

Voluntary Sector Consultation Responses

1) Autism Beds

Q1 Proposal to increase cost effectiveness

The proposal is brief and doesn't detail how the need will be assessed and met in other ways. We can only comment on the direct impact on our funding for life lines services: the proposed reduction of £68k in payments to voluntary organisations for short break provision. We strongly disagree that increasing cost effectiveness; by reducing payments to voluntary organisations for short break provision will be effective increase cost effectiveness.

We believe that the impact of Autism Bedfordshire being forced to reduce/remove services will inflate demand for costly social care support directly from the council. Currently, Central Bedfordshire receives £135k worth of services annually for an SLA that costs £35k. The SLA anchors our funding pot and attracts grants. Reducing/removing £35k risks the loss of services that cost £135k - this is not cost effective.

I would encourage full cost recovered in house services to be explored first; including £30k wasted annually on overnights that are not attended and the tens of thousands that families tell us that they have in their accounts to spend on direct payments, that go unregulated/reviewed and they cannot spend as they do not have suitable choices available to their needs.

Q2 Proposal to protect services for those in greatest need and

Q3 Proposal to develop new service models for those with lower levels of need

There is no definition that clearly defines; greatest need. Assuming that greatest level of need is the threshold criteria for CWD; All children with autism, including those who do not have intellectual impairment / Children receiving a service from social care / Children with special educational needs – all children with autism can fall into Meets Threshold for specialist services.

Autism (whether diagnosed as autism, classic autism, Kanners autism, autistic spectrum condition/disorder, Asperger Syndrome, High Functioning Autism) is a developmental, neurological disability; the impact of which can vary according to the level of anxiety/sensory processing of the individual. Some people with autism can also have a learning disability, but all people with autism will experience difficulty with weak central coherence and adaptive functioning – they would not receive a diagnosis if their difficulties were not impacting on their ability to function in a neurotypical society.

Like a learning disability, autism is life long – there is no cure. Autism is widely acknowledged to be an invisible disability but recent legislative changes protect the rights of those with autism (see the Autism Act 2009, Statutory Guidance 2010, Care Act 2014 and relevant guidance 2015) to the same levels of support as other disabled people without the need for a cognitive impairment (i.e. no IQ cut off).

A diagnosis of autism legally entitles children to the level of support described in the Central Bedfordshire Short Breaks Statement. With the Council proposing to target services on children with the 'highest/greatest' needs (this terminology without definition is extremely subjective) – those children being listed on the council's website as:

- Children receiving a service from social care
- Children with special educational needs

And proposing specialist Services would need to be withdrawn from:

- Siblings of children with disabilities

- Other children – i.e. children who do not meet the categories for the highest levels of need, but who may still meet a definition of disability under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 and the Children Act 1989.

The following two issues are extremely concerning and risky for 'other children':

They are a group of disabled children and their needs are not recognised/assessed. By limiting targeted services to those already in receipt of social care support, the council is effectively 'blocking up the door' to this group of disabled children, those in need go uncounted, registered and the council will be at risk legally of not understanding the level of need and therefore not fully understanding if they are providing adequate or sufficient short breaks/support.

For the council to understand and commission appropriately; a child's needs, needs to be properly assessed as, by trained professionals; the group that is titled 'other children', are at risk from having their needs neglected and the council is at risk from not complying with The Children's Act; in its duty to know the numbers of those with disabilities in order to understand the need within the area, to have an informed joint strategy and commission accordingly.

Q4 Proposal to apply new eligibility criteria

The new threshold criteria for CWD will only be an effective tool to measure and assess need if the social worker is trained, experienced and competent to understand some but not limited to the responses provided for questions 1-3.

Q5 Proposal to change funding model - reducing grant funding to voluntary organisations

As Q1 response

Q6 Opportunities universal services present to voluntary organisations as one way of meeting need for children and teenagers with lower level needs

They have facilities and staff. Over the last 25 years, we have attempted to work in partnership with these venues and over the last 7 years we have trained thousands of staff from Central Bedfordshire's leisure centres, libraries, swimming pools and play schemes. We have encouraged and supported members to integrate.

Parents, staff and Children told us in our January 2017 consultation that the barriers are being 'add on' group of people, that there is a lack of understanding, co-operation and empathy towards their needs and this dissuades members from continuing. Specialised services and support adequately meets the needs – other universal services are inadequate. The culture of acceptance and stigma still dominates; we are currently supporting the University of Bedfordshire and Autistic in conducting research and together working towards intervention programmes.

Q7 Issues the Council would need to consider

Staff induction, training, supervision and appraisal of working with/for children with disabilities would need expert care. Staff retention and turn over would need specialist training built into the common induction standards framework. The council would need to consider; that this may not work/breakdown, be underused; Strategic review points and appraisal of the effectiveness considered; how to monitor unmet need due to the inadequacies of the universal services and how to still meet the need.

Facilities redesign and staff training: e.g. facilities design may need to be adjusted to risk of sensory overload and the council's recognition that these steps are 'hassle' for mainstream providers. (The word hassle was used recently by one mainstream provider at Flitwick leisure centre – who repeatedly requested that we set up, run and organise the session at our own cost – audit trail kept).

Q8 Integrating children and teenagers with lower level needs into universal service provision

This would need to be workshopped, Staff induction, training, supervision and appraisal of working with/for children with disabilities would need expert care. Staff retention and turn over would need specialist training built into the common induction standards framework. The council would need to consider; that this may not work/breakdown, be underused; Strategic review points and appraisal of the effectiveness considered; how to monitor unmet need due to the inadequacies of the universal services and how to still meet the need.

Q9 Voluntary organisations working together to improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families

We do come together, we meet independently of central Bedfordshire with VOC – we do currently improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families. The proposed cuts put voluntary organisations under pressure to compete and prepare grant applications. There is a high risk that it will fragment the sector. There is limited overlap that would be appropriate and as opposed to a compliment and range of services that we can provide as part of the local offer – voluntary organisation will be under pressure to survive.

Q 10 Other ways the Council can ensure that services are sustainable

- Develop standards with partners including voluntary organisations to ensure that outcomes for children and teenagers are being achieved.
- Help voluntary organisations to work together to share expertise and knowledge.
- Provide advice and support to enable teenagers over the age of 16 and their parents to access direct payments

Q 11 Supporting the requirement for personalisation

Through our Community Support Services, effective in Bedford and Luton. Ensuring that we are putting the needs of children and teenagers needs at the heart of service and that every disabled child matters

Q12 Innovating to provide aspirational services for children, young people and families that are sustainable

Through funded and sustainable services – please see our previous proposals for more details.

Q13 Moving from a service level agreement and identifying alternative models that might enable effective partnership working with the Council

Which funding models are you considering? We are flexible and open to partnering with the council. We have standardised cost rates, however there was a lack of council framework around this – happy to explore together.

Q14 Ideas that would enable the Council to redesign services to ensure they are sustainable

Yes, provide adequate funding (see our proposal) to collaboratively have sustainable short break services, fund upwards of £35k and receive services that cost and are funded £135k, best quality and best price. Happy to workshop – you could recruit a facilitator from The Cranfield Trust?

In cases where a number of questions elicited a similar response, these responses have been edited with regard to repetition and an indication of this has been provided.

2) Bedford and District Cerebral Palsy Society

Q1 Proposal to increase cost effectiveness

BDCPS provide a good service which is very cost effective for the Council in terms of what is being delivered. The full cost of the support is greater. The Council need to see this as a life line which supports some very complex children to stay living at home. The funding to BDCPS is a small amount compared with one overnight in a residential service of having to go out of area.

Q2 Proposal to protect services for those in greatest need

This is important as the parents BDCPS are working with are under a lot of pressure in caring for their children and would not cope if the support were not available to them

Q3 Proposal to develop new service models for those with lower levels of need

It would be good to explore this but the children who BDCPS are working with have specialist needs which make it difficult to manage in some environments. It would take quite a bit of work for this to be effective.

Q4 Proposal to apply new eligibility criteria

The children that BDCPS support meet the criteria for the children with disabilities service so the organisation will not be significantly affected by the change

Q5 Proposal to change funding model - reduced grant funding to voluntary organisations

The funding from the Council provides a platform from which other grants can be applied for. BDCPS require this if they are to continue to provide the support

Q6 Opportunities universal services present to voluntary organisations as one way of meeting need for children and teenagers with lower level needs

Given the right support – equipment, staff, this could provide some good opportunities for disabled children to access local services. This will require quite a shift in thinking.

Q7 Issues the Council would need to consider

Premises, level of funding. What is that the Council is asking of the voluntary organisations. What is the best way of funding this, perhaps over a longer period of time.

Q8 How could children and teenagers with lower level needs be integrated into universal service provision?

They would have to build confidence with the parents by providing a safe place with well trained staff as the physical and learning needs of this group of children and young people make them vulnerable

Q9 Thinking more broadly, how could voluntary organisations work together to improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families?

BDCPS would be prepared to be involved in discussions about this. They are currently unique in the service they provide for children and young people living in Central Bedfordshire.

Q 10 Other ways the Council can ensure that services are sustainable

We would tick in order going down

- Ensure that we are putting the needs of children and teenagers needs at the heart of service provision by working with voluntary organisations to ensure there is no overlap or duplication of services
- Develop standards with partners including voluntary organisations to ensure that outcomes for children and teenagers are being achieved.
- Look at ways of managing vacant short break places to ensure that all opportunities have been taken up and
- Provide advice and support to enable teenagers over the age of 16 and their parents to access direct payments

Q 11 Supporting the requirement for personalisation

We would support the requirement through our Gateopener Service working with the CBC team to assist any families able and wanting to move to personalisation. We would disseminate information and encourage families to engage in exploration of personalisation as a means of meeting their needs if it is appropriate and supportive in their case. Try to ensure that it is a needs led option/service

Q12 Innovating to provide aspirational services for children, young people and families that are sustainable

We aim to provide services that are innovative in terms of meeting need and gaining best outcomes for young people and their families. Fully funded we could continue to develop appropriate and meaningful services with good outcomes. Less funding threatens our existence as we could not ethically take on complex young people without safe staffing levels. We would not be prepared to warehouse.

Q13 Moving from a service level agreement, and identifying alternative models that might enable you to work effective partnership working with the Council

We would struggle as a very small core team working across all roles to produce good tender proposals that would compete with nationals or other charities that have personnel with specific tender and funding roles. This puts us at risk of working hard to produce a tender proposal that is not likely to compete with the “experts” after some lovely feedback that we can use to improve for the next time we may not be around to bid/present.

We also find quantative data does not help us as our numbers will never be large due to the complex needs of many of the young people using our services. See attached comparison from the start of being given an SLA by CBC . We would like to see a model that takes this kind of service cost and provision into account and appreciates the difficulty of producing effective and real data that demonstrates the outcomes. We would like to see more interaction in terms of observation of outcomes at service provision levels.

Q14 Ideas that would enable the Council to redesign services to ensure they are sustainable?

Provide adequate funding to support the voluntary sector to provide services that meet the needs of families and avoid costly long term need and family break down. Think long term benefit for the council as well as for the families. A residential place costs approx. 6 times a year more than the funding that each charity has been receiving on an SLA. For BDCPS that has meant CBC has paid approx. £7.48 per hour for care of a complex disabled person comparatively cheap to all other service provision with probably the same if not better in some cases outcomes.

Additional Submission from Bedford and District Cerebral Palsy Society

Comparison of the Changing Needs of Young People within Central Bedfordshire

Category of Need - No. of young people using BDCPS	2009	2017
1	12	19
2	3	9
3	19	16
4	3	17
5	0	6

An Analysis of the Category of Need Changes 2009-2017

The statistics show we have had a large increase in users over the 8 year period, the figures have almost doubled. This is primarily due to an increase in the service coverage we deliver and our support staff resulting in the capacity to deliver extended services.

In 2011 we lowered the age of our Stampede Saturday club to 5 years+ (from age 8 years +).

In 2012 we created ACE for 18-25 year old. Our previous age limit for services was 20 years.

In 2014 we created Little Sweet Peas delivering services to pre-schoolers 0-5 year olds. Our previous age range was 5years+. We also created Little Saplings which brought 5-8 year olds into our summer schemes with the previous age being 8years+.

There has also been a documented increase in the numbers of young people with disabilities and a recognition that these are becoming more complex.

“A report out today is the first analysis in 10 years of the numbers of children and young people with complex needs or life-limiting conditions and estimates that numbers have increased dramatically by over 50% since 2004, from 49,300 to 73,000 children and young people.”¹

As the only provider in Central Bedfordshire for complex needs operating in each of the school holidays, as well as weekends and evenings, this has led to an increase in demand for our services. We also do not require parent/carer support at our sessions making us a preferred option for short breaks.

The 8 year period shows that those in category 4 have increased 5-fold in numbers resulting in a need to have an increase in the trained workforce supporting this group with specialist skills. Category 5, our highest level of need of support was not something we were supporting in 2009 but has increased dramatically in the past 8 years. These young people often have palliative care status. Category 2 has also trebled and although the skills base for this category is lower, it is one which requires us to provide staff in greater numbers. All other categories have risen in line or greater than the increase in our numbers.

We currently train staff to meet the needs of young people for emergency rescue medication for epilepsy, oxygen, suctioning, gastro feeding, feeding difficulties, administration of regular medication, manual handling for care needs, first aid, safeguarding and communication difficulties. We are in the process of aiming to secure tracheostomy care training.

¹ Council for Disabled Children, Newsletter 27 Feb 2017

The level of complexity we support is also demonstrated by the number of children who have sadly passed away. We have 5 children from Central Bedfordshire who have bravely lost their battle with their condition. Of these 4 in category 4 and 1 in category 5.

We have had a consistent level of funding from Central Bedfordshire which initially offered some security but failure to review resulted in recent years in a loss of that certainty. It has also failed to keep track of the development of our services, the increase in users and in the complex care needs of those users. Our funding from another local authority for holiday childcare for the same period has increased in line with needs and demand for the service. In order to sustain our services to Central Bedfordshire we must have in an increase in the funding received.

DEFINITIONS

CATEGORY OF NEED

1	Has a mild to moderate disability, or is vulnerable due to age, that can be supported by an advanced beginner
2	Has a moderate disability that can be supported by an advanced beginner but needs 2 staff due to behavioural needs, of advanced beginner plus novice or above
3	Has health and care need and/or behavioural needs arising from their disability that requires a competent person who has had specific training to support their needs
4	Has complex health and care need and/or behavioural needs arising from their disability that requires a proficient person+ to support their needs with the support of another person competent or above to assist under direction of proficient person
5	Has complex health and care need and/or behavioural needs arising from their disability that requires a proficient person+ to support their needs with the support of another person advanced beginner or above to assist under direction of proficient person

CATEGORY OF STAFFING

Novice	An inexperienced member of staff who needs clear rules and instructions. They need complete supervision and support
Advanced beginner	A member of staff who is building their experience, has an awareness of policies and procedures but needs clear support and supervision
Competent	Has gained experience and has had training and has developed an understanding of ranging needs and can adapt to support these with some support
Proficient	Has a wide range of experience and training and responds flexible to needs with little direction with an understanding of policies and risk assessment. Is a mentor to other staff around needs.
Expert	Has a breadth of experience and training which they apply efficiently and effectively to any given needs without the need for direction, seeing the bigger picture with a true understanding of policies, procedures, risk assessments and responsibility. Is able to train and mentor others to meet the needs of those with disabilities

3) Family United Network

Q1 Proposal to increase cost effectiveness

Short break services provided by the voluntary sector already represent excellent cost effectiveness for the Council. By their nature, voluntary organisations work to secure funding from other sources in order to financially maintain their services for Central Bedfordshire families. By so doing, they enable the local authority to fulfil its short break obligations at a much reduced cost than would otherwise be the case. Voluntary organisations are built on a foundation of goodwill from people who are willing to give of their time for no payment or financial reward. This goodwill can be damaged and eroded if the Council continues to withdraw financial support from the services that Trustees and other volunteers work to provide within their communities.

Short breaks are well recognised to be a vital part of the support that helps keep families together - not just surviving, but being resilient and thriving.

We are aware of the legal duties on the local authority to provide short breaks for families with disabled children, under a number of different Acts and Regulations. We would like to have reassurance that all other avenues to avoid these cuts have been explored by the Council and that the Council can show that it is going to be able to provide a level of short break service which is sufficient to meet the needs of children and families in Central Bedfordshire after the funding cuts.

We are also anxious to ensure that the inevitable reductions to our services for Central Bedfordshire members will be replaced by the Council with alternative provision for those children and young people and families.

Questions

- 1) How much money does the Local Authority currently hold in its unrestricted reserves?
- 2) What if any consideration has been given by the Local Authority to using these reserves to avoid or reduce the need to cut spending on short breaks?
- 3) What if any consideration was given to increasing Council Tax as a way of avoiding or reducing the need to cut spending on short breaks?
- 4) Does the local authority know how many children with additional needs and disabilities there are in Central Bedfordshire?
- 5) How has the local authority determined what the likely need for short break services will be in Central Bedfordshire?
- 6) How has the local authority satisfied itself that the level of short break services after the cuts will be sufficient to meet this need?
- 7) How will the Local Authority meet its obligation to treat disabled children's best interests as a primary consideration in its decision-making process when deciding on whether the proposed cuts to the short breaks budget will go ahead?
- 8) How can the Local Authority show that, during its decision-making process, it has had due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for disabled children?
- 9) Can the local authority confirm that all children with additional needs and disabilities living in Central Bedfordshire will have access to a social work assessment, and that the eligibility criteria for accessing short breaks will be clear and accessible to all families?

10) Will the Council fulfil its duty to reassess all children against the new criteria before any services are withdrawn from them?

Q2 Proposal to protect services for those in greatest need

Only protecting services for those in greatest need can be short sighted and lead to increased costs down the line. Lack of appropriate and effective support for 'lower and moderate need' families can lead to these families becoming 'higher need' and then requiring much greater levels of support in the long run. Maintaining family well-being and resilience for those with 'moderate and mild' needs - through effective support - helps to ensure that these families are equipped to continue caring for their disabled child and do not hit a crisis point that then requires much costlier intervention by the Council

Q3 Proposal to develop new service models for those with lower levels of need

The proposal to develop short breaks services within existing universal provision for those children not meeting the 'blue' and 'red' threshold criteria, will mostly disadvantage the children with moderate needs and their families. The fact that their needs within an educational setting have been deemed significant enough to require an EHCP or Statement (and the additional funding that this brings) demonstrates that these children and young people have significant difficulties that inevitably will also be impacting on their family carers on a daily basis.

Only providing the option to access universal services removes choice from the family as they decide whether inclusion within a mainstream leisure activity is right for their child or not - depending on what is most appropriate for their child at any given stage in their social development. Accessing the less structured and socially fluid environment of a universal leisure activity is very different to accessing mainstream schooling. It cannot be assumed that if a child is able to manage within a mainstream school, then they are able to manage within a universal leisure activity.

Preparing universal services to successfully meet these children's needs, whilst also managing the expectations and lack of awareness of typical families using the service, is not impossible - but it will require significant initial and ongoing investment in staff training, and will need very effective communication between the provider and all users of the service and the wider community. Education and training for all staff involved in designing and delivering any universal leisure activity for disabled children will be vital. In particular, thorough training in: Autism, Aspergers, Epilepsy, Tourettes, ADHD and Downs Syndrome. Educating staff on how to communicate effectively with family carers will also be vital. In addition, training on the causes and effects of anxiety and other mental health issues will also be needed.

Q4 Proposal to apply new eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for short breaks services as they are written are based solely on the severity of the disabled child's impairments, and do not take into account the caring capacity of the child's family members or other family environmental factors. Looking at the child's disabilities in isolation of their family environment will not ensure that services are directed at those children and families that are in most need or in most danger of hitting a crisis situation. If one of the purposes of short breaks is to increase family well-being and resilience and prevent family breakdown, then the criteria for accessing services needs to be based on more than just the young person's impairments. The eligibility criteria, upon which a decision about access to services is based, needs to explicitly include assessment criteria for carer capacity and other family and environmental factors.

Q5 Changing the funding model - reducing grant funding to voluntary organisations

Changing the funding model from SLAs to personalised funding can be done, provided that there is plenty of notice for service providers and families to make the transition successfully; and that a

clear plan and timeline are formulated that addresses all of the administrative and financial challenges that such a transition will involve. Decisions about service plans and budgets for the next financial year are made in the January prior to the new financial year starting in April. Any proposed changes in funding need to be finalised before January to allow providers to plan their services in an effective and sustainable way. We need clarity and certainty about what funding will be available, how it will be available, and when.

Families will need a clearly explained pathway on how and when to request an assessment for short break services, and be given sufficient time to do this before any changes to their child's access to provision kicks in. Families should have at least six month's notice of any change so that they are able to request the necessary social care assessment in time to ensure that - where their child is found to be eligible - there is no break in the clubs and activities that they are attending.

The local authority will also need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in their social care assessment process to accommodate many new families requesting assessments that have not needed to do so in the past.

Q8 Integrating children and teenagers with lower level needs into universal service provision

In order for universal services to successfully include SEND young people, the following would need to be considered:

- Universal services need to be able to offer flexibility in their approach to grouping children and young people e.g. allowing children with additional needs to access activities with younger typical children if this is deemed most appropriate and beneficial for them, in consultation with their family carers.
- Dealing with any resistance to this from other typical families and taking steps to educate all those accessing the service about the benefits of including young people with disabilities.
- Universal services need to be flexible enough to adapt their planned activities and clubs to accommodate the needs of children with additional needs; and that their registration or admission processes are set up in such a way that makes access to their services as easy and stress free for SEND children as for their typical peers.

For example:

- Making sure that family carers are fully consulted before the child attends
 - Allowing parents or a carer to attend with their child for a period of time if needed
 - Allowing free access, without long term commitment, for a couple of sessions to determine whether the service is right for the child.
 - Providing as standard a peer mentoring/friendship service to all first time users, from which SEND children can benefit without feeling that their additional needs are being highlighted.
 - Providing regular and unprompted honest feedback to family carers on the progress of their child, to reassure them, build trust and seek their advice.
- Staff running universal services must understand the need and benefit of communicating effectively with family carers; ensuring that the service itself is designed in such a way that, not only facilitates this, but embeds this practice within the service.
 - Universal services must send a clear message to the whole community (not just the parents of SEND children) that the club or activity is open to - and is ready for - children with additional needs. Universal services need to be committed to working proactively with other agencies and professionals.

- Providing someone that the child or their family can go to if the service is failing to meet the child's needs or where adjustments are needed to allow access for their child into the service.

Have any universal services within Central Bedfordshire been consulted about these proposed changes?

Have they been asked about their readiness and capacity to include children with disabilities within their services?

What specific support do they feel they will need in order to achieve this?

Q9 Voluntary organisations working together to improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families

Greater communication and regular contact between voluntary organisations, to ensure that everyone has a good working knowledge of the services that are being provided across the county. This means that children and families can be signposted easily from one organisation to another, and will help ensure that all available short break places are taken up. Sometimes, families who access one or two providers can still be unaware of services that are available to them at other providers

Better information and data sharing between all of the voluntary organisations about the capacity and take up of their services. Only by understanding the current capacity and uptake across all providers that are serving Central Bedfordshire families can we begin to make sure that we are providing the services that families want and need at the times and in the places that they need them.

More collaborative decision-making between organisations on the scheduling of our short breaks provision will help to either increase capacity where there is a demand or avoid over capacity. Understanding what resources, equipment or good practice all of the different short breaks providers have that can be shared.

Q 10 Other ways the Council can ensure that services are sustainable

Ensure that there is a clear and well-timed transition plan for any change in the way that funding of services is provided. Ensure that voluntary service providers have the time that they need to adjust their plans and working practices to successfully accommodate the changes that the Council requires. Ensure that families have the notice that they need of any changes that could affect them, to ensure that any change for their child is well-managed and stress free.

Q 11 Supporting the requirement for personalisation

FUN has always been willing to change the way it delivers and funds its services to accommodate personalisation. However, there needs to be a clear and concrete schedule and timetable for the transition from SLAs to personalisation, that spells out exactly how the funding arrangements will change over time, to ensure that services are sustained and not lost during the transition period through lack of funding. There also needs to be a clearly defined and practical model as to exactly how families will access services using a personal budget; how information sharing will work in order to ensure that services are offered and provided to those families that the Council deems to be most in need; and what the payment arrangements between the provider and the Council will be.

Q12 Innovating to provide aspirational services for children, young people and families that are sustainable

FUN is constantly listening to the families that use our services to determine what their current and future needs are. This informs what services we provide families and when. FUN will only

commit to running a service where we believe that families want it and it is financially sustainable for a significant period of time. We have no desire to raise family expectations that a service will continue to be accessible into the longer term if in fact it will not. This is why it is so vital to have a clear commitment from the Council as to what funding will or will not be available, and how funding arrangements will change over time. Without this information we are not able to ensure that our services remain sustainable into the future.

Q13 Moving from a service level agreement, and identifying alternative models that might enable you to work effective partnership working with the Council

We are willing to work together with the Council to implement any new funding model, provided that this is done in a timely and properly managed way; allowing us the time needed to adjust our service planning and budgets to ensure that services are not lost and families are not left without provision.

4) Special Needs Out of School Club

A response to the consultation was not submitted.