



## Social Care Services Board

20 January 2017

### Re-commissioning Short Breaks for Disabled Children

**Purpose of report:** This report provides the Social Care Services Board with an update on the short breaks re-commissioning project along with an opportunity for feedback and comment to inform procurement decisions and planned formal public consultation from 8 May to 16 June 2017.

#### Introduction:

1. Surrey County Council has a statutory duty to provide short breaks services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Short breaks have an important role to play in helping children and young people to develop their independence, readiness for adulthood and physical and emotional health, by having new experiences, learning, having fun and meeting their friends. They also support parents and carers to meet the needs of their children, enabling their whole family to achieve good outcomes, have choice and control, and look after their own emotional and physical health, by giving them breaks from caring.
2. Surrey County Council is in the process of re-commissioning £3.1 million of externally commissioned short breaks. This process supports the wellbeing goal in Surrey County Council's Corporate Strategy by: helping families thrive; keeping families healthy; and protecting our vulnerable children.
3. On 22 November 2016, Surrey County Council's Cabinet agreed:
  - a) to extend the deadline for re-commissioning short breaks in Surrey to 1 December 2017.
  - b) that all existing contracts terminate on 30 November 2017 and the newly commissioned short breaks offer begins on 1 December 2017.
  - c) that a three-month extension until 30 November 2017 should be sought to the contract with Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SABP) for overnight residential short break provision at Beeches.
4. This amended timeline was agreed to:
  - a) allow for a formal six-week public consultation with the children, young people and families directly affected by the specific changes to short breaks recommended by the procurement process.
  - b) support Cabinet to make a fully informed final decision about the re-commissioned short breaks offer, taking account of the views of children, young people and families on the specific changes to services recommended by the procurement process.
  - c) strengthen engagement and co-design with families to increase further the robustness of the re-commissioning process and deliver better outcomes for more children, young people and families.

- d) allow any perceived negative impacts of the recommended changes on particular children, young people and families to be planned for and, as far as possible, mitigated so that families continue to be supported.
5. In response to this timetable, Surrey County Council opened the procurement process for a range of these services on 9 January 2017, following a period of extensive engagement with children and young people, families, partners and providers during 2016 to co-design the offer for the future.

## **Update on Short Breaks Re-commissioning Project**

### **Summary of engagement with children and young people, families and partners**

6. As agreed by Cabinet on 24 May 2016, Surrey County Council and Family Voice Surrey have undertaken a programme of engagement with children and young people with SEND, families, partners and providers to co-design the future short breaks offer in Surrey. This has involved:
  - a) holding 18 co-design sessions for parents and carers in different locations across Surrey during June, July and August. These sessions developed and tested the outcomes for children, young people and families that the re-commissioning of short breaks needs to achieve and identified the changes to current provision that will support this. A copy of the Short Breaks Outcomes Framework, that describes the difference we are seeking to make to children, young people and families, has been included as Annex 1.
  - b) conducting an online survey for families, which received over 200 responses, to provide more families with an opportunity to shape the future short breaks offer.
  - c) holding 2 co-design workshops in July with current and potential providers of short breaks to develop the market, highlight key gaps in current provision and seek their views about the outcomes that short breaks should support.
  - d) engaging with children and young people with disabilities and young carers through visits to current short breaks providers, focus groups at local youth centres and a bespoke young carers survey.
  - e) developing new ideas for future delivery of short breaks through five co-design workshops in September and October with parents and carers, providers and practitioners.
7. In Surrey's recent Ofsted inspection letter, short breaks was highlighted as an area of good practice, where positive feedback was shared about the approach to working with families: "Parents' and carers' views have been put at the heart of some recent policy decisions, for example about short breaks and transport arrangements."

### **Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy**

8. Following this programme of engagement, Surrey County Council and Family Voice have also co-designed and issued a new Commissioning Strategy for Short Breaks in Surrey (Annex 2). A summary taken from this Commissioning Strategy is:
  - "We will enable and empower more children and young people with SEND to access inclusive opportunities in their local communities – this will require us, our

commissioned providers and our wider partners to work together in new and innovative ways.

- In doing so, we will develop children and young people's independence and readiness for adulthood, improving their opportunities later in life, whilst ensuring that those with the greatest need are able to access the essential specialist services they require.
  - Alongside this we will work with providers who are committed to developing more sustainable models of delivery over time, strengthening the use of social capital, untapped local assets and peer support, to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families within our resources."
9. The approach to delivering this strategy is summarised in specific commissioning intentions (that will guide external commissioning), priorities for service development (that SCC's internal services will respond to) and priorities for strategic influence (that will require effective partnerships and influencing of the wider system).
10. The four commissioning intentions are:
- i. Commission services that increase resilience and prevent family breakdown through early help, targeted and specialist support
  - ii. Commission inclusive approaches that enable children and young people to access more opportunities in their local communities, whilst delivering the best value for money from our investment in residential provision
  - iii. Respond to identified gaps in provision and to the changing needs of children and young people over their life journey
  - iv. Commission and develop sustainable models that draw on social capital to achieve better outcomes
11. The three priorities for service development are:
- i. Improving clarity of and access to information about short breaks
  - ii. Improving the transparency of processes and criteria to access services
  - iii. Enabling children, young people and families to have choice and control over their short breaks
12. The two priorities for strategic influence are:
- i. Developing more inclusive communities and mainstream services, allowing the fullest possible participation of children and young people with SEND and their families
  - ii. Enabling children, young people and parents to support one another through peer relationships and networks

### **The short breaks commissioning model**

13. Informed by this strategy, a new external commissioning model for short breaks has been designed. This mirrors the current service structure but includes a range of developments in response to co-design feedback. The model has three parts: play and leisure short breaks, overnight short breaks and innovation grants.
14. **Play and leisure** short breaks enable children and young people with SEND to develop their independence, readiness for adulthood and emotional, mental and physical health, whilst forming meaningful relationships, socialising with their peers and accessing new experiences in their communities. They will also provide parents and carers with breaks from their caring responsibilities, so they are empowered to look

after their own emotional and physical health and provide better and more sustainable care to their whole family. Children and young people will access a range of creative, flexible and fun play and leisure short breaks in their local communities that contribute to the outcomes in Surrey's short breaks outcomes framework. Funding for these services has been allocated to boroughs and districts based on the number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans who live in each area. Some of the key characteristics of the model are summarised in the diagram below:



15. **Overnight short breaks** will enable children and young people with SEND to develop their independence, prepare for adulthood, learn life skills, form meaningful relationships, and socialise with their peers, alongside providing a safe and secure environment for the overnight stay of up to 24 hours. They will offer parents and carers breaks from their caring responsibilities, so they are empowered to look after their own emotional and physical health and provide better and more sustainable care to their whole family. In doing so they will strengthen families and prevent family breakdown. Some of the key characteristics of the model are summarised in the diagram below:



16. The purpose of innovation grants is to achieve the outcomes set out in the Short Breaks Outcomes Framework through new, innovative and transformative short breaks that extend and enhance the opportunities available for children and young people with SEND in Surrey. In particular this will include projects delivered by or in partnership with Surrey's Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Special Schools. Grants will typically range from £500 to £25,000. Some of the key characteristics of the model are summarised in the diagram below:



17. Overall, the project is seeking to commission new services within existing budgets and absorb a current overspend on residential provision, whilst meeting current need and addressing increasing demands. This is likely to result in changes in provision, which would be set out in the planned consultation. The commissioning strategy is seeking to grow capacity through greater use of social capital, for example more volunteering, external fundraising and access to universal services, such as youth centres.

### Project timeline

18. A summary of the key next steps in the project (beginning from the launch of the tender process on 9 January) is included in the table below (please note - a full project timeline is attached as Annex 2 below).

| Date                  | Activity  |
|-----------------------|---|
| 09 Jan 17             | Tender launch event held and tender process begins  |
| 10 Feb 17             | Tender process ends and bid evaluation begins   |
| 27 Apr 17             | Cabinet decision to endorse and consult on recommended options  |
| 08 May 17             | Six-week public consultation begins following Cabinet call-over period  |
| Late May / early June | Engagement with Chair and Vice-Chair of the Social Care Services Board during the public consultation process                 |
| 16 Jun 17             | Public consultation ends  |
| 18 Jul 17             | Cabinet decision on final changes to short breaks offer, informed by outcome of procurement process and consultation feedback |
| Aug-Nov 17            | Mobilisation of new short breaks offer  |
| 01 Dec 17             | New short breaks offer launches   |

19. A key stage to highlight to the Scrutiny Board is the planned public consultation phase, which is happening between 8 May and 16 Jun 2017. This will follow the completion of the procurement process but be prior to the award of any contracts or grants, to allow a final opportunity to consult with families who are affected by any changes that emerge as a result of this process. This stage will also involve developing a draft of the statutory Short Breaks Statement.

#### Conclusions:

20. The project to re-commission short breaks in Surrey has sought to co-design a new offer that better meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families, and supports them to achieve better outcomes. The approach to delivering this is described in the Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy, through commissioning intentions, priorities for service development and priorities for short breaks.
21. During the next phases of the project, SCC will be seeking to realise the best possible value from the resources available for short breaks through its planned procurement process and then undertaking a final consultation about any changes that are recommended with the families who may be affected by this.

#### Recommendations:

22. It is recommended that the Scrutiny Board:
- a) notes the work undertaken to date on the project, in particular the endorsement of the approach to engaging families in co-design by Ofsted.
  - b) provides feedback to commissioners and Children's Services in relation to the approach set out in the Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy.

#### Next steps:

The table below sets out the key milestones from 27 April onwards

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 27 Apr 17             | Cabinet decision to endorse and consult on recommended options  |
| 08 May 17             | Six-week public consultation begins following Cabinet call-over period  |
| Late May / early June | Engagement with Chair and Vice-Chair of the Social Care Services Board during the public consultation process                 |
| 16 Jun 17             | Public consultation ends  |
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#### Report contacts:

Frank Offer, Head of Market Strategy, CSF Commissioning  
[frank.offer@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:frank.offer@surreycc.gov.uk), 0208 541 9507

Chris Tisdall, Senior Commissioning Manager, CSF Commissioning  
[chris.tisdall@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:chris.tisdall@surreycc.gov.uk), 0208 541 7567

**Sources/background papers:**

- Cabinet Report, Short Breaks for Disabled Children, 24 May 2016
- Cabinet Report, Re-commissioning Short Breaks for Disabled Children, 24 November 2016
- Assessment of need in relation to short breaks in Surrey (co-produced with Family Voice Surrey) – Available on request

## Annex 1 – Short Breaks Outcomes Framework

| Ref | Overall purpose  | Ref | Outcomes  | "I" statements   |
|-----|--|-----|---|--|
| 1   | Children and young people develop their independence and readiness for adulthood | 1.1 | Children and young people develop skills that enable them to be more independent                                | I am developing my communication skills<br>I am learning and developing practical life skills<br>I am developing my social skills  |
|     |  | 1.2 | Children and young people develop their self-confidence within and outside their family setting                 | I have tried new things<br>I am able to succeed and achieve<br>I feel safe and supported<br>I have fun   |
|     |  | 1.3 | Children and young people make informed choices about their short breaks  | I have the information I need about different short breaks<br>I know the choices that are available to me  |
|     |  | 1.4 | Children and young people communicate their choices and preferences   | I have the support I need to communicate my views<br>I contribute to decision making regarding my care<br>My choices and preferences are listened to<br>My choices and preferences are acted upon  |
|     |  | 1.5 | Children and young people prepare for and achieve successful transitions to the next stage of their development | I am better prepared to start at my new school, college or place of education<br>I am happy in my school, college or place of education<br>I am able to get a job or to access further training and support as an adult<br>I am prepared to live as independently as I am able |
| 2   | Children and young people are more emotionally and physically healthy            | 2.1 | Children and young people's health needs are met  | I have opportunities to be physically active, with the right support<br>I am confident that I can get the medical help I need<br>I am confident that I can get the mental health help I need<br>I am more able to make choices to keep myself safe                             |
|     |  | 2.2 | Children and young people overcome challenges   | I know where to go for help when I need it<br>I know I am not on my own and feel supported<br>I feel more prepared to face problems  |
|     |  | 2.3 | Children and young people recognise and manage their feelings and emotions                                      | I understand my feelings better<br>I recognise when my feelings change<br>I am more able to manage my behaviour when my feelings change  |



|   |  |     |  |  |
|---|--|-----|--|--|
|   |  | 2.4 | Children and young people form and develop supportive relationships                                    | <p>I mix more with people my own age</p> <p>I am making new friends and developing friendships</p> <p>I feel more comfortable in groups</p> <p>I have opportunities to spend quality time with different members of my family</p> <p>My family relationships are stronger</p> <p>I have positive role models in my community</p>   |
| 3 | Parents and carers are more empowered to meet the needs of their children          | 3.1 | Parents and carers are able to make informed choices to plan the support that is best for their family | <p>I can access information and guidance about my child's needs</p> <p>I have the right information and training to allow me to enable my child to communicate their needs and wishes</p> <p>I can find information about the different short breaks that are available and how to access these</p> <p>I have choice and control in planning support for my family</p> <p>I can access local services that meet my family's needs</p> <p>I can pay for services that meet my family's needs</p> <p>I feel confident that those supporting my children have the skills required to meet their needs</p> |
|   |  | 3.2 | Parents and carers feel able to ask for help when it is needed   | <p>I know where to go for help when I need it and feel able to ask</p> <p>I understand the process (including access criteria) to access the right support to meet my family's needs</p> <p>I feel supported by professionals and not judged</p> <p>I feel confident that the needs of my family will be fairly assessed</p>   |
| 4 | Parents and carers are able to support their whole family to achieve good outcomes | 4.1 | Family life is enhanced  | <p>I have opportunities to spend quality time with my family as a whole</p> <p>I have opportunities to spend quality time with the different members of my family, including all my children</p> <p>My children who do not have disabilities can access a range of activities that meet their needs</p>  |
|   |  | 4.2 | Parents and carers are able to work or undertake activities not possible without short breaks          | <p>I am able to go to work or get the training I need to prepare for work</p> <p>I am able to carry out housekeeping and household activities to support my family</p> <p>I have opportunities to undertake hobbies and activities that are important to me</p>  |
| 5 | Parents and carers are more emotionally and physically healthy                     | 5.1 | Parents and carers form and develop supportive social networks   | <p>I have opportunities to talk with parents and carers in similar positions</p> <p>I am able spend time with my friends and wider family</p> <p>I am able to work with other parents and carers locally to develop solutions to the challenges we face</p> <p>I feel less isolated</p>  |
|   |  | 5.2 | Parents and carers are able to look after their own wellbeing  | <p>I have opportunities to rest and recuperate</p> <p>I feel less stressed</p> <p>I feel less exhausted</p> <p>I feel more able to face problems when they happen</p>  |

## **Annex 2 – Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy 2017-22**

### **1 Introduction**

Surrey County Council and Family Voice Surrey want to develop and improve Surrey’s offer of short breaks to achieve better outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and their families. The purpose of this commissioning strategy is to communicate how we will seek to achieve this between 2017 and 2022.

#### **1.1 Vision and purpose of short breaks**

Through accessing short breaks children and young people with SEND will develop their independence, readiness for adulthood and physical and emotional health, by having new experiences, learning, having fun and meeting their friends. Short breaks also support parents and carers to meet the needs of their children, enabling their whole family to achieve good outcomes, have choice and control, and look after their own emotional and physical health, by giving them breaks from caring.

‘Confident in our future’, Surrey County Council’s Corporate Strategy, sets out three key strategic goals – wellbeing, economic prosperity and resident experience. The re-commissioning of short breaks will support three key priorities in relation to our wellbeing goal: helping families thrive; keeping families healthy; and protecting our vulnerable children.

The Surrey Children and Young People’s Partnership is developing a new joint-commissioning strategy focussed on tackling inequality in the County. Short breaks have a contributory role to play in reducing inequalities experienced by those with additional needs, including increasing inclusion in their wider community and society as a whole.

#### **1.2 Who are short breaks for?**

The core target group for our short breaks are children and young people with SEND aged 0-17 in Surrey. This includes those with a wide range of needs covering: learning disabilities; physical disabilities; sensory impairments; complex health needs; autistic spectrum disorders (ASD); attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); and behaviour that challenges - as well as associated mental health needs.

Through providing quality short breaks to children and young people in the target group we will also support their parent carers (this term covers parents, grandparents, foster parents and special guardians) and siblings.

#### **1.3 What do we know about the needs of these groups?**

We have sought to ensure our re-commissioning strategy is underpinned by clear data and information about the needs of children and young people in our target group. We have produced a [detailed needs assessment](#) that summarises what we know, which we have published online.

Here is a selection of the key messages from this needs assessment:

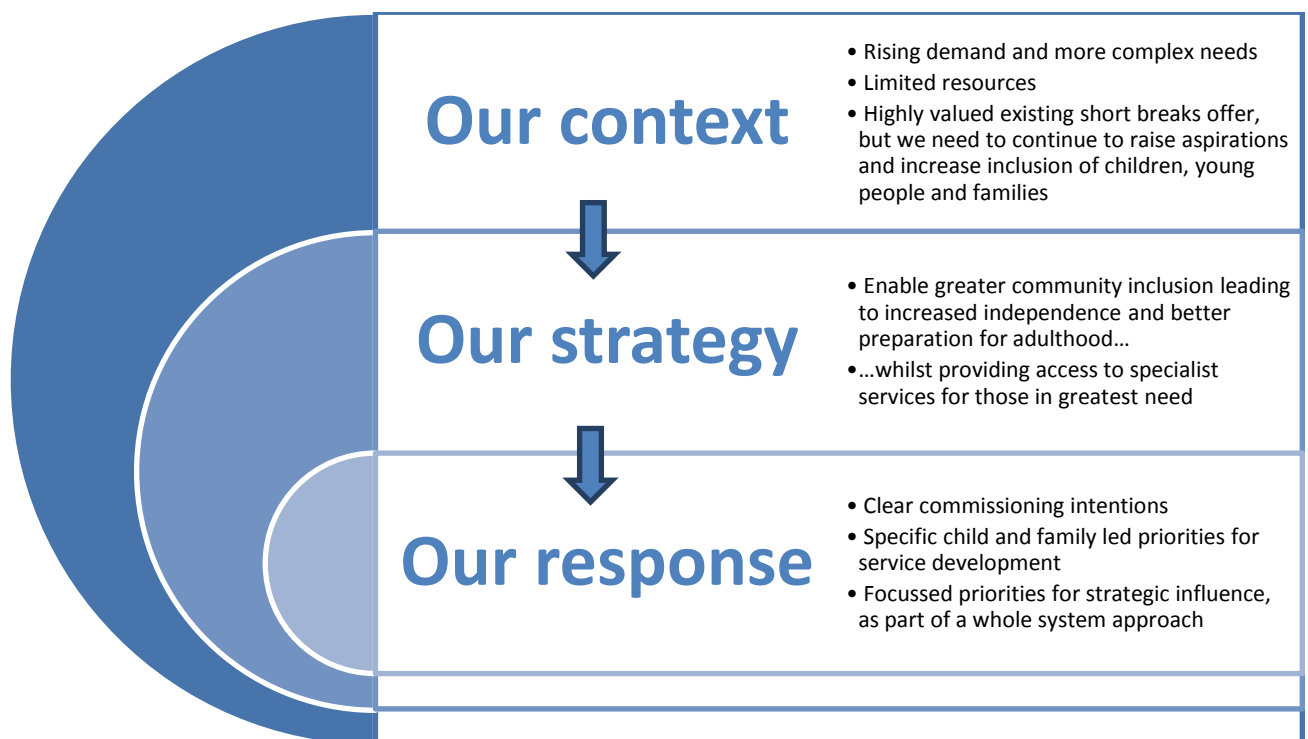
- 2,225 Surrey children and young people accessed short breaks in 2015/16
- 5,751 Surrey children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in January 2016
- If current trends continue, the number of children and young people with an EHCP in Surrey is forecast to increase by more than 1,600 by 2026
- The number of children and young people with ASD is forecast to increase by around 30% by 2026
- 9.4% of children and young people in Surrey live in poverty, and those with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty than their peers

## 1.4 What are short breaks and why are they important?

Short breaks are an essential part of the support available to children and young people with SEND, and their families. They allow children and young people to spend time away from their parents and carers, developing their independence and readiness for adulthood, whilst enabling them to relax and have fun with their friends. They also support parents and carers by giving them a break from their caring responsibilities, allowing them to rest and unwind and spend time with other family members, so they are able to provide better, more sustainable support to their family in the future.

A wide range of activities and opportunities can be short breaks and different things will work best for different children, young people and families. Examples could be attending a youth club or play scheme, being supported to access an opportunity in the local community, an overnight stay in a specialist centre, or activities and support delivered in the home. This list is by no means exhaustive. Short breaks can take place during the day, in the evening, overnight or at weekends, depending on the needs of the child or young person and their family.

## 2 What is our commissioning strategy for short breaks?



## 2.1 Our context

- We know that the number of children and young people with SEND is increasing, including those with the most complex needs
- Surrey County Council and our partners are facing significant budget pressures and growing demand for services across the board
- Alongside this, we know that we have a short breaks offer that is highly valued by many children, young people and families, but we need to continue to raise their aspirations and increase community inclusion. This context means we need to develop our response – building on what works well and refocussing our resources on the things that children and young people with SEND, and their families have told us are most important

## 2.2 Our strategy

- We will enable and empower more children and young people with SEND to access inclusive opportunities in their local communities – this will require us, our commissioned providers and our wider partners to work together in new and innovative ways.
- In doing so, we will develop children and young people’s independence and readiness for adulthood, improving their opportunities later in life, whilst ensuring that those with the greatest need are able to access the essential specialist services they require.
- Alongside this we will work with providers who are committed to developing more sustainable models of delivery over time, strengthening the use of social capital, untapped local assets and peer support, to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families within our resources.

## 2.3 Our response

We will achieve this strategy through our commissioning intentions, priorities for service development and priorities for strategic influence.

Our **commissioning intentions** for short breaks are:

- 1) Commission services that increase resilience and prevent family breakdown through early help, targeted and specialist support
- 2) Commission inclusive approaches that enable children and young people to access more opportunities in their local communities, whilst delivering the best value for money from our investment in residential provision
- 3) Respond to identified gaps in provision and to the changing needs of children and young people over their life journey
- 4) Commission and develop sustainable models that draw on social capital to achieve better outcomes

Our **priorities for service development** are:

- 1) Improving clarity of and access to information about short breaks
- 2) Improving the transparency of processes to access services

- 3) Enabling children, young people and families to have choice and control over their short breaks

Our **priorities for strategic influence** with our partners, the wider system and communities are:

- 1) Developing more inclusive communities and mainstream services, allowing the fullest possible participation of children and young people with SEND and their families
- 2) Enabling children, young people and parents to support one another through peer relationships and networks

### 2.3.1 What do our commissioning intentions mean?

**1) Commission services that increase resilience and prevent family breakdown through early help, targeted and specialist support** – short breaks have a vital preventative role to play, providing support to families early so that they do not reach a point of crisis and require significant intervention. This support could range from early help for a child who has recently been diagnosed with an additional need or be part of a package of specialist services to families of children and young people with multiple and complex needs.

#### How will we achieve this?

- We will build a formal early help role into our commissioned short break services, to improve joint working to support for families in need of early help.
- We will work with providers and families to enable children and young people with the most complex needs to get timely access to the most appropriate services for them.
- We will strengthen family relationships by developing more whole family opportunities, covering the child or young person, their siblings and their parent carers.

**2) Commission inclusive approaches that enable children and young people to access more opportunities in their local communities, whilst delivering the best value for money from our investment in residential provision** – the Council is currently over spending on overnight residential, whilst there is under-used capacity within existing services. This position is unsustainable. Whilst some children and young people will absolutely continue to need support through overnight short breaks, we will seek to be as efficient as possible in how we make use of this valuable provision, so that we can prioritise funding of our community based services.

#### How will we achieve this?

- We will run an open and transparent procurement process to identify the providers that will achieve the best outcomes and value for money, so that we make the best possible use of the available funding to meet the needs of children and young people
- If there is a need to change any current provision, we will consult with families and providers affected and work with them to mitigate the impact of this on children and young people
- We will prioritise funding for our community based services and work with our providers to innovate, develop and enhance these, so capacity within specialist services is available to those in greatest need

### **3) Respond to identified gaps in provision and to the changing needs of children and young people over their life journey**

- Our analysis has highlighted that there are growing numbers of children and young people with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), complex health needs and behaviours that challenge. We will look to our providers to offer more opportunities that meet these needs. This will require training by providers to develop the skills that give confidence to parent carers that the needs of their children will be met, and to provide 1-to-1 and 2-to-1 support as appropriate. We will also work to ensure that short breaks provision is as fairly distributed across the county as possible in response to need, and is accessible to a wide range of communities and groups. Finally we want to work with our providers and partners to improve the skills, knowledge and experience of children and young people at key transition points in their lives.

#### **How will we achieve this priority?**

- We will seek to commission more provision that can be accessed by children and young people with ASD, complex health needs and behaviours that challenge.
- We will work with providers and parents to share training, learning and expertise.
- We will commission appropriate levels of 1-to-1 and 2-to-1 care to enable access to services.
- We will share funding for short breaks between areas of the county in response to the level of need.

### **4) Commission and develop sustainable models that draw on social capital to achieve better outcomes**

– we know that the level of need in the county is forecast to increase, at the same time as the Council is having to re-balance its budgets due to funding cuts and rising pressures. This means we will need to develop new, sustainable models of delivering services that are rich in social capital. We think social capital means: harnessing untapped community assets, like buildings, equipment and natural resources; empowering children, young people and parents through co-production to offer and receive peer support; and drawing in other resources through fundraising, partnership or generating income.

#### **How will we achieve this?**

- We will ask our providers to be innovative in designing their offer and develop more sustainable models of providing short breaks throughout this commissioning period, to grow capacity as need increases – this might mean use of volunteers, working in new partnerships, or fundraising and generating income
- We will ask our providers to make better use of the untapped physical assets in our communities, such as buildings, equipment and Surrey's natural resources
- We will empower children, young people and families to co-produce services in an equal and reciprocal relationship with professionals, through models that promote peer support

## **2.3.2 What do our priorities for service development mean?**

**1) Improving clarity of and access to information about short breaks** – children, young people and families have told us that finding out what short breaks are available can be difficult and this is a barrier to accessing the right services at the right time. We will review our information offer, in partnership with families and other professionals, to ensure that it meets their needs,

building on Surrey's Local Offer website. We will also work in partnership with Family Voice Surrey to develop networks of parents and organisations who can share information and advice with one another, to efficiently signpost to the available services.

#### **How will we achieve this priority?**

- We will work with families, through Family Voice Surrey and other parent carer groups, to review our information offer in relation to short breaks to ensure it meets their needs, making better use of social media and building on the Surrey Local Offer website
- We will refresh the statutory Surrey Short Breaks Statement by autumn 2017, in partnership with Family Voice Surrey, clearly setting out details of the services available, and the eligibility criteria and access arrangements for these services
- We will pro-actively strengthen, promote and support existing parent and family networks that provide invaluable support, advice and guidance to families across Surrey, working in partnership with Family Voice Surrey and Action for Carers

**2) Improving the transparency of processes to access services** – we have heard from families that current assessment processes can be difficult to go through, are hard to understand and it can be some time before services are accessed. It must be acknowledged, however, that it is of vital importance that children and young people are kept safe, access services that provide support appropriate to their needs, and that the most specialist services are fairly allocated to those in greatest need. We will increase the transparency of our eligibility criteria and assessment processes, so that children, young people and families are clear about what to expect, and we will seek to improve where we can. We will press ahead with implementing our Safer Surrey Approach, which will allow us to identify and build on the strengths of families, whilst also managing the risks that children and young people may be facing.

#### **How will we achieve this priority?**

- We will increase the transparency of our Children's Services assessment processes, so that children, young people and families are clear about what to expect and how services can be accessed
- We will work with families to improve our processes, whilst also being clear and open about the things that are required to comply with our statutory requirements
- We will press ahead with implementing our Safer Surrey Approach, which seeks to identify and build on the strengths of families, whilst also managing the risks that children and young people may be facing

**3) Enabling children, young people and families to have choice and control over their short breaks** – we want to increase choice and control for children, young people and families as part of the short breaks offer. This will mean developing the market for short breaks so that more options are available and increasing the role of children, young people and families in decision making about the services that meet their needs. At a provider level, we will be looking for organisations to co-design and co-produce services in an equal and reciprocal relationship with children, young people and families. We will continue to support growth in the use of direct payments for families who are able to access these.

### **How will we achieve this priority?**

- We will be looking to providers to increase local commissioning of services, through co-design with children, young people and parents
- We will encourage families to pool their resources to buy short breaks that better meet their needs
- We will continue to build on the success of personal budgets in Surrey, increasing choice and control for families to design packages of support and improving the support and advice we offer
- We will ensure that commissioned services are at an affordable level for families

### **2.3.4 What do our priorities for strategic influence mean?**

**1) Developing more inclusive communities and mainstream services, allowing the fullest possible participation of children and young people with SEND and their families** – children and young people with SEND, and their families have told us how they want more opportunities to access their local community – the sorts of opportunities that others might take for granted. By developing more inclusive communities we will help children and young people to develop their independence and readiness for adulthood and provide greater choice to families about the resources they can access.

#### **How will we achieve this?**

- We will work with our partners to develop more opportunities for children and young people with SEND, and their families within their existing services
- We will look to our short breaks providers to forge local links and partnerships with mainstream community groups and clubs, to share their learning and expertise
- We will work with partners to develop and promote inclusive opportunities for children and young people with disabilities in mainstream settings, such as health services, youth services and sports clubs.

**2) Enabling children, young people and parent carers to support one another through peer relationships and networks** – children, young people and families themselves are one of our most vital assets. They have told us they would like more opportunities to support and be supported by one another, as they have experience and learning to share and feel that their peers can better understand their situation.

#### **How will we achieve this?**

- We will look to our different partners and short breaks providers to work together to develop more opportunities for families to network and support each other, building on the many initiatives that already exist - some examples of these might include: coffee mornings; developing local parent carer networks; informal or formal buddying schemes; or opportunities to share their experience and ideas with others.
- We will continue to work with Family Voice Surrey to develop solutions that mean families feel less isolated, that they are listened to and that they can share their experience and expertise



### 3 Outcomes for children, young people and families

We are taking an outcome-based approach to this commissioning strategy. This means focussing on the outcomes (positive changes in the lives of children, young people and families) that we want to achieve through our short breaks, rather than describing what services we want delivered. During 2016, we have worked with children, young people and families to co-design the outcomes that they would like short breaks to help them to achieve. These are set out in our short breaks outcomes framework, which includes our overall and supporting outcomes, as well as “I” statements that describe what these overall points mean for individual families. This outcomes framework will be at the heart of all our short breaks commissioning and is provided at the end of this document.

### 4 National context

Under the **Children Act 1989**, disabled children are defined as children ‘in need’. As such, they are eligible for support under the general duty on local authorities established by Section 17(1) of the Act to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area through providing a wide range of services’. Statutory assessments of disabled children are governed by statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

The **Children and Young Person’s Act 2008** requires local authorities to provide short breaks services that are designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children to continue to do so, or to do so more effectively by providing them with breaks from caring.

The **Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011** (also referred to as the ‘short break duty’) prescribed the manner in which local authorities must make provision for short breaks for carers of disabled children and young people in their area. The regulations state that local authorities must have regards to the needs of those carers who caring and the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless a break was offered to them.

In performing their duty, the local authority must provide, as appropriate, a range of: daytime care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere; overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere; educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes; and services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

The **Children and Families Act 2014** made a range of changes to Local Authorities duties in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities: extending the SEND system from birth to 25; introducing Education, Health and Care Plans, to improve planning between agencies to meet the needs of children and young people; and giving children, young people and their parents greater ‘choice and control’ in decisions, to ensure their needs are properly met.

The **Care Act 2014** strengthens the rights and recognition of carers in the social care system. Carers and the people they care for have a clear right to an assessment of their needs regardless of their income and finances and level of need.

The council expects providers to keep up to date with future legislative changes which would have an impact on short breaks services for disabled children and young people.

Please note that where children and young people access 75 days of respite a year they become 'looked after', even though they still live in shared arrangements.

## **5 Local context for re-commissioning short breaks**

Surrey currently has a well-established short breaks offer, including play and leisure services, specialist residential opportunities, personal care and support services, and also personal budgets for some families. We are looking to build on the strengths of this offer and improve where we can.

SEND 2020 is Surrey County Council's programme to improve the offer to children and young people with SEND and their families. Short breaks are a key part of this programme and we will seek to commission services that support and complement this overall initiative.

## **6 Surrey County Council's budget position**

Surrey County Council's Medium Term Financial Plan includes provision for continuing short breaks funding at the current level, although there is a need to address a current budget overspend in relation to current residential respite provision. This funding acknowledges the vital preventative role played by these services in offering early help to families when it is needed. Overall, the council is facing unprecedented financial pressures, due to significant funding reductions from central government and rising demand for services. Considering this financial context, we are particularly interested in working with partners who are developing models that are sustainable, flexible and resilient, drawing increasingly on social capital to improve outcomes, grow capacity and enhance geographic reach, range and quality of short breaks that are available.

Annex 3 – Project timeline

Short breaks re-commissioning - Project timeline (Jan 2017)  Key decision

Review of specialist short breaks (Jan-Apr 2016)

Cabinet Report (24 May 2016)



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