

## Proposal for new Short Break offer

Did you use the EIA Screening Tool? (Delete as applicable)

Yes (please attach upon submission) / No

### 1. Explaining the matter being assessed

Is this a:

- Change to a service or function

**Summarise the strategy, policy, service(s), or function(s) being assessed. Describe current status followed by any changes that stakeholders would experience.**

The purpose of this Equality Impact Assessment is to review the impact of proposed changes to Surrey County Council (SCC) funded short breaks services for children and young people with Additional Needs and/or Disabilities (AN&D) and their families. Short breaks are vital in enabling many children and young people with AN&D in Surrey, and their families, to achieve better outcomes.

Local Authorities have legal duties in relation to short breaks to:

- provide short break services that are designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children to continue to do so;
- have regard to the needs of different types of carers when making short breaks provision;
- provide a range of breaks, as appropriate, during the day, night, at weekends and during the school holidays;
- provide parents with a short breaks statement detailing the range of breaks and eligibility criteria; and
- work in partnership across education, health and care to improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities.

All the short breaks services funded by the Council are provided by our commissioned partners, through contracts for services or grants. These are legally required to be renewed every 3-5 years, as existing agreements expire. Before awarding new contracts and grants the Council is legally required to undertake a competitive procurement process. Whilst this provides a positive opportunity to listen to families and re-commission services in response to feedback about how we can improve, it can also cause uncertainty for families.

As part of this process, priority has been given to funding Overnight provision and to pilot a new provisions for children & Young People (CYP) with complex needs (needing 1:1/2:1 support) and their families. Whilst funding for these services is not currently being reduced in real-terms, it is being held at current levels, following a decision by the Children, Families and Lifelong Learning Leadership Team in July 2022. This acknowledged the fact that by not increasing funding for these services there was likely to be a reduction in capacity available across open-access,

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community based short breaks services, due to inflationary pressures increasing cost since the services we last recommissioned in 2017/18.

This EIA will also consider the likely implications of the recommissioning process for children, young people and families, in light of this decision, alongside consideration any future real-terms reductions in funding levels, resulting from anticipated and actual budget pressures facing the County Council.

Whilst it is in no way a contractual requirement, the organisations that currently provide short breaks services in Surrey are predominantly from the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS). Whilst, these organisations provide services alongside complimentary services run by Surrey county council (including respite provision in two children's homes, the Surrey Domiciliary Care Service) and services purchased by families using direct payments. The focus of this EIA will be solely on externally commissioned services, accept in the event that an SCC run provision mitigates a negative or enables a positive impact identified by this EIA.

The proposed funding awards fall into the below categories:

**Overnight short breaks** (contracts) – these countywide services enable children and young people with SEND to develop their independence and readiness for adulthood, learn life skills, form meaningful relationships, and socialise with their peers, through a range of overnight breaks in a safe and secure environment for the stay. These services are accessed by referral only through the SCC Children with Disability Teams.

**Play and leisure short breaks** (contracts) – these provide children and young people with a range of creative, flexible, and fun opportunities in their local communities. Typical activities might include: social experiences; sport and physical activity; activities based around cookery, arts, crafts, design, dance and drama; outdoor pursuits; buddying services; use of technology and gaming; whole family activities; flexible outreach; and programmes to develop life skills. Some of these services target children and young people with particular needs, including autism, visual impairment and complex health needs.

**Proposed new service - Play & Leisure provision for CYP with complex needs** (who need 1:1 or 2:1 support) – This new service, which we intend to commission following the completion of a strategic review of short breaks completed during 2021/22, is designed to better meet the need of children with more complex needs that require 1:1 or 2:1 support – where these are best met in specific provision, alongside the more open access offer. Providers and families told us that there is real pressure on 1:1 and 2:1 spaces and that levels of need are increasing, so this service is proposed in response to this.

**Pilot provision for “Family Short Breaks”** – Families also told us how they struggled to find opportunities to do things together as a whole family. This proposed new offer is designed to provide additional opportunities for families to access activity-based short breaks together in Surrey, enabling improved outcomes for the whole family.

**Innovation Grants** – these are currently available to organisations who will deliver innovative projects that offer short breaks that extend the range of opportunities for children and young people with SEND across Surrey, to support them to achieve better outcomes.

More than 1,430 children received over 80,000 hours of externally commissioned short breaks services in 2021/22. As additional context, there were: over 3,400 children on the Disability Register; 4,458 children with disabilities known to SCC; and over 11,000 children with an

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Education, Health and Care Plan. It is important not all of these children and young people (and their families) would require or chose to access short breaks services.

The specifications for these services were designed in response to the thing's families told us were most important. The proposals for new services have been evaluated and moderated by a team including Surrey County Council staff and Family Voice Surrey. Through this a range of successful bidders have been identified to provide play and leisure and overnight short breaks

## How does your service proposal support the outcomes in [the Community Vision for Surrey 2030](#)?

The service proposal is linked to the below outcomes in the Community Vision for Surrey 2030:

- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident.
- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life.
- Everyone lives healthy, active, and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing.
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place.
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life.

## Are there any specific geographies in Surrey where this will make an impact?

Short breaks services are provided countywide, with families resident in all Surrey's boroughs and districts accessing provision:

- Elmbridge
- Epsom and Ewell
- Guildford
- Mole Valley
- Reigate and Banstead
- Runnymede
- Spelthorne
- Surrey Heath
- Tandridge
- Waverley
- Woking

The below chart provides as sense of the current distribution of children and young people who access short breaks across Surrey:

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...by District/Borough

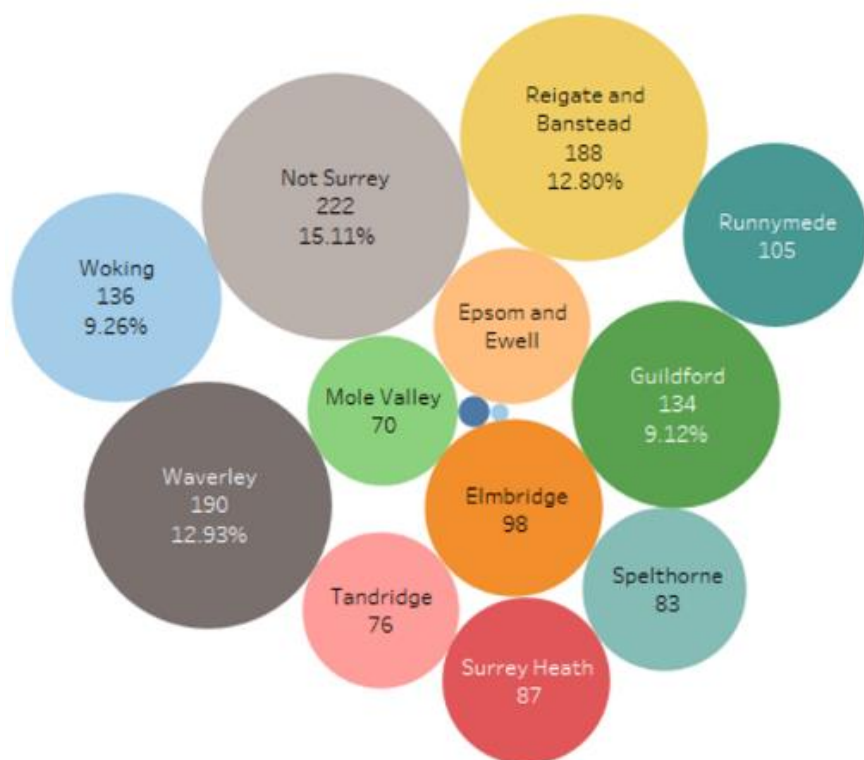


Figure 1 - Children and young people accessing short breaks by where they live

**Assessment team** – A key principle for completing impact assessments is that they should not be done in isolation. Consultation with affected groups and stakeholders needs to be built in from the start, to enrich the assessment and develop relevant mitigation.

- **Surrey County Council's Corporate Parenting Commissioning Team**
- **Surrey County Council's Children with Disabilities Teams**
- **Surrey County Council's SEND teams**

This EIA has been informed by engagement with:

- **Family Voice Surrey**
- **Children and young people with disabilities and their families**
- **Short Breaks providers in Surrey**
- **Health partners in Surrey**

## 2. Service Users / Residents

### Who may be affected by this activity?

There are 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) to consider in your proposal. These are:

1. Age including younger and older people
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour, or nationality
6. Religion or belief including lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage/civil partnerships

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, Surrey County Council recognises that there are other vulnerable groups which significantly contribute to inequality across the county and therefore they should also be considered within EIAs. If relevant, you will need to include information on the following vulnerable groups (Please **refer to the EIA guidance** if you are unclear as to what this is).

- Members/Ex members of armed forces
- Adult and young carers\*
- Those experiencing digital exclusion\*
- Those experiencing domestic abuse\*
- Those with education/training (literacy) needs
- Those experiencing homelessness\*
- Looked after children/Care leavers\*
- Those living in rural/urban areas
- Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage\*
- Out of work young people)\*
- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism\*
- People with drug or alcohol use issues\*
- People on probation
- People in prison
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Sex workers
- Children with Special educational needs and disabilities\*
- Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)\*
- Older People in care homes\*
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities\*
- Other (describe below)

(\*as identified in the Surrey COVID Community Impact Assessment and the Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy)

The key groups affected by the proposals set out in this EIA are:

- **Disability (including children with special educational needs and disabilities)**
  - Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged 0-17 in Surrey - This includes those with a wide range of needs covering: learning disabilities; physical disabilities; sensory impairments; complex health needs;

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autistic spectrum disorders (ASD); attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); and behaviour that challenges - as well as associated mental health needs.

- **Looked after children** – some children open to Surrey County Council’s Children with Disability teams will also be looked after by Surrey County Council, with those who receive 75 days of care or more per year (including respite) becoming looked after. Short breaks also play an important role in preventing children becoming looked after due to reducing the need for access to specialist residential provision and mitigating some of the pressures for families that might contribute to family breakdown.
- **Adult and young carers** - Their parent carers (this term covers parents, grandparents, foster parents and special guardians) and siblings.
- **Race**
- **Sex/Gender**

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## Disability and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

High-quality Short Breaks Services make a real difference to the lives of children and young people (CYP) with disabilities and their families in Surrey, enabling them to achieve the best possible outcomes. They provide CYP with positive, enriching experiences where they can make friends, increase their confidence and improve their emotional and physical health, whilst also providing parents and carers with a break from their caring responsibilities to support their own wellbeing and spend time with other family members. They also support positive outcomes for whole families. As a result of enabling these positive outcomes, short breaks also play a role in preventing family breakdowns and/or the need for further specialist support, which often comes at a higher cost to the local authority. This is reinforced by feedback from parents and carers, who often talk about services as being “a lifeline”.

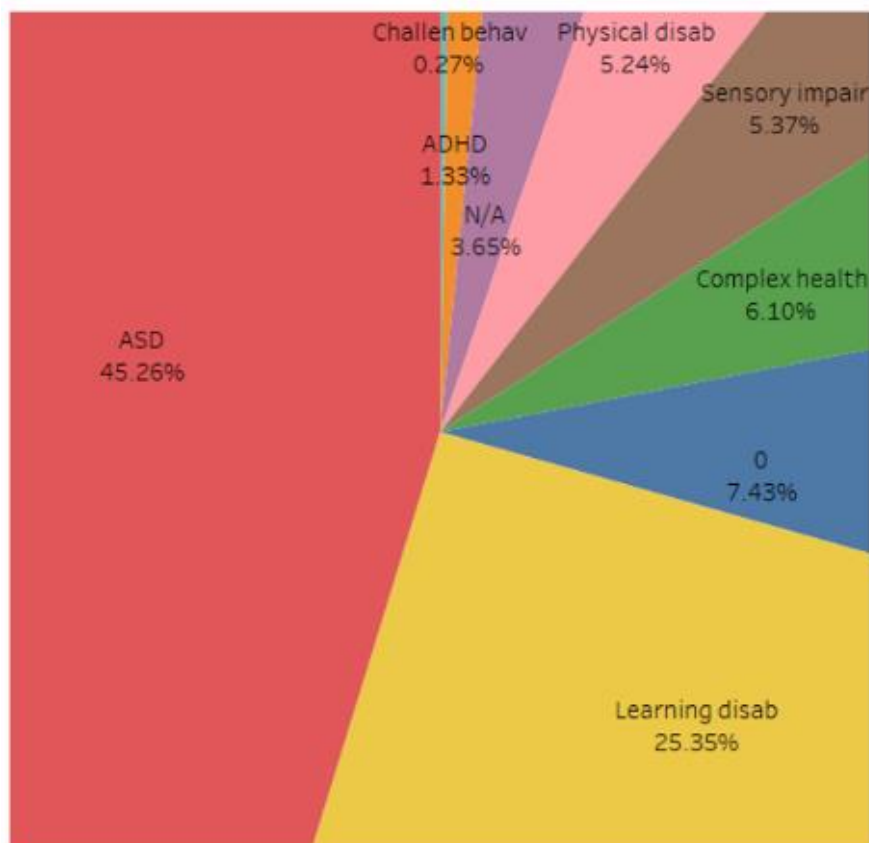
Here are three quotes from parents and carers that are illustrative of what we about how short breaks make a difference to children and young people with disabilities:

*“She has learnt to wash herself, make her bed, vacuum her room, cook, do art and go on bus trips without her parents watching her every move. She is often dressed and ready to go at 7 am when respite starts at 10 am. She is very proud of what she achieves independently.”*

*“It provides them with structure and routine in the holidays - without it this my son would struggle.”*

*“Makes him feel like other children who have clubs to go to, particularly his sister.”*

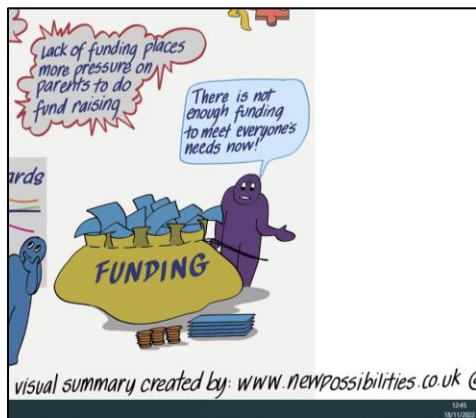
The below chart provides an overview of the distribution of the primary needs of children and young people who access short breaks. The main needs are autism (ASD) and learning disabilities.



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As mentioned previously, over 1,400 children and young people with disabilities benefitted from accessing a total of more than 80,000 hours of short breaks during 2021/22. Whilst this is a significant number, anecdotal evidence from short breaks providers and families suggests that there are other families who are currently on waiting lists for services, who would want to be able to access short breaks (and many those who do access services tell us they would access more if they could). Figure 1 below is an extract taken from visual minutes drawn up by an external facilitator from a market engagement workshop with local providers.

Figure 2 - Extract from visual minutes from provider workshop April 2022



Evidence clearly suggests that the number of children with disabilities in Surrey is increasing, as is the complexity of need of children currently accessing services. For example, since the last time short breaks services were recommissioned in 2017/18, the number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans aged 0-18 has increased by 65% and the level of children accessing short breaks who require 1:1 support reached 55% in 2021/22, against an original assumption of 40% in 2017/18.

There is limited published evaluative research into the impact of short breaks, but what evidence there is does suggest a positive, preventative impact of these services on families. Two published studies we have reviewed in support of this EIA do indicate positive impact of the services on children with disabilities and their families, as follows:

- A study conducted in 2017 for the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Board (HSCB)<sup>1</sup> does identify some positive evidence of the effectiveness of Short Breaks in providing support to families, improving wellbeing of carers, and helping them to cope, with families using Short Breaks tending to be those who are experiencing the highest levels of parenting stress and distress.
- Research conducted in 2011 by Together for Disabled Children<sup>2</sup> involved 17 local authorities across England and found that Short break services appear to have prevented disabled children entering the Looked After System and thus potentially saved money for the local authority.

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<sup>1</sup> [The effectiveness of short breaks in families where there are children with disabilities: A Systematic Review of the Evidence](#), NSCB, 2017

<sup>2</sup> [Impact of the Short Break Programme on the Prevention of Disabled Children Entering the Looked After System](#), Together for Disabled Children, 2011



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Since SCC last recommissioned its short breaks services, there has been around 17.5% inflation, with the current inflationary forecasts suggesting there is likely to be further pressure on the horizon. If we assume this results in a 17.5% reduction in capacity of provision, this would equate to 14,000 fewer hours of short breaks – which will either translate into children accessing fewer hours on average or fewer children accessing services.

As with most services of a preventative nature, in the absence of published randomised control trials (noting that, even then, it might not be appropriate to assume comparable impact by simply translating impact from one area into Surrey's context), precisely quantifying the level of preventative impact that there currently is on children with disabilities in Surrey is problematic. There is however compelling local and recurring qualitative feedback from families, telling us about the importance of these services, alongside published research that presents a similar position.

As a purely illustrative example, a not unrealistic scenario could be a 20% reduction in capacity of short breaks services (linked to price increases connected to inflationary pressures). In this scenario, as an authority we would look to take mitigatory steps to ensure our investment continues to focus on provision to those children and/or families where there is the greatest need. Building on this and again, for illustrative purposes, it might be reasonable to assume that with mitigations a 20% reduction in capacity would only have a meaningful adverse impact on the outcomes achieved by 5% of children and families currently accessing services, due reduced access to support. If this was the case, it would equate to just over 70 children and young people with disabilities. Whilst this is, of course, just one illustrative scenario, it does provide an indication of the kind of impact we might expect from capacity changes in the current context.

Given the positive impact of short breaks referenced above, any reductions in capacity of short breaks services due to either or both inflation linked price increases (noting importantly that Surrey County Council is currently proposing to hold the budget for short breaks in 2023/24) and any future decisions by Surrey County Council to reduce current levels of investment in these services are likely to: reduce positive outcomes for children with disabilities and their families; and increased pressure within families of children with disabilities, which is likely to, in some cases, contribute to family breakdown if this is not mitigated – leading to increased cost for the local authority.

## **Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

**Ensure available services are focussed on children with the greatest need:** Whilst we know that short breaks services are important to all children and families who take them up and/or are currently on waiting lists for services, there are steps SCC can take, working in partnership with providers to ensure those children and families who have the greatest need for short breaks are able to access the largest share of the provision. These include:

- Ensuring funding is prioritised for Overnight Short Breaks, and other services that support children with complex needs (noting that these children are represented to an extent in all current services). This would mean shifting any real-terms funding pressures on to services that are currently open-access, such as play and leisure schemes and innovation grants, resulting in likely capacity reductions of greater than 17.5% highlighted above for these services.
- Engage with providers and families in relation to establishing eligibility criteria for current open-access short breaks, so that access to services can be more directly linked to need.

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- Continue to work with providers to use their expertise to remain responsive to the needs of children and families who access their services, so that those who really need the support are enabled to access as much as possible when it is needed.
- Signpost children and families with lower-needs to non-disability specific services, for example ensuring that Surrey's Local Offer is up to date and that short breaks providers are well connected with other local service providers in Surrey's communities.

## **Look to generate alternative, additional funding to support the provision of short breaks services in Surrey:**

Whilst public funds for short breaks services are constrained, there are other options that might strengthen the funding available to enable short breaks delivery in Surrey, including:

- Review the potential to increase the level of parental contributions to short breaks services, informed by engagement with providers and families. Within this it would be important to ensure due consideration is given to support for those where an increased cost could prevent them taking up a much-needed service.
- SCC to continue to bid for additional funding from external sources, for example through the national Short Breaks Innovation Fund, to complement services currently funded in Surrey.
- Work alongside providers to explore creative ways to strengthen and enhance their efforts to fundraise to support delivery, noting that providers already contribute their own voluntary funding to subsidise delivery.
- Work in collaboration with local providers to explore whether efficiencies can be made linked to their current delivery models, by working together differently, to maximise funding for short breaks delivery. This will include trying to provide certainty of funding to providers through longer-term contractual awards.
- Work in collaboration with local providers to strengthen the evidence base for the impact of short breaks on children with disabilities and their families and, if appropriate, make the case for further investment into short breaks in the future
- Establish a flexible procurement mechanism that allows for reallocation of any additional funding secured to local providers in a timely and effective way.

## **What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

- All-Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 - This strategy aims to improve the lives of the estimated 12,300 autistic people living in Surrey, by breaking down barriers and inequalities that autistic children, young people and adults face in education, health, social care, work and communities
- Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25 – Through this strategy SCC is aiming to enable more looked after children to remain in Surrey. This includes joint sufficiency planning alongside development of additional school places for children with SEND in the county. Enabling more children to remain in Surrey is likely to increase the demand for wrap-around services such as short breaks.

## **Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

Whilst there are a range of steps Surrey County Council can and will take, in partnership with local providers, to mitigate the extent of impact of any changes to capacity of short breaks services

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(whether due to price increases resulting from inflation or reductions in SCC funding) and in particular those with the highest needs, there will be children and young people with disabilities who currently access open-access play and leisure and innovation services that will have less access to short breaks as a result of recommissioning the current offer without increased funding. This will also have an impact on their parents and carers, including young carers, in their family.

## Looked after children

**Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.**

The number of looked after children in Surrey is on an increasing trend, rising from 126 in May 2019 to 144 in November 2022. Some of these children may require short breaks services as part of a package of support to meet their needs. Increases in need may be challenging to meet through the short breaks offer if capacity is reduced due to inflationary pressure and/or funding reductions by Surrey County Council for these services.

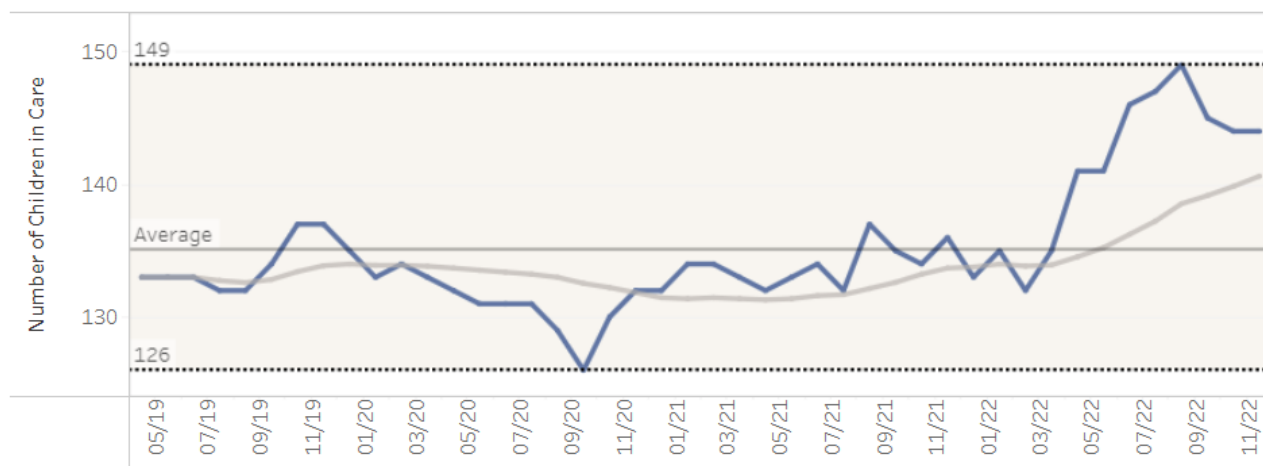


Figure 3 – Variance in the number of looked after children with a disability since 2019

In October 2022 there were 178 looked after children with Education, Health and Care Plans who were living outside of Surrey. Surrey County Council, in support of its current Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25, is working to enable more of these children to return to Surrey, with 26 children moving back to Surrey since January 2022. As more of these children are appropriately supported to return to Surrey, they may require support via short breaks services. This may be challenging if capacity of services reduces due to inflationary pressure and/or funding reductions by Surrey County Council for these services.

Looked after children with disabilities will be affected by the range of consideration identified under the “Disability and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities” section of this EIA.

**Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

It is important to note that the mitigations identified under the “Disability and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities” section of this EIA also apply to looked after children with disabilities.

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In addition, for looked after children with disabilities specifically, ensuring they can access the services the short breaks services they require, when capacity is likely to be reduced, because of price rises due to inflation, when services are recommissioned and with planning underway to enable more looked after children with disabilities to remain in Surrey, will be challenging. Surrey County Council can take steps to mitigate this by improving planning and coordination between professionals from social care, education and health, alongside short breaks providers, to ensure the right children are able to access the right services when and where they are needed. This is currently being facilitated through the Coming Home project that Surrey County Council is undertaking.

It is also going to be important to ensure that the needs of looked after children with disabilities are considered specifically in any engagement that is undertaken in relation to exploring eligibility criteria for short breaks and/or changes to levels of parental contributions.

## **What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

- All-Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 - This strategy aims to improve the lives of the estimated 12,300 autistic people living in Surrey, by breaking down barriers and inequalities that autistic children, young people and adults face in education, health, social care, work and communities
- Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25 – Through this strategy SCC is aiming to enable more looked after children to remain in Surrey. This includes joint sufficiency planning alongside development of additional school places for children with SEND in the county. Enabling more children to remain in Surrey is likely to increase the demand for wrap-around services such as short breaks.

## **Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

Whilst there are a range of steps Surrey County Council can and will take, in partnership with local providers, to mitigate the extent of impact of any changes to capacity of short breaks services (whether due to price increases resulting from inflation or reductions in SCC funding) and in particular those with the highest needs, there will be children and young people with disabilities who currently access open-access play and leisure and innovation services that will have less access to short breaks as a result of recommissioning the current offer without increased funding. This will also have an impact on their parents and carers, including young carers, in their family.

## **Adult and young carers**

### **Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.**

For the vast majority of children with disabilities in Surrey (the exception being those living in very specialist and intensive support placements) they are part of families across the county. Parents and carers, and siblings (who are often young carers) provide invaluable care and support to their children and brothers and sisters. Depending on the child's individual strengths and needs and how these change over time, families may need to change the level of support they give at various points in that young person's journey. This can be challenging to manage and exhausting for

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carers over time – so providing appropriate access to different short breaks can make a real difference.

Many of the parents and carers we have engaged with through the recent strategic review of short breaks and preparations for recommissioning have told us about the important role short breaks play in the lives of their families. For example, in April 2022 responses from parents and carers to the question “What do Short Breaks mean to you and your family?” included:

“Everything, without the respite provided...the impact on both my daughter and the rest of the family would be hugely negative.”

“Mental health lifeline for my whole family.” (lifeline was mentioned by eight respondents)

“These allow us to care for our child at home rather than being physically and mentally exhausted and forced to put them in care.”

This kind of feedback mirrors what we have heard in previous engagement with families over several years in Surrey.

Alongside the qualitative feedback received, in their responses to the same survey, parents and carers identified the following positive outcomes as being important to them in the following proportions:

- 89% - “They provide a break from their caring responsibilities, which gives them more energy and reduced stress”
- 68% - “I/we have more time to do things”
- 65% - “I/we have more time with my other child(ren)”
- 58% - “I/we are better equipped to support our child(ren) and meet their needs; and 55% “Our family life is better”

As referenced above, there is limited published evaluative research into the impact of short breaks, but what evidence there is does suggest a positive, preventative impact of these services on families. Two published studies we have reviewed in support of this EIA do indicate positive impact of the services on children with disabilities and their families, as follows:

- A study conducted in 2017 for the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Board (HSCB)<sup>3</sup> does identify some positive evidence of the effectiveness of Short Breaks in providing support to families, improving wellbeing of carers, and helping them to cope, with families using Short Breaks tending to be those who are experiencing the highest levels of parenting stress and distress.
- Research conducted in 2011 by Together for Disabled Children<sup>4</sup> involved 17 local authorities across England and found that Short break services appear to have prevented disabled

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<sup>3</sup> [The effectiveness of short breaks in families where there are children with disabilities: A Systematic Review of the Evidence](#), NSCB, 2017:

<sup>4</sup> [Impact of the Short Break Programme on the Prevention of Disabled Children Entering the Looked After System](#), Together for Disabled Children, 2011

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children entering the Looked After System and thus potentially saved money for the local authority.

Given the positive impact of short breaks referenced above, any reductions in capacity of short breaks services due to either or both inflation linked price increases (noting importantly that Surrey County Council is currently proposing to hold the budget for short breaks in 2023/24) and any future decisions by Surrey County Council to reduce current levels of investment in these services are likely to: reduce positive outcomes for children with disabilities and their families; and increased pressure within families of children with disabilities, which is likely to, in some cases, contribute to family breakdown if this is not mitigated.

## **Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

It is important to note that the mitigations identified under the “Disability and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities” section of this EIA also apply to adult and young carers.

In addition:

- SCC should consider working with existing providers and other local voluntary sector groups to explore provision of more whole family opportunities, through flexible use of social capital and working in partnership. There are current examples of providers working innovatively to better support families, including facilitated peer support models or just simple opportunities for families to build relationships with others in similar circumstances.
- SCC to ensure discussions are held with representative groups for young carers in Surrey to try and ensure changes to services are well communicated as part of mobilisation.

## **What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

- All-Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 - This strategy aims to improve the lives of the estimated 12,300 autistic people living in Surrey, by breaking down barriers and inequalities that autistic children, young people and adults face in education, health, social care, work and communities
- Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25 – Through this strategy SCC is aiming to enable more looked after children to remain in Surrey. This includes joint sufficiency planning alongside development of additional school places for children with SEND in the county. Enabling more children to remain in Surrey is likely to increase the demand for wrap-around services such as short breaks.

## **Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

Whilst there are a range of steps Surrey County Council can and will take, in partnership with local providers, to mitigate the extent of impact of any changes to capacity of short breaks services (whether due to price increases resulting from inflation or reductions in SCC funding) and in particular those with the highest needs, there will be adult carers and young carers in families of children and young people with disabilities who currently access open-access play and leisure and innovation services that are likely to face increased pressures, linked to less access to short breaks as a result of recommissioning the current offer without increased funding.

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## Sex/Gender

**Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.**

Data on sex/gender is not currently captured in relation to short breaks services. This is something that should be considered as part of new arrangements when services are recommissioned.

To provide an indication of the balance of sex/gender within the cohort of children with disabilities likely to access short breaks (noting that this is an imperfect approach), we can look at the profile of sex/gender with the cohort of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in Surrey. The key thing to note here is that there is a clear sex/gender imbalance within the EHCP cohort in Surrey, with 72% being recorded as male and 28% being recorded as female. It is important that this is considered when services are planned and commissioned.

Some of this difference may be due to patterns of diagnosis, as well as spread of need. For example, there is growing evidence that suggests that males are more likely to be identified as autistic (for example) which may contribute to some under-identification of females with these needs.<sup>5</sup>

**Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

It is important to note that the mitigations identified under the “Disability and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities” section of this EIA also apply to children with disabilities of different sexes or genders.

In addition:

- SCC commissioning should consider whether recording of sex/gender is required as part of renewed contract management arrangements
- Providers should ensure their planning of provision takes account of any differing needs associated with the sex/gender mix of children with disabilities who access their services

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

- All-Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 - This strategy aims to improve the lives of the estimated 12,300 autistic people living in Surrey, by breaking down barriers and inequalities that autistic children, young people and adults face in education, health, social care, work and communities
- Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25 – Through this strategy SCC is aiming to enable more looked after children to remain in Surrey. This includes joint sufficiency planning alongside development of additional school places for

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<sup>5</sup> Time trends in autism diagnosis over 20 years; a UK population-based cohort study, The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, Russel et al, 2021

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children with SEND in the county. Enabling more children to remain in Surrey is likely to increase the demand for wrap-around services such as short breaks.

## Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

Whilst there are a range of steps Surrey County Council can and will take, in partnership with local providers, to mitigate the extent of impact of any changes to capacity of short breaks services (whether due to price increases resulting from inflation or reductions in SCC funding) and in particular those with the highest needs, there will be children and young people with disabilities who currently access open-access play and leisure and innovation services that are likely to experience reduced access to provision. Based on the sex/gender split within this cohort, it is likely that this will mean more males being affected than females.

## Race

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

The 2011 Census shows that provides the following overall view of the ethnic make-up of Surrey:

Ethnicity	Surrey population	%
White: British	945,673	83.50%
White: Irish	13,012	1.10%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	2,261	0.20%
White: Other White	62,736	5.50%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	4,920	0.40%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	2,736	0.20%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	9,657	0.90%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed	6,241	0.60%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	20,232	1.80%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	10,818	1.00%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	3,400	0.30%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	9,461	0.80%
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	19,587	1.70%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	7,828	0.70%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	3,303	0.30%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	1,299	0.10%
Other ethnic group: Arab	4,101	0.40%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	5,125	0.50%

Source: 2011 Census - Office of National Statistics

Some of the headlines from this data are as follows:

- The largest ethnic group in Surrey is White British with 945,673 (83.5%).



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- Indian was the next largest single ethnic group with 20,232 people (1.8%) followed by Pakistani (1.0%)

At a borough and district level, there are variations between different parts of the county, as shown in the table below. Surrey's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights that Woking the most ethnically diverse borough or district in the county. It is important that short breaks providers demonstrate awareness of the ethnic makeup of the communities they are based within, to ensure services can be appropriately tailored to meet needs.

Local authority	White British	All other White groups	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	Asian/Asian British: Indian	Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	All other Asian ethnic groups	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Other ethnic groups	All non-white ethnic groups
Surrey	83.50%	6.90%	2.10%	1.80%	1.00%	2.90%	1.10%	0.80%	9.60%
Elmbridge	79.90%	10.40%	2.60%	1.90%	0.40%	3.10%	0.80%	1.00%	9.70%
Epsom and Ewell	78.60%	7.30%	2.60%	2.40%	0.90%	5.30%	1.50%	1.40%	14.10%
Guildford	83.50%	7.40%	1.80%	1.20%	0.40%	3.30%	1.20%	1.20%	9.10%
Mole Valley	90.10%	5.00%	1.50%	0.80%	0.20%	1.50%	0.50%	0.40%	4.90%
Reigate and Banstead	85.00%	5.70%	2.20%	1.60%	0.90%	2.60%	1.60%	0.60%	9.40%
Runnymede	80.00%	9.00%	2.10%	2.50%	0.50%	3.90%	1.10%	1.00%	11.00%
Spelthorne	81.00%	6.30%	2.50%	4.20%	0.70%	2.80%	1.60%	1.00%	12.70%
Surrey Heath	85.00%	5.20%	1.90%	2.00%	0.80%	3.50%	1.00%	0.70%	9.80%
Tandridge	89.30%	4.60%	2.20%	0.90%	0.20%	1.50%	1.10%	0.30%	6.20%
Waverley	90.60%	5.40%	1.30%	0.40%	0.20%	1.20%	0.40%	0.30%	4.00%
Woking	74.90%	8.70%	2.40%	2.40%	5.70%	3.50%	1.40%	1.10%	16.40%

Source: 2011 Census - Office of National Statistics

In comparison to this overall picture, the below table shows the ethnic profile of children and young people who accessed short breaks services in 2021/22:

Ethnicity	%
White British	68%
White Irish	0%
White Other	5%
<b>White total</b>	<b>73%</b>
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	1%
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	1%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	2%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	1%
Asian/Asian British - Other	3%
Asian/Asian British - Arab	0%
<b>Asian/Asian British total</b>	<b>7%</b>
Black/Black British - African	1%
Black/Black British - Caribbean	0%
Black/Black British - Other	1%
<b>Black/Black British total</b>	<b>2%</b>

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<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>%</b>
Mixed - Other	4%
Mixed - White/Asian	1%
Mixed - White/Black African	1%
Mixed - White/Black Caribbean	1%
<b>Mixed total</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Not given</b>	<b>8%</b>

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Service users</b>	<b>Surrey %</b>
Asian/Asian British: Bangladesh	7	0.4%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	37	2.0%
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	33	1.7%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	46	2.4%
Black/Black British: Black African	11	0.6%
Black/Black British: Black Caribbean	9	0.5%
Black/Black British: Other Black	10	0.5%
Chinese/Other Ethnic Group: Chinese	8	0.4%
Chinese/Other Ethnic Group: Other	8	0.4%
Mixed: Other Mixed	42	2.2%
Mixed White & Asian	22	1.2%
Mixed White & Black African	18	1.0%
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	16	0.8%
White British	1373	72.8%
White Irish	25	1.3%
White Other White	74	3.9%
Unknown	144	7.6%
Prefers not provide information	3	0.2%

Whilst the majority (68%) of service users are White British, it is interesting to note that the proportion overall in Surrey is actually higher (83.5%). This contrasts with what appears to be reasonably strong representation for several other ethnic groups (acknowledging the fact that a reasonably high proportion – 7.6% - have an ethnicity that is unknown). There are currently no children and young people accessing short breaks who report their ethnicity as Arab, which compares to 0.4% of the Surrey population.

## **Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

Whilst overall there appear to be reasonable representation of different ethnic groups accessing short breaks services in Surrey, there is a notably lower proportion of children who report their ethnicity as White British and none who report their ethnicity as Arab. It would be appropriate for SCC to undertake further work to understand why this is to ensure that needs are being appropriately responding and that are not any other issues preventing access.

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As part of the tender process to award new short breaks contracts to providers, bidders have been asked to demonstrate their understanding of the communities they will be working in. This will include consideration of ethnicity profile and any arrangements they will put in place to respond to this in their local area/s.

Ethnicity information will continue to be recorded and reviewed as part of contract monitoring arrangements on an ongoing basis. This will need to consider whether reductions in overall capacity (resulting from inflationary increases) have led to any disproportionate impacts on particular ethnic groups.

## **What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

- All-Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 - This strategy aims to improve the lives of the estimated 12,300 autistic people living in Surrey, by breaking down barriers and inequalities that autistic children, young people and adults face in education, health, social care, work and communities
- Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25 – Through this strategy SCC is aiming to enable more looked after children to remain in Surrey. This includes joint sufficiency planning alongside development of additional school places for children with SEND in the county. Enabling more children to remain in Surrey is likely to increase the demand for wrap-around services such as short breaks.

## **Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

No specific negative impacts identified linked to race or ethnicity, in addition to those identified for children and young people with disabilities and their parents/carers overall.

## 3. Staff

**Adult and young carers-** Replicate this page for each of the protected characteristic or vulnerable groups that are within the scope of this EIA.

**Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.**

Whilst we do not hold information on SCC staff who may be parents or carers for children and young people with disabilities who may access short breaks services, it is likely that some staff will be affected by these changes – as set out in the section relating to adult carers above.

**Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

The mitigations here are the relevant ones identified as those set out in “Adult and young carers” section earlier in this EIA.

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

- All-Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 - This strategy aims to improve the lives of the estimated 12,300 autistic people living in Surrey, by breaking down barriers and inequalities that autistic children, young people and adults face in education, health, social care, work and communities
- Looked After Children and Care Leaver Sufficiency Strategy 2020-25 – Through this strategy SCC is aiming to enable more looked after children to remain in Surrey. This includes joint sufficiency planning alongside development of additional school places for children with SEND in the county. Enabling more children to remain in Surrey is likely to increase the demand for wrap-around services such as short breaks.

**Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

Whilst there are a range of steps Surrey County Council can and will take, in partnership with local providers, to mitigate the extent of impact of any changes to capacity of short breaks services (whether due to price increases resulting from inflation or reductions in SCC funding) and in particular those with the highest needs, there will be adult carers and young carers in families of children and young people with disabilities who currently access open-access play and leisure and innovation services that are likely to face increased pressures, linked to less access to short breaks as a result of recommissioning the current offer without increased funding.

## 4. Recommendation

Based your assessment, please indicate which course of action you are recommending to decision makers. You should explain your recommendation below.

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken
- **Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?
- **Outcome Three: Continue the policy/service/function** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:
  - Sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact
  - Mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts plans to monitor the actual impact.
- **Outcome Four: Stop and rethink the policy** when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (For guidance on what is unlawful discrimination, refer to the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance and Codes of Practice on the Equality Act](#) concerning employment, goods and services and equal pay).

### Recommended outcome:

Outcome Three: Continue with the policy/service/function

### Explanation:

The current contracts that Surrey County Council has in place for short breaks services are due to expire on 31 March 2023, following the activation of all available contractual extensions for these contracts. There is therefore no option other than to recommission these services, to ensure continuity of much needed provision for children and young people with disabilities and their families. In doing this, it is however unrealistic to assume that providers will not increase their costs in response to inflation, since the last time services were recommissioned in 2017.

It is important to note that SCC has not reduced current funding levels for short breaks. Whilst this is the case, it is also true that SCC has not been able to provide an inflationary increase linked to the provision of short breaks services. This is due to the overall financial pressure that Council is under, resulting from a combination of external factors (for example inflation, legacy costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit, cost of living rises and market pressures that are being experienced by local authorities nationally linked to the cost of key services) and rising demand for services, which is contributing to budget overspends in key areas of statutory responsibility for children and families. At the same time, SCC has an overall statutory responsibility to live within its means and deliver a balanced and sustainable budget, which leads to difficult choices needing to be made.

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In taking the decision not to increase the budget available for short breaks services, the CFLL Leadership Team acknowledged that this will result in reduced capacity in some current open-access short breaks services, but also made a clear commitment to take the steps necessary to protect funding for those children and young people with disabilities who have the greatest level and complexity of need. The mitigations set out in this EIA will seek to deliver this and will also go some way to cushion the broader negative impacts identified in this EIA, although we do acknowledge it will not be possible to mitigate these entirely. We do however have confidence in the resilience, flexibility, and creativity of local providers, who we know will remain committed to working with us to seek the best outcomes possible for children and young people with disabilities and their families with the resources that we have available. We hope and expect that by working in close collaboration with our partners, we will be able to be innovative and develop additional mitigations on top of those set out in this EIA over time.

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## 5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

Insert your action plan here, based on the mitigations recommended.

Involve you Assessment Team in monitoring progress against the actions above.

Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Open/ Closed
1	July 2022	Ensure available funding is prioritised for Overnight Short Breaks, and other services that support children with complex needs through any retendering process.	Head of Commissioning – Corporate Parenting	December 2022	Open
2	January 2023	Engage with providers and families in relation to establishing eligibility criteria for current open-access short breaks, so that access to services can be more directly linked to need.  Head of Commissioning – Corporate Parenting	September 2023		Open
3	January 2023	Following confirmation of funding levels, continue to work with providers to use their expertise to remain responsive to the needs of children and families who access their services, so that those who really need the support are enabled to access as much as possible when it is needed.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead  Service Manager – Children with Disabilities	Ongoing for duration of new contracts		Open

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Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Open/ Closed
4	January 2023	Signpost children and families with lower-needs to non-disability specific services, for example ensuring that Surrey's Local Offer is up to date and that short breaks providers are well connected with other local service providers in Surrey's communities.  Short Breaks Providers  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts	Bids submitted to rounds 1 and 2 of Short Breaks Innovation Fund	Open
5	January 2023	Review the potential to increase the level of parental contributions to short breaks services, informed by engagement with providers and families.  Head of Commissioning – Corporate Parenting	September 2023		Open
6	April 2022	Bid for additional funding from external sources, for example through the national Short Breaks Innovation Fund, to complement services currently funded in Surrey.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	December 2024		Open
7	April 2023	Work in collaboration with providers to explore creative ways to strengthen and enhance their efforts to fundraise to support delivery.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts		Open



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Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Open/ Closed
8	April 2023	Work with local providers to explore whether more collaborative working can enable efficiencies, beyond those currently achieved by local providers, to maximise funding for short breaks delivery. This will include trying to provide certainty of funding to providers through longer-term contractual awards.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts		Open
9	December 2022	Look to award longer term contracts to providers to give certainty of funding, to enable improved forward planning  Head of Commissioning – Corporate Parenting	Ongoing for duration of new contracts	Dynamic Purchasing System established	Open
10	April 2023	Work in collaboration with local providers to strengthen the evidence base for the impact of short breaks on children with disabilities and their families and, if appropriate, make the case for further investment into short breaks in the future  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts	Work in progress through Step Down and Coming Home projects	Open
11	April 2022	Establish a flexible procurement mechanism that allows for reallocation of any additional funding secured to local providers in a timely and effective way.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	December 2022		Closed

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Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Open/ Closed
12	April 2022	In response to increased numbers of looked after children with disabilities being enabled to live in Surrey over time, SCC will continue to improve planning and coordination between professionals from social care, education and health, alongside short breaks providers, to ensure the right children are able to access the right services when and where they are needed.  Step Down Manager	March 2024		Open
13	January 2023	Ensure that the needs of looked after children with disabilities are considered specifically in any engagement that is undertaken in relation to exploring eligibility criteria for short breaks and/or changes to levels of parental contributions.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	September 2023		Open
14	April 2023	Explore working with existing providers and other local voluntary sector groups to develop more whole family opportunities, through flexible use of social capital and working in partnership.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts		Open

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Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Open/ Closed
15	December 2022	Ensure discussions are held with representative groups for young carers in Surrey to try and communicate changes to services effectively as part of mobilisation.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	June 2023		Open
16	December 2022	Consider whether recording of sex/gender is required as part of renewed contract management arrangements to inform planning and service development  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	April 2023		Open
17	December 2022	Providers should ensure their planning of provision takes account of any differing needs associated with the sex/gender mix of children with disabilities who access their services  Short Breaks Providers  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts	This has been factored into bid evaluation	Open

## Equality Impact Assessment

Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Open/ Closed
18	January 2023	Investigate reasons for why lower proportions of children reporting their ethnicity as White British and Arab access short breaks than the equivalent proportion of the overall Surrey population, to establish whether are any factors preventing or limiting access to services.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	March 2024		Open
19	August 2022	Ensure bidders understanding of the needs of the local communities they are planning to deliver from is evaluated as part of their tender submission.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	December 2022	This has been factored into bid evaluation	
20	April 2023	Continue to monitor ethnicity information as part of reporting on any new short breaks contracts. In particular, this will consider whether any changes in capacity have resulted in a disproportionate impact on particular ethnic groups.  Short Breaks Commissioning Lead	Ongoing for duration of new contracts		

### 6a. Version control

# Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Purpose/Change</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>
0.1	Initial working draft of EIA	Adolphus Marshall	22/08/2022
1.0	Final version updated for sign-off	Chris Tisdall	22/11/2022

The above provides historical data about each update made to the Equality Impact Assessment.

Please include the name of the author, date and notes about changes made – so that you can refer to what changes have been made throughout this iterative process.

For further information, please see the EIA Guidance document on version control.

# Equality Impact Assessment

## 6b. Approval

Secure approval from the appropriate level of management based on nature of issue and scale of change being assessed.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service	22 November 2022
Executive Director	6 January 2023
Cabinet Member	16 January 2023
Directorate Equality Group	23 November 2022

### Publish:

It is recommended that all EIAs are published on Surrey County Council's website.

Please send approved EIAs to: **INSERT SHARED EMAIL ACCOUNT ADDRESS**

### EIA author:

## 6c. EIA Team

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role
Adolphus Marshall	Commissioning Officer	Surrey County Council	Initial author
Conrad Benefield	Senior Commissioning Officer	Surrey County Council	SME
Chris Tisdall	Head of Commissioning – Corporate Parenting	Surrey County Council	Reviewing editor

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