

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	12 July 2018
Title:	Proposed changes to the Short Break Activities Programme and consultation outcomes
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Suzanne Smith,
Head of Procurement, Commissioning & Placements

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1. The decision:

- 1.1 To facilitate a Short Break Activities Programme that more clearly reflects the needs of parents, carers and young people accessing it, and taking into account relevant information and the outcomes of the public consultation, it is recommended that the following proposed changes to the Short Break Activities Programme are approved:
- a) Proposal 1: To commission the Short Break Activities Programme on the basis of priorities, agreed with a representative parent/carer panel.
 - b) Proposal 2: To require parents and carers to pay in advance for Short Break Activities, and for providers to collect advance payment of parents'/carers' contributions for those activities.
 - c) Proposal 3: To require providers of Short Break Activities to apply consistent parental/carer charges and hardship rates.
 - d) Proposal 4: To move to a new online Gateway Card application system.
 - e) Proposal 5: To require evidence of eligibility from a professional as part of the new Gateway Card application to access the Short Break Activities Programme.
 - f) Proposal 6: From 1 April 2019, to stop funding Short Break Activities for young people aged 18 and over.
 - g) Proposal 7: That Short Break Activities would only be funded for children who live in the Hampshire County Council authority area.
 - h) Proposal 8: To only fund Short Break Activities which allow parents and carers to leave their child.
 - i) Proposal 9: To stop funding swimming lessons as a short break activity.

1.2 It is further recommended that the charging policy setting out the consistent parent/carer contributions and concession rates set out in *Integral Appendix D* is approved.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

1.1 The Children's Services Department (excluding schools) has a two year savings target of £30.1million to be delivered by 2019, representing an overall budget reduction of 18%.

1.2 The current budget for Children with Disabilities is £19.5m of which £16.5m supports families eligible for social work support and interventions through children with disabilities social work teams. The budget also includes £3m of funding for a short break programme and £2.4m of this is used to provide open access short break activities delivered by third sector and charitable providers.

1.3 The decision to reshape the current Short Breaks offer as proposed in the report, will save an estimated £1million, representing a 5% reduction in the Children with Disabilities budget.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

3.1 To stop funding for after school clubs and to look to schools to subsidise these clubs. This was rejected as it is not feasible in light of pressures on school budgets.

3.2 To appoint a single strategic partner for the delivery of the Short Break Activities Programme. This was rejected as no significant benefits of this approach were identified.

3.3 To reduce rental payments by providers to schools. This was rejected as it was not considered feasible in light of pressures on school budgets.

3.4 To stipulate that Direct Payments be used for families to purchase Short Breaks themselves. This was rejected as it would increase the administrative burden on parents/carers and would merely shift the financial pressure from one area of funding in Children's Services to another

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

7.1. In reaching this decision I have taken into account the debate and recommendations made by the Children and Young People Select Committee on 12 July 2018; in particular the recommendation for further appraisal of proposals 8 and 9 by the Committee. I have also taken into account the financial position of the County Council and the need to achieve savings set out in the Transformation to 2019 programme. I note that the Director of Children's Services will review the impact of changes resulting from implementing Proposal 6 and provide an update after six months. I have requested that this also incorporates an evaluation of the impact of proposals 8 and 9, with a special focus on the provision of swimming lessons.

Approved by:

Date:

12 July 2018

**Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Councillor Keith Mans**