APPENDIX

Short Breaks - Consultation Summary

1. Pre-engagement Activity

In advance of the formal consultation period commencing, contact was made with those families who are directly affected by the proposal to close Smith Crescent.

A total of 15 discussions were held with relatives/carers of people who use Smith Crescent, covering 16 of the 17 people who would usually access the service. Seven took place over the telephone and eight face to face. The family of one person who has previously used Smith Crescent advised that the person they support already accesses The Trees therefore no further engagement was required. The key areas of discussion focussed on:

- The proposal to close Smith Crescent;
- The future use of The Trees;
- How best to engage with those who use Smith Crescent to ensure where possible they can contribute their views to the consultation;
- If the proposal went ahead, what transitionary arrangements would need to be considered for people to access alternative services;
- Any other feedback or comments that were important to highlight.

During the period of formal consultation, family members and people who use Smith Crescent were invited to visit the other in-house short breaks services in Wigston, Melton and Hinckley. In addition to this, video tours of the services were also provided to give a wider overview of the different services and their local amenities.

2. Consultation Methodology

A formal six-week public consultation was held on proposed changes to residential and short break services provided by Leicestershire County Council. The consultation commenced on Monday 10 May and ran until midnight on 20 June 2018.
The aim of the consultation was to gather feedback on Leicestershire County Council's proposals affecting short breaks services in Coalville and Hinckley. Paper copies of the survey and copies in alternative formats (including easy read) were available on request.
The consultation was promoted in advance of and during the consultation period to stakeholders and partners including:

- Employees of Smith Crescent;
- Elected Members;
- Trade Unions;
- Leicester City Council;
- Rutland County Council;
- Local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)
- Blaby District Council;
- Charnwood Borough Council;
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council;
- North West Leicestershire District Council;

- Harborough District Council;
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council;
- Melton Borough Council;
- Healthwatch;
- Voluntary Action Leicester;

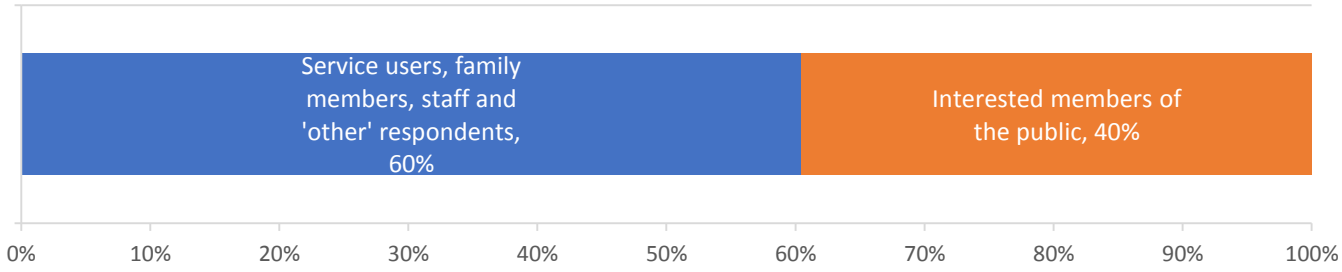
A range of communication activity was used throughout the consultation period to encourage people to have their say, including media releases (Twitter, Facebook) as well as via direct mail to families of those who access Smith Crescent.

3. Results

In total, 43 responses to the survey were received.

Question 1 - Role

Respondents were asked in what capacity they were responding to the survey. The chart below shows the breakdown. Throughout the analysis that follows, comparison has been made between the views from those affected by the proposals, e.g. service users, family members, staff etc. (26 responses), and those of interested members of the public (17 responses). All responses that were recorded as 'don't know' have been omitted from the analysis.



Question 2 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the council's assessment that the Smith Crescent accommodation is now not fit for purpose?

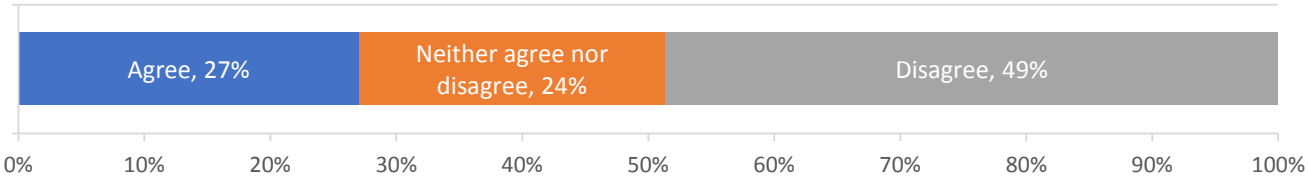
Respondents were asked their views on the existing accommodation at Smith Crescent. The two-storey building is not purpose built and is not well suited to support people with physical disabilities.

A slightly higher proportion of interested members of the public said that they disagreed with this assessment (53% as opposed to 45% of affected respondents). In comparison the percentage of interested members of the public who neither agreed nor disagreed with the assessment was higher at 29% as opposed to 20%.

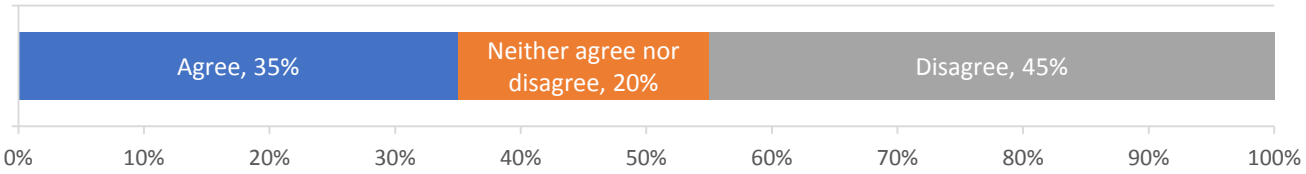
The key themes from the comments focussed on the fact that a local service is needed as transport to the alternatives set out would be difficult, both for service user and any family members wishing to visit.

Whilst there was acknowledgement that the existing building is not fit for purpose, comments were made that this should either be refurbished, or a replacement built.

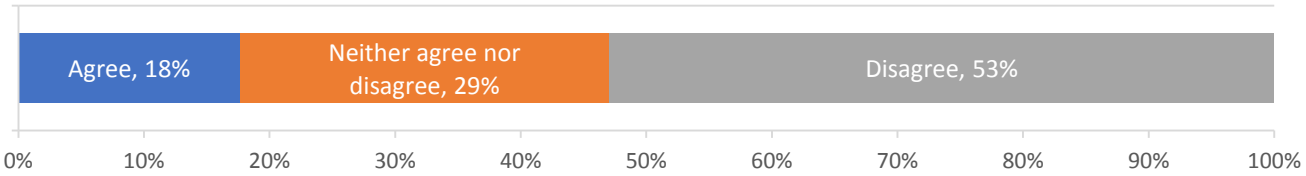
Overall response:



Directly affected respondents:



Interested members of the public:



Comment Themes	Number of Respondents
Local service is needed	10
Difficulty in travelling to alternative options	7
Existing building should be brought up to standard	5
Replacement facility should be developed	3
Too far for family to visit	3
Facilities not fit for purpose	3
More short breaks beds needed	1
Reopen services following their suspension (due to Covid -19)	1
Alternative options should be explored	1

Question 3 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the council's proposals to close Smith Crescent short breaks service in Coalville?

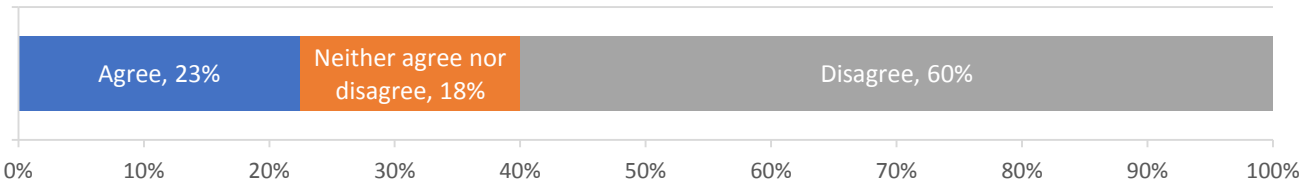
Respondents were asked their views on the proposal to close the existing accommodation at Smith Crescent.

There was strong disagreement to the proposal to close Smith Crescent – 60%, although again, this was higher in the interested members of the public respondents (65% as opposed to 57%).

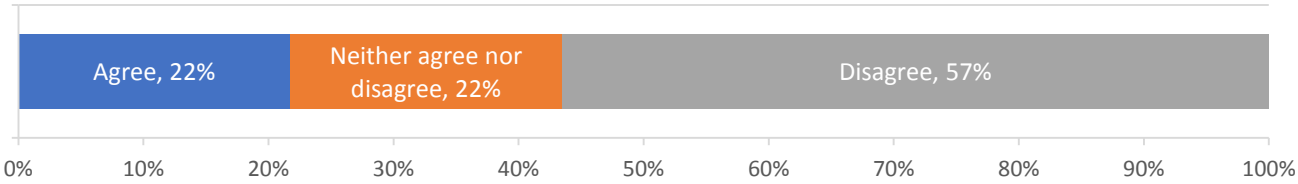
The key comment themes were in the main similar to that of Question 1. Transport concerns and distance to alternatives being a key feature of these.

Comments again reflected that the existing building was not fit for purpose - the expectation being that a replacement facility or the existing building refurbished in preference a to a permanent closure.

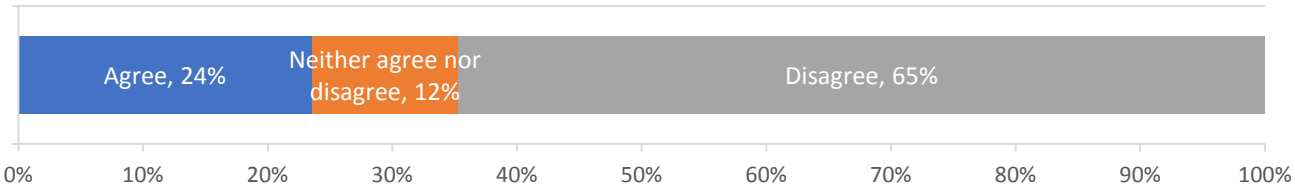
Overall response:



Directly affected respondents:



Interested members of the public:



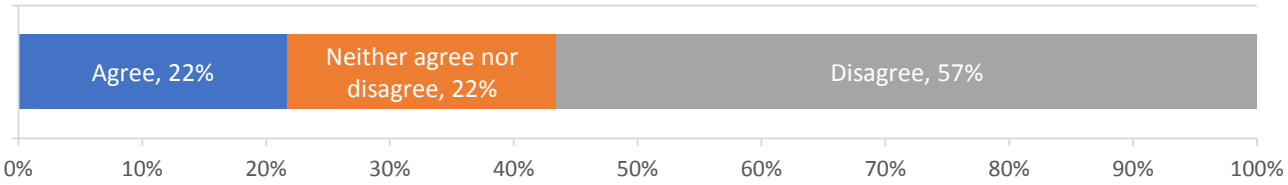
Comment Themes	Number of Respondents
Alternatives too far away for existing users / poor transport links	7
Local service needed	6
Replacement facility should be built	5
Close Smith Crescent / building not fit for purpose	5
Keep Smith Crescent open	4
Service is underused	1
Reopen service following suspension due to pandemic	1
Choice of service to be available	1
Quality services needed	1
Increasing demand for services	1
Explore alternative options to existing proposal	1

Question 4 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the council's proposal to utilise short breaks capacity elsewhere in the county (including 8 refurbished fully accessible bedrooms at The Trees) rather than build a new facility on the existing site?

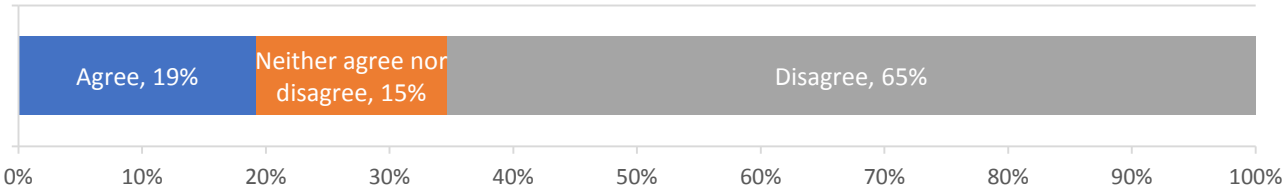
There was overall opposition to the use of other short breaks capacity across the county as opposed to building a replacement facility. Again, there was stronger disagreement to this from interested members of the public (71%), who also did not have any neutral views on this question.

Common themes in the written responses were again noted in relation to the need for a local service alongside the challenges of distance / transport to alternatives. A replacement or development of other types of services was raised, which linked with the view that demand for short breaks services is increasing.

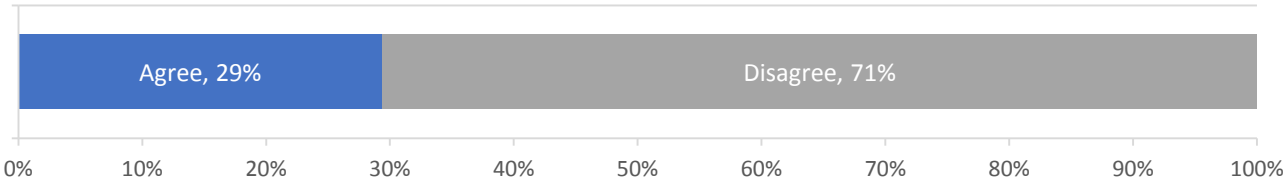
Overall response:



Directly affected respondents:



Interested members of the public:



Comment Themes	Number of Respondents
Local service is needed	8
Distance to alternatives is too great / there are poor transport links	7
Alternative services / replacement facility should be developed	5
Increasing demand for short breaks	5
Increasing the number of beds is positive	2
Keep Smiths Crescent open / bring it up to standard	2
Criticism that this is a cut to services	2
Proposals are cost effective	1

Transition for service users to alternatives is stressful	1
Quality services should be developed	1
Support for carers needed	1

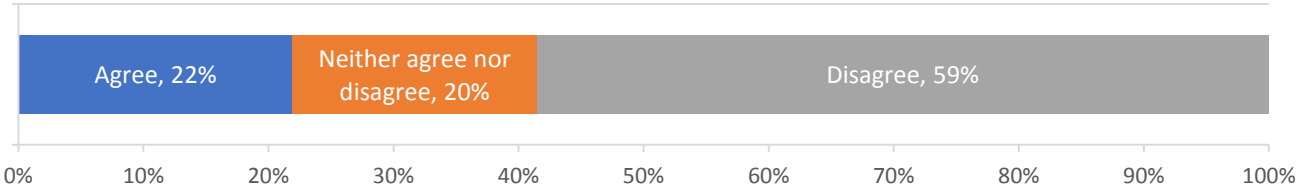
Question 5 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the council's proposals for how we would support existing users of accommodation-based short breaks at Smith Crescent if the service was to close?

Respondents were asked for their views on the support that would be available for those who currently go to Smith Crescent to access an alternative, for example, transport arrangements, access to existing daytime support and transitionary stays that are not part of the existing care and support plans.

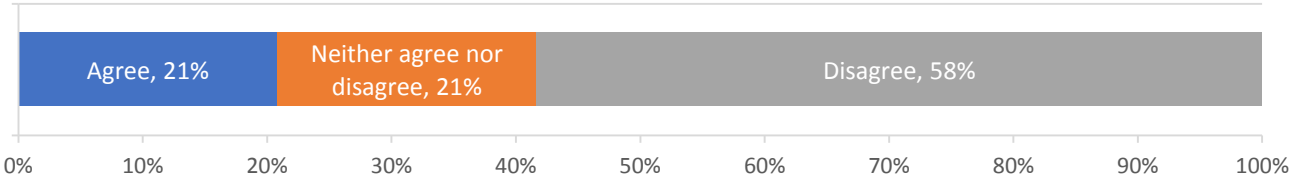
There was a great deal of consistency across both analysis groups to this question. Based on the comments that accompanied the responses to this question, the overarching view is that a local service should remain.

There was strong concern that proposals would affect short breaks availability for existing users of services at Hinckley / Melton / Wigston.

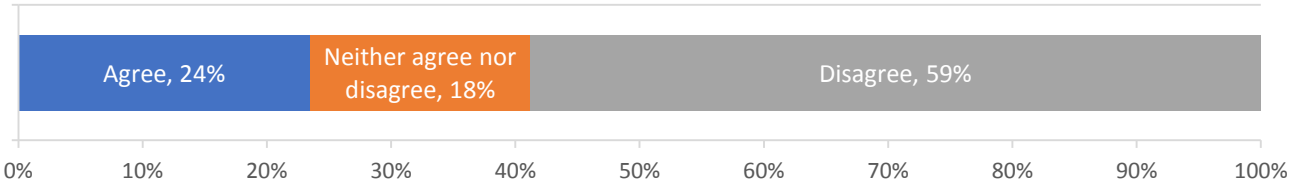
Overall response:



Directly affected respondents:



Interested members of the public:



Comment Themes	Number of Respondents
Negative impact on service availability in Wigston / Melton / Hinckley for existing users	7
Local service is needed	7
Arranging transport can be difficult	4
Distance to alternatives is an issue	3
Negative impact of change on people who use services	2
Apprehension that support offer will materialise	2
Agreement that existing facility is not fit for purpose	1
Reopening of short breaks services, suspended during the pandemic	1
Replacement facility should be built	1
Support for carers needed	1
Agreement with proposal	1

Question 6 – Do you have any other comments on the potential impact of these proposals? This includes measures we could put in place to reduce any possible negative impacts of these proposals or to maximise any benefits.

Respondents were concerned that there would be a negative impact for those who would usually access Smith Crescent to transition to an alternative. Again, distance and transport were a key concern.

The importance of support for carers and increasing demand for short breaks was also a theme.

Comment Themes	Number of Respondents
There is increasing demand for short breaks	5
Negative impact of the proposals on people who use Smith Crescent	5
Transport links / distance to alternatives an issue	4
The importance of support for carers	4
Retain a facility at Smith Crescent	3
Local service should be retained	2
Agreement with proposals	1
That there is choice for people who use services	1
Reopen short breaks services suspended during the pandemic	1
There are improved facilities at other short breaks services	1
Criticism that this is a cut to services	1
Consideration must be given to the future use of the site	1

Question 7 – Do you have any other comments?

Comment Themes	Number of Respondents
Importance of short breaks / respite services to support carers	4
A local short breaks services is needed	3
Smith Crescent building should be brought up to standard	1
Give choice to people	1
Ensure that the council has explored all options	1

Summary and Conclusion

The key themes from feedback received can be summarised as:

- Greater opposition than support for the proposal to close Smith Crescent.
- Greater opposition than support for existing capacity across the county to be used for short breaks – including the newly refurbished beds at The Trees.
- A local service should remain to alleviate any additional travel needs.
- Concern at the distance to travel.
- Accommodation based short breaks services are valuable to those who use them.
- The impact on service availability for existing users at Hinckley / Melton / Wigston.