

0 to 25 SEN and Disability Service Engagement Report

South Gloucestershire Council

Contents

	Page
Purpose, methodology and response	3
Overall vision for the service	6
The local offer	8
Integrated assessment and single plan	11
Support for parents (key working)	15
Preparation for adulthood	18
Personal budgets	20
Joint commissioning and working with health services	22
Services, staffing and resources	23
Comments analysis	25
Respondent analysis	26

Appendices *(available online or on request)*

Appendix 1: Copy of survey

Appendix 2: Comments made in full

Further information

This report was produced by South Gloucestershire Council's Corporate Research & Consultation Team. Further information about this report is available from:

📞 01454 868154

✉ consultation@southglos.gov.uk

🌐 www.southglos.gov.uk

✉ South Gloucestershire Council, Environment and Community Services,
PO Box 299, Corporate Research & Consultation Team, Civic Centre, High Street,
Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 0DR

Purpose, methodology and response

Purpose

The purpose of the engagement programme on 0 to 25 SEN and disability services was to:

- work in partnership with colleagues in health and parent representatives to ensure that service users are fully engaged in the development of proposals and delivery of the new service;
- inform stakeholders about the current position and rationale for the reviews affecting the service and the anticipated timescales for the project;
- provide stakeholders with the relevant information necessary to enable them to make informed representations as part of the engagement process;
- clearly explain to stakeholders the different options, financial and service implications and any project constraints;
- provide a framework for engagement that enables stakeholders to participate in timely, accessible and appropriate manner suitable to their needs;
- ensure a suitable response level to the engagement so that Councillors can make informed decisions based on the needs and views of service users and local people;
- gather a clear evidence base to support the implementation of the project and future service delivery;
- ensure that the engagement and consultation meets the council's statutory responsibilities, legal requirements and relevant policies.

Engagement and consultation approach

The council undertook a significant engagement and consultation process over 12 weeks from 2 December 2013 until 24 February 2014.

To engage as many people as possible, the council used a wide range of engagement and consultation techniques including:

- The publication of an engagement document that outlined the council's vision and proposals in detail. An easy read version of this document was also produced.
- A supporting website which provided access to all the documents, event information, surveys, presentation and impact assessment.
- A survey to gather views on key points, paper, online and easy read versions were also produced. The council also welcomed comments and views in writing, email or by phone.
- The main focus of the engagement was a series of seven workshops and events aimed at parents and carers and other organisations and stakeholders.

- The council also gave a series of presentations at various other meetings, groups, forums and networks
- The council also commissioned KiDS to undertake some specific engagement work with young people with a special educational need or disability

The engagement was promoted using local and social media and through parent carer forums and networks. Formal stakeholder notification was also sent to a large mailing list of interested organisations, schools, statutory consultees and service users.

Consultation response rates

In total the council received 19 survey responses which included comments and these are included throughout this report.

The table below outlines the approximate number of attendees at each event

Event	Number of attendees
20 January, Shireway Community Centre, Yate	44
22 January, Turnberries, Thornbury	28
23 January 9, Greenfield Centre, Winterbourne	42
28 January, Jubilee Centre, Bradley Stoke	64
30 January, Longwell Green Community Centre	56
10th February, Shireway Community Centre, Yate	17
27 January, Kingswood Civic Centre (organisations)	62

In total across these events 3204 individual comments were recorded which are summarised throughout this report.

General caveats

The results of this consultation are not statistically representative of the views of South Gloucestershire residents due to the nature of the consultation methodology used. The level of response, information gathered and views obtained provide a useful indicator of wider opinion and any important issues that will need to be considered.

Due to the software used and the different response options open to respondents, it was possible for people to submit more than one response. This has been monitored during the consultation period and analysis and it does not appear to have been abused or be a significant issue affecting the response.

Any obvious duplicate comments, personal information and comments that can identify individuals, have been removed from the comments analysis.

Percentages used in this report have been rounded and may not add up to exactly 100%. For some survey questions, respondents could select more than one response which also means that percentages, if added together, can total more than 100%.

The overall vision for the service

In the engagement workshops, participants were asked to consider the proposed vision for the new service.

“every child and young person with a special educational need or disability is to be given the best chance to succeed in life by enabling them to maximise their potential at school and college, and to move successfully into adulthood: finding work, living independently and participating in their community.”

Overall there was strong support for the overall vision with 85% of respondents stating that they agreed with it.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the overall vision for a 0-25 service for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities?

53%	Strongly agree	11%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
32%	Tend to agree	5%	Tend to disagree	0%	Don't know

They were then asked to identify all the potential benefits and outcomes that delivering this vision could bring to children, young people, their families and the professionals that support them. These were called the “Fruits”

They were then asked to identify all the things that would need to be in place to support the successful delivery of these fruits. These were called the “Roots”

Vision for the service – the fruits

- Access to specialists
- Child and family centred
- Children are safe and happy
- Children that do well
- Clear and SMART outcomes
- Clearly published thresholds and criteria
- Confidence and trust in system and process
- Consistently high quality services
- Continuity of care and support
- Coordination between services
- Early intervention
- Easy to access support and information
- Engaging and involving
- Focus on the child’s potential
- Good information sharing
- Good partnership and multi-agency working
- Good quality information
- Good understanding of system and process
- Greater range of services available
- Greater involvement of parents
- Holistic planning and support
- Inclusive services
- Integrated assessment
- Joined up services and support across home, health and education
- Key working support
- Knowledgeable staff
- Local offer
- More choice, flexibility and control
- More fulfilling lives
- Parents and carers views acknowledged and valued
- Personal budgets
- Portable assessments and plans
- Proactive and responsive services
- Prompt and early diagnosis
- Quicker process
- Reduced duplication, more efficient

- Responsive services
- Single plan
- Single point of access
- Shared expertise
- Stable home life
- Streamlined and seamless service
- Successful and strong relationships
- Support during key life stages
- Support groups and systems
- Tailored age and condition appropriate support
- Timely and prompt support and help when its needed
- Time to get to know and develop relationship with family
- To empower our children to be a part of our community
- Training for parents and providers
- Transparency
- Values parents as experts
- Well informed professionals
- Well supported families
- Well resourced and funded
- Young adults prepared for and living independent lives

Vision for the service – the roots

- Accountability
- Appropriate management and supervision
- Awareness of roles & responsibilities
- Carers support
- Clear processes
- Communication is key
- Comprehensive information
- Co-operation and willingness to work together
- Data sharing
- Early diagnosis
- Early intervention
- Fairness
- First point/single point of access
- Focus on outcomes
- Funding and resources
- Information sharing
- Integrated assessments
- Involvement of parents and families
- Joined up IT systems
- Key working
- Knowledgeable staff
- Long term planning
- Manageable caseloads
- Multi agency involvement and attendance
- Partnership working
- Range of services
- Referral system
- Shared vision and goals
- Single coordinated planning process
- Specialist knowledge
- Staff capacity
- Staff structures
- Staff training
- Teamwork
- Transition support

The core principles

The twelve core principles ran as a consistent thread throughout the engagement process and the feedback we received. An analysis of this is contained throughout this report.

When asked specifically 90% of respondents stated that they agreed with the twelve core principles.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the 12 core principles for the new 0-25 service for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities?

37%	Strongly agree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
53%	Tend to agree	5%	Tend to disagree	0%	Don't know

The Local Offer

Support for the local offer

The local offer was generally supported by both parents/carers and professionals who welcomed more information, easily available from single source. It was seen as an important resource that could be used by parent/carers, professionals and providers to better coordinate care and provide support for service users.

Parent/carers were keen to stress that whilst the local offer was a good idea and a useful resource, it was not a substitute for face to face contact, advice and support from professionals.

When specifically asked, 85% of respondents agreed with the proposed approach to the local offer in South Gloucestershire.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to the local offer in South Gloucestershire?					
53%	Tend to agree	0%	Tend to disagree	0%	Don't know
32%	Strongly agree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree

Key features of the local offer

Respondents were keen that the local offer had the following features:

- Contains relevant, comprehensive, accurate and up to date information, although respondents were keen to avoid information overload
- Ability to save, export and store information for future use or reference
- E bulletins and alerts
- A way to access the information offline and for people who do not have internet access, possibly via a helpline
- Accessible from a variety of venues including; libraries, children's centres, hubs, one stop shops, community groups, schools and other organisations
- Well promoted to both parents and professionals
- Provides links to other detailed or more specialist information on other websites
- Glossary of technical terms
- Clear easy to understand language, free of jargon and technical terms
- Logical and intuitive to use, well presented, attractive and accessible design and layout
- Discussion forum where users can ask questions and share information with other users
- Calendar of events, activities and training opportunities open to both parents and professionals
- Flow charts or process maps including checklists (a map of the minefield and what to expect)

Organisation and structure of the local offer

Respondents wanted to be able to find information in a variety of ways including:

- Easy to use and comprehensive search by key words and terms
- Suggestions based on frequently asked questions, other peoples searches and page views
- A to Z
- Glossary of key terms
- What's new
- Information organised by:
 - ❖ Condition, disability or behaviour
 - ❖ Age
 - ❖ Key milestones and life stages
 - ❖ Key themes such as health, education, transport
 - ❖ Location of services and support
 - ❖ Service type and provision
 - ❖ Universal or specialist support, linked to eligibility level
 - ❖ Provider

These suggestions were supported by the survey responses we received.

Survey response: How would you like the information in the local offer to be organised?			
33%	By age	56%	By theme e.g. education, health, transport, leisure
28%	By level or type of need	56%	By key milestones and life changes e.g. starting school, preparation for adulthood

Information needs and topics to be included in the local offer

Respondents told us that they would want to be able to access the following information from the local offer:

- Assessment and planning process
- Breaks and respite care
- Child care
- Complaints and appeal processes
- Comprehensive information about schools and the services and support they provide
- Contact information for providers and professionals (names, phone, email and website details)
- Directory of clubs, charities and support organisations
- Discounts and special offers
- Early years provision
- Eligibility criteria and thresholds
- Emergency out of hours provision and support to deal with situations and crisis support

- Events and training opportunities
- How to access services and the eligibility criteria for them
- Info about specific conditions and specialist advice specific to them (or links)
- Information about specific life stages including a guide of the process, check lists and what to expect
- Information on benefits and entitlements
- Information on how to apply for blue badges, bus passes and radar keys
- Out of area services and provision
- Pathways to diagnosis (who to go to, where and when)
- Peer, sibling and family support groups
- Personal budgets
- Post diagnosis support
- Referral process
- Safe guarding
- Self assessment tools
- Specialist services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language therapy
- Techniques, processes and mechanisms to deal with or manage conditions, circumstances and behaviours
- Transport options and providers
- Who does what and their responsibilities

Involvement in developing the local offer

Respondents suggested the following as ways to involve parents/carers and professionals in the ongoing development of the local offer:

- Feedback page
- Discussion forum
- Suggestions page
- Parental focus groups
- Regular monitoring and review of customer satisfaction, compliments, complaints and suggestions
- Pilot information with staff, parent/carers and young people
- Regular engagement with parent carers/families and young people via user groups, events and activities
- You said – we did feedback

Survey response: What options should we consider for you to be able to make comments and feedback to review and develop the local offer?

95%	Online response	68%	Face to face feedback via events or local groups
53%	Written response	32%	Telephone feedback

Integrated assessment and single plan

Eligibility criteria

Whilst the majority of respondents agreed with the proposed eligibility criteria for the new service, there were some concerns that the eligibility criteria would be used as a way to reduce the amount of support available and who could receive it as a result of funding pressures. There were also questions about the specific details and how it would operate in practice.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed eligibility criteria for the new 0-25 service for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities?

26%	Strongly agree	16%	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Strongly disagree
37%	Tend to agree	5%	Tend to disagree	11%	Don't know

Respondents agreed with tailoring support to need and welcomed support packages that were flexible and tailored to individual children's needs and could adapt if circumstances changed.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with how support is proposed to be tailored to need?

42%	Strongly agree	16%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
42%	Tend to agree	0%	Tend to disagree	0%	Don't know

Integrated assessment

When specifically asked, 74% of respondents agreed with the proposed approach to the integrated assessment and single education, health and care plan in South Gloucestershire.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to the integrated assessment and single Education, Health and Care Plan in South Gloucestershire?

37%	Strongly agree	16%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
37%	Tend to agree	5%	Tend to disagree	5%	Don't know

From the feedback received through the engagement process, respondents made the following points about the assessment process:

- Timely assessments and getting an early and prompt diagnosis was felt to be essential to getting the appropriate proactive support in place as quickly as possible rather than waiting for reactive interventions when things reach crisis point. There was a general feeling that assessments currently take too long, are not joined up and start too late.
- Respondents wanted a way to easily access assessments, with clear routes in and referrals and transparent thresholds and eligibility criteria.
- There was a desire to see parents listened to and fully involved in the assessment process and their role as experts in their child recognised and respected.
- There was general support for some form of self assessment as the initial first step although it was recognised that parents would need appropriate information and support to enable them to do this.
- Parents were keen that assessments were undertaken in partnership with them rather than it being a process done to them.
- There was general support for assessments taking place in environments where the child feels comfortable such as the home, nursery and school and for these opportunities to be used for simultaneous assessments by a range of professionals.
- Parents wanted assessments to be easily accessible in terms of location, transport and times, with adequate notice which took into account working patterns.
- Some respondents had concerns about who would have access to the information contained within the assessment, how it would be used and data security.
- Respondents tended to be sceptical that the current IT arrangements would enable effective multi agency data sharing and communication between professionals. This was an area that was felt to be key to the success of a joined up assessment process.
- Parents wanted professionals to have access to and have read previous assessments so that they were fully aware of the situation and circumstances when they undertake further assessments reducing the need to repeat information.
- Parents wanted to be kept fully informed about the assessment process and have the results explained to and shared with them and other people involved in the care of their child in a clear and understandable way.
- There were some concerns about the resources required to undertake assessments and whether the staffing, knowledge and systems were in place to support joined up assessments.
- Parents were keen that assessments were portable across settings and authority boundaries if they move home, school or provider.
- There was support for assessments taking place in early years settings and for there to be better coordination when children start school to ensure a smooth handover.
- There were some questions about how this related to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and privately commissioned assessments.

Single education, health and care plan

From the feedback received through the engagement process, respondents made the following points about the single education, health and care plan:

- There was a desire to make the plan as timely and proportionate as possible, whilst being an accurate reflection of need.
- It was felt that plans should better reflect the holistic needs of the child and family circumstances, not just focus on provision in school.
- Respondents were keen to make sure plans are followed and delivered by all providers, especially schools and health
- It was felt that the role of the key worker would be essential in coordinating the delivery of the plan
- The local offer should provide detailed information about a full range of support that could help supplement the support outlined in the plan
- Plans should be developed in advance of key life stages to allow for a smooth transition
- Parents wanted to be kept informed about the plans contents and the progress their child was making towards the plan
- It was important that current plans and support is retained and honoured during the transition period between the changing systems
- It is important that the appropriate professionals are involved in developing the plan and that they attend key planning and review meetings
- There were questions about the appeals process, how the plan could be challenged and how providers could be held to account to deliver commitments
- The shorter timescales to develop the plan was welcomed
- Key features of the plan should be:
 - ❖ Up to date
 - ❖ Personalised to individual circumstances, capabilities and aspirations
 - ❖ Contain clear commitments
 - ❖ Detail specific services and support that should be provided
 - ❖ Provide specific outcomes and milestones
 - ❖ Be regularly reviewed
 - ❖ Flexible enough to deal with changes or includes a plan B when circumstances temporarily change
 - ❖ Provide clear and named contact points
 - ❖ Portable if the child moves home or changes provider

:

Supporting the assessment and planning process

From the feedback received through the engagement process, respondents made the following points about the support structures that would need to be in place to deliver a successful single assessment and plan process:

- Comprehensive information available in the local offer
- Training and support for professionals, schools, providers and parents on the new assessment and planning process
- The crucial role of the key worker to coordinate assessments and share information
- Secure IT systems that enable access to good multi agency information sharing
- Service and staff capacity to undertake assessments and plans in a timely manner
- Sufficient resources to deliver assessments and plan commitments
- Transparent assessment criteria and eligibility levels

The tables below provide information about the type of support both parents and professionals thought would be helpful to support them through the assessment process.

Survey response: What support do you think you will need as a parent/carer to help you through the assessment process?					
43%	Telephone support	71%	Face to face support	43%	Training tailored to parents and carers
71%	Written guidance	64%	Online support		

Survey response: What support do you think you will need to help you through the assessment process as a professional supporting children, young people, families and carers?			
85%	Training and professional development	54%	Support from manager
62%	Guidance	31%	Online support

Support to parents and carers (key working)

Key working

There were mixed views about having a specific key worker or whether we should operate a key working model and the advantages and disadvantages of the two different approaches.

Parents welcomed the consistency of dealing with a named contact who had an in-depth knowledge of the family and its circumstances and provides direct access to a key worker. They described current support as very dependent on individual staff, their relationship with the family, the time they have available (case load) and their knowledge.

In future, parents wanted key working support to be of a consistently good standard, accessible when they need it, particularly at initial entry into the system, key life stages and crisis points.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to key working in South Gloucestershire?					
22%	Strongly agree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	6%	Strongly disagree
50%	Tend to agree	6%	Tend to disagree	11%	Don't know

There were questions about how key working would operate in South Gloucestershire including:

- Could parents choose who their key worker is or have a say in who is assigned to them?
- Could parents act as a key worker with training?
- Could you buy in a key worker using a personal budget?
- What happens if you don't get on with the key worker and the relationship with the family breaks down?
- Would families be able to drop in and out of having a key worker as needed?
- If an issue is identified during pregnancy, can a key worker be assigned prior to birth to support parents?
- How long will a key worker be assigned to a family for?
- What difference will key working make to my family and the support we receive?
- How does a key worker differ from key working? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two models?

Qualities of a key worker

During the engagement process, respondents were asked to describe the key skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that a successful key worker would have, which included the following:

- A good multi-tasker with attention to detail
- A level of independence
- Ability to build and maintain trust
- Ability to hold people to account
- Ability to keep other people to task and to chase up progress
- Ability to make and maintain positive relationships with the family and other professionals involved
- Ability to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts
- Ability to support and empower family
- Ability to think proactively but also respond reactively as situations arise
- Accessible and available
- Advocate for the child and family
- An enabler (not a blocker)
- Can look at families need and service provision holistically rather than focus on the child or the individual service
- Committed to getting the best outcome for the child and family
- Easy to contact and returns messages
- Empathy
- Excellent coordinator “the glue that holds it all together”
- Experienced
- Familiar with family and their circumstances
- Knowledgeable about the condition and the range of services available
- Non critical or judgemental
- Open and honest
- Problem solver
- Understanding
- Well informed and up to date who can communicate latest situation to parents and other professionals
- Well organised

Other parental support and information needs

From the feedback received through the engagement process, parents made the following points about support structures and information that they felt they needed:

- Parental, sibling and family support groups, networks and forums can be helpful
- Parenting courses were welcomed but they needed to be better promoted, accessible (location & times) and available (waiting list, some courses withdrawn due to funding limitations)
- Joint training, coping techniques and behaviour management strategies should be made available to and shared with parents as well as care staff/teaching assistants to ensure consistency across home and school
- Supportive parents are an excellent source of information and support through the SEN process, especially initial assessment, appeals and dealing with issues with schools
- Parents wanted clear information about the process, stages, criteria, thresholds, support, next steps and expectations (a map of the minefield)
- Condition specific information and access to specialist support groups
- Early help especially whilst waiting for a diagnosis and not having to wait for a specific diagnosis before getting obvious help
- Information about where to go in an emergency or at crisis point
- The local offer was seen as essential and a helpline or first point for families would be beneficial, sometimes you just need to talk to a real person rather than look up information online
- Having someone who understands to talk to and information about where to go when parents need a break
- Counselling and support for parents to deal with stress, depression, mental health issues and crisis
- Support information and guidance to fill out all the paperwork

Preparation for adulthood

The majority of respondents (79%) agreed with the proposed approach to preparing for adulthood.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to preparing for adulthood?					
47%	Strongly agree	16%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
32%	Tend to agree	0%	Tend to disagree	5%	Don't know

Preparing for adulthood

From the feedback received through the engagement process, the following points were made about preparing for adulthood:

- Preparing for adulthood needs to start as early as possible, but exactly when it starts needs to be flexible based on the needs and circumstances of the child and their abilities.
- This preparation should be well planned and implemented and phased in gradually. It should focus on the holistic needs of the child and not be focused on one area (e.g. education). It was recognised that change if done badly or suddenly can be disruptive and stressful.
- Preparing for adulthood should fully involve and engage with young adults and their parents. It should be a process of working together with the family not something done to them and should take into account their wishes, expectations and aspirations.
- It was recognised that preparing for adulthood also involves changing responsibilities and challenges for parents and that they would welcome more information and advice to support them as well as their child.
- There was a particular need for more information on the broadest range of opportunities, choices and support available, the benefits system, capacity and capability assessments, specialist and out of area support
- Some respondents were keen to see a young persons advocate or independent adjudicator who could provide support especially through appeals and when second opinions were needed.
- There was felt to be a gap in age appropriate service provision and support for young adults and it was hoped that commissioning and the use of personal budgets would help address this.
- Supporting independent living was seen as essential and the following were listed as areas that should be included in preparing young people for adulthood:
 - ❖ Budgeting, managing, handling money and shopping
 - ❖ Getting around independently, travel and transport
 - ❖ Forming and managing relationships, socialising and social skills

- ❖ Housing options, choices and adaptations
- ❖ Managing a home, cooking and cleaning
- ❖ Looking after yourself, managing conditions, medication and personal hygiene
- ❖ Employment advice and options, interview and other employment skills, work placements
- ❖ Accredited training courses and qualifications
- ❖ Building confidence and self esteem
- ❖ Safeguarding and personal safety, considering dangers and preventing exploitation, abuse or fraud

Support through other key life stages

For some people taking part in the engagement, preparing for adulthood is a long way off for them to consider, so discussions focussed on what support they would need at other key life stages.

Respondents identified the following as key life stages where support may be needed:

- Getting a diagnosis, pre-diagnosis and immediately following diagnosis
- Early years and changing childcare arrangements
- Starting school and the move from early years to primary education
- The move from primary to secondary school
- Adolescence
- Preparing for adulthood
- Moving house and changing provider or setting
- Moving between mainstream and specialist provision
- Changing family circumstances, family breakdown or bereavement

They made the following points about supporting families through key life stages and changes:

- Knowing who to contact
- Knowing the process, what to do when and what to expect
- Change should be well planned in advance of change to enable a smooth transition
- Support should be tailored to need and circumstances
- Should involve and listen to parents, children and families
- More information and advice was needed on understanding options and choices

Personal budgeting

Personal budgeting was an area that respondents had mixed views on. Some felt that there was not enough information available about how personal budgeting could work and whether they would be eligible and it would affect them in the future. Whilst others welcomed the opportunity to know what resources had been allocated to them and to have some control and flexibility over how it was used.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to the rollout of personal budgets?

11%	Strongly agree	42%	Neither agree or disagree	11%	Strongly disagree
16%	Tend to agree	11%	Tend to disagree	11%	Don't know

As many parents were unclear as to whether they would be eligible for a personal budget, many could not answer whether it was something that they would want to have control over until they received further information.

Survey response: The draft guidance allows for people to be able to choose to have a personal budget. We are developing how this could work in South Gloucestershire.

Would you want control over you own personal budget?

12%	Yes	12%	No	0%	Don't know
0%	Maybe	77%	It depends. I would need more information		

Personal budget process and information

From the feedback received through the engagement process, respondents made the following points about the personal budgeting process and the information they would need about it:

- Respondents wanted more information about how it would work in practice, the eligibility criteria, what it could be used for and any restrictions or limitations and whether they would be eligible.
- Transparency and the ability to know how much resource was being used to support their child's needs was welcomed by parents.
- There were some concerns about how personal budgets would impact on the budgets for health and schools and affect how much could be spent commissioning universal services or making other services unviable as parents chose other options or providers.
- Some respondents felt that the use of personal budgets would make the system more efficient and was more preferable than a one size fits all approach, whilst others were concerned that purchasing lots of individual services would be more expensive as they would not benefit from economies of scale.
- There were questions about how personal budgets relate to benefits, direct payments and whether they would be means tested and form part of tax returns.

- Some parents were concerned that personal budgets were a big responsibility and would be a burden which would mean more work for parents who were already under enough pressure.
- The ability for a family to choose and decide on the best way to support their child's needs and to get it flexibly when it suits them was welcomed by parents
- It was suggested that parents would need support, training and advice about how to use a personal budget, especially if they had to directly employ people and some would find guidance from a key worker to be beneficial. Comprehensive information in the local offer was seen as essential.
- Respondents felt that a payment card would be simple and easy to understand and use, whilst keeping records so that expenditure can be easily monitored.
- There were questions about how a personal budget would work for young adults post 16/18/25 and what support would be provided to them to help them manage them.

Personal budget needs and uses

From the feedback received through the engagement process, respondents made the following points about what they would need and want to use a personal budget for:

- Buying in support when needed including:
 - ❖ Extra teaching support
 - ❖ Carers support
 - ❖ Personal assistance
 - ❖ Escorts
 - ❖ Short breaks and respite care
 - ❖ Peer support
 - ❖ Occupational therapy
 - ❖ Physical therapy
 - ❖ Speech and language therapy
 - ❖ Audiologist, opticians, dieticians
- Specialist equipment
- Home education or extra curricular lessons
- Early years and child care
- Alternative therapies
- Home adaptations
- More flexible care packages
- Further information on providers and options
- Social and leisure activities, sports, clubs, socialising and going out with friends
- Independence training
- Housing and employment training and advice for young adults
- Supporting young people's participation, engagement and decision making
- Paying for fuel for family car rather than paying for taxi's
- Transport that is friendly, flexible, reliable with a driver that is trained

Joint commissioning and working with health services

The majority of respondents agreed with the proposed approach to the joint commissioning of services.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to joint commissioning?					
21%	Strongly agree	21%	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Strongly disagree
37%	Tend to agree	0%	Tend to disagree	16%	Don't know

The majority of respondents agreed with the proposed approach to working with health services.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to working with health services?					
39%	Strongly agree	22%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
28%	Tend to agree	0%	Tend to disagree	11%	Don't know

From the feedback received through the engagement process, respondents made the following points about joint commissioning and working with health services:

- Respondents recognised the need to make sure that systems and resources are in place to support the commissioning process especially information sharing and the identification of needs.
- Involvement of families and service users are critical to identifying needs and priorities and getting feedback on the quality of services provided. It was felt that services needed to consider the needs of the child and family holistically.
- Flexibility and choice are important
- Respondents were keen to see value for money and quality in commissioning
- There were questions about how the performance of providers would be monitored and how poor performance would be tackled and dealt with.
- It was felt that transparency about the commissioning process, criteria, thresholds, resources, outcomes and performance was important if people were to have confidence in it.
- Some respondents were concerned about managing expectations and demand.
- Respondents wanted access to good information about what is available, provided and alternatives
- There were questions about how commissioning would work across, education, health and social care and how existing contracts would be affected by commissioning, how it would be phased and the arrangements for any transition period.
- Some respondents had concerns about funding reductions, blurred responsibilities, overlap and duplication, whilst others saw commissioning as an opportunity to provide more flexible and joined up services.
- Some parents did not understand what commissioning is, what it could bring or its benefits or why it wasn't already happening.

Services, staffing and resources

Current service comments

As part of the engagement we received feedback on the current level of service and how it is provided.

We received some examples of excellent staff providing high quality services that make a real difference to children and families. We also received examples of poor service, delays and missed opportunities.

Parents commented that the current level of support and service is inconsistent and very dependent on the individual school or staff member and their knowledge and relationship with the family.

We were provided with various examples of how the assessment process and the promptness of support was affected by the nature of the disability or diagnosis and when and how it was identified. It was felt that physical disabilities were identified earlier, whilst those with less visible and behavioural disabilities faced a far longer uphill battle to get recognition and support.

There was a general feeling that diagnosis, assessments and plans take too long to undertake and that the system is bureaucratic and inflexible.

It was felt that the views of parents are not listened to and their experience as experts in their child is not appreciated by some professionals. They described the process as something that is done to families rather than fully involving them.

Some respondents commented that support is very reactive rather than proactive and that more needs to be done to support early intervention. There were also comments about how the needs of the child and family are not considered holistically, rather each service tends to look at their part in isolation, resulting in opportunities being missed.

Respondents recognised that the system is really complicated and that more information could be provided to help people through it. Some people commented that it was an uphill and constant battle to get the support that they need and that some people have given up.

Survey response: How satisfied are you with the current level of service and support that you, your child, your family or the child/young person that you support receives?					
0%	Very satisfied	19%	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	6%	Very dissatisfied
31%	Quite satisfied	25%	Quite dissatisfied	19%	Don't know

Staffing structure, training and support

The majority of respondents agreed with the proposed service and staffing structure.

Survey response: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed range of services, disciplines and professionals that will be brought together into the new team around the family to provide coordinated support for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities?

56%	Strongly agree	0%	Neither agree or disagree	0%	Strongly disagree
39%	Tend to agree	6%	Tend to disagree	0%	Don't know

Respondents welcomed better cooperation between and the joining up of services, which they felt would provide more efficient and effective support to children and families.

The local offer was seen as absolutely crucial to both parents and professionals, improving the awareness of the process and the support available.

There were concerns about staff capacity, high workloads and unmanageable caseloads which would make implementing the changes difficult.

There was a general call for more training for staff to support the introduction of the new system and for better knowledge and awareness of specific conditions and how to identify, manage and deal with them (particularly in schools and early years settings).

Systems and Resources

Respondents recognised that IT systems need to be joined up and that this would be essential to the successful implementation of the changes. They wanted systems that support the way we work not drive how we do things with clear data protection and information sharing protocols that support multi agency working.

There were concerns about how budget cuts would impact on the service and how school changes and the move to academies could affect choice of schools and the level of service received.

Equalities and respondent analysis

Information about respondents was collected as part of the survey. This information is used to better understand the views of people participating in the consultation and to inform the council's equalities duty.

Due to the low level of responses to the survey, which asked about respondent backgrounds, it is not possible to produce a detailed equalities analysis as the numbers are not robust enough.

Respondent type

The table below provides a breakdown of the type of respondents, responses were received from.

Respondent type	Number	Percentage
Parent or carer of a child or young person with a disability or special educational need	10	53%
Young person with a disability or special educational need	1	5%
Member of South Gloucestershire Council staff	4	21%
Member of staff working in Health services	1	5%
School or education setting	2	11%
Voluntary, community sector organisation	2	11%

Geography

Respondent postcode information was collected from the survey and this information will be used to support the development of the project as it moves forward.

Age

The table below provides a breakdown of the age profile of respondents, where an age was supplied.

Age	Under 25	26 to 45	46 to 64	Over 65
Number	1	7	9	1
Percentage	5%	37%	47%	5%

Gender

The table below provides a breakdown of the gender profile of respondents.

Gender	Female	Male
Number	16	3
Percentage	84%	16%

Disability

The table below provides a breakdown of the disability profile of respondents.

Disability	Disabled	Non disabled
Number	5	16
Percentage	26%	84%

Ethnicity

The table below provides a breakdown of the ethnicity profile of respondents.

Gender	White British	Non White British
Number	16	2
Percentage	84%	11%