**Do you work with children and young people who have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) and want to help shape how short breaks will be offered in Cheshire West and Chester Council?**

Cheshire West and Chester has launched a consultation on the draft Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy - an engagement exercise to give everyone the chance to share ideas about proposed changes to the way we offer short breaks for children and young people with SEND and we would like to hear your views.

**What are short breaks?**

Short breaks are services that can help families with a disabled child. They give disabled children the chance to have time away from their families, make new friends and have fun. They give parents a break from caring for their child; the chance to spend time with their other children and are designed to meet different levels of need.

Currently we do not have a commissioning strategy for short breaks to underpin our approach to helping disabled children and their families.

The commissioning strategy will ensure:

• Better value for money

• More responsive services

• Services are more focussed on the needs of the family

• More service is available within local communities

• Carers views will be captured to develop services aligned to the needs identified in the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Existing short breaks have been in place for 3 years and it is important that we seek views to ensure Cheshire West and Chester

• is meeting the needs of families;

• understands how families would like to access short breaks;

• makes short breaks available in the right locations at the right times.

The full proposed ‘Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy’ is available to read on the Council’s website: [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/shortbreaksconsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/shortbreaksconsultation)

**How to take part**

Cheshire West and Chester Council would value the insight and feedback of all parents, carers, and other stakeholders, to ensure the Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy addresses the issues that are most important to parents, carers, and children and young people with SEND and provides the support they need.

There are several ways you can get involved and share your views:

• Complete an online questionnaire at [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/shortbreaksconsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/shortbreaksconsultation)

• Request a paper version or easy read version by calling 0300 123 8123

• Email your views to: [shortbreaksconsultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaksconsultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

• Write to us at: Short Breaks Strategy Consultation, Peoples Commissioning and Contracts, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Floor 2, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BE

COVID-19 restrictions currently prohibit face to face engagement. However, we are running virtual focus groups and offering telephone discussions. Dates and times are available at [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/shortbreaksconsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/shortbreaksconsultation) .

**Focus groups for stakeholders such as organisations which provide short breaks, after school and holiday care will be held on**

* **Wednesday 14 October 2020 10am – 12 noon**
* **Friday 23 October 2020 2pm – 4 pm**

Please e mail [shortbreaksconsultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaksconsultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) or telephone the Council’s contact centre on 0300 123 8123 quoting ‘Short Breaks Strategy Consultation’ to register your interest in a focus group.

Your views will only be used to help inform the development of the proposed Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy.

**Consultation will be close Sunday 15th November 2020.**