

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

16 JANUARY 2013

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN

BCBC SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide to the Committee an overview of Bridgend County Borough Council's services for disabled children and young people, including those Looked After. This report will be further informed by a presentation to be delivered by the report's author.

2. Connection to Corporate Plan

- 2.1 The Council has key responsibilities for the provision of services to disabled children and their families. This includes disabled children who are Looked After, who are a key responsibility for the Council as corporate parents, and connect with the following community strategy themes:

- Young Voices
- Strong Communities
- Healthy Living
- New Opportunities

3. Background

- 3.1. Specialist services for disabled children and young people are provided by virtue of their status as 'children in need' as defined in S17 (11) of The Children Act, 1989 or as Looked After Children.
- 3.2 Specialist services which have been developed and are provided to disabled children and their families, aim to
- ensure they have the support they need to live 'ordinary lives' as a matter of course
 - Recognise that all children and young people are unique and may require different levels of support and different types of services such as short breaks depending on their needs and circumstances;
 - Acknowledge that needs may change and services need to be reviewed to reflect this
- 3.1 The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (Wales) Regulations came into force on 28 June 2012.
- 3.2 The Regulations state that a Local Authority must prepare a 'short break services statement' setting out details of:

- a) The range of services the local authority provides.
- b) Any eligibility criteria for assessment for services.
- c) How the services are designed to meet the needs of carers in its area.

3.3 The local authority must publish its short break services statement which includes placing a copy on its website.

3.4 When preparing and revising its short break services statement, the local authority must consider carers in its area.

4. Current Situation

4.1 A Short Breaks Statement has been established and published on the BCBC website on 27 September 2012.

4.4 As required by the Regulations, the Statement will be reviewed annually and updated accordingly.

4.5 A task group has been developed which involves all key stakeholders in order to further develop the 2012 Statement, with an aim to improve the participation of parents/carers and disabled children and young people.

4.6 Services referred to within the Short Breaks Statement and how these services can be accessed will be detailed in the presentation by the Principal Officer. This will include:

- The Disabled Children's Team
- Bakers Way Residential Short Breaks Service
- Family Link short break service
- The Complex Needs Playscheme
- Trinity Care and Support
- Direct Payments

4.7 A brief synopsis of each of the above is as follows:

- **The Disabled Children's team**

This is an assessment case management team which operates in line with the policies and procedures of the other Safeguarding teams within the Safeguarding and Family Support division of Children's services, but which also has specialist knowledge and experience in working with disabled children. The team which is based in Glanogwr offices in Bridgend has a county wide remit. The Disabled Children's Team comprises 1 x Team Manager; 1 x Senior Practitioner; 2 x Transition Social Workers; 4 x generic Social Workers and 1 unqualified specialist worker for under 5's. Currently there is also a Transition Keyworker whose post is funded by ESF/WG until 31.03.2013. A Business Case has been submitted for the continued funding of this post from 01.04.2013, as this has proven to be a very effective preventative family support service for disabled young people aged 14-19, who have a diagnosis of ASD. The business case submitted has requested this role to be extended across all age ranges and disabilities. To access the specialist support services detailed below, the child/young person's

needs must meet the eligibility criteria for an assessment to be undertaken by the team. This will be further detailed in the presentation.

- **Bakers Way Residential Short Breaks service**

Bakers Way is a 5 bedded residential short breaks home based in the Bryncethin area of Bridgend. The home is regulated and inspected annually by CSSIW. The home has been specially adapted to provide short break stays (including overnight) for children aged 0-18 years, who have a range of disabilities, including those with more complex medical needs. A DVD involving children and young people who attend Bakers Way on a regular basis will be delivered as part of the presentation.

- **Family Link Short Break Service**

Family Link is a short break fostering service which is based with the Disabled Children's Team. Family Link is a regulated service which is annually inspected by CSSIW as part of the annual fostering inspection. The Family Link scheme recruits, assesses and supervises short break foster carers who provide regular, planned short break stays (within their own homes), to disabled children and young people on the open caseload of The Disabled Children's Team.

- **The Complex Needs Playscheme**

The Complex Needs Playscheme is a specialist therapeutic playscheme which operates from Heronsbridge school. The playscheme provides a specialist play and short break service to children with the most complex health needs and disabilities who would be unable to access any other play provision within the County Borough of Bridgend, due to the complexity of their needs. The playscheme operates for three days per week for two weeks in the Easter school holidays and four weeks of the Summer holidays.

- **Trinity Care and Support**

Trinity Care and Support is a registered charity commissioned by Bridgend County Borough Council to provide a sitting service to the parents of disabled children and young people. The service also provides personal assistants to accompany disabled young people to engage in community based social activities.

- **Direct Payments**

Direct payments are monetary payments made by local authorities directly to individuals who have been assessed as having community care needs that are eligible for certain services (including to people who care for others). Direct payments enable individuals to purchase the assistance or services that the local authority would otherwise provide. They therefore give individuals control over their own life by providing an alternative to social care services provided by a local authority. This helps to increase opportunities for independence, social inclusion and enhanced self-esteem. Since the original legislation was passed in 1996, Direct Payments have gradually been extended to include older people, carers, parents of disabled children, and disabled 16 and 17 year olds, as well as disabled adults. Parents of disabled children and young people on the active caseload of The Disabled Children's Team are provided with packages of Direct Payment support following the outcome of an assessment. These Direct

Payments are used to employ personal assistants who can provide care to the disabled child within their own home, or to assist disabled children and young people to engage in social activities.

During the period December 2011 to December 2012:

Name of service	Numbers of children	Average frequency of visits/hours per month
Bakers Way	48	Overnight stays range from 1-4 per month. Average stays per month = 2. In addition 10 transition aged young people receive a fortnightly Outreach service.
Family Link	17	Average of fortnightly visits/overnight stays.
Trinity Care and Support	32	A range of hours and packages of support matched to identified need. As with Direct Payments the packages are flexible to meet the needs of the individual children and their families, so the hours will increase during school holiday periods. In terms of average hours per month over a 12 month period, therefore, the lowest number of hours is 3 and the highest is 62.
Direct Payments	44 (in addition 10 cases transferred to Adult Services during period Dec 2011 – Dec 2012)	A range of hours and packages of support matched to identified need. The lowest number of hours is 3 per week for social activities which equates to £2,387 per annum; the highest package relates to a more complicated care plan which varies to provide additional hours during school holiday periods i.e. 9 hours per week social activities

		with 2:1 support per annum and additional 12 hours per week social activities 2:1 support for 13 weeks per annum (school holidays) which equates to £15,288 p.a.
Complex Needs Playscheme	Up to 15 children (12 attended Easter 2012 and 15 Summer 2012)	Offers a service for three days per week for two weeks at Easter School holidays, and three days per week for four weeks of Summer school holidays.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 None.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 This is not required as there are no changes proposed.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The range of services referred to in this report provide essential specialist family support services, which play a vital role in preventing family breakdown. The high care demands often experienced by parents of disabled children and young people if not alleviated by the provision of respite/short breaks would likely result in an increased Looked After Children population; and due to the complexity of their needs would require specialist foster and residential placements. .

7.1.1 The funding for the Transition Keyworker post which has been developed through ESF/Welsh Government funding will conclude on 31.03.2013. This post has proven to be very effective in providing intensive direct work with disabled young people and their parents and carers and has resulted in the prevention of family breakdown, and foster placement break down. Without the provision of such a specialist service, there is an increased risk of demand for specialist fostering or residential placements. There has been agreement to fund the post until 31 March 2014 from within existing resources but funding will need to be identified from 1 April 2014 if the service wish to continue with this post.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the Cabinet Committee notes the report.

Hilary Anthony
Corporate Director – Children

Contact Officer

Wendy Wilcox
Principal Officer
Disability Services and Transition.

Telephone: (01656) 642459

E-mail: wendy.wilcox@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Sunnyside, Bridgend, CF31 4AR

Background Documents

Information leaflet - Bakers Way
Information leaflet - The Disabled Children's Team.
The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (Wales) Regulations
Support for the whole family – Bridgend Short Breaks Statement