**Parent/carer Consultation results regarding The Disabled Childrens Team services – May 2024**

1. **Background**

The Disabled Childrens Team (DCT) works with children and young people who have diagnosed disabilities or health conditions which have a significant impact on their day to day lives from birth through to 18 years old when they transition to Adult Services.

Within B&NES there are a range of short break options available to families to access. This ranges from respite being delivered during the daytime, evening and weekend as well as overnight provision.Currently these services are often full so the Council wanted to explore what services could be developed to better meet the needs of the families that access DCT.

1. **Introduction**

This report details the Needs Analysis that was carried out to support the commissioning of a range of new services in the Disabled Children’s Team (DCT).

Views have been sought from parent / carers of children that currently access DCT services. This was to explore the range of services families would like to access in the future to enable them to have a break from their caring responsibilities.

The conclusions of this report will act as recommendations to the commissioning of Services in DCT that will take place in 2024/25 and onwards.

1. **Method**

DCT were asked to send a questionnaire to all families with an email address. The questionnaire was sent out to 55 families in total. The needs assessment was carried out between 25th March 2024 and 12th April 2024. This was extended to 10th May 2024 as the response rate was low. Social Workers were asked to encourage families to fill in the questionnaire when they were in contact with families.

The questionnaire asked the families 8 questions in total and was based on the

* age of child/ren,
* needs of their child/ren,
* types of services they were receiving through DCT now
* types of services they would like to receive in the future.
* And how could DCT services be improved.

(Please see appendix one for full list of questions asked)

1. **Summary of Key Findings**

There were 20 responses in total. Some parent/carers did not answer all the questions that were asked in the questionnaire.

* Age of child/ren

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age Range** | **Number of children** |
| 0-5 years | 0 |
| 6-10 years | 4 |
| 11-15 years | 9 |
| 16-17 years | 3 |

* Disability Impairment of Child/ren

Parent/carers have ticked more than one box when describing their child/ren’s disability which suggests this cohort of children display more than one or more disability/ impairment traits.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Disability/ Impairment** | **Number of children** |
| Autism/ Neuro developmental disability | 13 |
| Learning Disability | 13 |
| Health Condition | 6 |
| Physical impairment | 6 |
| Visual Impairment | 4 |
| Mental and emotional stress | 3 |
| Hearing Impairment | 2 |
| Other | 6 |

Other: Reponses included Downs syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Ophn1, most of the above

* What qualifications do you feel staff need to take care of your child/ren

Again parent/ carers have ticked more than one box here.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Qualification/ Training | No. of Responses |
| Disability awareness / Inclusion Training | 17 |
| Communication Support Training | 15 |
| Behaviour Support Training | 13 |
| NVQ Qualification in Health and Social Care | 8 |
| Medication Training | 4 |
| Qualified Nurses | 3 |
| Other – An ability to connect to my son | 1 |

At present when Agency workers are engaged to work with children accessing DCT they are qualified nurses. This is expensive. It is clear from the results that parent/carers would prefer professionals that have a knowledge and understanding of Disability and an understanding of their behaviours associated with disability.

The next three questions of the questionnaire are displayed together in table in appendix two below. This is so the questions can be better analysed. The three questions are

* How many hours of support are you **entitled** to from DCT currently?
* How many hours of support do you **actually** receive from DCT?
* What type of service would your family **like to receive** from DCT, please tell us what type of service this is

There were 17 responses to these questions. The majority of families are receiving the hours that they are entitled to receive. There were two families that were:

* receiving less hours to what they were entitled to (receiving 2 hours rather than 4 hours)
* a different service to what they were entitled to. (Receiving support in family home using an agency when available rather than overnight away from home)

When asked what services families would like to receive many families ticked multiply boxes including the box for a service they are already receiving. This shows that parent/carers want to carry on receiving the service that they have already. They also want a variety of services on offer to them. There were 14 responses to this question. Here are the services they requested:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Service | Number of responses |
| Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | 8 (6 already receiving) |
| Overnight stays Beaumonds/ Family Link | 7 |
| Community based support during school holidays | 6 |
| Community based support at the weekend | 5 |
| A sitting service in child’s home | 4 |
| Support groups | 3 |
| Home based support during the day | 2 |
| Home based support during the evening | 1 |
| Community based support during the daytime | 1 |
| Direct payment - Home based support at the weekend | 1 (1 already receiving service) |

The responses to the next question are varied and the number of responses were low (6). There were no conclusions to be drawn from the answers given. All of the responses to question 8 are listed below:

**We would like your thoughts about how to improve DCT services? Please tell us about the top 3 things you would like us to change or a service you would like us to develop in the future.**

Response 1

1) More help in identifying PAs. Such as established services/relationships with Universities and other relevant organisations that you could contact with your specific request when looking for a new PA. Each time I have done it I have had to build my own individual relationship, which has made it more difficult and time consuming to find a PA. i.e. identify which organisations will publicise the advert, what the process for doing so it, how much it costs etc.

2) Clear information about what exactly the money can be spent on (can I use the money for anything other than wages for example, like paying for clubs/travel/cinema tickets with the PA etc?

Response 2

Annual reviews to coincide with EHCP reviews, then a six month light touch CIN review - if the condition and needs do not fluctuate

Response 3

Over the years we have received support for our son with complex needs his short break package has gradually decreased. He has regular overnight care needs and because of this is no longer able to receive short breaks at Beaumonds. Although we receive support at home for him at the moment, this is not the same fun experience for him. We also constantly have carers in our home so it’s not respite for us and at times we are required to be the second person. BANES are not meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children with complex needs and their families who so desperately need a real break.

Response 4

Work experience project at weekends {for CYP}. Youth club for school and college age {YP} to communicate and make friends and socialising.

Response 5

Just making sure communication on what goes on at Beaumonds is always shared to you guys {DCT} from Beaumonds.

Response 6

More proactive signposting of services - i.e. this is the first time I've heard of the possibility of overnight support. I think our contact from DCT is great!

**4. Conclusions**

The conclusion to this consultation shows that the children and young people that access DCT are those children and young people with multiply disabilities/ complex needs. Parent/carers would like staff that are working with their children to have a good knowledge and understanding of disability/ inclusion and have undertaken training to support communication and behaviour needs of their children.

The consultation also shows that most families are receiving the hours of support that they are entitled to. When asked what services families would like to receive many families ticked multiply boxes which shows that they want a variety of services on offer to them.

These findings will contribute towards designing a commissioned service for families accessing DCT that deliver a range of services that better support families needs as well as providing more choice and flexibility to when services are delivered.

Report Written by Kay Sibley, Commissioning Support Officer, May 2024.

Appendix one

**Questionnaire for families accessing Disabled Children Team’s Services**

The Disabled Childrens Team (DCT) are supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people in B&NES. The Council would like to take this opportunity to consult with families who already access DCT and seek their views on the current services offered by DCT in B&NES. The Council would also like to identify services that families would like to access from this team in the future.

Please could you return your completed questionnaire by **Friday 12th April 2023 to** [**kay\_sibley@bathnes.gov.uk**](mailto:kay_sibley@bathnes.gov.uk)

1. How old is/are your child/ren who is accessing DCT?
2. How do you describe your child’s disability or impairment? (Please tick all that apply)

* Physical impairment
* Visual Impairment
* Hearing Impairment
* Learning difficulties
* Health condition
* Autism/Neurological Disability
* Mental and emotional distress
* Other (please specify)

1. What qualifications do you feel staff need to take care of your child/ren? (Please tick all that apply)

* Disability Awareness / inclusion Training
* Behaviour support training
* Communication support training
* Medication training
* NVQ qualification in Health and Social Care
* Qualified nurse/ practitioner
* Other Please specify in box below

1. How many hours of support are you entitled to from DCT currently?
2. How many hours of support do you actually receive from DCT?
3. What type of service is your family currently receiving from DCT, please tell us what type of service this is (please tick all that apply):

* Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services i.e. to pay for PA)
* Direct payment -Home based support during the day
* Direct payment -Community based support during the day
* Direct payment - Home based support during the evening
* Direct payment- Community based support during the evening
* Direct payment - Home based support at the weekend
* Direct payment - Community based support at the weekend
* Direct payment - Home based support during school holidays
* Direct payment - Community based support during school holidays
* Family link Overnight stays
* Family Link Daycare
* Overnight stays Beaumonds
* Agency -Home based support during the day
* Agency -Community based support during the day
* Agency - Home based support during the evening
* Agency- Community based support during the evening
* Agency - Home based support at the weekend
* Agency - Community based support at the weekend
* Agency - Home based support during school holidays
* Agency - Community based support during school holidays
* Another service or support (please specify in comments box):

1. What type of service would your family **like to receive** from DCT, please tell us what type of service this is (please tick all that apply):

* Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services i.e. to pay for PA)
* Home based support during the day
* Community based support during the day
* Home based support during the evening
* Community based support during the evening
* Home based support at the weekend
* Community based support at the weekend
* Home based support during school holidays
* Community based support during school holidays
* A sitting service in child’s home
* Overnight stay away from home i.e. Beaumonds/family link
* Support groups
* Another service or support (please specify in comments box):

1. We would like your thoughts about how to improve DCT services

Please tell us about the top 3 things you would like us to change or a service you would like us to develop in the future.

1.

2.

3.

Thank-you for taking part.

Appendix 2: Answers to Questions 4,5 and 6

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| --- | --- | --- |
| How many hours of support are you **entitled** to from DCT currently? | How many hours of support do you **actually** receive from DCT? | What type of service would your family **like to receive** from DCT, please tell us what type of service this is |
| 8 hours a week | 8 hours a week using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Overnight stays away from home Beaumonds/ family link |
| 6 hours a week term time/ 12 hours a week school hols | 6 hours a week term time/ 12 hours a week school hols using DP’s | Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) |
| 15-20 hours | 15-20 hours using Direct payment - Home based support at the weekend | Direct payment - Home based support at the weekend |
| 10 hours a month | 10 hours a month using DP’s | Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) |
|  | Using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services), Community based support at the weekend, Community based support in the school holidays, sitting service. Overnight stays away from home |
| 2 days/nights per week short break away from home | **If available** 2 days/nights per week support at home using agency home based support during day/ evening/ weekends and school hols | Overnight stays away from home Beaumonds or Family Link |
| 8 hours | 8 hours using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services), Community based support at the weekend, Community based support in the school holidays, sitting service. Overnight stays away from home |
| 5 hours | using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Community based support during the school holidays; |
| unsure | none | Direct Payments (Money from council to pay for Care & Support Services); Community based support at the weekend; Community based support during the school holidays; Overnight stay away from home, Support Groups; |
| Don’t Know | 2 Hours a week using another service or support | Community based support during the day; Home based support during the day; |
| 15 hours a month | 15 hours a month using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) |
| 8 hours a week | 8 hours a week using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Direct Payments (Money from council to pay for Care & Support Services); Community based support at the weekend; Community based support during the school holidays; A sitting service in child's home; Overnight stay away from home |
| As & When | As & When using Overnight stays Beaumonds; |  |
| As & When | As & When using Overnight stays Beaumonds; Another service or support |  |
| 18.5 hours | 18.5 hours using overnight stays at Beaumonds |  |
| 4 hours | 2 hours using Direct Payment Home based support during the day; Direct Payment Home based support during the school holidays; | Home based support during the day; Home based support during the evening; Support Groups; |
|  | Using Overnight stays Beaumonds; |  |
| 6 hours school holidays | 6 hours school holidays using Direct payments (money from Council to pay for Care and Support Services) | Direct Payments (Money from council to pay for Care & Support Services); Community based support at the weekend; Community based support during the school holidays; A sitting service in child's home; Overnight stay away from home; Support Groups; |