

Initial Equality Impact Assessment – Service Change

The initial equality impact assessment is a quick and easy screening process. It will help you to identify those changes to services which require a full EIA by looking at:

- negative, positive or no impact on any of the equality groups
- opportunity to promote equality for the equality groups

Any questions at anytime please call Clare O'Connor on ext 7816.

PLEASE NOTE THE BOXES CAN BE EXPANDED TO ALLOW FOR MORE INFORMATION TO BE ADDED.

Department	Children's Services
Service	Special Needs and Children with Disabilities
People involved	Carol Payne, Gillian Bennell

1. What are the aims of the service and what changes are being proposed?

- The Council has a statutory duty to provide a range of short breaks for children and young people with special needs / disabilities. The Council must have regard to the needs of carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless a break from caring were given to them. It must also have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care more effectively if breaks allowed them to undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity, meet the needs of other children in the family, or carry out day to day tasks in order to run their household.
- The change being proposed is that the current process of central charging for some short breaks services should cease and there should be local charges, which are more in line with the kinds of charges any families might pay for leisure activities for their children / young people
- The loss in income can be contained within the children's services existing budget. It is expected that the loss in income will be more than compensated for over time because of changes that will flow from the new policy. These include:
 - a saving of £6,000 to the DCT budget for additional support at George Shearing. Instead of providing an agency worker to each individual young person to enable them to access the facilities, the centre will employ and train an additional worker who could be linked to a number of young people. This will reduce the costs to the council.
 - a saving of up to £3,000 over time in relation to costs at Lady Allen Playground, as a result of making local charges to families who are not currently paying; and
 - a saving of around £4,500 in the Aiming High short breaks budget as a result of introducing consistent local charges in special school summer

schemes, and play services specialist short breaks provision, reducing the cost of running these schemes.	
2. What is the rationale behind these changes?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve greater equity for service users • To reduce bureaucracy both for families and for the council 	
3. What information do you have on the service and the potential impact of your service change in relation to the following?	
	<p>List information you have. Do not put what the information shows you</p> <p>Information includes number of people using the service, customer satisfaction, feedback on service, results of consultation</p>
Race	<p>Some analysis has been undertaken of the families accessing Lady Allen Playground. In the group of families being charged for additional support 44% are white British, of the remaining 56% from Black and Minority Ethnic groups the numbers in the different groups are very small (1-3 children) and therefore it would not be possible to draw significant conclusions from this.</p> <p>The group of children accessing additional support who are exempt from charging follows the same pattern</p>
Gender	<p>As is common in the population of children with disabilities many more boys are affected than girls and this is reflected in the service user groups.</p>
Disability	<p>Currently 168 families access services through the DCT, some will be making use of more than one service</p> <p>Lady Allen Playground / George Shearing: At present families with children / young people with more significant needs are charged for the provision of additional support in order to access the provision. Children who do not need additional support just pay the local charge. This practice appears to discriminate against those with higher levels of need. 120 families access this service</p> <p>Oakdene / Domiciliary Support / Direct Payments / Wandsworth Family Link Families are accessing these services on account of their children's disabilities. Higher levels of service are provided where there are higher levels of need. Children requiring this kind of support are likely to be those who cannot easily participate in the kinds of leisure activities that most families access and which would enable parents to have some free time at a</p>

	much lower cost (e.g. child going on a sleepover with a friend / child attending a weekly club) 110 families access this service	
Age	Families of young people aged 16 and 17 are not assessed for central charges.	
Faith	These areas are not monitored in relation to short breaks services	
Sexual Orientation		
4. Thinking about each group below please list the impact that the service change will have.		
	<u>Positive</u> impacts of service change	Possible <u>negative</u> impacts of service change
Race	Proposed service change is not expected to have a significant impact in this area although given the gender split within this group both the positive and negative impact of the proposals will affect more boys than girls	
Gender		
Disability	Families with children with more severe or complex needs will no longer be charged at a higher level to access a service such as Lady Allen Playground / George Shearing Youth Club on account of needing additional support; they would just pay the local charge levied from most families. This will address the inequality in the current policy. Some families which have not taken up services because they could not afford the central charges or where the bureaucracy of the eligibility process proved to be a barrier may now take up services, improving the families' ability to cope and reducing the need for long term residential arrangements in some cases. Overnight short breaks at Oakdene, personal assistant support in the home, or direct payments will be offered at	Some families who have not been paying the local charge because they were being assessed for the central charge, in the end were exempt from the central charge because they were on benefits and will now have to meet the local charge of £2.50 per session. This would affect in the region of 28 families.

	<p>nil cost in line with Health and SEN Services</p> <p>Feedback from parents is that they find the charging policy complicated and discriminatory. It can increase levels of distrust and hostility between the Council and families with disabled children. Removing the complexity of the policy will address these concerns.</p>		
Age	<p>This is a service for young people and therefore any changes (both positive and negative) will affect children aged under 16.</p> <p>Proposed service change is not expected to have a significant impact in this area</p>		
Faith			
Sexual orientation			
<p>5. Is a full EIA required? Yes/No</p> <p>The following questions should help you decide if a full EIA is required. As a guide if you are a frontline service where the impact is unclear or negative you will need to conduct a full EIA. You are unsure call Clear O'Connor on ext 7816</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the service a frontline service? Yes • Is it clear what impact the service change will have on all the equality groups? Yes • Overall will the change have a negative impact on any of the equality groups? No 			
<p>Comments - Please give the rationale here for not undertaking a full EIA</p> <p>The changes will only affect a very small number of families within the group of 168 children accessing these services. Some will gain financially, a slightly larger number will lose out, although they will be paying at the same level as all other families accessing the service. All these families will benefit from the greater clarity about the revised system and there will be a saving in time for both the families and the department given that the financial assessments will no longer be undertaken. Overall, the information available indicates that the proposed service change will have a positive impact on families of children / young people with disabilities who will be able to access services without the need for a detailed financial assessment.</p>			
<p>6. Through the initial EIA have you identified any actions that needed to be implemented to improve access to the service or monitoring of the service? (please list)</p> <p>All parents who will now pay a small charge for accessing services are being contacted and their views sought. If they have concerns they are being invited to contact their social workers who will work with them on how to adjust to this change. For the families who will end up paying more and who are unable to afford it, it may be necessary to provide some transitional financial assistance. The</p>			

Charges for Short Breaks Services

numbers are small enough for this to be assessed on a case by case basis.

Signed Carol Payne

Date 16th May 2012

Approved by:
(all initial EIAs to be approved by Clare O'Connor)