

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Consultation on four areas for children with disabilities
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>At present Short Breaks for disabled children are delivered across two different levels;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for children who have been assessed by social care and determined to have a need for short breaks – this level of short breaks is commonly referred to as "assessed short breaks" or "Jigsaw (Children with Disabilities Team) short breaks" • for children who have not been assessed but have access to a "universal" offer of short breaks as a result of having a disability - this level of short breaks is commonly referred to as "Non-assessed short breaks" or "The Buzz Network (for all families of a child or young person with disabilities) short breaks". <p>At present around 1250 children with disabilities and their families are registered on the Buzz Network and around half this figure actually access non assessed short breaks. A further 150 receive an assessed short breaks package through Jigsaw.</p> <p>Short Breaks provide a break for the carer and allows the child/ young person to have a positive break with peers to attend an activity, scheme or overnight respite service. Many families opt to take their short break offer as a direct payment, which allows them choice and control relating to when and how they receive this break.</p> <p>A recent review of services identified a number of areas needing improvement to ensure services are equitable for all children with disabilities. The current approach provides a high level of support to some families, but restricted or no support for many other children and their families, who may have similar</p>	

levels of need. The review also identified the need to change the way resources are allocated to ensure an appropriate level of support is provided to children and their families on the basis of need. The current eligibility criteria would not support changes in these areas.

The consultation proposals were:

1. To implement a new eligibility criteria to provide a clear, consistent and equitable means of determining access to disabled children's services, based around four levels of need: Low, Medium, Substantial and Critical.
2. To redesign the Southampton short break offer aligning this with the new eligibility criteria
3. To seek views on the future name of "Jigsaw"
4. To see views on the future name of the "Buzz Network"

The proposed eligibility criteria has four levels; low, medium, substantial and critical.

Low: The child has low level additional needs that parents are able to meet through universal services and a network of family and friends. Parents may require signposting to the SEND Local Offer for information, advice and guidance about the universal services available.

Medium: The child has additional needs where parents require support above what is available at universal level e.g. Special Education Information, Advice and Support, Benefits, carers rights and short breaks from caring through specialist play schemes and clubs, or enhanced/adapted mainstream provision.

Substantial: The child has a learning or physical disability that significantly impacts on a child or family's ability to function. The impairment, chronic health or life limiting condition have a substantial impact on the quality of the child and their family's life and child would be unable to achieve outcomes without support from targeted services, coordinated by a lead professional.

Critical / Complex: The child has Learning disabilities within the moderate, severe or profound range OR a severe physical (including visual and hearing), health condition or impairment which is life limiting, or significantly affects, or is predicted to affect, everyday life functioning or a child's access to education (e.g. in a wheelchair, has adapted living, requires total personal care support, requires communication aids) and their ability to achieve outcomes appropriate to their age related potential.

The funding for non-assessed (Buzz Network) short breaks initially was provided under the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme. This funding is now included in the overall funding envelope provided to the Local

Authority. The 2011 Short Breaks Regulations and Section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014 require consideration by local authorities of whether services are 'sufficient' to meet the needs of families in their area including a duty to provide short breaks to children with disabilities.

In Southampton the Buzz Network budget is £480,000. This funding is used to deliver the following provision: direct payments, grant funded community activities, specialist playschemes and one to one outreach support.

The current budget for assessed Short Breaks is £935,000. This funding is used to deliver the following provision: specialist residential overnight services, outreach or support in the home and direct payments.

The changes proposed are intended to be cost neutral albeit distributed differently across the new eligibility levels. To enable proposals to be consulted on and plans to be developed and implemented following the consultation, the current contracting arrangements for the services have been extended to October 2018.

In October 2017 there were 1,249 children and young people registered on the Buzz Network aged between 0 and 19 years. The following provides some key information on age, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Age

Age Group	No. C&YP	% of total
0-4 years	251	20.0%
5-9 years	419	33.5%
10-14 years	376	30.1%
15-18 years	203	16.3%
Total	1249	

Gender

Gender	No. C&YP	% of total
Female	313	25.1%
Male	936	74.9%
Total	1249	

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	No. C&YP	% of total (known)
White British / Irish	644	79.7%
White Other	31	3.8%
Any Mixed Background	58	7.2%
Black African or Caribbean Background	18	2.2%
Asian Background	51	6.3%
Any other Ethnicity	6	0.7%
Unknown (not collected/provided)	441	
Total (known)	808	

Geography

The categories below are based on children's centre areas.

Area	No. C&YP	% of total
Bassett & Lordswood	26	2.1%
Bitterne Park	86	6.9%
Central	70	5.6%
Freemantle	49	3.9%
Lordshill	153	12.2%
MRM	150	12.0%
North Shirley	90	7.2%
Portswood & Bevois	61	4.9%
Sholing	85	6.8%
Swaythling	73	5.8%

Thornhill	107	8.6%
Townhill & Harefield	89	7.1%
Weston	59	4.7%
Woolston	98	7.8%
Outside Southampton	53	4.2%
Total	1249	

Disability

The table below shows the number and percentage of children and young people registered on the Buzz network by broad disability type. This is self-declared by the parent/carer when they sign their child up and they can include multiple disabilities (hence the total figures add up to more than the 1249 individual members).

Disability Type	No. C&YP	% of total
Autism	629	50.4%
Learning Disability	221	17.7%
Physical Disability	139	11.1%
Sensory Disability	76	6.1%
Challenging Behaviour	292	23.4%
Other	245	19.6%
Total Buzz Members	1249	

The proposal is to redesign the offer of short breaks around the 4 levels of need described in the eligibility criteria in order to provide a more equitable, consistent offer of short breaks which is based on need and better integrated with universal provision, particularly for families at the low and medium levels, as follows:

- **Low** – Children who have low levels of additional needs will be able to access universal services and adaptations. The suite of mainstream clubs and activities in and around Southampton is available on the Southampton Information Directory -

<http://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/home.page>

- **Medium** - Families not receiving an individual package of support via services at the substantial and critical level will have access to a Short Breaks card which offers easy access to a range of concessions or discounts negotiated across the city. This recognises that these children are able to access the majority of services available to all children.

Additionally, the Short Breaks Card will offer booking rights into subsidised activities, in and around Southampton. The short breaks programme will fund two main types of activities:

- Specialist Activities – run specifically for children and young people with moderate needs.
 - Support to attend mainstream activities, play schemes, clubs and groups.
- **Substantial** – Family’s needs who are assessed to be substantial will be supported through the relevant social care team. These teams will carry out an assessment of need for the child and their family. If eligible the family will receive an individual package of support through a Personal Budget. This might include:
 - Access to commissioned services, specifically for those at the substantial or critical level, for example Individual support in the home or community (e.g. outreach)
 - Direct Payments - to purchase individual support in line with the personal budget and direct payment policy. Families may wish to use their direct payment to purchase subsidised services made available through the grant making process (for those at medium level). They may also be able to access the non-assessed short break activities at a subsidised rate, purchased through direct payments. Access to these services will be using funding within their package of support and **not in addition** to it. Access will also be dependent on capacity with priority given to those at the medium level.
 - **Critical / Complex** – Families open to the JIGSAW Children with Disabilities Team will have an assessment of needs and if eligible will receive an individualised package of support through a Personal Budget. This might include;
 - Access to commissioned services, specifically for those at the substantial or critical level, for example
 - Individual support in the home or community (e.g.

outreach)

- Family based overnight and day care (e.g. short break fostering)
- Residential overnight short breaks
- Direct Payments - to purchase individual support in line with the personal budget and direct payment policy. Families may wish to use their direct payment to purchase subsidised services made available through the grant making process (for those at medium level). They may also be able to access the non-assessed short break activities at a subsidised rate, purchased through direct payments. Access to these services will be using funding within their package of support and **not in addition** to it. Access will also be dependent on capacity with priority given to those at the medium level.

A period of engagement has already been undertaken with families to inform development of the proposals for a redesign of the short breaks offer and the eligibility criteria.

Finally with regard to Jigsaw (integrated health and social care team), the service will be broadened to include all children at the critical level of the new eligibility criteria. This will include children with severe physical and/or sensory impairment (hearing and visual impairment) needs without a learning disability who currently do not have access to Jigsaw. The service offer will remain unchanged; however we are consulting on the name of the service to ensure that it remains relevant to children and families.

Summary of Impact and Issues

Eligibility Criteria:

There will be a much clearer, consistent and equitable means of determining access to disabled children's services which is entirely based on need, as identified by the impact of the child's disability on their life and that of their families.

Short Breaks:

The offer will be redesigned in line with the proposed eligibility criteria to provide access to short breaks based on need. Some families will receive more short breaks (as described below under "positive impacts"); however some will see a reduction in service:

- One2One services and the option of a direct payment will end for all families whose needs are considered to be at the medium level (Buzz Network Families).
- Families who receive an assessed package at the critical level (JIGSAW) will no longer be entitled to have a non-assessed package as an addition to what they receive through the assessed route.

It is anticipated that overall around 650 children & young people will experience a reduction in the services they can access.

Jigsaw:

The eligibility criteria will be extended to include all families at the critical / complex level. This will mean that children with severe physical and/or sensory impairment (hearing or visual impairment) needs who do not have a learning disability will have access to the service. It is estimated that this will be around 30 additional families.

Potential Positive Impacts

The proposals seek to provide an offer of short breaks that is a fairer and more equitable needs led approach for all children with disabilities. This will provide a positive impact for all children and families currently not able to access services, or the appropriate services. For example an estimated 30 children will now be able to access services at a critical / complex level, 150 at the substantial level and around 850 will gain access at the medium level.

	Total estimated will be at this level	Estimates number receiving an enhanced services
Low	5,000	5,000
Medium	1,350	850
Substantial	150	150
Critical / Complex	285	30
Total	6,785	1,030 (not including those at the low level)

Responsible Service Manager	Sandra Jerrim, Senior commissioner, Integrated Commissioning Unit.
Date	09 March 2017
Approved by Senior Manager	Hilary Brooks,
Date	

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	<p>The Buzz Network service users are all aged between 0 and 19 years of age. 20% of children are aged 0-4 years, 34% are 5-9 years, 30% are 10-14 years and 16% are 15-18 years. Therefore there will be a larger impact on children aged 5-14 years.</p> <p>Removal of the One2One and direct payment option will mean that families at the medium level have less flexibility to purchase their own short breaks to suit their child's age related needs and preferences.</p>	<p>Through the grant funding process intended to supplement activities at the medium level, suitable checks can be incorporated to ensure services are available across all age groups and provide a range of activities which suit children of different ages.</p>
Disability	<p>There are a range of different disabilities. There is potentially a larger impact on those with autism as 50% of those who use the Buzz Network report this as one of their disabilities.</p> <p>Removal of the One2One and direct payment option will mean that families at the medium need level have less flexibility to purchase their own short breaks to suit their child's own disability related needs and preferences.</p> <p>There will however be increased access (positive impact) for those families with greater needs at the substantial level and for new cases able to access the critical level.</p>	<p>Decisions on grant funding for community providers and commissioned services at the medium level will take into account the need for a range of activities which suit children with different needs, particularly autism, as a result of disability.</p>
Gender Reassignment	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Race	17% of the current users of the Buzz Network are from non-white ethnic groups, rising to 20% for all groups	Having a wider range of community provision at the low and medium levels of need will

	<p>other than White British.</p> <p>Removal of the One2One and direct payment option means that some families at medium level will have less flexibility to purchase short breaks that meet their own individual needs and family circumstances.</p>	<p>provide more opportunities for some families to access services more appropriate to their own individual needs and circumstances. A key aim of the redesign at these levels is to ensure that short breaks are better integrated into local community provision as opposed to being separate, distinct disability provision. This will provide opportunities for better linking into particular communities, like BME.</p>
Religion or Belief	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Sex	Buzz Network demographics show that 75% of service users are male , 25% female so there will be more of an effect on males.	While there are no currently identified negative impacts this will need to remain under review and can be covered in conditions set out when grants are awarded or services commissioned at the medium level of need.
Sexual Orientation	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Community Safety	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Poverty	<p>Families who have children with disabilities are more likely to be subject to financial pressures and poverty. Families with low incomes who experience a reduction in the services they receive may find it hard to adapt to the change.</p> <p>Families may be asked to pay a contribution towards the expanded range of community provision whereas the One2One support and option of a direct payment which they may be accessing</p>	<p>Families who experience a reduction in services will be considered for a review (at critical /substantial levels) or assessment (at medium level).</p> <p>Equity of access will ensure those with highest need have</p>

	<p>currently are both free to families.</p>	<p>access to the right services to support them, including those facing financial pressures.</p> <p>The Council will make it a condition of funding to community activity providers that they make provision within their grant application for a 'hardship' fund to enable children to access if their families are in financial difficulties.</p>
<p>Other Significant Impacts</p>	<p>Parents who work and use the short break time as child care, particularly during school holidays may need to find alternative child care arrangements. This can be particularly difficult for families of disabled children to find child care with suitable training and ability to support their child's individual needs.</p>	<p>Families and children will be able to request reviews if they feel the changes are having a negative impact. This will include a parent carer assessment to ensure the parent is supported to maintain their employment.</p> <p>We will ensure that there continue to be short break opportunities during holidays.</p> <p>We will work with the Early Years Team to ensure that families are able to access other child-care options such as the 2/3/4 year old funding and child minders who are well trained to support children with disabilities. The Early years Child Care Team</p>

		is able to provide information as to which child minders are specifically trained to support disabled children.
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