

**Overnight Short Breaks Services**



Consultation Paper

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# **Background**

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (the Council) is committed to supporting children and young people, including supporting them to develop their independent living skills and to achieve positive outcomes.

The Council currently contracts with a third sector organisation to deliver two overnight short breaks services for children who have disabilities. These services aim to provide children who have disabilities with fun, enjoyable experiences away from home which will support them to learn and develop new skills to help them fulfil their potential. The services also provide parent carers with regular opportunities to take breaks from their caring responsibilities.

Council Officers want the opportunity to develop and potentially expand overnight short break services to ensure that these types of services are accessible and available to children and young people who have an assessed need for these services.

# **What are overnight short breaks?**

Overnight short breaks are where a child or young person who has disabilities can access overnight support, away from their home to develop independent living skills and work towards achieving positive outcomes. The Council currently commissions two overnight short break services:

Family Link:

This service provides children with overnight stays in an approved Link Carer’s home. The service is commissioned to recruit, train, support and retain a pool of Family Link carers who will provide overnight stays within their own home throughout the year.

Park House:

This service provides children with overnight stays in a purpose built three-bedroom facility. The service is commissioned to manage and deliver overnight stays throughout the year.

Council Officers want to ensure that:

* There is a good range of overnight short breaks for children, young people and their parent carers
* Overnight short break services are designed around what is important to children, young people and their parent carers
* Overnight short break services are delivered to a high-quality standard
* The Council can meet demand and provide timely access to overnight short break services to children, young people and parent carers who have an assessed need for these services

# **What are the proposals?**

The Council is proposing to:

* Design overnight short break services in line with the outcomes which are important to children, young people and their parent carers.

* Design overnight short break services in line with the service features which are important to children, young people and their parent carers.
* Bring current overnight short break services (including Family Link and Park House) under direct Council provision, meaning these services will be delivered and managed by Council employed staff.
* Explore expanding overnight short break services to better meet demand to ensure children, young people and parent carers can access these services when they need to.

If decisions are made to bring these services in house then staff in existing organisations may/could be impacted. Staff who will be directly affected will be notified months in advance of any change taking effect. Any changes which may have an impact upon staff will be handled in line with all relevant laws and regulations.

1. **What are the aims of this consultation?**

* To make sure that all interested parties are aware of the Council’s proposals.
* To make sure people have all the information they need to come to an informed opinion.
* To encourage people to give their views on the proposals.
* To make sure people know how to submit their views.
* To collect feedback and consider this feedback before a final decision is made.

1. **When will the consultation take place?**

The Council will be collecting feedback for 90 days from 28th April 2025 to 27th July 2025.

As well as this document, Council officers will be visiting partners and services throughout the consultation period to explain the proposals with parent carers, Link carers, staff and other stakeholders. This will be a chance to ask questions.

After the consultation ends, the feedback will be analysed and a report will be presented to the Council’s Cabinet Board Meeting for decision. The report will set out the proposal and recommendations, taking into account the feedback from the consultation.

1. **Questions & Answers**

There are several ways you can submit questions and comments about these proposals during the consultation period. However, here are answers to some questions you may have:

**Q:** How has the Council reached this proposal?

**A:** The Council has recently undertaken a review of its overnight short breaks offering to local children and parent carers. The Council want to ensure quick and timely access to overnight short breaks and that children and families who have an assessed need for these services are able to access high quality, effective services in line with what is important to them.

**Q:** Is the Council considering bringing services in-house/changing organisations to deliver the service?

**A:** The Council are required to explore all avenues of how services can be delivered, which includes:   
Option 1: Bringing the services in-house so they are delivered directly by the Council.

Option 2: Tendering the services. This is a competitive process where the organisation who demonstrates the best quality and best value for money is awarded a service.

This consultation is seeking feedback on the proposal to bring the overnight short break services (Family Link and Park House) in-house so they are delivered directly by the Council.

**Q:** Is this purely a cost saving exercise?

**A:** No. The Council is committed to ensuring children, young people and parent carers access high quality services, when they need them whilst also achieving best value for money.

**Q:** If services are going to change, when will these changes take place?

**A:** If decisions are made to bring these services in-house, parent carers who access these services will be notified months in advance of any change taking effect.

**Q:** Will staff in existing organisations be impacted?

**A:** Any changes which may have an impact upon staff will be handled in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protecting of Employment) Regulations 2006 and any other relevant laws and regulations.

**Q:** Are you going to be consulting with children and young people?

**A:** All commissioned services are required to consult with individuals accessing services to support with service quality and design. The Council consulted with children and young people in 2024 around short breaks and what is important to them, through the completion of activity sheets.

**Q:** How will the Council agree if I can access an overnight short breaks service?

**A:** All children and young people are assessed through Children’s Social Services and receive the most appropriate service for them based on their individual needs.

1. **How will the Council collect views and opinions?**

There are a number of ways that the Council will be collecting views and opinions on the proposals:

i. Consultation portal

The “Have Your Say” section on Neath Port Talbots Council’s website will allow you to view all supporting documents, make comments and provide feedback.

ii. In writing

You can write to us or complete the Feedback Form at the end of this booklet.

Letters and forms can be posted to:

Children’s Overnight Short Breaks Consultation

Neath Port Talbot Council

Common Commissioning Unit

Civic Centre

Neath

SA11 3QZ

Or email [ccu@npt.gov.uk](mailto:ccu@npt.gov.uk)

iii. One to one meetings

Individual meetings with families will be arranged where requested.

iv. Meetings with current service staff and management

Meetings with current service management and support staff will be arranged where needed.

v. Meetings with Link Carers

Meetings will take place during the consultation period. This will be an opportunity to find out more about the proposals, ask questions and give your views.

vi. Team staff meetings

Officers will attend social services staff meetings to raise awareness.

vii. Meetings with partner agencies, groups and forums

We will be circulating information on the proposal to key agencies and other stakeholders.

1. **Explanation of terms used in the context of this document**

A **Stakeholder** is a person, group or organisation with a direct interest, involvement or investment in something e.g. staff, owners and customers/ service users of a business or service.

**Third sector** refers to non-governmental and non-profit making organisations, including charities, voluntary and community groups.

A **Parent carer** means the individual(s) who have primary and/or parental responsibility for the care and support of a child/young person.

An **Assessed need** is the social services process of assessing an individual need for care and support or a carer’s need for support.

**Commission/ commissioning** is the process of planning and prioritising, purchasing and monitoring services, to help produce positive outcomes for individuals accessing services.

**Applicable laws** means all laws and legal obligations relating to the provision of the service, including, but not limited to, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

**Regulations** means the statutory framework for the regulation and inspection of social care services (RISCA). They are also based on the legislation relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, such as the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004.

**Value for money** is one of the key considerations of any decision involving the use of public funds. It considers cost, quality and sustainability to meet the needs of the public and those accessing commissioned services.

**Sufficient/ sufficiency** means enough volume of a service that can be delivered to those individuals who need to access it.

**Outcomes** are individual personal goals/wants and achievement of these outcomes can help to support children, young people and their families to improve their quality of life.

**Demand** refers to the increasing/decreasing level of need for a service.

**Alternative Formats**

This information is available in a range of formats including Welsh. All documents can also be accessed via the Council’s website.

To make a request for another format, please ask one of the support staff who will pass your request on to the Common Commissioning Unit, or email us directly at: [ccu@npt.gov.uk](mailto:ccu@npt.gov.uk)

1. **Feedback Form**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Children’s Overnight Short Breaks Consultation**    **Feedback Form**    If you would like to comment on this proposal, please complete this form and email it to [ccu@npt.gov.uk](mailto:ccu@npt.gov.uk) or post it to:    Children’s Overnight Short Breaks Consultation  Neath Port Talbot Council  Common Commissioning Unit  Civic Centre  Neath  SA11 3QZ | | | |
| If you wish to receive a response to any questions raised on this form please provide your name and address: | | | |
| Name: |  | | |
| Address: |  | | |
| Postcode: |  | | |
| Please indicate your interest in this proposal (please tick ): | | | |
| I am a child/young person | | |  |
| I am a parent carer | | |  |
| I am a Link carer | | |  |
| I am a member of staff at the Family Link service | | |  |
| I am a member of staff at the Park House service | | |  |
| I am a member of staff in the Council | | |  |
| Other (please specify) | |  | |

**Short Break Services: Outcomes for children and young people**

The services aims to provide children and young people with access to a wide range of positive experiences away from home to enable them to have fun, socialise, learn new skills and achieve their personal outcomes.

Children and young people have told us that they want (outcomes):

* To have fun
* To have new and positive experiences
* To make new friends and spend time with friends
* To have opportunities to develop personal skills
* To be supported to achieve improved positive outcomes
* To be safe

To what extent to you agree that these outcomes are appropriate for overnight short break services?

Please tick  one box only:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly agree | Tend to  agree | Neither  agree or  disagree | Tend to  disagree | Strongly  disagree | Don’t know |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

Please give reasons for your answer or provide further comments or suggestions of alternative outcomes that are important to children and young people in the box below:

|  |
| --- |

**Overnight Short Break Services: Outcomes for parent carers**

The service also aims to support parent carers with access to regular short breaks to enable them to benefit from quality time away from their caring responsibilities.

Parent carers told us they want (outcomes):

* To be confident their child is having fun and enjoys accessing the service
* To have a break from caring responsibilities
* To have opportunities to enjoy quality time away from their caring role
* To have an increased ability to cope in their caring role
* To be confident the service is of a high-quality standard
* To be confident their child is safe

To what extent to you agree that these outcomes are appropriate for overnight short break services?

Please tick  one box only:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly agree | Tend to  agree | Neither  agree or  disagree | Tend to  disagree | Strongly  disagree | Don’t know |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

Please give reasons for your answer or provide further comments or suggestions of alternative outcomes that are important to parent carers in the box below:

|  |
| --- |

**What does a good overnight short break service look like?**

Please tick  all that apply:

No waiting lists

Following a referral to the service – a quick assessment process to start the service

Ability to meet all support levels and levels of behaviour presentation

Ability to meet all different medical diagnosis

Reliable service with no/limited cancellations from the service

A flexible booking system, where you can access overnight short breaks when you want it/ Ability to book blocks of nights together as opposed to booking one night at a time

A range of fun activities

Services to work in partnership with families, schools and social services

Staff who are caring, kind and compassionate who are competent and suitably trained

More nights available during school holidays

Other (please specify below)

|  |
| --- |

**Priorities for what a good overnight short breaks service looks like**

Based on the above, please state which your top 3 priorities would be:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

Please give reasons for your answer or provide further comments or suggestions in the box below:

|  |
| --- |

**Future Development Opportunities**

When considering the future development of short break services, what do you think is important to consider?

Please tick  all that apply:

If services change - minimal disruption to children and young people

Locations close to home

Locations close to where children and young people attend school

Families to have a variety of overnight short break services to choose from

Short break services that complement each other/closer partnership working

Support provided to children and young people around changes to services

A specialist short breaks unit for solo/specialist overnight short breaks placements

Other (please specify below)

|  |
| --- |

**Priorities for Future Development**

Based on the above, please state which your top 3 priorities would be:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

Please give reasons for your answer or provide further comments or suggestions in the box below:

|  |
| --- |

Please tell us your thoughts on the proposal for the Council to deliver overnight short breaks services in-house (meaning the Council delivers these services directly by using Council employed staff). Please tell us what you see as the positives and negatives of this approach:

Positives:

|  |
| --- |

Negatives:

|  |
| --- |

**Do you have any feedback/suggestions/comments about the Family Link service?**

|  |
| --- |

**Do you have any feedback/suggestions/comments about the Park House service?**

|  |
| --- |

**About You**

The Council operates equality policies that aim to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equally. To make sure that people are not discriminated against when accessing our services we carry out monitoring and therefore would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. The information you provide is strictly confidential.

**Age:** *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Under 16 |  | 30-39 |  | 60-74 |  | 86+ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 16-24 |  | 40-49 |  | 75-85 |  | Prefer not to say |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 25-29 |  | 50-59 |  |  |  |  |

**Welsh Language** – are you: *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Fluent speaker & writer |  | Fluent speaker |  | Learner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Fairly fluent speaker & writer |  | Fairly fluent speaker |  | Little or no knowledge |

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term (i.e. has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Do you consider yourself to have a disability?** *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes |  | No |  | Prefer not to say |

**Ethnic origin:** *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | White British | |  | Mixed: White & Asian |  | Black: African |
|  |  | |  |  |  |  |
|  | White Irish | |  | Indian |  | Black: Caribbean |
|  |  | |  |  |  |  |
|  | Mixed: White & Black Caribbean | |  | Bangladeshi |  | Chinese |
|  |  | |  |  |  |  |
|  | Mixed: White & Black African | |  | Pakistani |  | Prefer not to say |
|  |  | |  |  |  |  |
|  | Other *(please specify):* |  | | | | |

**Sex** *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Male |  | Female |  | Transgender |  | Prefer not to say |

**Religion/Belief**: *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Christian |  | Buddhist |  | Hindu |  | Jewish |  | Muslim |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Sikh |  | No religion |  | Prefer not to say |  | Any other religion | | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Any other religion *(please specify):* |  |

**Sexual Orientation** *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Heterosexual |  | Lesbian |  | Gay |  | Bisexual |  | Prefer not to say |

**Nationality** *(please* *one answer)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Welsh |  | Scottish | |  | English | |  | British | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  |  | | |  |  |  |  | |
|  | Irish |  | Prefer not to say | |  | Other | |  | | | | | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Other *(please specify):* |  |

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME***