

By: Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director, Families & Social Care

To: Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Subject: **OUTCOME OF FORMAL CONSULTATION ON CLOSURE / VARIATION OF SERVICE USE OF RIVERSIDE DAY SERVICE, TONBRIDGE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: A report on the outcome of formal consultation undertaken at Riverside Day Service seeking Cabinet Member approval to proceed with the move from Riverside building and to continue the service based on a more inclusive, community model.

Recommendations: The Cabinet Member is asked to consider the feedback from the consultation and give approval to proceed with the move to a more inclusive, accessible community based service.

Background

1. (1) Adult Services Directorate is engaged in a process to modernise the way it carries out its responsibilities in order that the service outcomes for the people of Kent are improved. In 1999 and 2008, Members agreed to a Kent wide strategy (in line with national strategy) to move away from segregated centres for people with learning disability to a range of services in the community. The Good Day Programme was devised in order to deliver this across Kent and its vision statement 'Better days for People with Learning Disabilities in Kent' 2008 looks at how individuals can be supported to be part of their local communities and have the same opportunities as others, in employment, education and training, leisure etc.

(2) This report outlines the views expressed during the formal consultation on Riverside Day Service. The Consultation focussed on the proposal to move away from the segregated and inaccessible site at Riverside to a community based model, affording Service Users greater access to mainstream activities and enhancing community networks.

(3) Riverside Day Service is a small service in Tonbridge town centre supporting 21 people with learning disabilities across a week, with an average of 12 people attending each day. The service was opened in 2002 with the aim of offering localised day services for those individuals living in Tonbridge, who at the time accessed Beacon Day Centre in Rusthall.

(4) The Riverside building is leased and with the lease due to end in March 2012 it is the ideal time to look at moving away from this building based service. The building is very small with one room downstairs and one upstairs, a tea point and two toilet cubicles. It is not accessible for wheelchair users or those individuals with mobility issues; therefore the service has been unable to offer a service to people with additional physical needs since it opened. The service is used exclusively by people with learning disability, therefore segregated and is run on a traditional day service model.

(5) In line with other districts, Tonbridge has been working towards community inclusion for a number of years, partnering with a range of local organisations in order to promote opportunity and participation for people with learning disabilities across the area. As a result Service Users had been accessing a range of community facilities such as Tonbridge Pool, The Angel centre, Christ Church Community Centre, Adult Education and Library for some time. As a result of this work the building at Riverside is currently only used two days a week.

(6) An extension of the lease at the Riverside building has been secured until September 2012, in order to be able to act upon the feedback gained during consultation and to ensure everything is in place for a smooth transition.

Community Capacity

2. (1) Prior to and during the consultation period strong partnerships have been built with a wide variety of local community groups and organisations in Tonbridge Town Centre. As part of these partnerships The Good Day Programme has already invested capital and Social Care Reform Grant in to ensuring activities are fully accessible and sustainable for not only existing service users but other member of the community.

- Angel Leisure Centre – Mobile hoist, steps and sensory equipment for use with the trampoline in Rebound Therapy sessions. A changing bed and equipment for flexible use within the facility.
- Tonbridge Pool – Mobile hoist and specialist shower chair for use in health suite.
- Training for both KCC and Leisure Centre staff across West Kent in Rebound Therapy and Boccia in order to support sustainability.
- Tonbridge Library to develop their Easy Access section, increase the range accessible literature, etc.

(2) In order to support the priorities of Valuing People and Valuing People Now the individuals accessing Riverside have also had the opportunity to take advantage of four key innovations that have been funded to support the move from segregated services across South West Kent.

- Person Centred Planning (PCP) - with the support of a 12 month funded post for a PCP Support Worker (based at Riverside) individuals will have the opportunity to develop and action their personalised plans.
- The Chance2Change Project funded by South West Kent Commissioners and provided by Kent Supported Employment has been extended for a further 12 months to include Riverside service users, with the aim of supporting

individuals in pre-employment skills, work experience and ultimately paid employment.

- The Sportslink Post funded in partnership with Sencio Leisure and covering West Kent is well under way with developing inclusive sports and leisure activities in mainstream leisure centres and clubs.
- Travel Training and Travel Buddy Scheme – in partnership with the local Mencap is already supporting individuals from Riverside to travel independently.

(3) Within the local community we have been in discussions with Adult Education, Libraries, Church's, Community Centres, Youth Services, Children's Centres, Voluntary Groups, etc.

Consultation Process

3. (1) The purpose of the Riverside consultation was to:

- Find out from service users and other interested groups what they valued about their existing service.
- Explore how we might enhance the service through partnerships and/or investment.
- Identify any gaps either within the service provision or community infrastructure.

(2) The Variation of Service Procedure was invoked on 21 September 2011. A twelve week consultation period followed, ending on 20 December 2011.

(3) Consultation has been extensive, with information and questionnaires cascaded to all relevant groups and individuals. This included Service Users, Parent/Carers, Staff, Trade Unions, Advocacy Groups, Residents, District Partnership Groups, Community Partners, Integrated teams, Parish Councillors, Borough Councillors and KCC Members.

(4) A number of individual and group meetings have been held to talk through the proposal, promoting involvement and collating feedback.

(a) Pre Consultation

- Cabinet Member Briefed – 6 July 2011

Process	Date Action Completed
<p>Formal Consultation invoked KCC Members invited – 21 September</p> <p>Meetings that included Service Users, Staff and Carers with an information pack sent to those invited and attended.</p>	<p>21 September & 28 September 2011</p>

<p>Stakeholders were informed in writing and invited to comment: - Users, relatives and carers Head of Service Staff/Trades Unions Local residents Local KCC Member(s) Borough Council and Parish Councils Integrated teams etc</p>	<p>Consultation Pack sent - outlining the proposal, 12 week consultation process and timetable and including letter, questionnaire and website details.</p> <p>Summary of Meetings and correspondence received as a result of the consultation</p>
<p>Website - live with proposal and questionnaire</p>	<p>21 September 2011</p>

(b) Outcome of the Consultation and Issues raised during the Consultation

- (i) 21 people attended the meetings held on the 28 September 2011.
- (ii) Further meetings were offered across the 12 week period, however there was no take up of this offer.
- (iii) Advocacy services undertook thorough consultation with Service Users, working in a variety of ways, with individuals, group workshops and experiential sessions, to ensure that Service Users not only understood the proposal but have had a very real opportunity to develop their own viewpoint and to express this. Views have been collated in a variety of ways, including adapted questionnaires, flip charts, verbal feedback, etc.
- (iv) A Total of 7 individual completed questionnaires were received in the first 3 weeks of the consultation period (this does not include the feedback from advocacy as mentioned above).

(c) Service User Feedback

- (i) Those individuals who attended the initial meeting said they were ‘a bit worried’ about the changes, but that they are only in the Riverside building 2 days a week now and they really like all the activities they do in the community, so it wouldn’t be much different.
- (ii) A comment was made that it would be nice to have some new people coming to the service who couldn’t come now because they are in a wheelchair. Once we are in an accessible community building those people in wheelchairs would be able to attend.
- (iii) The group said they were happy as long as they still had somewhere they could go if it was raining or they wanted to meet their friends.

(iv) One person asked if they could still go swimming and to the gym. It was explained that, taking in to account their Person Centred Plans (PCP), chosen activities will carry on.

(v) Advocacy Services have been supporting the service users across the consultation period and beyond and so every individual has now had the opportunity to give their feedback about the changes.

(d) Family Carers Feedback

(i) We had only 4 family carers attend the meeting on 28 September. The feedback from those attending was that they felt the reasons parents did not attend was that they are ok with the proposed changes as it won't be very different from how it is now.

(ii) The main feedback from the meeting and questionnaires returned was that there would need to be an alternative hub, to support the group in bad weather and as a safe place if needed.

(iii) Questions were asked as to whether the staff would stay the same. There will be no changes to the staff team due to the move to the use of alternative venues.

(e) Staff Feedback

(i) As well as staff members at the meeting there were the following people:

- Unison Rep
- Human Resources Officer
- Lip Speaker (Interpreting Service)
- The general feedback was positive and the team didn't feel that their role would be very different from what it is now.
- Would there be an office in one of the hubs, to store confidential paperwork, etc? The answer was that we are hoping to have a small office or lockable storage to ensure safety of confidential paperwork.

Financial Implications

4. (1) Capital

(a) The Good Day Programme Capital Strategy has identified £200,000 as capital available to support the improvement of the Tonbridge Town Centre and out-lying villages community infra-structure over the next three years - £50k 2011/12 - £75k 2012/13 - £75k 2013/14. As agreed by the Project Approval group (PAG) and set out in the current KCC medium Term Plan.

(b) The capital will be invested in local community facilities to develop meeting space for the service to use Monday to Friday 8.30 – 5pm. Development of a Changing Place in order to open up the service to offer places to those with additional physical needs. The Changing Place will also enhance opportunities for the wider community to access the community resource.

(c) The capital investment would be off-set by an agreed length of rent free tenure.

(2) Revenue

(a) The current revenue costs for running the building at the Riverside site is £24,981 per year and the lease is a full repairing lease, therefore on occasion this cost can increase.

(b) In terms of revenue implications it is anticipated that any work undertaken to existing community facilities would be on a one-off capital basis and maintenance would be taken on by the owners of that building.

(c) However it is recognised that in the transition period whilst promoting a full range of community options, there will be a shift in the way revenue is utilised, which may result in some double-funding for a six month period.

Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

5. (1) Bold Steps for Kent – The Medium Term Plan to 2014/15

(a) This sets out three clear aims for Kent County Council over the medium term:

- To help the Kent economy
- To put the citizen in control
- To tackle disadvantage

(2) Valuing People - March 2001 / Valuing People Now 2007

(a) Valuing People is the government's plan for making the lives of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers better. It was written in 2001 and it was the first White Paper for people with learning disabilities for 30 years. It is based on people having:

- Their rights as citizens
- Inclusion in local communities
- Choice in daily life
- Real chances to be independent

(b) The modernisation of day services for people with learning disabilities is seen as a major part of the implementation of Valuing People.

(3) Think Local, Act Personal - Next Steps for Transforming Adult Social Care

(a) This is a proposed sector wide partnership agreement moving further towards personalisation and community based support. This document sets down the thinking of policy direction in adult social care. The priority for adult social care is to ensure efficient, effective and integrated partnerships and services that support individuals, families and the community.

(b) It requires commissioners to reduce duplication across the system, improve outcomes, engage in targeted joint prevention interventions and provide information and advice for people using the services to make the most appropriate choices to meet their outcomes. Commissioners should draw upon voluntary and community action and facilitate an environment where various models of commissioning and purchasing can emerge to support people to make more personalised choices. The two main focus of reform are:

- A community-based approach for everyone
- Personalisation

(4) The Good Day Programme - KCC's strategy for improving days for people with learning disabilities.

(a) In 1999 and 2008, Members agreed to a Kent wide strategy (in line with national strategy) to move away from segregated centres for people with learning disability to a range of services in the community. The Good Day Programme was devised in order to deliver this across Kent and its vision statement 'Better days for People with Learning Disabilities in Kent' 2008 looks at how individuals can be supported to be part of their local communities and have the same opportunities as others, in employment, education and training, leisure etc.

Legal Implications

6. (1) The public sector equality duty created by section 1 of the Equality Act 2000 came into force on 5 April 2011. The section provides that:

"An authority to which this section applies [which includes county councils] must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage"

(2) Section 149 of the Act provides that:

"A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it."

Equality Impact Assessments

7. (1) The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for Riverside Day Service is in addition to the overarching Good Day Programme EIA.

(2) There is a requirement on all public bodies to comply with the 'due regard' duties. To take account of the impact of the decision to implement the new service model and consider practical measures that might lessen the impact on existing and new service users. The consideration of equality issues must inform the decisions reached. The impact assessment can assist in ensuring that the 'decision-maker' comes to a decision with reference to 'due regard' and is able to do so in a considered and informed manner.

(3) In line with equality duty and KCC's Equality Impact Assessment Policy, an assessment was carried out during the formation stage of the new service model. The impact assessment was later revised when the consultation closed and following the analysis of the consultation response to address issues that arose during the formal consultation process.

(4) It is recognised within the equality impact assessment that we will need to make sure accessibility of all new venues has been assessed and new facilities developed through GDP capital funding meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and Inclusive Access.

(5) That full Adult Changing Facilities are placed in a variety of buildings to increase accessibility for individuals with a learning disability and the wider community. Designated rooms are also available within identified community buildings to provide an area to maintain privacy and dignity for those requiring additional support.

(6) In addition to this a comprehensive specification detailing all requirements will be adhered to when identifying all potential community buildings. The specification will be drawn up with a variety of stakeholders, including people with a learning disability.

(7) It is considered that other specific groups with protected characteristics (based on gender, ethnicity, religion or belief and sexual orientation) will not be disadvantaged by the changes.

(8) The equality impact assessment will be included within the implementation plan with further screening taking place and the assessment updated as appropriate throughout the project.

Risk and Business Continuity Management

8. (1) Business Continuity is more assured as the new service model will offer a greater range of choice through enhanced opportunities and partnerships.

Sustainability and Rural Proofing Implications

9. (1) The new model for future services is based on personalisation, with everyone having choice and control over the shape of their support. This person centred approach by providing people with what they want; people will choose to continue to be supported through the new model.

(2) The GDP capital investment in the development of sustainable community resources in partnership with the private, voluntary sector and social enterprise will also provide sustainability for the future. Along with making better use of the existing revenue by redirecting the revenue spent on the current building into personalised support and increased direct payments.

(3) It is important to note, evidence from “Valuing People Now” and other learning disability groups highlights that a lot of young people leaving school do not want to go to traditional style building based services. In addition we also know that those coming through transition have additional physical disabilities and cannot currently access the Riverside building.

(4) Riverside is currently situated in Tonbridge Town Centre and supports those coming from out-lying villages, so this will continue and in fact have a greater capacity to support individuals with additional needs. The Malling area is already supported by a community hub.

Recommendations

10. (1) The Cabinet Member is asked to:
- a) NOTE the pre-consultation work undertaken to develop community capacity in Tonbridge Town centre.
 - b) CONSIDER the feedback gained during consultation.
 - c) APPROVE transfer to a more inclusive, accessible community based service.

Background Documents:

- Briefing Report
- Consultation Pack
- Presentation

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