had absolutely no support, getting away as a family on a holiday and day trips has restored our batteries, and helped my son who received the grant very very much. Even having an impact on my other son- we rarely can afford to do things like that, I would've liked the hours option but with two disabled children, the grant was more feasible for us all to enjoy and making a huge difference in us all it would directly impact families like mine, who have lack of support and extremely demanding care needing children,

Again those who most need it should be able to access it.

We currently use the grant towards weekend breaks for our family to help our son's social development. Unfortunately you need the full 800 to access most breaks if out of term time. Removing/reducing this option would have a significant impact as some families cannot afford to supplement the grant for a break

see my previous answer as this applies to this cost cutting exercise too.

The role of a carer is very draining and it should be a given that families requesting a short break grant do need one.

To ensure that providers are aware of the demand

To assess individual needs and make it fairer

if you get DLA or PIP you shouldn't need anymore proof

Again the needs for these children have already been established without an assessment. The needs of the children will not have changed and this is only putting an additional barrier in the way to the funding which these children have already been deemed entitled to.

As with the previous answer

I have responded as such to this question as we do not use the short breaks fund

I currently have the half half option for my son and it's brilliant and a real life line

The difficulty is the families experience is that the assessments are not completed in a timely manner and some families have had to cancel plans as paperwork has been lost, or the person doing the assessment has not been able to do it in a timescale people would find reasonable, ie 6-8 weeks.

Please give us the reason for your response to the assessment proposal:

Again social care and other teams are stretched and trying to get an assessment would incur a wait this money has to be spent in a certain time limit and this would only delay the amount of time we have to use the money. Again we supply enough evidence to support our need for it with paediatrician letters. Educational healthcare plans/ statements etc to prove our need. Also not being able to spend it on a family holiday is wrong, that just makes it almost the same as the one on one support option if I have to use it so XX goes out with someone else. I don't have any family that can take her out and I don't want anyone else to do so as I wouldn't trust them to keep her safe due to her many diagnosis and complex needs. I always choose the grant option as my daughter

Again parents could be put off and the children miss out as assessments are very stressful for both the parents and children

I feel that if the child has the assessment done through the correct people then they will be given a fair amount.

Families who need more than £400 for a short break DISABLED CHILD ONLY quite clearly are working daily as a carer, trying to check school provision, making applications for help of all kinds. To add another assessment is stressful. It should be borne in mind that An assessment is a cost to the LA and this cost can be avoided. It is likely that parents will not apply for an assessment due to time and effort involved on top of being a carer and disabled children will miss out. In respect of the DISABLED CHILD only cost, it is likely that disabled children will miss out as when parents have other children they may not afford the whole family therefore the break will not happen. Plus it makes it very administratively inefficient as things like fuel, booking fees, will ne

As my previous answer.

Most children applying have either been assessed already for DLA and/or an EHCP/Statement, it is already virtually impossible to get a disabled children's assessment from social services DESPITE this being a statutory obligation. It is ridiculous and time consuming to add yet another assessment to the process

See previous comments about the use of EHCPs

It shouldn't be used to fund family holidays and i'm shocked people have been allowed to do this. Again an assessment should be in place.

Disability within the family puts a huge financial, social, emotional and physical strain on all members of the family, including siblings. When you have a disabled child it is not so easy to just jump on a plane or stay at any old hotel for a short break. Everything that comes with the adage "special needs or disabled" is usually twice the price. The thought of not being able to break up the strain and stresses with a family holiday where we can try and be "normal" is just unacceptable

As question 1

My son XX has many care needs and I would not be opposed for him to be assessed and if decided receive a reduced grant.

Again I see this as an opportunity to target the support more effectively, I think the existing system has been open to misinterpretation as to how it should be used.

As previously

money is tight and £400 is generous

I feel that it would be difficult to access assessments necessary to support applications. We have as a family benefitted from short break grants to go towards our family holidays. Our eldest daughter has high functioning Autism and would not be able to benefit from a holiday/respite away from her family as she suffers from extreme anxiety about being away from home and would not want to go. We would have difficulty being able to afford to go on holiday without the grant and therefore her quality of life would deteriorate. Our younger daughter has spina bifida and hydrocephalus and has many complex needs. She would need us to be with her to provide her care and would also not be able to benefit from a break away from us, especially as she is only 3. As a family we have

Same as last question

Please give us the reason for your response to the assessment proposal:

The one-to-one support is excellent for those who need and benefit from it. However there are a number of children for whom that kind of support will not work and causes them a great deal of anxiety, so the opportunity to access an equivalent amount of funding to facilitate them accessing those opportunities such as special provision breaks where they are catered for appropriately along with children with similar challenges, is equally valuable.

Caller uses the short break grant to take her two disabled children to the seaside and this would be a much missed feature.

I think it's unfair to ask for more assessments, or to stop the short break grant being used for a family holiday. As a family with a child with autism and learning difficulties we have enough to deal with day to day and the short break we take is something to look forward to as a family, we would otherwise be unable to afford due to myself not working and being my daughters carer. The planning we have to do just to take her somewhere people do not realise. This short break gives her life skills and makes it not as scary the second time she goes anywhere, to stop this would not help her at all.

Historically the grants have not been as closely monitored as the allocated hours. We would recommend improvement to avoid the potential to mis spend public funding.

vital funding is being given to the wrong families - if they can afford they should not get this type of funding - an assessment is essential

Again the fact that they are cutting this grant in half and preventing the grant to be used for family holidays is discrimination against families who have to cope with a child with specialist needs or disability. If the grant is there for short breaks then a family should be able to use this exactly for this purpose to access places they would otherwise be unable to afford. The fact that we as a family have had to alter our working lives to accommodate the needs of our child due to not being able to receive the schooling she needs means that our financial situation prevents breaks that the aiming high grant have helped us to provide. Taking this way is affecting the whole families quality of life

I just think this is all wrong for parents who already struggling

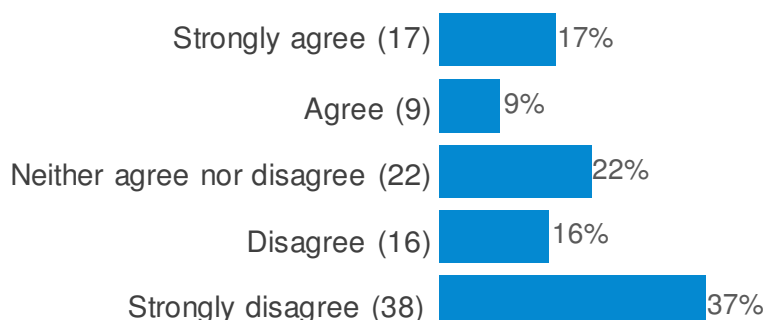
As said before, it will cost the council more to carry out all these assessments!!!

MAT team have been involved with my child in the past but due to staff shortages arent able to continue to support us, we would then get overlooked and the fact that Im a single parent and wouldnt be able to take my child away without funding to take a helper which has resulted in police bringing my child back to me on a previous vacation is concerning. I do think that they should reevaluate the expenditure on earnings as I know of a family that being home over 30k per annum. I feel that on their current salary the £800 shouldnt be granted as they are already wealthy enough and a complete family unit to manage on their payscale and have gone on multiple vacations and feel that this system is being abused by them. As a single parent coping with a child that has ASD and ADH

In stead of the need for an assessment why do you not give managers a pot of money and tell them to manage it. If they run out then they have to tell the customers why and be answerable to senior management. Another alternative is you dip test instead of assessments.

Personally I have not requested a short break despite being a full time carer. I think people who request this should be answering this question.

How strongly do you agree or disagree that Aiming High Short Break Grants should no longer normally be used to help fund family holidays?



Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal on funding family holidays:

If families can pay the top up themselves why not?

I do not have sufficient experience of this use of funds to comment further.

My daughter has complex needs and I do not want respite care but the aiming high allowed us to take a break as a family and spend quality time together.

The families would have to pay for the disabled child on their holiday anyway, and surely this funding is to help families to spend time with other children/have a break from their caring role?

Family holidays do not provide an ongoing service for the child/young person. If a child has additional needs that they are assessed as needing support for it is not appropriate to provide for only 2 weeks per year. Families should use their own income or DLA to fund a holiday.

Not all families can afford to take a disabled child on holiday, it costs much more to do so. All disabled children should have the right to holiday with their family.

sometimes it is the only opportunity for families to get a holiday

As with the last question, my child will not willingly go anywhere without either mum or dad.

The grant should be payment towards the child to help with their development as well as give the parent a break. However, it seems this would be difficult to ensure.

a change of scenery for all family members can help all members relax. having a disabled child in the family impacts on the WHOLE family

It is surely to be decided by the individuals and what meets that particular family's needs? As long as it can show evidence of better quality of life for te carers and the individuals in the family who have disabilities.

I don't believe that it is reasonable to fund a family holiday, but, funds to enable the needs to be met of a disabled child, thus enabling the child to join the family holiday is reasonable.

I think that this is an appalling proposal. There will be a large number of children in the same circumstances as my own, who would not benefit from independent breaks from family (or, like my own child, who already access a number of family funded independent activities). The ability to use 'some' of the grant to provide for a short break for all the family allows for a greater variety of experiences during the break. For example, this year our older child with challenging Asperger's went on a family funded independent break (we do NOT claim aiming higher for this child). This allowed the remaining family (mum, dad and aiming higher funded child) to go on a short (4 days break). This used approximately £300 of the current grant in accommodation expenses; but, this allo

Disempowers families

It would depend on the individual needs of the family.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal on funding family holidays:

For some children there are few opportunities to take a holiday other than with the family. The family is likely to provide one of the best opportunities but it might cost them more to accommodate the needs of the disabled child.

WE HAVE NEVER HAD A GRANT SO CAN'T REALLY SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE BUT SOME FAMILIES WILL PROBABLY NOT GET A HOLIDAY WITHOUT IT.

I agree with this except in the cases where it is hard for a family to afford a family holiday.

Because families can get support from the Family Fund. 1:1 support is more valuable

there are always additional costs to consider taking a child with physical disabilities away. Making sure vehicles are big enough, ground floors, transporting specialised equipment, having extra pair of hands, specialised equipment for holidays and instructors. The list goes on

Please see previous response

I do feel that families benefit from short breaks with their children and that this can improve the well being and mental health of both the parents and children. I do feel however the aiming high grant could be much clearer about how breaks should be funded and examples of prohibited activities as it is currently so open it is left to interpretation and potential misuse.

The funding should be to allow the young person to access short breaks away from their family. This way it gives all concerned a break.

As per previous comments

why should they not be used for the family.

As previous.

I believe by taking away the option to allow the funding to be used towards family holidays you are doing the disabled child a huge disservice. Most of the organised short breaks through agencies such as Fairplay, Stockport CP and Aspire are aimed at children with learning difficulties (IQ less than 70). Children with physical difficulties or social difficulties such as ASD can often feel excluded from these groups as they do not fit in at the same intellectual level. The way round this is for the family to book an extra activity short break or if financially stretched, an activity break through someone like Hoseasons or PGL to provide supervised activities for their child. This way the disabled child is able to develop their social and physical skills with their peers

It must be remembered that single parents can't take one child and not the others so is this a family holiday, but neither is it respite for the family

It completely depends on the situation as some children may not get much social time with their family and would benefit from a family holiday whereas in other situations it may be more useful for a child to spend time at a summer camp or retreat so that they can develop social skills with peers rather than just family.

I do feel that this can be taken advantage of, however there are some families who are unable to take holidays due to the extra support their child requires

This makes the grant very inflexible. We use the grant to pay for the active ability week at Lea Green. This is a holiday specifically designed for my disabled daughter, but we can only attend if I go with her due to her care needs. I therefore also have to take my other young daughter as I have no alternative care. I think that this is a very good use of the short break grant. If this option was withdrawn I could not afford to take her as well as having a normal family holiday.

That depends on the family's needs....

This is where our son needs the most support. Learning life and social skills from people he trusts and feels safe with

If you give a grant to parents then you must be able to trust they use it to benefit their child/children and the people that support and surround them so an assessment will eliminate the need to veto the use of the grant for family holidays.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal on funding family holidays:

I would personally not apply for family holiday fund but I know other friends in different circumstances have valued this an important time in their children's lives.

Because this is something that such families may not otherwise be able to access and family is key to the benefit in my opinion

This is an oxymoron, Family holiday means EVERYONE holidays TOGETHER but the Short Break Grants are for carer respite (not the whole family)

This might be the only time family's get s brakes

The short break grants are primarily intended I would have thought as a respite for carers. However, the way in which individual families need support will vary considerably and additional funding for a family holiday may be one way that some families can achieve a break to some degree. So I would be reluctant to see a blanket ruling on this.

I have never had the financial grant. this may inhibit low income families from accessing quality family time.

There are other company's who can offer this option I do believe the funding is best spent on providing the child extra curriculum activities, we pay for one to one swimming lessons for my son with a short breaks lady from kids who is not only doing her job but has a built a very good relationship with my son

Our view is that one family holiday does not meet the needs of a child / young person over a 12 month period.

not being able to spend it on a family holiday is wrong, that just makes it almost the same as the one on one support option, if I have to use it so XX goes out with someone else. I don't have any family that can take her out and I don't want anyone else to do so as I wouldnt trust them to keep her safe due to her many diagnosis and complex needs. I always choose the grant option as my daughter has complex needs and I struggle to watch her sometimes she's very challenging and has severe behaviour problems. I wouldn't trust anyone else to have her and look after her. The grant enables us to take a much needed family holiday, to spend quality time together as a family doing fun things instead of running around to appointments, cleaning, washing, ironing cooking etc.

We use our to have a family holiday, while there we access activities that out son loves to do and we all get to enjoy family time without having to worry about running off to appointments, cleaning and everyday life. We can just enjoy spending time together

Having a child with additional needs and being declined this opportunity has left us all feeling a little sad as we can no longer take our child or our two other children on a camping holiday in a camper van. We can not afford to take our children on holiday as I have to stay to look after our child with special needs. I do however feel that it would have made our little girl very happy as she loves scooby doo... Hence wanting to hire a camper van. It would also be unfair for the parents and or carers to have this decision taken away from them.

How can you take one child on a break and leave the sibling at home? How can your disabled child spend quality time with their sibling(s) in a stress free environment where parents can relax. It is more likely that one parent will take the disabled child on the break whilst the other parent remains at home with the sibling. When taking a disabled child on holiday everything costs more and this also applies to the whole family. For eg a disabled child may need their accommodation to be in a quiet area, away from other families due to sensory overload. The child ,any make noises that upset other families and may wake in the night and make lots of noise, this means the accommodation needs to be away from other families. Clearly the cost attached to this applies to the whol

If the grant is the only means for a family to get a holiday then they should be allowed to spend it on that.

A lot of families can only have a holiday with the help of the Aiming High Grant. It is very unfair to penalise parents for wanting them the take their children away to help them gain life experiences.

I didn't even know this was an option despite having been in receipt of Aiming High for several years, as this is an option that isn't widely known I believe this would not affect most recipients

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal on funding family holidays:

It may be that this is in the best interest of the child, it is an individual case. If specialist accommodation is needed, it is more than reasonable that the grant should be spent on it. Families have a really tough time when there is a disabled child and siblings often suffer. If the other children feel they are having a good experience because of the disabled child, this may be very beneficial to the disabled child.

The extra cost to take our children away should be taken into account

no no no to family holiday. Holidays are a luxury not a given right. Shouldn't be using tax payers money for holidays

Please see previous comment

What difference does it make? For Some families it is their only chance of a holiday. How will this proposal save money?

not sure what the question is asking. I assume the money is used by some families to fund a summer holiday, I do not use the money for this purpose. We use the money to ensure XX has a break in a fully adapted facility, my family is not really considered

Sometimes a family break together is just what is needed to recharge batteries.

I don't understand why this is no longer acceptable, this is surely the point of the grant, in that it allows a child with disabilities or additional needs to be included in the family break, would it be more appropriate to leave them behind? Most holidays suitable for children with additional needs incur a financial penalty (extra space / specific travel requirements / tailored activities).

everyone has to pay for their own family holidays why should we be any different

I feel that it is very unfair that the grants could not be used towards family holidays as both of our daughters have needs which could not be met if we weren't with them, please see previous answer. We would have difficulty affording to go on a family holiday without receiving a short break grant. We are only able to work part time in order to care for our daughters and are therefore a low income family. We feel very disappointed that we may not be able to afford family holidays in the future as a result of this proposed change.

I don't think holidays should be included

Providing the break can be shown to be supportive of the child's needs, it is vital that they are with people who they are relaxed and happy. This will normally be family members. The alternative to family not being present, and in many cases that will have to be siblings, is for many, the choice of a break or no break at all and where the one-to-one is not appropriate the child will be disadvantaged. It is appropriate to ensure that the break is for the child's benefit but equally appropriate that for the child to benefit fully, family members may need to be present. Families in receipt of benefits may not be able to afford appropriate break provision without this funding support.

Caller uses the short break grant to take her two disabled children to the seaside and this would be a much missed feature.

As put in previous question

We believe that the allocation of funding should be throughout the year. It is in the best interests of the family for the money to be available for short breaks throughout the whole year rather than for 7-14 day period.

I know it's hard but if you can afford a holiday then you should pay for it yourself

This is disgraceful. A family facing everyday struggles due to having a child with specialist needs and disability requires a break from this ongoing struggle. Financially we are unable to facilitate our families holidays as we have to keep our child home part days as a special school place is not available. This has huge impact on our income and the amazing high grant has helped us to take short breaks over the last 2 years

Sometimes a family holiday is what is good for the child

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal on funding family holidays:

if the holiday will be more expensive due to the disability then the extra cost for special accommodation or insurance could prevent the family having a break however if there is no extra cost then no funding should be available

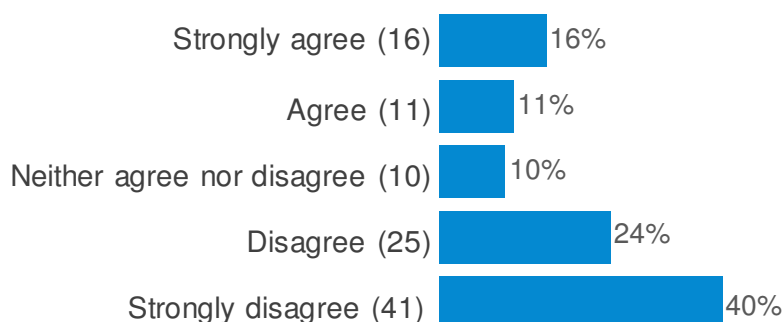
For some children this may be the only way they'll get the opportunity to have a holiday!

As explained previously

There should be an assessment as to how much public money is going into one family then a threshold after which justification needs authorisation at a senior level.

Personally I would not use these funds for a family holiday but I would fully support someone who did. However the wording 'family holiday' is not an accurate description of time away from home with a special needs child or children in the family. The word holiday implies a relaxing break away from stresses and strains of a working life. When you take your special needs child or children on holiday then you take your stresses and strains with you. This is very different from respite.

How strongly do you agree or disagree that all families meeting the current criteria receive the reduced offer from 1st April 2016?



Please give us the reason for your response to the proposed reduced offer for existing service users:

Get the system in place as soon as possible

It is often the regularity of support, e.g. fortnightly, which keeps the young person going. Our son would probably have opted out at an earlier stage than was sensible. He gained an ENORMOUS amount over four years, in confidence, in social skills, in independence, in trying things outside his comfort zone, in learning to be without family members for some of the time. We could not have achieved these results on our own.

If families are needing this level of support then surely they need some form of formal assessment.

I'm not sure whether I've read this question correctly - I feel that families who have already been receiving the 80 hours before 1st April 2016 should receive 60 hours in April 2016 then 40 hours in April 2017. I feel it is important that the support available is reduced in steps rather than cutting it straight to the 40 hours. I understand that additional support may be available through accessing MAT or social care help, but the thresholds for being able to access these are increasing and not everyone will be able to get this help to be able to apply for the additional hours.

It should be an assessed need. This should be for new and existing applicants. Reducing the support bit by bit will better prepare families for reductions in support. Children need a gradual change not a sudden change, as this can cause them to regress. Parents get stressed and need a break from the demands made on them.

It seems the fairest way to ensure that people can continue to get some support.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposed reduced offer for existing service users:

Caller would like obviously to keep the 80 hours that is currently on offer but if this is no longer possible would prefer a step down approach to be implemented.

my son has just lost his funding through DASG...he has been supported through berevement and given friendships through this group...this is all now lost at a critical time in his life (gcse) as our children get older they need higher support to succeed.

If these families have used the service to its maximum, congratulations to them initially for actually finding out about the service and being able to access the service effectively. It took me nearly a year to get it off the ground. It also implies they have used the service to its max because they NEEDED it. Without it it's likely that, along with other cutbacks, they're heading for crisis. Why penalise people that have used the service already? Surely that means they have needed to use it to that degree?

That would mean a big, sudden drop in support. A staged reduction would be kinder, especially for all the young people who find change very difficult.

As I keep quite detailed records of activities/breaks benefiting my child, I am able to see that at this date we are approaching a spend of almost £2000 this tax year on such activities. Towards this, I have allocated £625 from the core offer grant - I am sure that you will agree, that if I can reduce the reduction in the grant by £200 next year, I will do!

A more nuanced approach could be tried

An assessment on the individual families should be addressed on needs.

For those of us outside of the current support system it seems almost impossible to tap into any funds or support. It's as if because we struggle on alone we aren't considered to be in need.

This question is confusing - I'm not sure whether I am agreeing or disagreeing to a or b!!!!!! I think that the reduced offer from 1st April 2016 should only be for new applicants. It should be phased for existing users in a controlled step down way otherwise it will be too much for these families and more families are likely to not be able to cope with the significant demands of having children with additional needs to the extreme that more children will need looking after by the local authority.

I AGREE TO A POINT THAT SOME HOURS ARE BETTER THAN NONE BUT OF COURSE I WOULD LIKE THINGS TO REMAIN THE SAME BUT IF THERE HAS TO BE CHANGES THEN STAGED REDUCTIONS WOULD BENEFIT MOST FAMILIES

This question is worded in a way that makes it difficult to understand what you're agreeing or disagreeing with. Does the "reduced offer" mean the full reduction or a partial reduction the first year? I think the cuts will have a significant affect on children and families and anything we can do to minimize this effect is worth doing, so I would agree that families already receiving the funding should step down to 60 hours. Our hours were already reduced this year and we've had to try to explain to our child that he can't do as many activities this year. Now we'll have to explain to him that this will be cut further this year - and explain to his brother that there'll be less opportunities to do things with him that he wants to do that aren't suitable for his brother

There should be no reduction in hours at all. These hours are vital, not only for the children accessing them but for their families. It is the only respite some families get.

reducing support does not save money. A mother needs her mental health to be ok. Taking away much needed support will create ill health to families and neglect

I think if introduced previous applicants should be allowed to follow plan B as the amount of persons applying will be difficult to process

We need the existing hours and more. Please do not cut this lifeline! Think of the extra costs putting families onto MATS and then social services.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposed reduced offer for existing service users:

I feel that families such as ours have actually become dependent on the financial support from aiming high and this has shaped how we manage our school breaks and our families wellbeing. As April 2016 will be the next grant this does not give families time to plan as a 50% reduction will have a huge impact. The council may make savings in terms of the aiming high grant but in the long run this will result in a false economy as families and carer's struggle and the outcomes include worsening mental health and well being, poorer inclusion and reduced resilience to mainstream environments for our children.

Children with learning difficulties will need time to adapt to the reduction in their breaks etc therefore the proposal to gradually reduce funding appears to make common sense

Your child will still require the same amount of support and the respite is invaluable

just making life more difficult for these families involved.

It would be a huge difference to the frequency of the activities my child would be able to access. This "independent" time gives him time out of the home, with another adult other than a parent. At his age being accompanied all the time by a parent is not ideal. 40 hours would mean 1.53 hours per fortnight, he finds it much easier to stay in than go out and becomes harder to get to go out the longer he has been at home.

I have to approach the MAT Team every year and do a new application even though I have had the funding for the past three years. Why are we not contacted and asked if we wish to continue and why do we have to go through the whole process again? My preferred supplier was full so we have had to take the grant and find out own 1-2-1 support

It is a lifeline to me as a single mother with MS and an autistic child who needs routine. Nothing can be changed quickly

There is a reliance on this funding and I feel that it should not be reduced at all

Don't reduce it.

Whilst I see the predicament I feel it would be wrong to penalise the people who have previously used the system. They obviously need the help or they would not apply for it

Assessment of all current users by a relevant LA department would ascertain whether any reduction to respite/breaks at what ever time is detrimental to the disable child/children and their family. As this consultation should not be about your need to save money but about ensuring the support relevant for any disabled children and their families.

All families should of course receive the same offer.

I understand the need for cuts but it would make things so much harder

There should be one rule for everyone

Hours are already being reduced for existing service users and there needs to be a transition period so that the impact of this reduced service can be managed by families as best they can

If this proposal has to be implemented at all i feel a gradual reduction is the best option for the families.

As I previously answered, the flexible 1 to 1 provides a lifeline for our family. It was a hard battle to get it awarded in the first place and we'd really struggle without the service.

Without the full funding I would struggle to fund the private swimming lessons as the short breaks lady who takes XX helps me out by keeping him occupied whilst my other son who is younger is also disabled and in a wheelchair, so it means I am free to spend quality time with my youngest as having a older brother with autism and adhd can be very stressful and he feels pushed out.

This fails to acknowledge that the reason families are accessing the maximum is because those are the children & YP with the most complex needs and these are unlikely to change and will continue throughout their life. We feel its discriminatory to implement these changes without considering the needs of the children, or seeking their views

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposed reduced offer for existing service users:

It should be staggered for existing users allowing families that are used to a certain amount of help to get used to the reduced rates slowly, family's rely on this help to function, cutting half of their hours or grant money off would cause distress and leave a big hole in their life's.

I believe that current users should be able to step down over the next two years

I feel that everyone should be treated equally and each child is different, the child who needs a little more should have the opportunity to have a lovely holiday or days out as much as any other child.

You ask this question having clearly made a decision, I thought this was consultation? Consultation means a decision has not yet been made. Either of these suggestions will result in disabled children accessing less activities. Yet these children are the future. Neither is a fair system.

NOBODY should have their hours cut, 40 hours is not enough respite, it is already impossible to get a disabled child's assessment from social services if your child is autistic DESPITE this being a statutory obligation and without this involvement NO OTHER respite is available to these families who are most in need of it!

to reduce the amount of support would severely impact on our families ability to cope

agree with plan B.

See previous comments. If a child's disability is not improving then it's more than likely the families quality of life isn't changing either so how would a reduction in support be justified?

I could appreciate that new applicants could receive the reduced hours as they would not see a reduction in the service only a gain of 40 hours. I feel that this would save money. I don't feel that 40 hours is enough for those families that already receive 80 hours. Perhaps a phased reduction to 70 hrs from Apr 16 and then to 60 hrs from Apr 17 and keep the hours at 60 going forward.

My son has access to support that we could not afford. If this is reduced then we wouldn't be able to afford his swimming lessons which are one-to-one due to the level of support needed for him

If a family requires further assessment then no changes should be made until the assessment has been carried out, removing support could push some families to crisis point resulting in greater financial costs to the council.

Important if the system changes

I do not feel that the grant should be reduced.

Both of boys lack social skills and interaction with general public. To us the umbrella aiming high support is vital and the impact of reduced hours would dramatically have a negative effect on them. They thoroughly enjoy the 1-2-1 time and look forward to it. We already do 2 hours fortnightly so it is ample time to actually do an activity such as swimming. If hours were cut more this would only be once a month and impact on their social skills and their rapport with their support workers as both have memory issues.

It is usual for reductions in funding to be applied progressively to those who have been used to receiving the allowance. This, in conjunction with lead times involved in booking breaks or one-to-one support could lead to hardship where a sudden substantial reduction may well impact adversely on claimants. On this basis, whilst recognising that reductions are inevitable in the current climate, option b) seems the fairest way forward.

Caller would like the funding to remain as it currently is and feels strongly that other less vital services could be trimmed to make the savings.

Since my daughter has been using Umbrella as one to one support, her confidence levels have increased, she has been using the service for two years and to take it away or reduce it would have a massive effect on her and her life skills. I disagree that any of these cuts to disabled children should be made.

40 hours is a small amount of support for the whole year

I agree with the second proposal set out under b) above

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposed reduced offer for existing service users:

the stepping down of hours of support I agree with however the money could be reduced immediately as this is a one off payment and not an actual benefit or entitlement so should not be relied upon

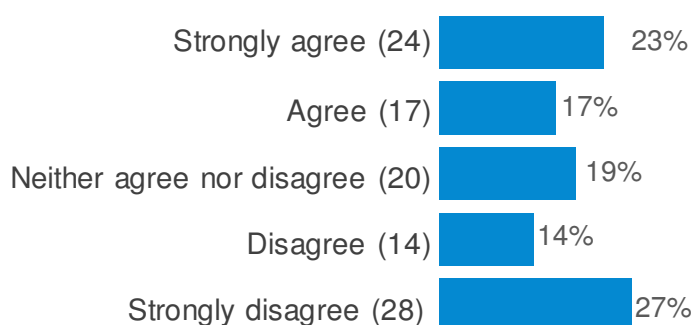
Just because you're already receiving aiming high it doesn't mean your child's needs are greater than a new applicant.

Explained previously Please financially review this on families income so it doesnt continue to get abused

As per my previous answer.

I strongly disagree in reducing this support. It doesn't really help that you are considering doing it in stages. In some ways that will confuse children with limited or fixed understanding anyway.

How strongly do you agree or disagree to the proposal that families who currently have flexible one-to-one support or a grant would have support reduced in two stages: stepping down to a maximum of 60 hours or £600 in April 2016 and to 40 hours or £400 in April 2017?



Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce support in two stages:

Gives time to plan

See above.

Agree in relation to the 1:1 support - people need time to adjust. Grant could be cut without a staged introduction to the new funding level - straight down to £400

As per the previous question

I do not think the one to one support should be reduced at all. The grant should be stopped completely. I fail to see how it benefits the child.

gradual change is paramount

I don't think hours should be reduced at all. It should be up to the individual as to whether or not they need the support

Current families have been used to 80, so a stepped approach seems fairer and easier to manage. New families should start with the new hours as they have not had anything else. However, could you ask the parents whether they are happy with 40 or 60 hours, as some may find 40 is fine straight away. Personally, I need most support during the school holidays which 40 should cover quite well.

Caller would like obviously to keep the 80 hours that is currently on offer but if this is no longer possible would prefer a step down approach to be implemented.

see last comment

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce support in two stages:

Any reduction in hours, whether it be staged or not, will be met by many with horror. Families are living on a knife-edge and this is yet another kick in the stomach. False economy. Reduce these services and watch the figures rise in CAMHS and adult mental health services. As a single parent of a child with disabilities, my own health has suffered immensely since services have been cut back. Carers Break has gone. Short Breaks are reducing. £62 per week carers allowance and not able to earn more than £102 per week. Work out the maths. The lives you are affecting are in turmoil.

This seems kinder and better for those who find change difficult.

Same ideology as Q5 answer

A more nuanced approach is needed

Reducing support on families at crisis point may save money in the short run but in the long run when the families can no longer cope and collapse with exhaustion it will cost the government a lot more.

Should be reduced for all from next year

I WOULD LIKE THINGS TO REMAIN THE SAME BUT IF THERE HAS TO BE CHANGES THEN STAGED REDUCTIONS WOULD BENEFIT MOST FAMILIES

See previous comment. Many of our children have difficulty understanding why they are no longer able to participate in as many of the activities that they have been and this will help to minimize the impact somewhat.

I believe the money should be used for 1:1 support

reducing support where there is a need is madness. In the long run this is not cost effective.

Do not reduce the support

if the changes have to be made I agree that the process should be staged to enable families to plan ahead for the financial loss. this will affect families both practically, financially and psychologically.

Q5 Allows time for adjustment as mentioned before

See previous response

as before

It would give time for each family to adjust and, for those children who have set days and times less of an impact around the change.

There is no choice as the money will decrease anyway

Don't reduce it.

I can see the need for it to happen but feel it would be a tragic loss for the families that most need it

As per the previous answer ASSESSMENTS BY PROFESSIONAL KEY WORKERS INVOLVED WITH WHOLE FAMILY WOULD ELIMINATE REDUCTIONS TO THOSE THAT REALLY NEED IT.

It is kinder, especially to children, to phase out support which has been vital to their lives as slowly as possible.

I feel that it's better than a sudden reduction but it's a drastic cut

There should be one rule applied for everyone

It's wrong it shouldn't be cut

As per the last response - this will give families an opportunity to adjust over time to the reduced levels of service

I think this is crazy when the funding provided now is only enough for a session for 2hrs once a fortnight or 4hrs a month, my son thrives off structure and routine. I know this is all about funding and money but these children who are going to be effected don't understand any of that and they build close relations.

see response to Q4

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce support in two stages:

This would ease family's into it slowly with a reduction they can cope with not just cut off half there support or grant money. Family's rely on this to help ease strained times and allow family's to function as normally as possible to give parents and siblings a much needed timeout from the everyday strains of living with a child with complex needs. Much better to stagger.

I think this would be helpful as then if you use the money already for activities throughout the year such as swimming lessons gives you time to be able to find them yourself

I think the situation they are in should be assessed then a decision should then be made.

Reducing the support will mean less access to activities. SSEN , SLT , OT all say getting your child involved in activities is essential to their development. Yet these cost more for a disabled child due to the necessity for a small group or 1:1. Therefore any reduction will reduce what they access. Parents are more likely to have given up work or reduced hours so they are already financially disadvantaged from the parents of the non disabled children. This is a statistical fact.

I don't think support should be reduced at all.

NOBODY should have their hours cut, 40 hours is not enough respite, it is already impossible to get a disabled children's assessment from social services if your child is autistic DESPITE this being a statutory obligation and without this involvement NO OTHER respite is available to these families who are most in need of it!

Don't reduce it at all. Make economies by spending less time and money on EHCP tribunals & consultation studies that will inevitably be disregarded. Sell County Hall to a developer and work in more modest offices. Find other ways rather than reducing services to the most vulnerable.

again the support we currently receive is minimal to reduce that further would impact on our family

i think this is a hard one to comment on as that would mean would only be able to have support for 1 hour 15 minutes a week the first year and the second i think would be 2 hours every other week for the second year. Cut down the time we can have with our other daughter who is not disabled.

See previous comments

Stepping down is acceptable, it's just the dramatic loss of 20 hrs that is too much. It should reduce to 70 hrs in Apr 16 and then 60 in Apr 17.

Do it in more stages over more years

Again I think the option to be reassessed should be given and if required then no change in funding until the assessment is carried out. At such time to outcome of the assessment should choose the final amount.

If the changes go ahead families need to be able to plan. In reality this means a cut in therapy for us. Horse riding with the grant our children access weekly sessions and holiday schemes. We will have to reduce which is a large problem for both our children.

I do not agree with any reduction.

same as last question

It is usual for reductions in funding to to apply progressively to those who have been used to receiving the allowance. This, in conjunction with lead times involved in booking breaks or one-to one support could lead to hardship where a sudden substantial reduction may well impact adversely on claimants. On this basis, whilst recognising that reductions are inevitable in the current climate, option b) seems the fairest way forward.

Caller would like the funding to remain as it currently is and feels strongly that other less vital services could be trimmed to make the savings.

i disagree with these cuts to help families and the disabled children themselves. They have enough to cope with and getting that little bit of extra help is a lifeline to our family, I can get on with other things with my other child whilst my daughter is with her support worker plus the confidence it gives her is a massive life skill to her.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce support in two stages:

This proposal is a fairer way of ensuring that support is still available to all and it means less impact initially,

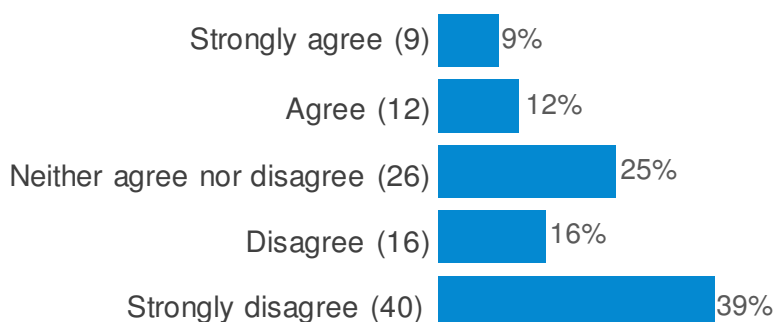
This is a lifeline to all families

the hours of support yes step down but the one off payment could be reduced immediately

If resources are running out then difficult solutions have to be found.

I don't see how staging a reduction will make any different ultimately.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities?



Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities:

Maintaining some provision in an austere time U.S. Better than no provision and families can use other allowances to provide other services

See above answer.

Non of these have ever been suitable for my daughter

I agree with only one provider being available in a district, although for me personally this is likely to make accessing support for my disabled twins more difficult. My twins do not get on at all (and this is a massive understatement of the situation), and it is likely to mean that one may access support and the other won't rather than them spend time together. It is very disappointing for me, but I can understand why this is being suggested.

These groups provide much needed support especially during the school holidays when disabled children cannot access mainstream groups and activities.

this would impact hugely on the type of beneficial activities Umbrella could do, they wouldn't be able to go out in to the community as much or visit places and this will effect the children as these activities help with development and behaviour

For all the reasons previous, cutting costs affects those with special needs and their carers.

My child struggles with group activities so we do not access these - that is why the one to one support is important.

Caller does not use group activities and would sooner preserve one to one support.

many of our children due to their disabilities not not have friends/peer groups...for my son this is the only support he gets to be with his peers instead of family members

One provider per district - in the past there have been a number of providers on offer which have all offered different services, i.e. some won't offer overnight services, etc. W ill they be offering the whole range of services? W ill they have sufficient members of staff to cope with all the requests?

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities:

What about continuity of service? Some of our children avoid change like the plague. We have built up trust with individuals. Leaving your child with someone is a major thing for all parents - we, too, have built up trust with people. Training alone doesn't give you that trust.

I don't know enough about which activities this would directly affect. I do know that my daughter (aged 13, has autism) finds the monthly youth club session and occasional holiday playscheme days that she attends, absolutely priceless. She says that she gets to be herself on these days, she can let her autism out. No-one treats her "like a wierdo", or looks at her as though she is strange. The rest of the time she is like a pressure cooker - modelling her behaviour on others, repressing her true self, or being picked for being odd. This places her under immense pressure everyday, resulting in great stress and anxiety and melt-downs at home. I begrudge admitting this, but, the playscheme days that she has attended this summer holiday have given me a much needed break to.

I accept that these saving need to be made. I am also under the impression that there is currently minimal support for summer groups any way.

We would benefit from Aiming High in theory but in practice have not engaged - the benefits are not worth what is on offer and the difficulties in securing the provision. A more individualised approach (April to April schemes are a dead giveaway that it is just about how it fits the budget and not the needs)

Ridiculous.

By working with a range of providers it is more likely that there will be diverse opportunities and that more families will hear about them

MY CHILD HAS REALLY ENJOYED SPENDING TIME WITH HIS PEERS ON GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DUE TO CUTS HAS NOT BEEN ON ANY GROUP ACTIVITIES THIS YEAR YET AND HE HAS REALLY MISSED OUT

I'm still a little unclear what the difference is, but at the moment my son uses his 1:1 Aiming High funding to access the group activities through Umbrella. I feel that it is important for him to access group activities, rather than use the funding for swimming lessons, etc. as this is the only social opportunities he has outside of school and so it's particularly important in the summer months. Without going to Umbrella group activities in the summer, he would be very isolated and have little contact with other children as he doesn't get invited to local play dates etc because he has to travel out of the village to go to a special school. I'm not sure which "various local inclusive clubs and activities" or "after school clubs" you're referring to as I haven't been a

Please don't cut these activities. Families are already struggling. Many parents have long term health conditions brought on by looking after a disabled child. This would only make it worse. You will end up with many more families in crisis with nowhere to turn to.

The Councils proposal is abuse

What about the working parent who needs a dedicated school holiday club. Where the trips although available are totally unsuitable and the child is autistic and hates change so the play schemes run at schools are the ONLY sensible option!

We currently do not access groups due to our child's difficulties and needs.

This is potentially the only time the disabled person gets to socialise without their family

How many times do we have to say these are invaluable our children can not always access NT or mainstream holiday clubs as they are unable to cope. Our children need structure and activities to help them progress and just enjoy life

because i believe you could save money in other area's

It seems they are well covered and did not need to use up all of last years budget.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities:

We have never accessed any group activities as we have not been offered any and this year the provider was full and couldn't take us on their books

These organisations don't provide services that are appropriate for all children. It would be more appropriate if grant could be provided for more personalised activities such as horse riding or specialised music lessons.

Which is more important disabled child or garden waste bin? I am the proud owner of both. The consultation to charge for bins was rejected so I

can still have a free bin but you want to cut the support to my disabled child? Which do you think is more important?

This is not an area I know much about

to reduce the amount of provider from the very small pool we have access to already is a nonsense and where are the addition saving you require of £60865 coming from. You are effectively reducing the hourly support funding and the funding to provide this support to voluntary organisations this equates to further disadvantaging disabled children and their families. If you have a problem with these organisations use the money or the quality of the provision assess them and revoke the funding do not take away good providers as a knee jerk reaction to government cuts. There are some really highly paid officials working for the LA who have been in their positions for considerable amounts of time who if assessed would also be seen to not giving value for money so I would su

There is very little support for children on the autistic spectrum. Social activities are essential if they are going to have any chance of a meaningful life where they work and form relationships. This is not provided by school so group activities should be continued not reduced. Received is spelled wrongly right up there in the first paragraph. It doesn't inspire confidence if you can't spell.

These activities make such a difference to so many disabled children

Reduction in these types of activities can only have a negative impact on children with disabilities. Opportunities are already very limited and this will just reduce that opportunity even more. The amount of proposed saving here can not nearly match the potential negative impact on the scale and quality of opportunities afforded to children with disabilities.

The group activities not only give families a break but also allow children to interact in a supportive, therapeutic setting. Many of these children do not have the opportunity to spend time with peers, away from their families, due to their condition. This will have an impact socially and financially on the family members if the funding is cut.

i don't really have a opinion as we don't access groups

Such actions would not give families choice and would inevitably lead to some providers feeling they could not continue. For any provider, Action for children included, we would need to consider carefully if the reduction in budget meant we did not feel it was viable to continue to operate the service. Such actions would need to consider if this meant Derbyshire was meeting its requirements under the local offer and Short Breaks regulations

I don't access group activities and cannot comment on whether the proposal is ok or not sorry

This currently doesn't affect family and I'm not sure what activities and outside support is available so I wouldn't be able to comment

There are more and more children in need of these group activities, I think it's sad that children with disabilities will suffer from this.

Having one provider could potentially mean the council would be paying a high price for the service as there is no competition. Councils are often in this position as they are not business leaders. This is my main concern with this.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities:

Refer back to previous answers.

Not all children can settle with one provider so having a choice means that children that wont go to one of the providers will have the opportunity to use another provider. Also each provider gives a different approach so a choice should be given.

NOBODY should have their hours cut, 40 hours is not enough respite, it is already impossible to get a disabled children's assessment from social services if your child is autistic DESPITE this being a statutory obligation and without this involvement NO OTHER respite is available to these families who are most in need of it! There are NO groups in the Ilkeston area, the last one was Barnados who proved unable to support autistic children with behavioural issues.

We don't use the play schemes but I know they are a lifeline to other families. If you overload the parents of disabled children you end up with financial impact elsewhere such as mental health costs, marital break down, poverty, increased dependency on the welfare state. It is not an economy to cut these services, it is also morally wrong.

There are so few places that support our children already to make further cuts would affect our childrens ability to access groups or access the community safely

i don't use any of these

I believe there are lots of groups/activities that can be paid for within family budget, however, more activities need to be specifically aimed at children with disabilities. We manage to find a varied balance of activities for our autistic son, but I would struggled with a severely, physically disabled child as I don't feel enough is on offer

Group activities are not accessed by my child. He responds well to the one to one service.

the aiming high grant has been key for me and my disabled son having a break - eg cost for modified caravan £1250 cost for caravan same time unmodified £600

Although I have found the statements very misleading, most people in Buxton and surrounding areas will read this and think that you are referencing Buxton & District Summer Club and in turn suggesting that there was at some point, some financial contribution by the council. I sincerely hope that this was not the intention of the wording.

As you say there are other providers who can offer the shortfall via grants. We ould suggest there is consultation on which provider

everyone is affected by cuts

We do not access these activities so are unable to comment on how it would affect families.

Same as previous comment as it would have negative effect on my children and their lives

I was not aware of the existence of these group activities.

Caller feels that these services should not be cut although her children do not currently access them.

This does not affect us as my daughter only receives 40 hours one to one support and does not attend other group activities. i have seen the other activities and I am sure they are a help to other families, who at times feel very isolated with their child's condition, so meet other families there etc.

Due to providers being capped for 1:1s the excess children who meet the AHDC criteria are usually offered group provision. Reducing the group budget will limit opportunities for a significant number of children and young people. We are concerned the reduction in budgets will reduce the number of opportunities for children and young people who do not meet the AHDC for example for young people with ADHD.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities:

There are many charities out there that can and will make up the difference - this should not be the Councils responsibility

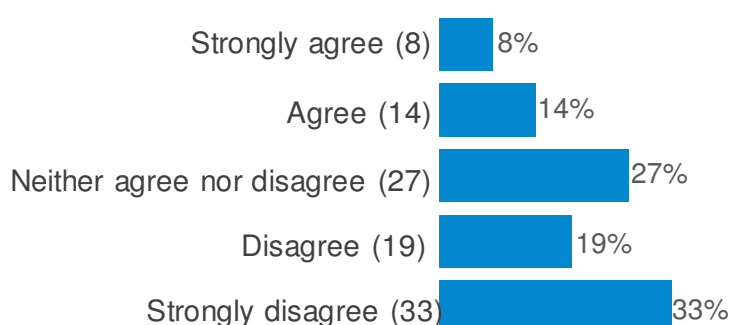
The services in place for these children and families are needed. We cannot keep cutting funding for these and expect no impact. People need support and respite and what happens to the carers?? Cut the funding higher up the chain

We currently access the FairPlay parent support group in our area and are hoping our daughter will eventually, when she's ready, access activities provided by the organisation. We have found the parent group to be an extremely valuable service for us to access! Having a disabled child can be very isolating and cause stresses that only another parent of a disabled child would begin to understand. The 90 minutes of my FairPlay Friday keep me sane, give us time to make friendships and gain support. It may only be once a month but that time is priceless, to lose it would be devastating, it's a lifeline for parents and carers!!

Look at providing services jointly with neighbouring authorities.

For some children, the group activities are the only time they are able to socialise without being judged in a place where they are fully accepted as themselves. To reduce this would have a significant impact on children who already struggle with low self esteem and could increase anxiety and social phobias.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to have one provider per district commissioned to provide Aiming High group activities?



Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to have one provider per district to provide Aiming High group activities:

Children and young people are entitled to choice

Resources are limited and we should only provide a simple service - if other groups wish to form to provide activities that is up to them - they can then apply independently for grants to charities and the voluntary sector.

The district is very large and too big to be covered by one provider.

We don't access group activities

As per previous question!

Parents should have the choice of who they go to - this would leave them with no options, and coupled with the reduction in funding, may leave them having to travel long distances or unable to access groups.

District is too big, and could mean people travelling over an hour just to get to the venue, that would mean 4 hours travelling for the parents

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to have one provider per district to provide Aiming High group activities:

I think people with special needs would slip through the net with only one provider per district. The work load would be too much.

I do not know the impact this would have. However at the moment it seems to be Umbrella, so that would be good to continue.

Caller would like to support Derbyshire Autism society.

the children accessing groups need firm structure and routine...this will destroy them, impact them mentally, emotionally and socially

See previous response.

Depends who the provider is, if it is Umbrella then that would be fine!

I suppose that depends upon who gets the contract for my area - will you be intending to canvass the views of service users to make this decision, I hope so!

If the provider is held properly to account (whilst bearing in mind that it takes time to build up groups) and does not unreasonably centralise their service - often most rural children may be in most need.

No choice the families should have a choice of provider. Also the provider can choose as they see fit and have no competition.

I think it would be difficult to have one provider to satisfy the needs of the very broad range of disabilities/additional needs. Some providers have more expertise with some disabilities than others. This would be a very bad move - completely moving away from targeting and personalising the support for disabled children and younger adults.

1 PROVIDER IS NEVER ENOUGH, THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES REQUIRING SUPPORT IS GOING UP NOT DOWN

I'm not sure - I'm very happy with my provider (Umbrella). That said, activities are sometimes oversubscribed and it can be difficult to get a place for your child, particularly on the most popular activities and activities during the school breaks.

I think parents should have a choice to find the best provider to suit their child. There is also the issue of distance and how children in more rural areas would be affected. Traveling comes out of their hours, by the time they had been picked up and got to the chosen place/activity an hour of 1:1 may have already gone

Not everyone's needs are the same. My daughter doesn't want to have the stigma of being in a group, Choice is a right!

I think there should be more choice for providers. There are a lot of parent carers who are not satisfied with the service they have received. One parent has been told they could not cope with her child so had no other options.

Different organisations have different strengths. One organisation maybe able to cope with a child and another not, blacklisting the child so you have to spend 12 months getting funding through social care cause not even the MATS team want to know. And then even with extra funding they cannot provide suitable care for the child.

I think it depends on who the provider is. parents should have a range of choices to meet their child's needs.

Ok I agree with this one as long as they had enough places for all children who needed it and correct training and not a one size fits all approach

for continuity of service

It seems sensible, one provider will mean that they have a full overview of what is on, where and when, avoiding dates clashing.

More coordinated approach

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to have one provider per district to provide Aiming High group activities:

We currently have 2 providers, one was full and the other makes lots of additional charges. It would be better however if parents had a choice though

It would be easier to monitor the level of service they deliver

I think that families should have the choice to spend their grant wherever they choose, not be forced down a single route. It would be better to give families the grant to spend on approved activities provided by the provider they feel most appropriate

Different providers have different strengths. Why does cerebral palsy charity provide short break for a severely autistic child?

I think it's better if families have a choice but obviously cuts need to be made

It is a fact that reducing choices of providers creates a monopoly and will lead to a selective process to get access to the service the NHS is a prime example. Plus we already live in a post code penal system and you will be creating another if the provider of choice is outside an individual district therefore creating more work and bureaucracy on behalf of all parents to get the right support for their child/children. The reason for less stress for parent of disabled children has already been covered in previous answers but still apply.

I don't know enough about this to comment.

This will probably ensure streamlining & better overseeing/management

Not all children like mine would do group

The more providers and the more diverse opportunities the better. To go down to one provider puts all the eggs in one basket and will hold everyone hostage to the quality of the approved provider (good, if they are good but not so much otherwise)

some of the children will be unable to function in larger groups due to anxieties, level of need etc

I think having one provider for anything has to be the best as there's been no consistency to the service and the admin part of aiming high needs much improvement!

See Q 6

I don't access group activities and cannot comment on whether the proposal is ok or not sorry

Again not sure what's available so can't comment

I think derbyshire is a large area to cover and again I do not think there are enough activities on offer for children or families so perhaps more than one provider would be better.

Provided the contract is robust in terms of quality, quantity and diversity of provision .

Not allowing a choice is a nonsense - if the one provider doesn't provide activities the child/young person likes then they won't go and there will be nothing for them at all, which equals further social exclusion/isolation that they may experience already.

If you limit it to one provider despite them being expected to support a wide range of differing needs they will be unable to help anyone properly. One size does NOT fit all when it comes to disabilities.

It depends on how the delivery would work. The activities need to remain local to the children.

having a choice of providers is crucial to meet the varied needs of our children

they can set their own prices and if there is only one provider there is no competition to keep prices down or to provide a good service

They need to be able to meet all children's needs and parents need to have a choice of what service they want their child to receive

It depends on if that provider has full staff coverage in that area, and is based in that area. No good having a provider based in Chesterfield and they are given South Derbyshire to cover!!

In such a large area encompassing rural and urban I don't believe that any of the providers can provide the "Full package". I can envisage lots of journeys the Chesterfield at families expenses.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to have one provider per district to provide Aiming High group activities:

It depends on the provider and what they can offer. If you had a provider that could meet a lot of differing needs I could see how this could be cost effective

difficult as I see organisations like umbrella as only useful for a certain type of disability and not suitable for all and I disagree with them getting all the grant money and parents can't have the money themselves to spend how they think their child would be better off suited to. My son's behaviour deteriorated attending Umbrella events and is better suited to attending more mainstream events so money for parents could be targeted properly.

Please see previous answer.

I think the providers should be restricted or capped. I've had problems accessing before due to caps with the provider who would happily take aiming high hours but Dcc wouldn't allow it.

The use of a single provider may well limit provision options.

Caller feel that this will disregard groups of children that do not all conform into one group. There wouldn't be enough support workers to go round the children if there was only one provider. This takes away choice for families. If the family are unhappy with the service being offered what is their option? If the service provider doesn't/can't provide the service to suit children/young people's needs, what will happen?. If organisations choose not to extend their contracts what will happen, we have seen this happen with Barnados. Would all organisations have capacity to deliver all of the provision in their area. Some geographical areas are very wide and this might be difficult. The amount saved on administration time would be minimal and families will not be able to choose their own provider. This is something the Council strived to offer from the onset.

This sounds expensive

As some people will not be able to get to them

this would depend on the activities provided and the cost effectiveness of this

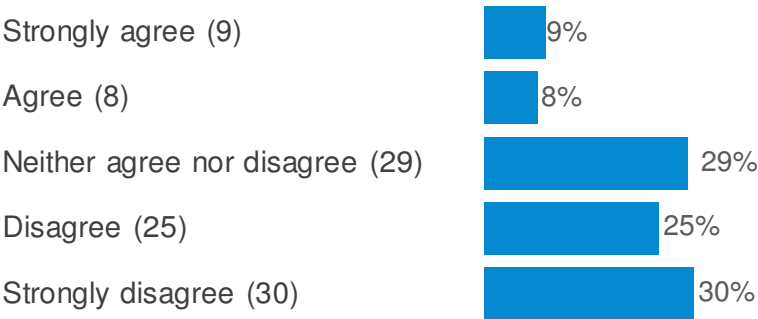
There needs to be a choice, one service doesn't fit all!!!!!!

We need the rest bite and help especially if your on your own!

Sorry do not understand your question.

I don't have enough information to answer this question. In theory though, it would probably result in a reduced level or service for families though as there would be less local knowledge and contact with families.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to no longer offer one-off funding for summer play schemes?



Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to no longer offer one-off funding for summer play schemes:

This has already gone

Often useful to have a variety of activities available during summer

It is unfortunate but funding doesn't allow us to do everything we have done in the past. Other play schemes should be encouraged to offer sessions for all children.

The children who need these services rely on them and funding them properly is essential.

These have never been suitable for my daughter

If this support is available elsewhere as has been suggested, then it makes sense not to duplicate this support.

This is a much needed play scheme for disabled children.

Following cuts to children's centres and youth services there are few activities for any children left. Children with SEN need safe places to meet and socialise over the summer. This will leave them isolated.

These are vital for the children as it gives them something to do and keep contact with friends during holidays, to some these are the only activities they get

I do not access the summer playscheme, but know that in Derby City there is much less provision for parents now, so if it affects that it is a worry.

As in previous comments, for many children this is their only chance to socialise with their peers and not family

This will not affect me so I don't feel well placed to give any feedback on this. I

don't know who this would affect.

I don't believe that you currently offer much funding

We've never been able to access a summer play scheme, all far too far away

Some individuals need one to one support

I THINK THE CHOICE SHOULD ALWAYS BE THERE,, MAYBE SEE IF THERE IS INTEREST BEFORE OFFERING FUNDING

I'm still a little unclear on the impact of this, but do feel quite strongly that summer play schemes are essential for disabled children as so many of our children would become isolated otherwise. I typically save up my hours for the summer play schemes as I feel that is not only the time my disabled child needs the opportunity to participate in group activities, but the time that we as a family most need a break and have an opportunity to do things with our other son that he'd like to do but aren't suitable for his brother to do - or just to get a little time with us to himself. Siblings of children with disabilities already feel that their disabled brother or sister takes up most of the parents' time and attention and it's very important that they have some time with

As I have said before, you will end up with many more families in crisis. For many this is the only type of activity accessible to their children.

There was and still is a need for one off's. The cuts are NOT due to lack of NEED. Cut budgets elsewhere

We have nothing in S Derbyshire anyway so this would not affect us

Derbyshire you have a specific facility dedicated to caring for children for respite, summer holiday playschemes, etc instead of relying on external organisations who rely on volunteers and low paid workers to care for children with difficult and specific needs.

Summer play schemes provide valuable support for families. This is usually a very difficult time when the child has a reduced routine and the well being of the whole family is impacted on. I suspect that families will be presenting to health and social care in different ways to meet their needs i.e. Mental health services, Carer services

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to no longer offer one-off funding for summer play schemes:

Some families really need help during the long summer holidays away from school, could this be part funded with a parental contribution?

For working parents we have difficulty accessing anything in the first place, this would make the work home balance even more impossible

cuts for cuts sake. not needed here

The provision seems well covered already.

These still have their place and should maybe be subject to district lead deciding if required

We have not accessed these so cannot comment

Summers a long holiday parents need help, disabled children need to socialise with their peers

These schemes should be encouraged

Again this is not an area I know much about

If this is what works for a family then it should not be removed unless at an assessment this is deemed to not be required or an alternative provision/support can be found on a individual case basis.

Summer play schemes are particularly important for social training and for respite for parents. They should not be cut.

I have no experience of these so cannot comment

They are hitting this big time it's so unfair on these children

These schemes provide an essential service for children with disabilities over the summer. It allows them to participate in a range of activities over a period of time when opportunities are limited. It also gives parents and carers the opportunity to engage in activities with non-disabled siblings while a brother or sister is engaged in the summer play scheme.

not all families are able to afford to pay for these schemes. they offer the children a chance to meet and mix in a social environment away from parents.

My son did use to go to half term events run by FairPlay I didn't realise you could use aiming high to fund these

The inference is that this would be provided in house and that does not consider that other providers, or indeed a block contract would not offer it at better value

I don't access summer play schemes and cannot comment on whether the proposal is ok or not sorry

Some children need additional funding to be able to access a summer play scheme that would be suitable for them

I think it would be the children that would miss out. This is very unfair.

Without summer playschemes families are going to go into meltdown and that will cost far more in the long term. These proposed cuts are for short term gain and for very long term (and expensive) pain.

The play schemes offer respite for parents while the children are at home for 6/7 weeks over the summer period. Children with special needs don't like the break in routine so this helps them to enjoy themselves and spend time with other children like themselves. It is very difficult to do "normal" activities with special needs children so the time given to them by accessing the playschemes is invaluable.

There is already no provision for this in Ilkeston

Really? I'm sure this is not something you would choose to do if you weren't under such extreme financial pressure.

there are very few play schemes that run during the school holidays that are able to cater for disabled children's needs. As working parents we are subjected to massive child care costs to ensure that our children's needs are met during the holidays. why should we be penalised for trying to work.

Please give us the reason for your response to the proposal to no longer offer one-off funding for summer play schemes:

i think they may struggle as they may rely on that money and fundraising is becoming harder as people don't have the money to give

Didn't know this existed

Again my child is unable to access these due to his disability.

I would be interested in know what funding had previously be given?

We have not utilised the playschemes. There are many providers who offer playschemes. I have found them to be good quality and affordable.

I think the Lea Green Centre for disabled children in the summer holidays is a complete must, as it introduces the children to so much variety. I disagree that play schemes run by Umbrella get all the money as these are not at all offering variety to children.

We do not access this so cannot comment on how families would be affected.

Children in need of support may find the long period of summer holidays tedious at times and will look forward to these opportunities for extra activity.

caller feel that the summer holidays offer the best opportunity for children accessing these facilities to mix with other similar children.

This does not affect us

Summer holidays are very stressful for families, by reducing the summer playscheme budget this could impact on the whole family. A number of families chose only to access holiday support. The decision to take away that choice if the current/chosen provider doesn't organise play schemes - especially if not in the family's area - family may not have transport.

Funding should be found elsewhere

This is something that will have huge impact on working families and the need for these facilities is ever evident. Parents cannot be expected to deal with the financial fallout from having to put children in childcare or nursery, if infact the setting will even take the child

there are many play schemes around who are or should be fully inclusive

Never accessed them so feel unable to give an opinion.

Summer play schemes appear to be provided by many levels of public authorities and charitable organisations perhaps you should spend your money on gaining access to these by your most vulnerable.

Parents who work will suffer significantly without the summer play schemes. This is quite a stupid question, how on earth could reducing this be of benefit?

I don't know about this unless you mean Buxton plays heme

Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the Council to achieve the savings:

If families wish to choose providers instead if having one provider could we not have the approved provider list that they could select from? This may,however, not be a secure position for providers

I think it should only be given by formal assesment so that it was aimed at the children who actually need it. I feel that removing the option to be able to use the short break for a family holiday is very sad as this is so valuable for many families including my own. Yes I know that it has been abused but it would not be difficult to make sure that the money was used appropriately and only given for families who need it and don't access any other funding/respite care.

Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the Council to achieve the savings:

Cut the grant completely and not the 1:1 hours - most people use the grant for a 1 off holiday which only gives them support for 1 week of the year. It doesn't help in the long run. 1:1 support, 80 hours over a year, is much more beneficial and gives families regular, sustained support preventing possible crisis. This should not be cut.

I think the grant should finish completely. The criteria needs to be clearer, many inappropriate referrals are being put through especially for the grant. People are just using it to boost their income. MAT workers and professionals should be clear what they are signing and the criteria needs to be stricter.

As much as the families object, you need to tighten the criteria.

One to one care would be expensive if that was reduced and all activities were group ones then people with special needs would be able to learn social skills at the same time.

Do not penalise parents who do not use all their hours. One thing it seems is that there is a need to use every hour you are allocated. However, needs change throughout the year, and surely if you need less hours this is a saving? There is a definite feel that if you do not use the hours you will lose them the following year, so a bit more flexibility with this would be good - although this may happen less now that the hours are 40.

Caller would like to support the one to one services in preference to the group activities as she feels these are of more value to her child.

The council needs to monitor the spend much more effectively. I've heard of families using the £800 to pay off debts! This is outrageous and an abuse of the service. I expect I'm saying similar things to other parents of disabled children. We were given these children, we did not ask for them to be born disabled. Quite often at the expense of our own health, we will not accept solutions which are deemed unethical or in any way contravene the laws that are there to protect our children.

Settle on what is available in terms of grants, and don't dictate to families how it can and cannot be used - or at least allow a framework for families to apply to use the funds in more appropriate ways. The potential to disproportionately discriminate some recipients, due to their unsuitability to pre-prescribed grant uses, needs to be guarded against.

It has never seemed a very creative scheme. It should be about providing a level playing field for children with SEND and their families and I am not sure it has been or will be. It should also be about preventing more expense eg as a result of family breakdown. Therefore I feel it should be an 'offered at point of need' service rather than 'apply for this just because you can and keep getting it'

Assess on an individual basis and give to those who need it. The right support is not getting to the families who actually need it. Without an assessment and professional input the severely disabled are missing out whilst none severe are getting ample. I would love someone to let me come to these meetings but I have been informed it doesn't affect my circumstances. From reading this it clearly does

All families with a disabled child should be made aware of the funding and given the opportunity to apply. When I first made contact I was told that I couldn't access the funding because my child was "not on the system". The reason for that was because we receive no support from anywhere.

I know this isn't a popular suggestion, but I would much rather pay a bit more in council taxes than have essential services cut to the most vulnerable families. These services will affect not only the lives and future of disabled children themselves, but the lives of their siblings and the rest of their families. It can be very difficult for families who have children with disabilities and things that people take for granted in other families can often cause a lot of stress. Simple things like getting ready for school in the morning, trying to find friends to play with, trying to find someone to look after your child so that you can do something else with your other child that they'd like to do, or even have a break yourself can all be difficult. We, for instance, don't have any family nearby and friends find it difficult to look after our child because of his needs. I know it is even more difficult for families who have children whose needs are even more complex, but if we all chip in a little more it can make a big difference.

Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the Council to achieve the savings:

Please don't cut the hours. I have 2 children with additional needs. I am already at breaking point. Can you really say that just over 3 hours a month is going to help support my child that is accessing aiming high funding or support us as a family? Do you want more children in care or parents having breakdowns. This is not dramatic just honest. You need to listen to us

Look at other cuts within the District, NOT the most vulnerable. I ask YOU what else can YOU do. blanket policies tend to be unlawful because of exceptional circumstances. I do not think you understand the impact this will have on each individual child and family. The service that is already in place is a necessary service, to take away is unlawful. What happened to safeguarding children in need (C.A 2003) The Children Family Act 2014 Human Rights Act needs to be considered especially article 8 ECHR, 19 UN CRPD, 23 UN CRC, 3 UN CRC What Allocated Reserve have you? What are L&A doing regards Council Tax?

I know our family is in the minority having a disabled child and both parents working, but I have no affordable childcare that I can buy for my child to enable us to work. I would like a dedicated nursery / out of hours facilities were for a sensible price I can buy childcare without having a person budget and the overhead (mainly time) of finding suitable staff. My child having been kicked off Aiming High due to the organisation who ran the summer holiday scheme inability to recognise my son was autistic and would fair better from not having daily changes of staff or being moved groups or even deciding that after 6 days my child did not fit in (by this I mean even being given chance to settle to the schedule!) It needs derbyshire to take responsibility to provide suitable childcare rather than giving it to the cheapest bid and more than that providing more childcare for those parents who do have work! But then the financial implications of having less parents on benefits and probably less suffering from depression and claim

it is very difficult to ask us to make savings for services which are already largely under resourced and services to parents are poor. Disabled children and their families are amongst some of the most vulnerable groups in society and susceptible to a host of physical and psychological health issues due to the nature of the demands placed upon them. The bottom line is there is more need than the resource can meet but any savings suggestion will have implications for parents and their children. I do feel aiming high could tighten up on what the grants could be used for in order for public monies to be used reliably and responsibly.

ensure all participating young people are eligible to receive the additional support so there are no leakages of funds to families who do not require support

How about working in conjunction with Autism East Midlands (ex NORSACA)

savings should be made in other areas. care for disabled children is not an area where cuts would be seen to be acceptable.

I do not know how much each service provider charges the council for providing support workers. Perhaps contracts could be put out to tender, or a website provided where families could locate and employ suitable staff themselves with the funding instead, especially in one to one service situations.

Yes. Instead of just offering 1-2-1 support offer 1-2-4 support. You could then have small groups of like minded disabled children go out with a group like they would their friends. This would help them socially and increase their independence. For example take 3 or 4 teenagers to the cinema and then have tea or take a group of 4 to play racketball or swimming club. Most young people just want a friend like them their own age to talk to and share experiences. They cannot do this with someone twice their age. The parents could then also pool their hours for the group and they could then have longer days, more trips and most importantly have someone they can talk to outside of the supported hours. My son always says "I don't want to go out with an older stranger I don't know. I want to go out with friends my own age but i don't have any and I don't know how to make any" We can easily change this if the children had a profile and a "supervisor" to take them out.

Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the Council to achieve the savings:

It would be more appropriate to provide a fixed amount of funding per child rather than a fixed number of hours. For example, as a contribution towards disabled horse riding which is quite expensive. This would provide more flexibility for families. Part of the reason the family holiday is popular is that we can then use the holiday funding to provide activities to disabled children which are more expensive than for able bodied children. The Aiming High grant for children with disabilities was cut from £1,000 to £800 in 2011/12. This further cut to £400 represents a 60% cut in funding since 2011/12. This is a higher level of reduction than the Council is receiving overall. It is unfair that this extremely vulnerable group who are unable to have a voice themselves are taking a larger than fair share of the cuts. The Council is not proposing to cut clubs for non disabled children. Surely the cuts need to be shared equally across society.

All is know is that families with disabled children deserve as much help as possible. It is a very challenging role and any help along the way is a bonus. As long as any changes made do not have a negative impact on the families you are supposed to support I can understand why most of the changes need making. However, I feel the children will suffer if all the cutbacks suggested are made.

The funding should remain as it is to help the funding to get 15/16 year olds out and about more.

All the statistic show that without support disabled children are venerable members of society and fall foul of the system with more being in jail learning a criminal trade, on drug, addicted to a range of harmful behaviour and substances. Society will pay eventually it will just be another department of the government in a few years time dealing with it, predominantly the prison system. So wise up and support these children whist they still listen to their parents and give us all support to prevent the inevitably sad outcome for our children.

We have only recently been awarded one to one support through Aiming High Derbyshire. My son has had to be home schooled as there is not an appropriate school place for him. In these circumstances it is very disappointing that the one service offered to him is going to be reduced just as he is beginning to use it. As a tax paying family we are entitled to an education which is simply not available to us so it is frustrating that we will now lose 50% of this service too. I would suggest that families like me who do not access funds used on a state school education are entitled to 80 hours a week. Other than that, I would add that I sympathise with the difficult decisions you are being forced to make and that I didn't vote for David Cameron and his government. If you are being made redundant, good luck.

To implore the government regarding the need for this valuable service to continue as it is

It's a bout time they left it alone these kids don't get enough support funding ect

Obviously the cuts to budgets that have been imposed by the government pose very real problems for the provision of local services and the responsibility for service reductions has been deflected from Westminster to local authorities. Personally I would much rather pay a higher level of general taxation or council tax than see local services reduced in this fashion. There are going to be difficult balances to strike but please try as far as possible to protect the vulnerable from reductions in services that will have a real impact on their lives and reduce their opportunities to participate in their local communities.

means testing,

Administration needs much improvement Please think of the children as this service is an absolute god send and a life line one tough weeks for the whole family

Action for Children we would welcome the opportunity to discuss the issue in detail, as no doubt other providers would. However there is a significant issue with the timescales of assessments and as such these proposals would only make the situation worse not better. If assessments are not completed within set timescales then the authority could be open to challenge and complaint

Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the Council to achieve the savings:

People should be made to submit proper proof of there child's disability and evidence of there proposed grant spend etc. I know people that sent in none or hardly any evidence of what they want to spend grant on and still got it. I was told to submit price lists for campsites etc I wanted to use etc which I did.

By assessing each case and sharing out the funds this would make it fair. Also a deadline could be put in place instead of it being open from year to year.

The award could be linked to DLA to cut out some of the administration. Collaboration with other county / city councils in order to demand better prices for services. Also managed jointly with derby city council to reduce management and admin costs. Use of electronic applications where software allows for auto upload and easy examination . This will save hundreds of staff hours.

These children and young people are among the most vulnerable in our society. If they are not offered the opportunity to socialise in suitable settings then the long-term prospects for them and society as a whole are dire (and the adults services bill will rocket because as they age they will be far more in need of support than they might have been had the support been provided at an earlier stage). This group of people are an easy target and the council should be ashamed of itself for even putting these proposals on the table in the first place. Increase council tax by a few pence specifically to fund services for the disabled, pensioners and other vulnerable groups (those in care, refugees, etc). We should be showing we care not making people suffer even more.

40 hours is not enough respite, it is already impossible to get a disabled children's assessment from social services if your child is autistic DESPITE this being a statutory obligation and without this involvement NO OTHER respite is available to these families who are most in need of it! Your provision for autistic children is abysmal - you need to change the social services disability team criteria so they stop excluding autistic children from their services unless they have a learning or physical disability as well. This survey/consultation has been deliberately written in such a way as to garner the answers YOU want to support these cuts. There are plenty of other areas these savings could be made (staff expenses and hospitality to name but two) without you having to cut front line services.

Put assessment into EHCPs or from school referral, to reduce the assessment load. Engage charities, churches, sports providers. Reach out into the community to support clubs and societies to extend their provision to include special needs children. If there were more sports clubs targeted at these children, there would be less need for Aiming High Get Scouts to set up small units for disabled children Offer Deaf, Autism awareness training and support to the private providers with the offer of then putting their details onto the local offer. If my son's Tae Kwondo teacher had been prepared to wear his radio aid, he could have carried on in a mainstream club. If the Scout leaders understood about Autism, he might cope. Put on more disabled & autism friendly activities in schools and leisure clubs. Maybe, some of the Aiming High hours could be spent in local leisure clubs with groups coming together for supported swimming activities, gym training etc. This would be more economical to the authority and would just need staf

in my opinion, the council needs to stop cutting services to these vulnerable groups and start looking elsewhere to save the money!

I think the idea of cutting back on waste is a reasonable one but to be honest I think you will spend more money on assessments than you will save. Are vulnerable children really the best place to target savings? Having spent a few months interacting with your Social Services department I could suggest a few streamlining and cost efficiency ideas there that would probably negate the need for removing/reducing this vital lifeline for vulnerable families.

Please tell us if you have any alternative ideas about how the Aiming High Derbyshire offer could be changed in order to remain sustainable or you want to put forward other suggestions for the Council to achieve the savings:

Aiming High is a valuable resource, which the council should be proud of. There is a clear need and the flexibility of it is a positive. I agree about holidays being provided from other providers and grants can be achieved via Children In Need etc. In my opinion the grants should be for the individual child with the disability. This in turn does support the family. It is right for quality assurance that receipts are kept. One idea is to look at the Aiming High Activities and the cuts that are to be made. Undertake a SWOT analysis and link the key agencies such as Umbrella along with parents. It may then be possible to develop a parents group who could achieve charitable status to offer some of the activities, such as playschemes via alternative funding streams.

Give parents a grant whether assessed or not and let them spend it to suit their child as every child has different needs - don't give it to one or two organisations and then we all miss out as these organisations don't offer what most children want.

We feel very strongly that the Aiming High offer should not be changed. Families of children with disabilities often suffer financially as a they are often unable to work as much due to their caring responsibilities. We think that it is unfair to try and make savings through cutting aiming high funding as families of children with disabilities need all the support they can get, particularly to enable them to have family holidays or get extra support to care for their children. We feel that it is not appropriate to take the current levels of support away from these families and that to make savings elsewhere would be preferable. The proposals would affect us greatly if they were successful and we would find it very difficult to be able to afford a family holiday without the grant and a grant would not be beneficial to our family for a short break for either of our children without us being there due to their complex needs. We feel very disappointed that this support may be taken away.

Without being aware of the whole picture for funding reductions it is impossible to comment constructively. I can only re-iterate how important the provision is for the children who are already disadvantaged by virtue of their need and disability.

caller feel that the budget that is allocated to aiming high is small in the grand scheme of things but offers a priceless alternative to other forms of social care and that savings of this nature could be found elsewhere within in the council quite easily.

We are unsure how many families access residential services. If you considered the cost of the project v the number of families supported could some efficiencies be made. For example could the young people currently accessing a residential short break be offered more hours at Getaway and the cost savings be invested in Short Breaks provision. We must question whether residential services are successful, popular and cost effective. We do not understand why residential services are not being considered as part of this consultation.

Families with disabled children can access funding from central Government - local government has become too involved here and is facing criticism now for withdrawing funds - but they should get on with it!

I personally feel it should be means tested although putting this into practice could understandably be problematic.

As I have said the council doneed to review who gets the grants and savings could be made their alone. Multiple diagnosed children in one family should only get 1 grant and it should be focusing on the more vulnerable families with low income and single.

Joint services.

I suggest somebody tries harder to stand up for disabled children. They are already getting a shitty deal. Parents and carers of disabled children work tirelessly against prejudice and ignorance for no other reward than the chance for their child to be treated with respect and given some of the same opportunities of their non-disabled peers. Think about what is available to a non-disabled child, on every level. Then think about what a child with say, autism or a degenerative bone disorder can easily do. You know it sucks to cut this budget. Stand up for them.

Are you:



What was your age at your last birthday?

Sample Count	Standard Sum	Mean	Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Range
97	4108	42.35	10.21	5	64	59

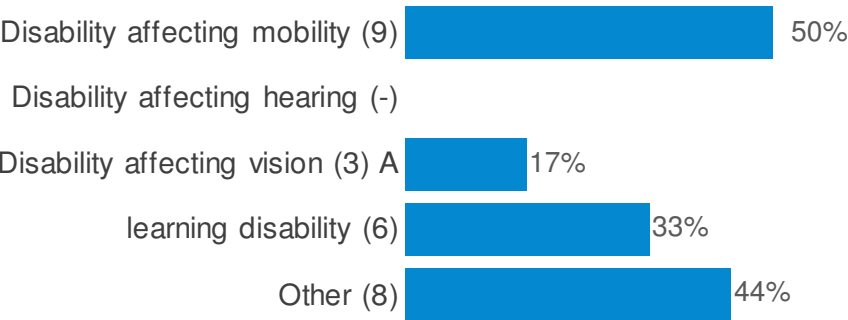
What is your home postcode?

DE58HW	DE11	de4 3pj	SK17 6RY
DE55 4ES	S18	DE7 6DB	S211gx
de13qt	de56	De723xe	ng10 3es
S417LE	S44 5TD	De757hx	DE55 5TE
DE4	DE45 1JJ	Sk17 0dq	DE7 6LU
DE65 6SA	s41 0yf	De58hw	SK17 9SL
DE55 3DL	DE7 4Fh	De561bs	Sk222jw
de56	de55 4ad	De11 7nz	
S43 2AH	S40	s43 1ef	
S44 6TX	De11 0pu	DE7 8SP	
DE11 0ER	DE561HA	DE564EZ	
de4 2tr	SK138uf	de75 7aw	
de6 1rs	SK22 4AH	s40	
sk17 0dt	de249eu	DE11 0HE	
de56 4 fj	DE4 5LZ	s426nw	
S42 5QT	DE65 5FL	S32 2JN	
sk176pe	de56	S45 9ES	
S41 8qj	S43 2jl	de7 4dp	
S45 8AA	sk13 2ha	S40 2jd	
ng10 4nn	s403ld	S40 3RS	
sk23 0pa	S40 2jd	sk17 6ub	
DE4	DE11 7EH	DE722DE	
DE55 5TP	DE76NB	De72 2bu	
s43 6ef	SK17 9SL	DE22 5JA	
DE65 5HP	de564er	S41 0QH	
De56	DE4 4NF	De65 5dl	
S42	de655fb	DE75 7EB	
DE7 4AA	DE12 8NJ	de65 5hg	
DE12 8NJ	s43 2lq	DE11 9AJ	
s41 8un	S404XT	de22 4LD	

A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Do you consider yourself disabled?



If you do consider yourself disabled, what type of disability do you have? (Please select all that apply)



If Other, please specify: (If other (please specify))

Depression ranging from moderate to severe

MY CHILD HAS A LEARNING DISABILITY

Invisible illness

Global delay

Depression

MS

I am a career for a 9 year old child with Cerebral Palsy which affects mobility and a learning disability

I have three disabled childe children and the fact that I have not joined them with some fall out illness due to stress is testament to my

I've got fibro

Autism, ADHD, Epilepsy, Pica, developmental coordination disorder, global developmental delay, sensory processing disorder

Autism

I am answering this questionnaire on behalf of my son who is disabled.

parent of disabled child so very relevant

What is your ethnic group?



Aiming High Consultation: Report on Feedback from Young People's Group Sessions

Introduction

This report relates to the consultation on a revised set of proposals that would change the Derbyshire Aiming High Offer that took place between 17th August and 6th November 2015 and should be read in conjunction with the main consultation report:

In addition to the online consultation being available for completion by all interested parties and the Parent Carer Voice forums at which parents had the opportunity to discuss proposed changes the specific views of young people were also sought.

All families in receipt of support from Aiming High were written to and invited to give their views by taking part in the online consultation. This letter also informed parent/carers that we were planning to obtain views directly from young people. The letter requested that detail of the school or youth groups attended by the young person be provided if their son or daughter wished to give their view. Over 947 service user families were sent a letter, however, only one response to the request to provide this detail was received.

In order that disabled children and young people had an opportunity to provide their views with the appropriate support and in a familiar environment all special schools and youth groups targeted at disabled young people were invited to facilitate participation by arranging for groups of young people to tell us about the things they currently enjoy and the things they would like to do during their leisure time. These group sessions also aimed to establish how these young people might feel, or be affected by, any proposed changes to the current Aiming High offer.

Sessions were arranged in special schools, targeted youth groups and Aiming High providers. Independent advocates were commissioned to lead the groups, which were held at various times of day and at the weekend.

The additional needs and disabilities of the young people taking part were varied and included: autism, Deaf and hearing impairment, physical and learning disabilities and communication language delay/disorder.

Not all settings were able to determine the specific support or service that the young people were currently receiving, however, it was possible to identify that at least one third of all the young people taking part in the groups were receiving support from Aiming High.

Twelve settings were visited and a total of 64 young people participated in small groups within a familiar environment. 32 of the young people took part in a group session held in their school. The special schools that took part were: Brackenfield, Bennerley Fields, Stanton Vale, Alfreton Park School, Ashgate Croft and Peak.

A further 32 responses were obtained from targeted and commissioned youth groups and included: Open Door Club, Saturday Fun Club - New Mills, Umbrella Group, Strides at Hadfield, Aspire and DASG.

The gender split of the total numbers attending these group sessions was 56% male and 44% female; however, there are approximately 2.6 times as many males as females accessing Aiming High support. Three of the young people consulted with were aged 20 years and above and the youngest participant was 9 years.

Survey Design and Methodology

The complexity of the proposals and the level of additional needs of the participants meant that not all young people would be able to provide an informed response to the questions in the online consultation. The independent advocates therefore conducted group interviews that focussed on identifying what the young people currently enjoy doing; what they would like to do that they currently are not able to and, if any activities were to be limited, how they would prefer to spend their time. Sessions took place in environments that were familiar to the young people and were supported by staff known to the young people and who understood their communication needs.

The independent advocates recorded the views of young people on a proforma. As data was collected through groups rather than via individual interviews this report does not provide counts and percentages at an individual level.

Session Summary

The independent advocates recorded the things that participants informed them they did when they were not in school. The biggest majority identified

that they took part, to some degree, in physical or sporting activity such as: trampolining, football, swimming, cycling, walking, table tennis and bowling.

An equal mixture took part in a social activity; including attending groups, shopping, travelling, pamper days and trips to the cinema, and those doing more isolated hobbies or activities such as gathering collectables, computer games, phone, X-Box, watching TV or doing jigsaws.

Other responders identified activities involving animals, such as horse riding, looking after chickens and walking the dogs and, in addition, time spent with family members.

When asked about what they would do if they could not continue with the current level or frequency of activities the majority identified that they were keen to continue attending groups and socialising and were concerned that by not doing them as often they would not see their friends. They identified that they might take part in additional activities such as walking, going to the skate park, watching football, playing sports and trips out including theme parks and zoos.

The young people described that they would feel sad and lonely if they could not do all of the things that they currently do.

10 groups were able to identify things they would like to do and the barriers that prevented them: these included attending youth clubs but not knowing where these were or a club previously attended no longer existing, guitar lessons but not having access to a guitar or trips to theme/animal parks but not having anyone to take them.

Other activities identified as being of interest included horse riding, eating out, painting, various organised events e.g. bowling, Laser Quest, ice skating and sport/fitness e.g. zumba/aerobics/kickboxing/yoga/tennis.

In general most of the young people would like to try some new activities or do more of what they do already. 11 of the 12 groups stated that they would like more organised trips out to theme parks, the seaside and various sporting / fitness activities or other activity away from home. Some did identify wanting to spend time with family and have visits to friends' houses. Dancing, bowling, going for a meal, playing Minecraft, singing, shopping, paint balling, cooking and the cinema were also identified as preferred activities when they were not at school

Reports from 8 of the sessions commented on whether or not young people preferred to do things in groups: 7 groups identified that they preferred to do

things in a group with other children although some of these individuals stated that they also liked one-to-one time with a support worker or family member. The remaining group had a 50/50 split between individuals preferring to do things alone and doing things with other children.

Individuals would like more social contact in general but the majority of views from 6 sessions stated that young people would like more activities with friends.

Conclusion

The responses from the young people attending these sessions enable us to conclude that young people value the time they spend socialising. They want to take part in the same sort of activities that other young people access and would like to have more opportunities available and to socialise with friends.

Many of these young people are currently able to meet with friends outside of school because activities and groups are supported and facilitated to enable them to do so. For many, attending targeted support groups or accessing activities with support from a provider or from a family member is currently the only time they are able to socialise outside of school. They identified feeling sad if they were not able to attend groups, although 50% of the groups indicated that they did also like to do some things alone or with a small number of people.

APPENDIX 2

Derbyshire County Council Equality Impact Analysis Record Form 2014

Department	Children's Services
Service Area	Targeted services - Aiming High Derbyshire Offer
Changes or proposals	Aiming High Derbyshire Offer
Chair of Analysis Team	Julie Harper
Date of Analysis	31.12.2015
Version	3.3

1. Prioritising what is being analysed

a. Description of current service arrangements

Local authorities have a duty to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a range of short break services which is sufficient to assist parent/carers of disabled children and young people to continue to provide care, or to provide care more effectively.

Derbyshire County Council provides a 'menu' of short break provision for disabled children/young people and their families at differing levels of need: the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer forms one strand of the wider short breaks offer and in 2015/2016 has a budget of £966,000.

Short breaks for carers of disabled children and young people are different from child care, education or universal provision, which anyone in the community can access, e.g. local leisure centres. Short break services are a range of services that support disabled children and their families and are intended to give:

- disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, thereby contributing to their personal and social development and reducing social isolation
- Parents and families a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities.

The current Aiming High Derbyshire Offer includes:

- Group activities for disabled children/young people: This is in the form of funding for two organisations per district to provide groups for disabled children that otherwise would experience difficulties accessing a short break activity. There are no criteria or assessments applied: providers determine the level of provision each child/young person can have based on their needs and the providers available capacity.
- Flexible one-to-one support: eligible disabled children/young people will have one or more of the following:
 - an autistic spectrum condition, most likely with other impairments such as a severe learning disability or challenging behaviour
 - complex health needs
 - moving and handling needs that require equipment and adaptations
 - challenging behaviour linked to other impairments, such as a severe learning disability.

and not be in receipt of any other services from social care.

Those meeting the criteria can access up to 80 hours of flexible one-to-one support per year. One-to-one support is provided through 3 organisations in each district, giving families a choice of provider, subject to availability.

- Short break grant. Families have the option of choosing a short break grant as an alternative to the offer of flexible one-to-one support. This is in the form of a cash grant up to £800 per year to be used towards providing short breaks.

An assessment identifying needs is not a requirement in order to access group activities, flexible one-to-one support or the grant. Providers determine the level of access to group activities and a lead professional confirms that the child or young person meets eligibility criteria for flexible one-to-one or grant support. Lead professionals should confirm that the disabled child or young person is not able to access group activities without one-to-one support and that they are not in receipt of other social care provision.

In previous years a limited amount of one-off funding was made available to voluntary organisations and groups for the delivery of summer play schemes.

In addition the Aiming High Offer includes:

- Aiming High activity weekends: these are occasional weekend activity breaks for older children and young people with more complex needs. Access to activity weekends is based on an assessment of need and is

approved by a Social Care Panel. This provision is not part of the current proposals and therefore would not be affected.

The table below illustrates the short break offer in Derbyshire. The services shaded in grey are those that would be affected by the proposals.

Universal <i>Available to all children and young people</i>	Inclusive Local Clubs and activities (for example, Children's Centre groups, Derbyshire Youth Service universal service after school clubs etc.)
Targeted <i>Can access without a formal assessment</i>	Specialist DCC youth service disability groups
	Small grants for summer playschemes
	Aiming High group activities – open to any child or young person with a disability aged 5-17
	Aiming High flexible one-to-one support or a short break grant – open to children/young people aged 5-17 who meet certain eligibility criteria
Social Care & Specialist short break services <i>Access identified through formal assessment</i>	Aiming High activity weekends – provided by the voluntary sector.
	Disabled Children's Core Services: Fostering, Residential Outreach and Family Support Services

Universal services/activities: are available to all children and young people and have no eligibility criteria. Families, children and young people tell us they want to be able to use local universal services and settings. The Disability Inclusion team can provide support to universal settings to help them meet the needs of disabled children and young people.

Targeted services/activities include: specialist Youth Service Disability Groups which provides a programme of recreational and sporting activities for young people aged 11+. There are no eligibility criteria but some groups have a specialist focus such as the groups for Deaf and hearing impaired young people.

Aiming High group activities: Derbyshire County Council contracts with voluntary sector organisations to offer group activities for disabled children and young people aged 5 – 17 years. Participants self-refer, however providers should be initially approached in order to discuss levels of need and to determine any additional support that may be required.

Aiming High flexible one-to-one support *or* short break grant *or* a combination of the two are for children/young people who cannot access any group activities due to the nature and/or severity of their needs. There are eligibility criteria and applications need to include evidence of the young person's

disability and be signed by a lead professional, such as a school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, nurse, Multi-Agency Team Worker etc. Children and young people must not be receiving any other short breaks or similar support.

The Aiming High flexible one-to-one support and group activities are provided by 8 voluntary sector organisations who currently hold contracts with Derbyshire County Council to deliver these services.

Specialist short break provision is provided following assessment by the Disabled Children's Team. Social Care and specialist short breaks services includes: Aiming High activity weekends (access to these is based on assessment of need and approved by a social care panel) and essential support to families who without this support would not be able to look after their disabled child due to the high levels of need identified through a statutory assessment. These services include Fostering, Residential, Outreach and Family Support Services such as Direct Payments or Personal Budgets.

b. Details of proposals or changes

Two consultations have taken place during 2014 and 2015 about the future provision of Aiming High short breaks. Following the first consultation in 2014, on the 28th July 2015 Cabinet agreed to a further period of consultation on a revised set of proposals for the Aiming High Offer. Consultation took place between 17th August 2015 and 6th November 2015 on the following proposals:

- I. To retain the current criteria for families to access Aiming High flexible one-to-one support, without the need for an assessment by a Multi-Agency Team (MAT) or Social Care. There would, however, be a reduction in the maximum hours available to families without an assessment from 80 to 40 per year;
- II. To continue to give families the option of choosing a short break grant as an alternative to one-to-one support, with a reduction in the maximum grant from £800 to £400 per year. In addition, there would no longer be an option for families to use the grant to fund family holidays.
- III. To consult on:
 - a) implementing these changes for all families from 1st April 2016, or
 - b) implementing these changes for new applicants from 1st April 2016, and allowing existing service users to step down to a maximum of 60 hours/£600 in April 2016 and 40 hours/£400 in April 2017.

In addition, subject to any further feedback, the Authority proposed to:

- IV. Implement the previous consultation proposals to:
- a) Reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities from £300,000 to £150,000 with one provider per district commissioned to provide group activities for disabled children.
 - b) No longer offer one-off funding to voluntary organisations to provide summer play schemes.

Background:

Feedback from the first consultation that took place between 8th October 2014 and 15th December 2014 led to the revised proposals described above. In 2014 views had been sought on the following proposals:

- Reduce the budget for group activities from £300,000 to £150,000, with only one provider per district commissioned to provide group activities;
- Reduce the budget for flexible one-to-one support and short break grants from £666,000 to £366,000, and use the reduced budget to make one-to-one flexible support available to families on the basis of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) by the Multi-Agency Teams (MATs). MATs would then spot-purchase short break services for eligible families from the existing 'Framework of Providers'. It was proposed that the access to the cash grant be removed;
- Cease the small grants for Summer Playschemes – making a saving of £35,000: as there are no on-going contracts in place and no commitment to any on-going funding;
- This consultation did not propose any changes to the Aiming High activity weekends; however views on the proposal that these should continue were requested.
- At the time of the consultation in 2014, the current provider contracts were due to end on the 31st March 2015. Interim arrangements were included in the proposals to cover the period from 1st April 2015 until September 2015.

The proposals were not implemented and contracts with providers have been extended for a full financial year. The Aiming High Offer remains unchanged in 2015-16.

The 2014 consultation identified that there was significant opposition to cuts to provision for disabled children. Also, during the consultation period, some issues were identified which required further thought and consideration, including:

- Whilst people felt that the principle of MATs assessing families' needs was fair, they were concerned that this would involve a disproportionate extra cost of assessment and the potential for backlogs;
- Access to support without further assessment was valued, and it was felt that those meeting the current criteria should have something they can access without an assessment;
- Grant: there was a strong view from some families that the short break grant enabled greater flexibility for activities and support that could not be delivered by the contracted providers of flexible one-to-one support. Many families advocated keeping the grant, although there were also concerns voiced about use of the grant.
- Some consultees expressed the view that disabled children and young people should be more fully involved in the consultation process to ensure that their views were fully considered in the decision making process.

Reflecting on the responses to the consultation in 2014, taking into account user feedback and further analysis of newly acquired data, led to consideration of alternative proposals requiring a further consultation between August and November 2015.

C. Rationale for proposed changes

The existing short breaks offer was developed as a result of increased funding that was made available to Local Authorities to extend access to short breaks for disabled children and their families. In 2010-11, Derbyshire County Council received a Government grant of £2.37 million for this purpose. The grant was used to increase the range of short break services, including "Aiming High" and a number of Social Care services for families with the highest levels of assessed need.

Whilst this has been extremely positive, this funding stream is no longer ring-fenced. Funding was initially subsumed into the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) and subsequently into the main Council funding. Although it is not possible to identify the current national grant allocation for short breaks, these wider budgets have been cut by between one third and one half. Over the same period, however, spending on short breaks has increased year on year. The 2015-16 budget for short breaks for disabled children and young people is almost £3.8 million, well in excess of the 2010-11 Government grant. Almost £1 million of this budget relates to "Aiming High" short breaks.

The number of users of Aiming High has increased significantly since it was

introduced and for several years spending on Aiming High short breaks increased year-on-year, by 15% on average. To date, spending has remained within the allocated budget only because many families have requested the Aiming High grant rather than the flexible one-to-one support. Continued delivery of the current model is no longer affordable or sustainable.

In the last five years the Council has had to face unprecedented reductions in its finances. During this period Children's Services has seen its budget fall from £126.8m to £95.3m, a reduction of almost 25%. The Council needs to make further cuts means that the Children's Services budget could ultimately reduce to circa £70m, around half of the 2010-11 budget. Consequently, the Service has no alternative but to consider implementing savings in key service areas.

Aiming High flexible one-to-one support, grant and group activities are provided without a formal assessment of need. Changes to the current Aiming High Derbyshire Offer will be necessary; both to enable the Authority to keep within its budget and to ensure that support for families with a high level of need can be sustained into the future.

Derbyshire Children's Services has previously provided a limited amount of funding to voluntary organisations and groups for the delivery of summer playschemes. This has been in the form of one-off funding available on an annual basis. The scheme overlapped with the commissioned Aiming High group activities, and take up reduced from £50,000 several years ago to an amount in the region of £27,000 in 2012-13, which was the last year in which the scheme was advertised. The outcomes have been varied: some well-established schemes have reportedly worked well; others have been under-subscribed and consequently may not have delivered value for money. Providers of Aiming High group provision already offer a range of activities during the summer holidays. As there were no costs in 2014-15 and no budget included for 2015-16, this saving has already been accounted for.

Starting Point aims to provide a single point of access for referrals into Children's Services. It would therefore be appropriate for requests for Aiming High one-to-one support and grants to be triaged through Starting Point; this will assist in achieving consistency, efficiency and ensuring that families are directed to the appropriate service. This process would also provide more consistent data for analysis. This would be an adjustment to internal arrangements for processing requests.

2. The team carrying out the analysis

Name	Area of expertise/ role
Julie Harper	Commissioning Manager Additional Needs And Disabilities, Children's Services
Linda Dale	Head Of Commissioning & Partnerships, Children's Services
Bev Milway	Head of Service - Provider Services Disabled Children
Denise Hudson	Commissioning and Contract Support Officer, Children's Services
Wesley Downes	DCC Policy

3. Existing information and consultation based feedback

a. Sources of data and consultation used

Source	Reason for using
Aiming High Consultations during 2014 and 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information obtained from: families, children and young people using the service, providers and other interested parties in the form of an online questionnaire: method used in both consultations Information gained from: families, children and young people using the service, providers and other interested parties in the form of a paper questionnaire; method used in both consultations Information gained from children and young people using the service in the form of group discussions recorded on a pro forma during sessions led by the Disability Inclusion Service in 2014, and the independent advocates in 2015.
Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice forums which included Aiming High service user families and other families with disabled children/young people	Report and views expressed during forum sessions held during the consultation

Source	Reason for using
Aiming High contract monitoring information	Provides service user volume, satisfaction data and outlines performance
Aiming High service user satisfaction surveys	Provides service user experience and satisfaction data
Aiming High Provider Annual Report	Provides service user experience, satisfaction and provider performance data
Consultation on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Reforms and the Local Offer	Information gained from families, children and young people in the form of a questionnaire that formed part of the consultation on the implementation of the SEND Reforms in 2014.
Special Educational Need and Disability Code of Practice and associated regulations	Contains provisions to reform the current system and drive the changes that will deliver co-ordinated assessments and support and greater personalisation
Derbyshire Short Breaks Statement	Currently under review: sets out the detail and range of short breaks services and eligibility criteria
Feedback on Derbyshire Local Offer	Feedback on content, accessibility and usefulness of information held on the Local Offer
Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children March 2011.	Departmental advice to local authorities
Draft: Children and Young People with SEND in Derbyshire	Provides information on the number of children and young people in Derbyshire with special educational needs and/or disabilities from school census, DCC Tribal and Profile systems

4. Known impact on different protected characteristic groups

- a. From existing data and information – who is likely to be adversely affected, how, and to what degree? Will anyone gain or benefit from the proposals?

Protected Group	Findings
Age including children and families, older people	The Aiming High Derbyshire Offer is aimed at disabled children / young people aged between 5-17 years. Those accessing flexible one-to-one support, short break grant or a combination of both are required to meet

relevant eligibility criteria. There are no criteria or assessments applied to group activities: providers determine eligibility.

Flexible one-to-one support: The highest proportion; 17%, of young people accessing flexible one-to-one support are age 16 years. 13% of all children and young people accessing flexible one-to-one support are age 10 years. A significantly higher number of males access one-to-one support; the chart below shows the use of flexible one-to-one support by age and gender.

M	Age	F
0	5	0
1	6	1
6	7	2
9	8	1
15	9	4
22	10	6
18	11	4
15	12	5
12	13	2
13	14	5
19	15	4
28	16	10
14	17	6
172		50

Short Break Grant: access to the grant is relatively consistent across all ages. A significantly higher number of males access the grant: the chart below shows use of the Aiming High grant by age and gender.

M	Age	F
10	5	6
20	6	12
14	7	11
22	8	9
34	9	8
20	10	16
35	11	11
25	12	12
21	13	5
20	14	15
22	15	10
34	16	7
10	17	3
287		125

Combination Offer: a smaller number of users access a combination of flexible one-to-one support and a short break grant. Data demonstrates a fairly even distribution. The number of males accessing the combination offer is significantly higher than females: the chart below shows use of the combination offer by age and gender.

M	Age	F
0	5	0
0	6	0
3	7	1
0	8	0
2	9	0
3	10	0
3	11	0
3	12	2
3	13	1
2	14	0
2	15	1
2	16	1
2	17	1
25		7

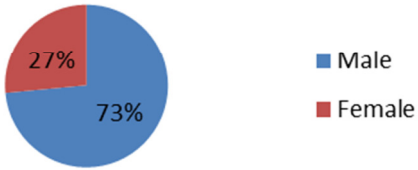
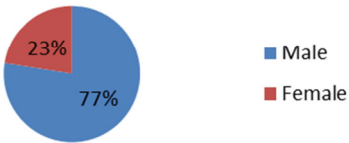
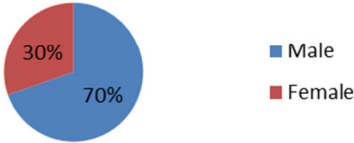
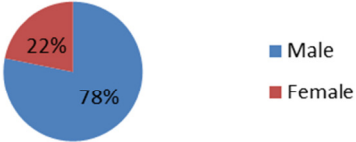
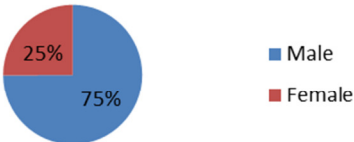
Aiming High Group Activities: The highest proportion; 14%, of young people accessing Aiming High group provision are aged 16 years. The highest numbers of males accessing group activities are aged 11 and 16 years, the highest numbers of females are aged 13 and 16 years. Significantly more males use Aiming High group activities: the chart below shows use of Aiming High group activities by age and gender.

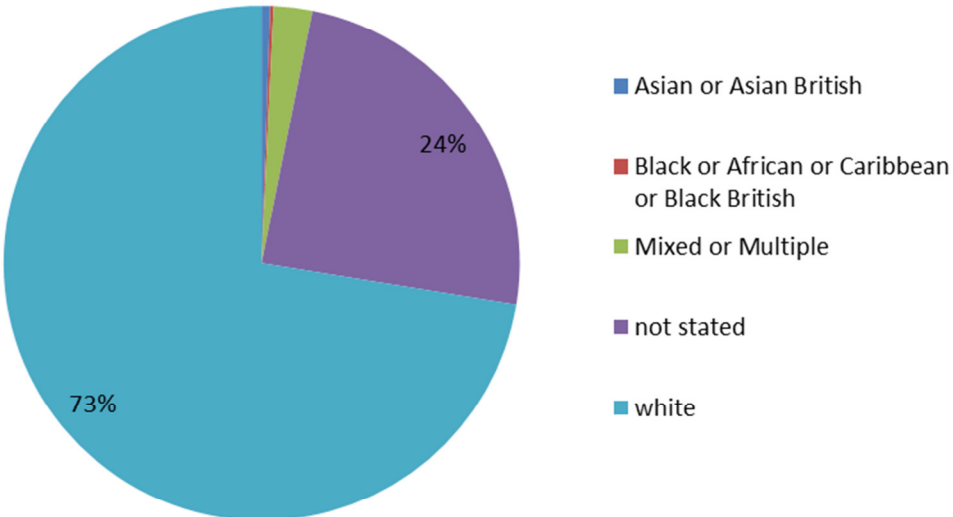
M	Age	F
1	5	1
6	6	6
16	7	5
19	8	7
26	9	8
28	10	9
34	11	6
26	12	8
25	13	10
25	14	7
22	15	3
34	16	19
22	17	6
284		95

947 children/young people have accessed group activities, one-to-one

	<p>flexible support and/or the grant provided through the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer during 2014/15; some children/young have accessed more than one provision therefore the total numbers of users per activity will be higher.</p> <p>In summary the above data identifies that users of Aiming High group activities, 1:1 flexible support and grant have a mean age of 13 years, however the most prevalent age of the users is 16 years and this is the age group who would, with their families, be most affected by any change.</p> <p>Data gained from the consultations in 2014 and in 2015 suggests the mean age of parent / carers of children and young people accessing aiming high support is 43.2 and 42.4 respectively. It is not demonstrated that elderly people are directly adversely affected by the proposals; however there may be individual arrangements where grandparents provide support/care.</p>
<p>Disabled people including mobility, sensory, learning, mental health, HIV, and also include carers and relatives</p>	<p>In 2014/15 947 children/young people accessed Aiming High group activities, one-to-one support and/or grant. As Aiming High is aimed at children/young people with additional needs, a reduction in provision would have a disproportionate impact on disabled children/young people and carers of disabled children/young people.</p> <p>Research from the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) suggests that around 6% of children are likely to be disabled, and that approximately 1.2% would be severely disabled.</p> <p>Is it therefore estimated that around 6,732 children aged 5-17 have disabilities in Derbyshire. A proportion of those would have needs that require specialist support based on a formal assessment and would be supported by and open to social care services. A significant majority of disabled children/young people are able to access universal and targeted group activities without the need of one-to-one support.</p> <p>Aiming High is aimed at disabled children and young people who experience difficulty accessing other universal and targeted activities. Lead professionals are required to identify whether a child/young person meets the eligibility criteria for Aiming High flexible one-to-one and grant support; providers are required to determine whether children/young people require access to Aiming High groups.</p> <p>Aiming High was set up to enable ease of access to a limited amount of support without the need for further formal assessments. As a result, records detailing the nature and severity of disability experienced by the</p>

	<p>child/young person are not generally held by the Local Authority. Individual client records have, in many instances, been created specifically to record that an application for Aiming High has been received and the outcome of the request.</p> <p>Where information about an individuals' disability has been recorded using the Framework-i disability categories; the highest proportion of individuals accessing Aiming High in 2014/15 are identified as having a learning disability.</p> <p>A maximum of 80 hours of flexible one-to-one support can be provided through the Aiming High offer in a financial year. In 2014-15, 197 individuals were allocated the full 80 hours of flexible one-to-one support; 57 of these utilised their full allocation. Uptake of the allocated one-to-one hours is in the region of 70%.</p> <p>The impact, therefore, of a reduced offer would be felt differently by families: around 30% would experience the full reduction of 40 hours; however most families would experience a reduction of approximately 20 hours compared with their experience of the current offer. Families do, in some instances, report that unused hours do not always arise because of family choice but because of issues with providers being able to deliver appropriate or timely support.</p> <p>Whilst a reduction in provision would have a disproportionate impact on disabled children/young people and carers of disabled children/young people; some families with children/young people with higher levels of need may gain from the proposals, as a formal assessment of their needs could result in a higher level of support than that available through Aiming High.</p>
Gender (Sex) including men and women, boys and girls	<p>Gender is not a key factor affecting the delivery of the Aiming High provision; however, more males than females access Aiming High support. Flexible one-to-one, short break grant or a combination of these, are accessible to those that meet the eligibility criteria; gender is not part of this. There are no criteria or assessments applied to group activities: providers determine eligibility and do not take into consideration the gender of the individual as part of those criteria. 73% of children/young people accessing Aiming High support are male. The below pie chart shows the prevalence by gender that have accessed Aiming High support. There will be some instances where a child or young person has accessed more than one type of support or provision, therefore, this figure does not represent the actual number of individuals accessing Aiming High.</p>

	<p>Aiming High Support by Gender</p>  <p>The following pie charts represents the gender split per support type</p> <div> <p>Flexible One-to-One</p>  </div> <div> <p>Short Break Grant</p>  </div> <div> <p>Combination offer</p>  </div> <div> <p>Group Activities</p>  </div> <p>The proportions of male/female users of Aiming High support are broadly consistent with figures identifying special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). National figures indicate that male pupils are 2.5 times more likely in primary school, and 3 times more likely in secondary school, to have SEND than female pupils.</p> <p>Some young people with higher levels of need may gain from the proposals as a formal assessment of their needs could result in the need for a higher level of support being identified and subsequently accessed.</p>
Gender reassignment – including impact if any on Transgender people	The data is not currently collected and would not be relevant to this analysis as gender re-assignment is not a key factor affecting the delivery of this service
Marriage and civil partnership – also include impacts on lone parents and unmarried couples	<p>The service is not delivered on the basis of marital status. However it could be assumed that a greater impact may be felt by lone parents/carers. Those requesting Aiming High are not required to provide this detail and individual family circumstances are not formally assessed when requesting Aiming High support.</p> <p>Whilst this data is not currently collected for families benefitting from</p>

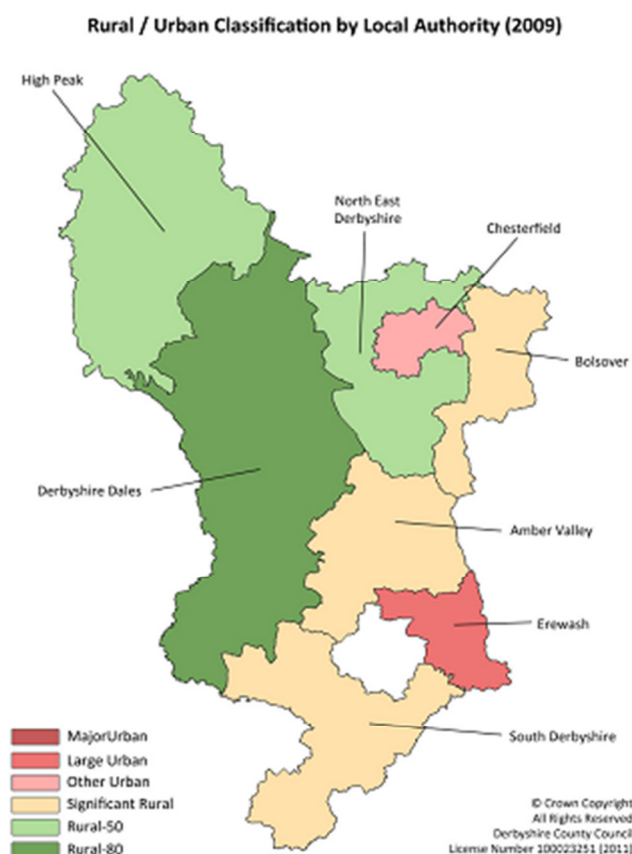
	Aiming High, national data indicates that 12.3% of adults in Derbyshire County are separated or divorced (2011 Population Census) which is higher than the England average.												
Pregnancy and maternity – including new mothers/parents	The data is not currently collected and would not be relevant to this analysis as pregnancy and maternity is not a key factor affecting the delivery of this service.												
Race – including all racial groups, including impact if any on Gypsies and Travellers	<p>This service is not delivered on the basis of race. However, the January 2011 census indicates that 96% of residents in Derbyshire identify as White British. The chart below indicates the proportion of ethnic groups accessing Aiming High provision during 2014-15 which appears to be broadly consistent with local population statistics</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnic Group</th> <th>Proportion</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>white</td> <td>73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>not stated</td> <td>24%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian or Asian British</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black or African or Caribbean or Black British</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed or Multiple</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Flexible one-to-one support, short break grant or a combination of both are accessible to those that meet eligibility criteria and ethnicity is not a relevant factor. There are no criteria or assessments applied to group activities: providers determine eligibility and race of the individual is not part of this.</p>	Ethnic Group	Proportion	white	73%	not stated	24%	Asian or Asian British		Black or African or Caribbean or Black British		Mixed or Multiple	
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Mixed or Multiple													
Religion and belief including non-belief, including religious minority communities, Humanists	<p>This service is not accessed or delivered on the basis of religion. Flexible one-to-one, short break grant or a combination of both is accessible to those that meet the criteria; religion or beliefs are not part of the criteria.</p> <p>Providers would be expected to take account of any cultural factors or religious beliefs that might affect how a service is delivered.</p>												
Sexual orientation – including the	Sexual orientation of parents or service users is not a key factor affecting the delivery of this service. All families with disabled children who meet the eligibility criteria can access their service irrespective of												

impact if any on LGB people	sexual orientation.
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Non-statutory

Poorer and disadvantaged communities and groups, including people who experience financial exclusion	<p>The service is not delivered on the basis of financial status. However it is relevant to note that some parents/carers with disabled children do not work, or cease to work in order to become full-time carers for the child/young person: however data on family income of the children and young people receiving Aiming High services is not available as access to the service does not take account of financial circumstances.</p> <p>It should be noted, however, that those from poorer disadvantaged groups may potentially experience a greater impact as a result of some of the proposals. Families with higher incomes may be able to mitigate any reduction in services or grant by purchasing activities and/or support, an option less likely to be available to those on lower incomes.</p> <p>Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015, 5.1% of children/young people accessing Aiming High live in areas which are ranked in the most deprived 10% of the county. A total of 53.7% live in areas which are ranked in the most deprived 50% of the county.</p> <p>IMD Decile: Postcodes of Children / Young People accessing Aiming High in 2014-2015</p> <table border="1"> <caption>IMD Decile: Postcodes of Children / Young People accessing Aiming High in 2014-2015</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>IMD Decile</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Most deprived 10 percent</td> <td>5.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Most deprived 10-20 percent</td> <td>13.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Most deprived 20-30 percent</td> <td>12.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Most deprived 30-40 percent</td> <td>11.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Most deprived 40-50 percent</td> <td>11.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Least deprived 40-50 percent</td> <td>9.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Least deprived 30-40 percent</td> <td>11.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Least deprived 20-30 percent</td> <td>8.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Least deprived 10-20 percent</td> <td>10.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Least deprived 10 percent</td> <td>6.2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The chart below shows the proportion of children/young people accessing each type of Aiming High provision, giving a comparison of children/young people living in areas which are in the 50% most and 50% least deprived areas of the county.</p>	IMD Decile	Percentage	Most deprived 10 percent	5.1%	Most deprived 10-20 percent	13.4%	Most deprived 20-30 percent	12.2%	Most deprived 30-40 percent	11.8%	Most deprived 40-50 percent	11.2%	Least deprived 40-50 percent	9.3%	Least deprived 30-40 percent	11.9%	Least deprived 20-30 percent	8.4%	Least deprived 10-20 percent	10.6%	Least deprived 10 percent	6.2%
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Rural communities	<p>With the Peak District National Park covering more than a third of Derbyshire’s total land area, and with only a few densely populated towns, the county may be described as largely rural. According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) six of the county’s districts are classified as rural with only Erewash and Chesterfield classified as urban.</p>												



Data Source: Rural/Urban Classification of Local Authorities in England, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), April 2009

The table below shows a comparison of children/young people who have accessed each type of provision in 2014/2015 by district. There will be instances where a child/young person has accessed more than one type of support/provision and therefore has been counted more than once. This explains why the total figure in the table is greater than the 947 individuals who have accessed the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer in 2014/15.

Locality	1:1	grant	comb	group	Total
Amber Valley	34	100	6	34	174
North East Derbyshire	12	52	1	63	128
Bolsover	23	45	7	43	118
Chesterfield	35	47	6	82	170
South Derbyshire & South Dales	36	73	2	37	148
Erewash	34	58	3	46	141
High Peak & North Dales	48	37	7	73	165
Other	0	0	0	1	1
	222	412	32	379	1045

	<p>Rurality impacts on ability to access services, in particular if transportation is restricted. Reducing the funding for Aiming High group activities and the providers to one per locality could impact most on those accessing services in Derbyshire Dales, High Peak and North East Derbyshire: which in 2014/15 equated to approximately 41% of those using Aiming High groups.</p> <p>34% of children/young people access the Aiming High group activities from the urban areas of Chesterfield and Erewash.</p>
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Impact on employees of Derbyshire County Council or prospective employees

<p>Families requiring more than 40 hours of one-to-one support or £400 short break grant would be able to request a formal assessment. An increased demand for assessments is likely and will impact on resources in local MAT's and/or social care teams.</p> <p>There is also likely to be an impact on the social care budget as some families will be in need of additional support over and above that provided through the Aiming High Offer. The additional support provided would, however, result from an individual assessment of need that takes account of each family's circumstance and can better tailor support to meet and monitor those assessed needs.</p> <p>We are unable to accurately identify the impact on the overall staffing levels of the voluntary organisations delivering Aiming High services, as staff may be employed to carry out a range of duties relating to different funding streams and not employed solely to deliver Aiming High activities. However, as funds available to the voluntary organisations will be reduced, it can be anticipated that there will be an impact on staff. The extent to which individual providers can mitigate this will vary.</p>

- b. From existing customer and other feedback – who is likely to be adversely affected, how and to what degree? Will anyone gain or benefit?

Protected Group	Findings
Age	<p>2014 Consultation:</p> <p>Of the 227 responses to the online consultation 34 of these were from young people with an age range of 10 to 23 years. 39 respondents chose not to answer this question.</p> <p>A total of 67 young people attended face to face group</p>

	<p>consultation, however not all young people were able, or wished to complete a formal consultation paper and views were collated by the Disability Inclusion Team. 26 individual responses were documented; the age of the youngest person taking part was 11 years.</p> <p>2015 Consultation: Out of 103 respondents to the online consultation 6 of the responses were from young people below the age of 24</p> <p>A total of 64 young people took part in the targeted youth consultation sessions.</p> <p>Aiming High is aimed at children/young people aged 5-17 years; there is not considered to be a disproportionate impact for under-fives. The parents of children aged under 5 years have access to other services, although access to Aiming High is possible in exceptional circumstances; current data shows that 4 children under the age of 5 have access the grant provision from a total of 412 individuals.</p> <p>Young people taking part in the group consultations anticipated feeling sad if they had fewer groups or activities to access in the future. They were concerned about not seeing friends as they had few opportunities outside of school to meet up and needed help to organise and fund activities and trips.</p>
Disability	<p>Feedback identified that the proposals would have significant impact on disabled children/young people who are currently accessing the Aiming High Derbyshire Offer.</p> <p>A reduction in the maximum hours available to families from 80 to 40 per year would impact on some young people's ability to forge effective relationships necessary to enjoy one-to-one support.</p> <p>A reduction in the number of organisations offering group activities may result in less choice of appropriate activities and impact on the frequency and availability of those activities, particularly in a highly populated area or if provision is a significant distance for a young person's home. This may result in fewer opportunities being available to socialise with peers.</p> <p>Annual Aiming High Parent/Carer Feedback Reports for</p>

	<p>2014/15 identify high rates of parent/care satisfaction: 86% of parent/carers providing feedback on group activities stated that their child's confidence had improved and 81% stated an increase in the child's independence. It is not reported whether, as a result of these improvements, children/young people go on to access other group activities.</p> <p>88% of parents/carers providing feedback on flexible one-to-one support said it reduced family stress; 77% stated their child had learned and 72% had increased independence. It is not reported whether, as a result of these improvements young people were able to access other universal and targeted activities without the need for one-to-one support.</p> <p>Other local universal groups may experience increased levels of attendance</p>
Gender (Sex)	<p>2014 Consultation: 78% of those who responded to the online consultation were female whilst 22% were male. 11% did not answer this question</p> <p>2015 Consultation: 83% of those who responded to the online consultation were female whilst 17% were male.</p> <p>It may be that the higher proportion of females responding to the consultation reflects the likelihood of a female being the main carer.</p> <p>The gender split of the total numbers attending the targeted youth consultation sessions was 56% male and 44% female; however, there are approximately 2.6 times as many males as females accessing Aiming High support.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>There is no feedback or impact reported on individuals that have under gone gender reassignment. There is no reason to suggest this group would either gain or be adversely affected</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>Feedback received during consultation identified that lone parents with a disabled child/young person that have</p>

	limited or no support structure may be more adversely affected by these proposals.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no feedback or impact reported on pregnancy / maternity; therefore is no reason to suggest this group would either gain or be adversely affected
Race	<p>2014 Consultation: Out of the 227 responses to the consultation 97% identified as White British which reflects the ethnicity of the highest number of users. 2% identified as Asian/ British Asian 0.54% identified as 'Mixed' and 0.54% as 'Other' (Polish)</p> <p>2015 Consultation: Out of the 103 responses to the consultation 98% identified as White British which represents the ethnicity of the highest number of users. 1% was of 'Mixed' but did not state the nature of the mix and 1% stated 'other' and described their race as 'English'. 4 responses did not answer this question.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that there will be differing impacts on different races using Aiming High; the themes identified in the responses were common across the race demographic represented in the consultation.</p>
Religion and belief including non-belief	There is no feedback or impact reported on individual religion or beliefs. Religious beliefs are not a factor affecting access to Aiming High. There is no reason to suggest this group would either gain or be adversely affected.
Sexual orientation	There is no feedback or impact reported on individual sexual orientation of parents or service users. There is no reason to suggest this group would either gain or be adversely affected

Non-statutory

Poorer and disadvantaged communities	<p>From feedback received during the 2014 and 2015 consultations it has been identified that the reduction of the short break grant provision will have the following impacts on people who are financially disadvantaged:</p> <p>2014 Consultation: Out of the 227 responses to the consultation, 23 stated that the proposal to cease the short break grant would impact</p>
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	<p>on the opportunity to have a family holiday. 11 stated that the proposal would impact on opportunities to enjoy other short breaks and activities. 10 families identified there would be a reduction in choice of activity for the child/young person. 2 stated an impact on their ability to purchase specialist equipment.</p> <p>2015 Consultation: Out of the 103 responses to the consultation, 22 stated that the proposal to reduce the short break grant and to no longer allow the grant to be used to help fund a family holiday would impact on them being able to provide a family holiday. 5 stated that the proposal would impact on them being able to provide other short breaks and enjoyable activities. 5 families identified there would be a reduction in choice of activity for the child/young person.</p> <p>A formal assessment of need, offered to families requiring more support than that available through the Aiming High offer, would take account of individual circumstance.</p>
Rural	Feedback has identified that service users in rural areas could be disadvantaged due to group provision being at a greater distance.

Employees or prospective employees

Families requiring more than 40 hours of one-to-one support or £400 short break grant would be able to request a formal assessment. An increased demand for assessments is likely and will impact on resources in local MAT's and/or social care teams.

Families have expressed concern about the likely impact on MATs and social care resources. Staff would require adequate preparation in anticipation of any increased demands for assessments and services.

- c. Are there any **other** groups of people who may experience an adverse impact because of the proposals?

The proposals may have an impact on financial viability for the voluntary sector currently delivering the service for Derbyshire County Council. This could lead to loss of other services that are delivered by these organisations to Derbyshire families. However, if organisations are successful in identifying other sources of

funding, the impact would be mitigated.

Reducing the levels of the Derbyshire Aiming High Offer would result in disabled children and their families receiving a reduced service. However, those families with higher levels of need could request an assessment from social care or MAT's in order to determine an appropriate type and level of support needed.

d. Gaps in data

What are your main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your policy and services? Please indicate whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

Gaps in data	Action to deal with this
Detail of the nature and level of disability is not available for all service users.	Although the Council holds a wide range of data about the number of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Derbyshire and their needs, there is relatively little detailed information about the specific individual needs and circumstances of children and young people benefitting from Aiming High short breaks and their families. This is because access to Aiming High short breaks does not require a formal assessment of need: Aiming High was set up to enable ease of access to a limited amount of support without the need for formal assessment, as a result records detailing the nature and severity of disability are not consistently held. Aiming High is aimed at disabled children/young people
Ethnicity – Not all service users have ethnicity recorded	<p>As a result of the current method of access, individual's details are not consistently recorded.</p> <p>More robust record keeping and housekeeping would be necessary to record ethnicity and other individual details.</p> <p>Fuller assessment of need would identify if there is a lack of support structure for lone parents</p>

lone parents	Fuller assessment of need would identify if there is a lack of support structure for new parents
pregnancy/maternity	

6. From the consultation you have carried out specifically in relation to proposed changes, what views or issues have been raised by those who have responded? (Include both their views and any issues they have raised which alludes to the likely impact)

a) Please summarise the consultation which has been carried out

Two consultations have taken place. A second period of consultation took place between 17th August 2015 and 6th November 2015 on a revised set of proposals, following an initial consultation between 8th October and 15th December 2014.

These consultations used a mixed method approach by offering both qualitative and quantitative ways to gather responses on the proposed changes. Officers planned for as many people as possible to take part by offering a range of ways in which people could share their views.

Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice provided local forum events for parents to attend to discuss proposed changes. A Derbyshire Parent Forum officer collated notes from the briefing sessions as well as gathering feedback by other methods.

Current Aiming High providers and service user families were written to and invited to respond to the online consultation. They were informed that alternative methods were available through Call Derbyshire: callers could request a paper copy of the questionnaire, with a free post return address, or provide their responses directly on the telephone. In 2015, the letter to families included an offer to facilitate face-to-face consultation with their child or young person.

During both consultations, tailored youth consultations took place visiting a range of specialist provisions where the children/young people felt confident and comfortable and supported by familiar support staff. This included specialist youth groups, special schools and commissioned Aiming High services. These young people's consultations were conducted by the Independent Advocacy Service in 2015 and the Children's Disability and Inclusion Service in 2014.

In order to reach as many interested parties as possible the consultation was publicised widely; letters, posters and information leaflets were sent to Derbyshire

GP surgeries, Libraries, schools, colleges and children centres who were asked to display posters and leaflets in prominent areas. All correspondence directed people to the Derbyshire webpage which provided additional information and access to the online consultation.

- b) Please summarise the feedback received. This should make clear where those who have responded have highlighted any potential adverse impact as well as their opinions on the proposals.

Parent/carers identified that there is confusion about what services are received as part of the Aiming High Offer and the support provided following a social care assessment as the support may be delivered by the same provider.

Families were concerned about the impact of any proposed reduction in services to families with disabled children and opposed to any reduction in support.

Flexible one-to-one support

There was a general agreement that the proposals to reduce flexible one to one support would not be beneficial to families. Views provided stated that 80 hours of support a year was not enough for some families and that a reduction to 40 hours would not allow regular, weekly, contact with support workers and did not take account of the amount of time required for the young person and the support worker to build an effective relationship.

Grant

There were mixed views with regard to the proposal that families should not use the short break grant to fund holidays. Concern was expressed that families may no longer be able to afford a family holiday, whilst others were concerned that a holiday does not provide a break from caring responsibilities and that alternative sources of support/funding from charities were available to support families to take a holiday. Comments highlighted that the option of a grant provides a wider choice for short break support and that providers were not always able to meet some families' needs. There was agreement that use of the grant should be more closely monitored to ensure the funds are used effectively.

Staged approach for existing service users

It was agreed that a staged, step down approach for existing service users would make adjusting to any reduction in support easier for families, although some felt that it was fairer if the same offer was available to new or existing users.

Formal assessments

There was a general agreement with the principle that it was right to target funding and support based on families' needs. There were however a range of different views regarding the number of assessments that disabled children and their families already have to undergo, and the effects of undertaking another assessment to access support on the lives of families with disabled children and young people. Fears were raised that having to take part in additional assessments would prevent some families from seeking support and that they might fall into crisis before being highlighted to the authorities. Concerns were raised about the impact on other services completing the assessments, specifically over the capacity of services to carry out additional assessments and the potential for delays to receiving services. In addition, views were expressed that the cost of additional assessments would increase demands on other services' budgets. There were specific concerns regarding a lack of experience of disability amongst some staff in Multi Agency Teams and that these services may not have the capacity to respond to additional demands, causing delays and preventing families from accessing sufficient support. Families considered the assessments already undertaken to be sufficient to determine a family's needs.

Group activities

There were concerns regarding the proposed reduction in the amount of group activities available and the impact on the frequency and regularity of young people being able to attend. It was viewed that commissioning one provider to deliver group activities across a large geographical area would create difficulties and they would be unable to target specific ages and activities. Different times and types of sessions will appeal to different children and young people; one model is not right for everyone. Outings and varying types of activities were considered by some parents/carers to not always be appropriate, for example, for some children and young people with autism. There were views that most universal groups were not inclusive, resulting in families with disabled children having fewer opportunities and choices, less flexibility and a higher risk of social isolation. The parents valued consistent activities in familiar surroundings and identified a shortage of breakfast and after school clubs that are accessible and affordable and that enable parents to work.

Budget

Concern was expressed that by reducing Aiming High more families would be pushed into requesting assessments from social care or falling into crisis with possible cost implications on the social care budget.

7. Are there any ways of avoiding or reducing likely possible adverse impact on any groups of people, what are those actions, and how will they assist?

1. Concern that 40 hours of flexible one-to-one is not enough:

It is acknowledged that 40 hours would not provide sufficient support in all instances. Families would be able to request a formal assessment in order to determine whether a higher level of support was needed. The current Aiming High offer is mechanistic whilst impairments vary in severity and their impact on family life is variable. An individual assessment would include consideration of:

- the child/young person's developmental needs
- parenting capacity
- family and environmental factors

An assessment would better ensure that support was tailored to meet individual needs and deliver measurable outcomes. Whilst a Local Offer should present a choice of short break opportunities to which a family can be directed without the need for further assessments, there is no duty for local authorities to provide specialist short breaks without an assessment of need.

2. Reduction in opportunities to socialise with peer groups and spend time away from family members:

As above: families would be able to request a formal assessment in order to determine whether a higher level of support was needed. In addition: further publicise the Derbyshire Local Offer to ensure that families, and those supporting them, are aware of the range of activities and support available without further assessment. Derbyshire County Council currently provides a range of targeted youth groups aimed at disabled young people. A review of how these groups might be better promoted and/or made as inclusive as possible will be carried out with the aim of ensuring that appropriate use is made of these opportunities for non-assessed short breaks.

3. Impact on child / young person's development of independence and well-being:

As above, families would be able to request a formal assessment in order to determine whether a higher level of support was needed.

4. Impact on other services/resources/budgets, including increased demand on social care as a result of greater stress on families leading to

crisis and resulting in higher costs in the long term:

It is anticipated that there will be an increased demand on other services' resources, however, an assessment of need would lead to the provision of support that is better tailored to meet individual circumstances and reflect the changing needs of families. An increased demand on social care services is anticipated but is expected to be less than the cost of the current Aiming High provision.

5. Concern that the requirement for additional assessments could lead to delays and be stressful for families and when children/young people have previously been the subject of assessments:

Previous assessments, for example, for a statement of special educational need, have not necessarily considered whether the child/young person does or does not meet criteria for Aiming High and is not therefore a reliable indicator of need for short breaks. The implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Reforms does, however, provide opportunity for consideration to be given to how Education Health and care needs assessments, plans and reviews can incorporate a single approach and reduce the need for separate assessments for families. Some families with children/young people with higher levels of need may gain from the proposals, as a formal assessment could result in a higher level of support being identified which is better tailored to meeting individual needs and takes account of family circumstance.

6. Concerns in respect of the proposed reduction in group activities: impact on the range, frequency and location of activities.

The impact of any reduction in group activities could not be fully mitigated, however, providers would be expected to offer as wide a range of choice as possible and the authority will review use of the targeted youth groups aimed at disabled young people to determine how they can be better promoted and/or made as inclusive as possible.

7. Concerns regarding proposed changes to use of the Aiming High grant:

The proposal that it would no longer be an option for families to use the grant to fund family holidays will impact on those families who cannot otherwise afford a holiday; however, it is assumed that there is a relatively low level of need if a family can manage with a holiday and do not require regular short breaks. A family holiday is likely to have little impact on a young person's development of independence and local social contacts and, in itself, does not provide carers with a break from caring responsibilities. There has been significant growth in the number of families claiming the grant and use for family holidays and equipment as opposed to providing a regular short break. The financial climate has changed significantly and use of the grant for these purposes is no longer affordable and takes resources

away from services which are based on family's assessed needs. A number of charitable organisations provide support to vulnerable families enabling them to take a family holiday, ensuring these are better publicised would help mitigate the impact of this proposal.

8. Main conclusions and Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis the following is believed to be of importance and should be noted by decision-makers:

- Two consultations have taken place and have been successful in reaching the intended audience and generating a reasonable level of responses.
- The overall conclusion is that the frequency of opportunities and level of support to enable disabled children and young people to have enjoyable experiences away from their main carers will be reduced by the proposals and that carers will have fewer opportunities to have a break from caring responsibilities.

Some families using or intending to use the Aiming High grant to help fund a family holiday may no longer be able to afford to take an annual holiday. The authority does not, however, have a duty to provide support for a family holiday and a family holiday does not, in itself, provide a break from caring responsibilities. Families can be signposted to organisations that do offer this type of support.

- In performing the duty to make short breaks provision the authority must 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; enabling them to undertake education, training, leisure activities, meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively or carry out day to day tasks.

In mitigation; families whose needs cannot be met by the reduced Aiming High offer would be able to request a formal assessment to identify needs and take account of individual family circumstance. Individual assessment should lead to support that is tailored to meet identified needs and provide more appropriate support; compared with the current model that provides eligible children/young people and their families with the same offer. The assessment would better enable progress to be monitored and for young people to, where appropriate, step down from higher levels of support when

sufficient progress has been made.

- The authority must provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.

A range of services will continue to be available including universal services, targeted services (albeit at a reduced level) and specialist services

The Framework of Providers is also available for social care and families to purchase provision if they wish.

In addition, the authority will want to ensure that DCC targeted youth groups are utilised as effectively as possible to meet the needs of disabled young people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the revised proposals for flexible one-to-one support and short break grants are introduced from 1st April 2016.

The proposals are:

- Reduce the budget for Aiming High group activities from £300,000 to £150,000 with one provider per district commissioned to provide group activities for disabled children.
- To retain the current criteria for families to access Aiming High flexible one-to-one support, without the need for an assessment by MATs or Social Care. There would however be a reduction in the maximum hours available to families from 80 to 40 per year;
- To continue to give families the option of choosing a short break grant as an alternative to one-to-one support, with a reduction in the maximum grant from £800 to £400 per year. In addition, there would no longer be the option for families to use the grant to fund family holidays.
- To implement changes for all families, including current users, from 1st April 2016.
- No longer offer one-off funding to voluntary organisations to provide summer play schemes as providers already offer a range of activities during the summer holidays, therefore the removal of this small grant was unlikely to have an impact on access to summer activities.

In addition,

- Triage requests for Aiming High through Starting Point in order to apply a more consistent approach and ensure that criteria is met and that families are not in receipt of the Aiming High and social care provision at the same time.

10. Action planning in response to the completed analysis

Objective	Planned action	Who	When	How will this be monitored?
What you want to achieve	What you intend to do	Responsible person or department	Timing of action	Monitoring and review arrangements
Inform all users of Aiming High of changes	Write to current users Write to providers Publicise changes on the Local offer and DCC website Alert schools and other services through electronic communications.	Commissioning and Partnership	February/ March 2016	Short Breaks Review Group (Commissioning and Disabled Children's Services)
Ensure families requiring a higher level of support to enable them to continue to care for their disabled child are able to request an assessment	Prepare services for anticipated additional requests.	Commissioning and Partnership	February/ March 2016	Oversight by Disabled Children's Service
Extend contracts with Aiming High providers beyond March 2016.	Written communication with providers	Commissioning and Partnership	February 2016	Short Breaks Review Group
Ensure information is available on the Local Offer regarding activities and breaks that can be accessed without the need for assessment	Review current content of Local offer website	Family Information Service	Ongoing	Short Breaks Review Group
Monitor and review situation following implementation of proposals to determine impact on resources and identify future	Monitor number of referrals and new assessments and assess impact on resources	Commissioning and Partnership Disabled Children's Service	April/May/ June 2016	Short Breaks Review Group

actions				
Publish a revised Derbyshire Short Breaks Statement	Involve the Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice in reviewing the Derbyshire Short Breaks Statement	Short Breaks Review Group	1 st April 2016	Short Breaks Review Group
Explore how the EHC needs assessment/plan and reviews could lead to a reduction in the need for further, additional assessments	Take proposals to the SEND Project Board	SEND Project Manager/Commissioning	2016/17	SEND Reforms Project Board
Ensure appropriate access to specialist youth groups	Examine current use of specialist youth groups and identify future actions	Services for Teenagers, Localities and Commissioning	April 2016	Short Breaks Review Group

10. Monitoring and review arrangements

Please outline what steps will be taken to monitor and review the implementation of proposals if they are agreed here:

Monitoring and review will be overseen by the Aiming High/Short Breaks Review Group: which includes representation from Commissioning and Partnership, Disabled Children's Services and Localities.

Involvement of parents will be through the Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice

11. Confirmation that equality impact analysis (EAI) completed and read

Name of officer signing off EIA as completed

Date:

This Equality Impact Analysis has been read by

Name	Date	Position
Linda Dale		

Where and when published e.g. with Cabinet Report, on DCC website

With Cabinet Report of 26th January 2016

Decision-making processes

Attached to report (title):

Date of report:

Author of report:

Audience for report e.g. Cabinet:

Web location of report:

Decision in relation to report

Details of follow-up action or links to further EIAs

Updated by:

Date: