

## Freedom of Information Request (NCC-034308-18 Special needs allocation)

### In response to the FOIR below on 24 October 2018:

#### Response

The review of the Nottinghamshire Short Breaks Offer was approved by the Children's and Young People's Committee in September 2016.

The purpose of the review was to ensure that the Short Breaks offer:

- continues to meet statutory requirements and the needs of children and young people with disabilities and their families
- remains affordable and financially sustainable in the long term
- responds to feedback from families and young people to give them a voice in decisions that affect their lives
- Responds to legislation (SEND Reforms 2014) and feedback from the 2016 Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) local area inspection which places considerable emphasis on co-production.

The report presented to Committee outlined the review process which was expected to take up to 12 months. A key part of the review process was to co-produce the revised offer with children and young people with disabilities and their parents and carers.

The initial stage of the review consisted of the following engagement and co-production activities:

- Online survey to gain initial views on Short Breaks (July – September 2017) – over 200 responses.
- Three co-production events held on weekends over the summer holidays across three districts – 43 children & young people attended the events and 59 parent/carers attended.
- Group visits across the County, including Young Pioneers (the council's advisory group comprised of children and young people with disabilities) and eight parent and carer groups (September 2017).
- Five parent working group meetings (October – January 2018).

The outcomes of these activities resulted in a revised offer being developed (please see the link below for the analysis) by the Working Group. The key changes to be proposed included:

- **A clear and effective information stage** – Families and the working group consistently said that if they had better resources to signpost them to support networks and alternative provision in their local communities that it would relieve pressure off the service.
- **An online self-assessment** – During the first consultation period for the Short Breaks Review, 70% of families said they would prefer to request an assessment online. The working group felt that an online assessment tool would be a fair way of assessing and identifying the families that needed the most support and that it would ensure equality of access through set criteria for families.
- **Clear eligibility criteria which can be amended** – The working group developed a set of eligibility indicators to ensure that children and young people who are the most vulnerable are identified for support. Furthermore the working group developed a structure to allow the eligibility criteria to be amended to fit the available local authority budget.
- **Packages of support that are reviewed annually** – Families said that they would value a yearly review as this would allow contact with a key professionals. The working group

felt that a time limited approach to packages with a yearly review would support equitable access to short breaks, as packages can be amended to take into consideration any change in circumstances. This would allow opportunities for packages to close when out-comes are met or for the child to be better supported to meet changes in need.

A final of consultation of the above proposal was held in January 2018, which received 97 responses. Sixty-two per cent of families that responded to this final consultation strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal for the new Short Breaks offer, with only 7% of families stating that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the Short Breaks proposal.

The final proposals were approved by the Children and Young People's Committee on 19 March 2018. The revised Short Breaks application process has two stages:

- (1) The first stage is an on-line self-assessment which establishes whether or not the threshold for a Council funded Short Break has been met. All families who meet the eligibility criteria receive a minimum allocation of 24 hours a year.
- (2) If a family would like additional hours, they can complete the second stage of the assessment which will determine the amount of additional short break hours that the family will receive. The second stages users a Resource Allocation System (RAS) which identifies the child / young person carer's needs, the key outcomes for the child, and how the caring role impacts on the carer's wellbeing.

There is an appeals process for families that do not meet the threshold for Council funded breaks, or who are unhappy with their hours' allocation, and want to appeal the outcome.

Further details on the application process can be found on the Nottinghamshire Local Offer: [A guide to applying online for a Short Break](#)

Finally, the reports on the Short Breaks review can be found on the Nottinghamshire Local Offer at the following link: [Nottinghamshire Short Breaks Review](#)