



9th June 2014

Agenda Item: 9

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH
AND PUBLIC PROTECTION**

**NEW POLICY FOR PROVIDING PLANNED SHORT BREAKS FOR ADULT
SERVICE USERS AND THEIR CARERS**

Purpose of the Report

1. This report presents the proposed new policy for providing planned short breaks for adult service users and their carers, and asks Committee to approve it for wider consultation.

Information and Advice

2. The Council does not have a policy relating to the allocation of planned short breaks for adult service users and carers at the current time.
3. Current practice is that decisions about the level of breaks to be given to service users and carers are made on an individual basis, following assessment of the service user and discussions with the carer involved. Good practice is that a Carers Assessment will be completed with the carer; this enables the carer to describe how their caring role affects their life, as well as to request further information and a break from caring.
4. The advantages of having a policy about the provision of planned short breaks for adult service users and carers are :
 - a) it will be much clearer how planned breaks of planned services can be accessed and
 - b) it will ensure that the resources available for planned short breaks are allocated in a fair and equitable way, according to service user and carer needs
 - c) it will assist the Council to implement the Short Breaks savings projects (see point 7), by ensuring that the people who will be affected by these projects will receive a fair and equitable new allocation of planned short breaks, based on agreed policy.
 - d) it will help the Council to meet its responsibilities towards carers, outlined in the Care Act.
5. The Council consulted on whether to introduce a short breaks policy as part of the Budget Challenge, November 2013 to January 2014. 28 people responded as follows :
 - There was total support for the proposals that the policy should be fair and consistent across all client groups - 28 agreed (100%).

- There was good support for the proposal that people should be offered the most cost-effective service response - 18 (67%) agreed, 5 (18%) disagreed, 4 (15%) did not know.
- There was strong support for the proposal that individual circumstances should be taken into account when allocating short breaks - 28 (93%) agreed and 2 (7%) disagreed.

A common theme of comments relating to these answers was that service users and carers would like to be involved in the discussion of how the allocation of short breaks can be fair and consistent.

6. The budgets allocated to the provision of planned short breaks are:

a. Assessment team budgets 14/15	£ 1,893,768
b. NCC residential respite unit funding 14/15	£ 3,292,744
c. Newlands residential respite funding 14/15	£ 485,000

7. The Short Breaks savings projects (ASC417 and C011) will deliver a saving of £ 960,000 pa by October 2016. This will be achieved by closure of two short break units; these are Kingsbridge Way (run by the Council), which is due to close in October 2015, and Newlands (run by the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust), which is due to close in April 2015. The 74 people who currently receive a short break service from these units will need to be offered an appropriate alternative short break service; for some people this could mean accessing another of the three short break services units operated by the Council (Holles Street, Helmsley Road and Wynhill Court) or another residential form of short break provided by the private or voluntary sector. For other people, an appropriate option may be to stay with a Shared Lives carer for a short break or to take a direct payment and use that to fund a different solution.

8. There are 275 people in total who use the 4 residential short breaks services run by the Council and Newlands. Their current allocations of short break nights have been based on many factors, including carer requests and capacity with the unit at the time. It is necessary to ensure that future allocations of planned short breaks are based on the new policy, once agreed. Once new allocations are agreed, the plans for alternative service provision can be fully developed, based on how best to meet identified needs with the provision that will be available around the County, after the two closures. Trial periods in alternative services will be organised and detailed transition plans will be developed.

9. The first section of the attached policy contains background information, including definitions of the terms “carer”, “planned short break”, “short term care”, “holidays” and information about the NHS Carers Breaks scheme, which is an additional source of funding for planned breaks but outside the remit of this policy. There is further information which clarifies the legislation relevant to carers’ rights and powers of the Local Authority. The scope of the policy is clarified as concerning the allocation of planned short breaks only and not setting out any eligibility for access to short term care or emergency provision.

10. The Principles and Commitments section follows; this outlines the intended purpose of the short break service and the way in which planned short breaks will be funded for eligible service users and carers. The Council will ensure that a range of options are available for purchase. Principles of cost-effectiveness will be applied.

11. Section 3 details who is eligible to receive a personal budget for planned short breaks and section 4 outlines how the value of the personal budget will be determined.
12. Section 5 details charging. Section 6 outlines how eligibility and funding will be reviewed and Section 7 explains the process for making a complaint.

Other Options Considered

13. There are no other options to outline.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. The reasons for recommending the approval of the attached policy for wider consultation are:
 - a) It will be much clearer how planned short breaks can be accessed and
 - b) It will ensure that the resources available for planned short breaks are allocated in a fair and equitable way, according to service user and carer needs
 - c) It will assist the Council to implement the Short Breaks Services, by ensuring that the people who will be affected by these projects will receive a fair and equitable new allocation of planned short breaks, based on agreed policy.
 - d) It will help the Council to meet its responsibilities towards carers, outlined in the Care Act.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that the Committee

- 1) Approve the attached policy for wider consultation.

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 30/05/2014)

16. Adult Social Care and Health Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments

Background Papers and Published Documents

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.