Help shape short break services for Wandsworth children and young people with disabilities and their families

What are short breaks?
Short breaks enable parents and carers of children and young people with a disability to have some time-out from their caring responsibilities whilst their child takes part in a social or leisure activity. They are hugely beneficial to families. They give parents and carers the chance to rest, catch up with everyday things and maintain their social networks, which make them better able to cope with the additional demands of raising a child with a disability. They give children and young people the chance to have fun and develop new interests, skills, relationships and greater independence.

There is a great variety in short breaks in terms of:
- when they happen - evenings or after-school, overnight, weekends, or school holidays;
- where they happen - in the family home, at school, at youth clubs or play schemes;
- how they happen - independent of other family members, as a family, or with other families.

What does legislation say about short breaks?
The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 state that all Councils must provide short break activities for children and young people with disabilities. They also state that Councils must publish a Short Breaks Statement and Eligibility Criteria so that families know what services are available, who is entitled to a short break and how they are designed to meet the needs of parents.

The Wandsworth Short Breaks Statement and Eligibility Criteria are published on the local offer website http://goo.gl/PJE0Mk.

What short breaks are available in Wandsworth?
Wandsworth Council has designed an offer that aims to:
- cater for the interests and needs of children and young people across disability, age and gender, in a variety of settings and operating at different times;
- have reliable and high quality services that give parents and carers confidence to plan regular breaks;
- make it easy for families to use the services, wherever possible without the need for an additional assessment;
- be flexible and allow families to access different levels and types of support as their needs change;
- have the capacity to respond to urgent care needs if they arise.

The details of Wandsworth’s short breaks offer are set out in the table circulated with this consultation document.

Why are we asking for your views?
The existing short breaks offer was developed following consultation with families and children and young people with disabilities. It is now five years since that initial consultation took place.

Wandsworth Council is keen to ensure that we continue to achieve the best overall value for children and young people with disabilities and their families from the short break funds available, whilst meeting reasonable demand. Therefore, we would like to know what parents and carers, children and young people, our existing short break providers, professionals working with families with children and young people with disabilities and any other interested people think about the current offer. For example are you happy with the range, type, amount and quality of short breaks available? Are there aspects of the offer you would like to change? Your views will help inform our short break commissioning decisions for April 2016 onwards.

Please note that there will not be any extra short breaks funding for 2016/17. Therefore, if this consultation highlights a need for additional or new provision then this will have to be funded from within the current budget.
What is involved in the consultation process?
The consultation is offering a range of opportunities for people to contribute in order to get as many responses as possible.

• **Focus Groups**
We have arranged meetings for parents and carers and our existing short break providers. Details are set out below. It is important that people book a place so that we can ensure we have made appropriate arrangements for the number of people attending.

• **Response Forms**
We have produced separate response forms for parents and carers, children and young people, providers and professionals. These are being sent out through the Disabled Children’s Register, Positive Parent Action, schools and short break providers and are on the Local Offer website at web link http://goo.gl/RSpr1N. We are aware that a number of young people will need help to answer the questions and give their views. Therefore, we are asking parents, schools and short break providers to adapt the response form as appropriate for their young people and to provide opportunities to talk about short breaks and record responses.

• **People can write in with any comments or views**
Completed response forms and written comments should be sent to:
Ros Francis
c/o Family Information Service
Education and Social Services
2nd floor, Town Hall Extension
Wandsworth Council
Wandsworth High Street
London
SW18 2PU
Pre-paid envelopes can be provided if you have not received one with this consultation document. Please ring 020 8871 7160 to request one.

Response forms and written comments can also be emailed to: csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk.

This consultation will close on **Friday 11 December 2015**.

What happens next?
After the consultation closes a report about the findings will be made available online on the council’s Local Offer website. A report will also be made to the council’s Education and Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. We will use the consultation feedback to develop a revised Wandsworth Short Breaks Offer from 2016 working in partnership with Positive Parent Action.

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### Parents and carers

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 25</td>
<td>6.00pm</td>
<td>3rd Floor, Building 1&lt;br&gt;Wandsworth Professional Development Centre&lt;br&gt;Burntwood School&lt;br&gt;Burntwood Lane&lt;br&gt;SW17 0AQ</td>
<td>Please book a place by <strong>18 November 2015</strong>. You can telephone 020 8871 7160 or email <a href="mailto:csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk">csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk</a></td>
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<td>November 2015</td>
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<td>Monday 30</td>
<td>11.30am</td>
<td>Room 1A, 1st Floor&lt;br&gt;Wandsworth Town Hall Extension&lt;br&gt;Wandsworth High Street&lt;br&gt;SW18 2PU</td>
<td>Please book a place by <strong>23 November 2015</strong>. You can telephone 020 8871 7160 or email <a href="mailto:csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk">csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk</a></td>
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### Short break providers

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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 24</td>
<td>2.00pm</td>
<td>Committee Room 123&lt;br&gt;Wandsworth Town Hall Extension&lt;br&gt;Wandsworth High Street&lt;br&gt;SW18 2PU</td>
<td>Please book a place by <strong>17 November 2015</strong>. You can telephone 020 8871 7160 or email <a href="mailto:csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk">csssp@wandsworth.gov.uk</a></td>
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A number of our providers will also be holding events to give young people the opportunity to share their views and shape the future short breaks offer.