

Report to CABINET

Extension of Short Breaks Play and Leisure Activities from 1 April 2026

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Officer Contact: Julie Daniels, Executive Director Children and Young People

Report Author: Andrea Weir, Head of Service Children's Commissioning

Angela Welsh, Head of Women's and Children's Programmes (Oldham)

17 November 2025

Reason for Decision

This report seeks approval to exercise the option to extend the current contract with POINT. The service is a statutory requirement ensuring that children, young people, and families have access to Short Breaks Play and Leisure activities.

The existing contract (DN647420) is due to expire on 31 March 2026 but includes an existing option for a two-year extension. Approval is sought to exercise this option for two years to maintain compliance with statutory and funding obligations.

Recommendations

To exercise the option to extend the initial term of POINT Short Break Play and Leisure Activities Contract for a period of two years at £200,000.00 per year, from 1 April 2026 up until 31 March 2028 in order to allow services for Oldham's children, young people and families to continue. This will prevent any gaps in service delivery for children and young people with additional needs and their families and ensure statutory obligations are being met by the Council.

Extension of Short Breaks Play and Leisure Activities from 01 April 2026

1 Background

- 1.1 In 2023, following a robust and transparent joint commissioning process, the Council entered into a contract with POINT to deliver Short Breaks Play and Leisure Activities (SBP&L). This service is a statutory requirement supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 1.2 The SBPL offer must provide opportunities enabling children and young people to access development and leisure activities suitable to meet their needs. The broad aims of SBPL are to provide respite for families preventing breakdown and escalation to higher cost intensive services; a safe place for children and young people to develop independence skills, build self-esteem and self-confidence and engage and interact with their peers and an alternative to more costly one to one Personal Advisor support where appropriate to meet individual needs.
- 1.3 Initial approval included a contract term of three years with the option to extend for a further two years. This extension is within the scope of the original award. The contract has delivered excellent outcomes to date and is recognised for its strong performance and positive impact.
- 1.4 Oldham remains committed to delivering inclusive services with high aspirations for all children and young people, including those with additional needs.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The SBP&L Service, also a statutory requirement, is currently delivered by POINT under a separate contract due to end 31 March 2026. POINT continues to meet or exceed performance targets for both services and is well regarded across the borough by professionals, families, and young people.
- 2.2 The SBP&L contract has consistently delivered against its key principles of fairness, accessibility, and efficiency. Feedback from service users remains positive, with up to 90 percent of respondents rating the service favourably. In 2023, the SBP&L Service was originally contracted with a funding allocation of £200,000.00 per year, jointly funded with the GM Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). The funding is split equally between the Council and the ICP. The ICP are currently taking the paper through their internal governance seeking approval for the extension.
- 2.2 The proposed extension will maintain momentum, avoid service disruption, and continue to support the development of confidence, independence, and peer relationships for children and young people with SEND, while also providing crucial respite for families.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option One – Recommended:

To exercise the option to extend the initial term of POINT Short Break Play and Leisure Activities Contract for a period of two years at £200,000.00 per year, from 1 April 2026 up until 31 March 2028 in order to allow services for Oldham's children, young people and families to continue. This will prevent any gaps in service delivery for children and young people with additional needs and their families and ensure statutory obligations are being met by the Council.

3.2 **Option two**

Do not exercise the option to extend and allow the Short Break Play and Leisure Contract with POINT to cease on 31 March 2026. This is not recommended as this would reduce services available for families and mean that statutory obligations are not being met.

4 **Preferred Option**

4.1 **Option One – Recommended:**

To exercise the option to extend the initial term of POINT Short Break Play and Leisure Activities Contract for a period of two years at £200,000.00 per year, from 1 April 2026 up until 31 March 2028 in order to allow services for Oldham's children, young people and families to continue. This will prevent any gaps in service delivery for children and young people with additional needs and their families and ensure statutory obligations are being met by the Council.

5 **Consultation**

5.1 Consultation with children, young people and families was conducted during the process of the original tender through Parent Carer Forum. In addition to this and as part of ongoing service development, regular Steering Group sessions take place with the whole partnership including Children, young people and families.

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 The report is requesting to extend the initial term of POINT Short Break Play and Leisure contract for a further two years, from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028 at £200k per annum. The POINT contract is funded in the 2025-26 budget as follows:
£100k – Dedicated schools grant – high needs block
£100k - GM Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) contribution

It should be noted; the contract extension will require funding confirmation from the ICP for a further 2 years. If this is not obtained there will be a budgetary pressure to the Council of £100k per annum in 2026/27 & 2027/28 which will have to be met from either a reduced service offer or an alternative funding source identified from within the Children's Services budget. (Nicola Harrop – Finance Manager) – 24.09.2025

7 **Legal Implications**

7.1 This contract extension is in line with both legal and procurement process. Legal have nothing further to add.
Mike Grocott Solicitor – 24.09.2025

8 **Procurement Implications**

8.1 The contract was originally tendered through an open process in early 2023, and awarded to POINT following evaluation and moderation. The contract initial term was stated as 1/4/23 to 31/3/26. The contract was advertised as a 3+2 contract, and the contract allows for an extension of up to 2 years, upon written agreement from the provider. An extension must be exercised prior to the expiry of the contract or there is nothing there to extend. The contract manager must be satisfied that the contract has been delivered to the expected standards and at the agreed price.
James England – Procurement Manager – 24.09.2025

9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

9.1 Not applicable as the service is continuing

10 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 EDS-12-25

12 **Background Papers**



12.1 Short Breaks Play and
Leisure - Approval to

13 **Appendices**

13.1 None