

Review of services provided for disabled children

Evidence based equality analysis

The recommendations from the review of services for disabled children, young people and their parents and carers aim to improve the services provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council for this priority group of service users. They have been developed based on feedback from a range of stakeholders including parents, carers and young people.

This strategic aim above directly links to the Council Plan as part of the Thriving Residents theme, where the Council makes the commitment that 'all of our families, children and young people are supported to get the best start in life'; and seeks to ensure that 'vulnerable adults and children feel safe and are protected'. Under the outcome area to ensure that 'all of our families, children and young people are supported to get the best start in life' there is a strategic theme to 'improve the support offered to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to ensure it better meets their needs'.

The output of this review should help to ensure outcomes for disabled children are safeguarded and improved through increasingly focusing on early intervention, clearer information, advice and guidance and more accessible routes into services, whilst establishing a 'graduated response' to supporting children and young people, and their parents and carers, at different stages on the continuum of need. Personalised support will be central to the Council's offer. In short, the right help at the right time from the right people to ensure the best start in life throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

Background

The review of services provided to disabled children and young people was initiated in autumn 2015. The proposed options were built through a series of scoping and informal consultation events with practitioners as well as with parents and carers from August 2015 to spring 2016. A public consultation on these options was held over a 12 week period from July to September 2016. Details of the consultation methodology are outlined in the body of this document.

The review's purpose is to deliver a service that is more joined up, that reduces duplication and ensures that outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families improve, maximising the resources the Council has to support these services. Benefits of the review would be evidenced by every child and young person with a disability achieving well; leading happy and fulfilled lives; and that they are provided with choices and are able to have more control of services they access.

Equally, families would report better experiences and feel that services are provided in a more joined up approach, at the earliest possible point, with whole family contributions to decision making about the support they are provided with. Finally, that assessments completed as a part of the service pathway are person centred and clearly evidence that consideration is given to the impact of the disability on every child and young person.

The review recognises that currently the services for children and young people with disabilities are fragmented and could be improved. Provision is split across a number of service areas including Children's Social Care, Education and Commissioning. The services considered in this analysis are:

- Disabled Access to Resources Team (DART – Council run short break/interventions e.g. group work).
- Pinewood – overnight short break unit based in Winsford
- Commissioned short breaks provision (e.g. youth clubs, group activities)
- Children's social care disabled children's team
- Transition team for disabled young people - social care
- Domiciliary/community care and personal budgets/direct payments relating to disabled children and young people

Lead officer: Mark Parkinson

Stakeholders: Cheshire West and Chester Council (Elected Members and respective Council officers: procurement, legal, finance, human resources, integrated early support, children's social care; education, adult social care prevention and wellbeing, strategic commissioning), health and third sector providers, parents and carers of disabled children and young people and disabled children/young people themselves.

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative or neutral impact, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a high, medium or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)	There are no additional/new race and ethnicity impacts from the options proposed. The new transparent criteria for accessing certain services, based on need, will be clearly displayed so as not to disadvantage any group, as per the Council's existing policy, factoring in translation and requirements of providers as happens now.	Service will recognise the particular needs of Gypsy and Traveller children by utilising the knowledge of professionals working with this group.	
Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)		The review of services provided for disabled children, young people and their parents and carers by Cheshire West and Chester Council will result in a more positive experience (for those accessing these services) or, at worst, neutral impact. The preferred model (option 3) ensures the needs of disabled children and young people are better met by applying a	

		<p>transparent criteria and graduated assessment process, creating one point of access and placing more emphasis on early intervention and personalisation of service delivery. The role of designated ‘navigators’ will assist in coordinating services and signposting to services.</p> <p>Option 3 will deliver a realignment of resources that will improve access to a range of services based on individual needs. Where an individual is not eligible for a service, alternatives will be available which are suitable based on assessed needs. This model will improve service delivery and address the key issues that service users have raised throughout the comprehensive consultation activities.</p>	
Gender	<p>Neutral impact at worst. There will be no change from the current model in terms of gender issues as both the ‘as is’ and ‘to be’ models operate under the Council’s existing policies – factoring in gender specific issues.</p>		
Gender reassignment	<p>Neutral impact at worst. There will be no change from the current model in terms of gender reassignment issues as both the as is and to be models operate under the Council’s existing policies – factoring in gender reassignment specific issues.</p>		

<p>Religion and belief</p>	<p>Neutral impact at worst. There will be no change from the current model in terms of religion and belief as both the as is and to be models operate under the Council's existing policies – factoring in religion and belief considerations.</p>		
<p>Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)</p>	<p>Neutral impact at worst. There will be no change from the current model in terms of sexual orientation as both the as is and to be models operate under the Council's existing policies – factoring in these considerations.</p>		
<p>Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)</p>	<p>Care planning and assessment processes will emphasise the need to have a clear understanding of the impact of age and any impact on accessing services due to age criteria. This is currently the case and will continue to be the case.</p> <p>Transition points e.g. between children and adults social care will be a key focus in the new model, to ensure a smooth transition with minimal duplication for the service user e.g. fewer unnecessary contacts.</p>	<p>The new model will ensure that fair service criteria for disabled children and young people is clear and consistently applied.</p> <p>This will improve the assessment process and service provided to disabled children and young people.</p> <p>As part of the co-production approach parents and carers of disabled children and young people will help shape future service criteria and service user pathways as part of the mobilisation of the recommendations. This will factor in the impact of age on needs and service delivery.</p>	
<p>Rural communities</p>	<p>Services will pay due regard to every disabled child's own community when considering</p>	<p>As part of the new delivery model service users will be supported to access user friendly venues,</p>	

	<p>responses to identified needs. This includes rural communities. This already happens, however in the new model there will be more family case work resource to offer direct outreach support in rural communities. Equally, the drive to offer more personal budgets will allow people to meet their needs as they see fit, using local services/personal assistants, utilising community based assets, support networks etc.</p>	<p>services and local amenities and also highlight those where improvements could be beneficial. Additionally, as part of the envisaged changes to culture and provision 'service user champions' will provide a consistent contact point and platform for highlighting issues, which will inform service delivery. Direct payments and personalised budgets will help overcome transport problems, e.g. by pooling.</p>	
<p>Areas of deprivation</p>	<p>The new model is needs led and so, regardless of where a child is in the borough, need will be assessed and met in accordance with their individual plan, utilising local services wherever possible. No area of deprivation will be negatively affected in terms of outcomes.</p>	<p>Many services are currently based in areas of multiple deprivation.</p>	
<p>Human rights</p>	<p>Neutral impact at worst. There will be no change from the current model in terms of human rights as both the as is and to be models operate under the relevant legislation and local policies.</p>		
<p>Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health</p>	<p>Comprehensive needs assessments of disabled children and young people will continue to be vital in determining appropriate responses to meet these needs. This includes the wider determinants of health and wellbeing.</p>		

and care services)	The new model offers a differentiated and tailored approach to assessment with a strong focus on early intervention and multi-agency support at all levels on the continuum where this is needed. Assessments are holistic and consider environmental factors.		
Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)	Providers will be obliged through contracts to ensure equality compliance and actively review and address equality issues on a regular basis.	Personal budgets, brokerage and other forms of support will have a positive impact.	

Evidence:

- The consultation document for the review of services for disabled children and young people
- The consultation timetable
- The consultation results
- The Cabinet Report – how services are provided for disabled children and young people in Cheshire West and Chester

Consultation Methodology

To summarise, the following work was undertaken prior to the 12 week formal consultation:

Informal consultation ‘listening exercise’:

- Three multi-agency stakeholder and professional events
- 5 focus groups for young people
- Questionnaires were made available to parents, carers, stakeholders/professionals and young people in a variety of methods. Children’s questionnaires were formatted in 2 versions to ensure accessibility. 136 questionnaires were returned including 40 parent carer questionnaires; 14 practitioner questionnaires and 82 from young people
- 3 focus groups were completed with members of the Parent Carer Forum, professionals from a variety of backgrounds, and a representative from the Council for Disabled Children (national umbrella organisation for disabled children)

Other baselining work focused on:

- Learning from what is working well in other councils
- Analysis of performance data
- A detailed understanding of service delivery including processes, based on information provided by staff
- In depth case tracking to understand the journey for our children and young people

The options and underpinning changes proposed in the 12 week public consultation which took place between July and September 2016 were shaped by this 'listening exercise' and baselining work listed above.

It was agreed that the 12 week public consultation could be held between July and September 2016. The 12 week formal consultation consisted of the below activities:

- 3 face to face consultation sessions
- Electronic links advertising the survey on the Council and Local Offer webpages
- Printed hard copies of the consultation including easy read versions distributed to corporate buildings, libraries and to staff who work directly with service users
- Strategy meetings such as; the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, SEND Strategy Group and Health and Wellbeing Board
- Parent and carer forums, both locally and regionally, received consultation information
- Managers promoted the consultation, encouraging staff to contribute to share their views in team meetings including: SEN Team, Information Advice and Support Service, Children and Families Services e.g. IES and wider social care teams
- Heads of Service from Education, Children and Families, Integrated Early Support Directorates provided regular email briefing notes to staff about the consultation and issued reminders to be part of the consultation
- Staff from Cheshire Centre for Independent Living (CCIL) supported service users, dependent on their ability, who wanted to share their views on the proposals. CCIL staff supported 10 disabled children and young people to complete Easy Read hard copy questionnaires and the Schools Champions group who as a collective group of approx. 15 disabled children and young people completed one online questionnaire.

Public Consultation Results

88 people responded to the public consultation via the survey, including the 10 young people referenced above supported by CCIL. A further 15 people attended face to face sessions across the Borough, along with 35 individuals who attended the Parent Carer Forum regarding the consultation, and 10 young people that attended a School Champions session. Across the respondent groups Option 3 was identified as a clear preferred option. The proposed underpinning changes to culture, process and provision were also strongly endorsed by all groups of respondents.

Full details of the consultation responses can be found in the Consultation Results document.

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Families in which both parents/young people do not speak English as a first language	Ensure appropriate interpretation services are available and accessible.	High	To provide appropriate information, advice and guidance, alternative languages will be available online, in leaflets and upon request through translation services.	External Relationships Manager	Ongoing
Children and young people who are physically disabled.	Ensure appropriate services/support is accessible.	High	<p>Disabled children, young people and their parents and carers will be supported to accredit user friendly venues, amenities and services and highlight those where improvements would be beneficial. Changes in culture and process will encourage 'service champions' to act as a key point of contact, develop succinct communication exchanges with service users; ensuring that information gathered informs service delivery.</p> <p>The new service delivery model will increase focus on early intervention and asset based assessments that will focus on understanding the impact of the disability on day to day life and provide personalised plans and</p>	Senior Manager for Disabled Children and Young People	Ongoing

			budgets.		
Children and young people with learning disabilities and/or SEN.	Ensure appropriate services/support is accessible	High	The new delivery model will provide a specialist, person centred service that will be able to assess and provide intervention that best meets the needs of the disabled child or young person. As part of the personalisation model, best practice techniques and alternative communication tools will be utilised by staff to capture the child's/young person's voice.	Senior Manager for Disabled Children and Young People	Ongoing
Children and young people who are visually impaired/disabled.	Ensure appropriate services/support is accessible	High	Alternatives to written documentation will be provided in braille or audio form. Disabled children, young people and their parents and carers will be supported to accredit user friendly venues, amenities and services and highlight those where improvements would be beneficial to the service champions.	Senior Manager for Disabled Children and Young People	Ongoing
Training Needs Analysis	Review staff skills, seeking to build on existing workforce development and training to identify any additional gaps/training needs	Medium	Evidence that all staff within the new service feel that they have been given appropriate levels of training and support and are confident in supporting disabled children, young people and their families.	Senior Manager for Disabled Children and Young People	Ongoing
Continued review of the effectiveness and	Ensure ongoing analysis of the service, communicating with	Medium	The service will ensure that continues analyse and monitor the effectiveness of efficiencies	Senior Manager for Disabled Children and Young People	Ongoing

efficiency of service, utilising a coproduction approach.	service users to ensure that their views are captured and used inform any potential changes.		of the service continue. The views of services users will be integral to these reviews and will be utilised to shape any potential changes.		
Panel process	Create SMARTER, streamlined and multiagency panels.	High	To ensure that the application of criteria is consistent, transparent and fair multiagency panels will be developed. Panel membership will include decision makers from services including Adults, health, education and children's social care.	Senior Manager for Disabled Children and Young People	Ongoing

Sign off	
Lead officer:	Mark Parkinson
Approved by Director:	Mark Parkinson
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	People Equality Group 25 November 2016
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	Two years