

From: **Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care**

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

Decision No: **14/00033**

Subject: **Outcome of formal consultation on the closure/variation of Service of Swanley Learning Disability Day Service**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: **DMT on 26 March 2014**

Electoral Division: **Swanley**

Summary:

A report on the outcome of formal consultation undertaken at Swanley Day Service and seeking Cabinet Member approval to proceed with moving from the existing base at The Junction, St. Marys road to a more accessible community hub focussed model within the newly refurbished Swanley Gateway.

Recommendations:

Following a 12 week period of public consultation, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to give approval to proceed with moving the Swanley day Service from its existing base and to continue the service as a more inclusive, accessible community based service that operates from a central community hub.

1. Introduction

This report outlines the views expressed during a 12 week formal consultation regarding Swanley Day Service.

The Consultation focussed on the proposal to move the Learning Disability day Service away from its current segregated site to a community facility based in the newly refurbished Gateway building located near to the Swanley town centre.

The service has been in its current location since 1995 and is attended by a total of 12 service users with an average of 7 attending on any one day.

The proposed model has already been implemented in other districts by The Good Day Programme and has afforded people with learning disabilities greater access to mainstream activities and enhanced community networks.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 Capital

The Good Day Programme has identified and secured £60k capital to enable the service to obtain a dedicated space within the newly refurbished Swanley Gateway building.

The capital is being invested in a multi-use space and adult changing place that will not only open up the service to those with additional physical needs but also enable existing Service Users greater community presence.

It is important to note that Changing Place facilities in public buildings such as the Gateway will also benefit other Swanley residents as well as visitors with disabilities.

2.2 Revenue

The 2012/2013 Property Subjective Outturn for the current Swanley day service building (as supplied by corporate landlord) totalled around £8,000 including rental and utility costs.

Revenue costs for the Gateway are calculated by dividing use of the building according to the space occupied by each partner. The day service space will be 46 square metres. In addition to this there will be a nominal cost for shared facilities management of the building. These costs are estimated to be £7,000 per year.

There is some potential to reduce these revenue costs by hiring out the designated FSC space outside of normal operating hours.

3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

a) Bold Steps for Kent – The Medium Term Plan to 2014/15

Remodelling Swanley Learning Disability day Service and relocating to the Gateway building is in line with KCC's Bold Steps Strategy in that it will:

- **Tackle disadvantage** – The new community model is based on a strong commitment to be inclusive, specifically ensuring that its facilities meet the needs of people with a range of disability and are located in a more accessible venue. The inclusion of an adult changing facility will enable people with more complex needs to access the service in the future
- **Put the citizen in control** – The proposed Gateway partners have a real willingness to embrace all members of the local community, young and old. Relocation will open up more opportunities and enable the Service to be more personalised in its approach. Service users will also have greater access to agencies which promote education and employment opportunities as well as a greater presence in their local community.

b) Valuing People - March 2001 / Valuing People Now 2009

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.

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

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.

The two main focus of reform are:

- A community-based approach for everyone
- Personalisation

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

4. The Report

4.1 Background

Families and Social Care 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.

In line with other districts, Swanley Day Service 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 in Swanley and the surrounding area.

The day service is currently based in the Junction, St. Mary's road, a building which is owned by the youth and communities directorate.

Youth and community services are undergoing changes and require additional space within the building for youth workers to meet with young people as well as additional office space.

Swanley day service moving out of the building would free up the space for this to happen.

4.2 Community Capacity

Prior to consultation, The Good Day Programme has already invested Capital and Social Care Reform Grant in order to ensure new opportunities are accessible and sustainable for not only existing service users, but other members of the community;

- Cascades Leisure Centre - A Mobile hoist and steps were funded for use with the trampoline in Rebound Therapy sessions for both adults and children with disabilities.
- Training for both KCC and Leisure Centre staff has been funded across West Kent in order to support sustainability.
- Cyclopark – The Good Day Programme funded and commissioned a range of accessible bikes, outdoor accessible adult gym equipment, sensory garden and a changing place.
- “Wheels for all” training was commissioned for West Kent Day Service Staff, OTs, Physios and volunteers in order to promote use and greater flexibility at Cyclopark.
- Fairfield Pool - The Good Day Programme funded Boccia equipment and training for both Leisure Centre and Day Service Staff

4.3 Consultation Process and timetable

The purpose of the Swanley day service consultation was to:

- Find out from service users and other interested groups what they valued about their existing service.
 - Gain people’s views on the proposed relocation of the service.
 - Explore any suggested developments that might enhance the service.
- a) The Variation of Service Procedure was invoked on 7th November 2013. A twelve week consultation period followed, ending on 31st January 2014.
 - b) 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, Community Partners, Integrated Teams, Parish Councillors, Borough Councillors and KCC Members.
 - c) A number of individual and group meetings have been held to talk through the proposal, promoting involvement and collating feedback.

4.4 Outcome of the Consultation and Issues raised during the Consultation

- a) 78 people were written to as part of the consultation and invited to give their views on the proposal.
- b) Advocacy services undertook thorough consultation with Service Users, working in a variety of ways; with individuals, as well as group workshops, ensuring that Service Users not only understood the proposal but have had a very real opportunity to develop their own viewpoint and to express this.
- c) Views have been collated in a variety of ways, including adapted questionnaires, flip charts, verbal feedback, etc.

- d) A Total of 6 completed questionnaires were received
- e) Information sessions were held at the Swanley district partnership group and the north Kent carers forum

4.5 Service User Feedback

- a) Advocacy for All were commissioned to provide independent support to those currently attending the Service. An advocate worked with Service Users in group and 1:1 sessions to promote understanding and gather feedback.
- b) Advocacy worked in an unbiased way, using photographs and drawings to ensure people understand what is being proposed and are able to give their views. Using a range of communication methods.
- c) The service users told advocacy that they are on the whole feeling positive about the proposed service as long as they can continue to take part in the activities that they value.

Comments included:

“Good difference it will be a community focus-what friendship is all about.”

“Staff coming. The library staff are good too. Think it will be better being closer to the shops.”

“Happy to try most things, I enjoy being with others.”

“Much better especially for Thursday afternoons, on the one day I come. I will be able to go out and get a magazine and have a look round. I might even start travel training-but I do love cooking.”

“I worry I will not be able to carry on with the Zumba group run at the center. I think I could carry it on. I could get dropped her by the taxi for 10 and then walk to the Gateway for my other activities.”

“I would like to make sure everything I do will stay the same, going to new places and that.”

4.6 Family Carers Feedback

- a) Of the 12 Parent/Carers invited to take part in the consultation 3 requested 1:1 meetings.
- b) 5 questionnaires were completed and returned by Carers.
- c) Of the 3 carers who requested a meeting 2 felt that the move was a good idea and being in a more central location is a positive step.

- d) 1 carer who requested a meeting explained that they had concerns over “stranger danger” and her daughter being taken out by agency staff who she is not familiar with.
- e) Mostly the feedback (whether verbal or written) has been positive and constructive, with the following range of comments having been made:

“Like most parents we are always dubious over change, but we are sure if you do these changes with clients in mind and not finance it will be alright.”

“I can’t wait to see it when it is complete.”

“Haven’t got a problem, think it is a good idea to be more in the community”

“We are all for it.”

4.7 Staff Feedback

The staff team have expressed the fact that they see a possible relocation as a positive move and have shown a strong desire to support the service users through any future changes.

Questions were asked about the availability of staff parking and about how ways might be found to ensure the service provides positive outcomes for older service users in accordance with their person centred plans.

4.8 Wider Feedback

Two stakeholder road show meeting were arranged. There were no attendees on either of these dates.

5. Legal Implications

- a) 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"

- b) 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.

6. Equality Impact Assessments

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

- a) 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.
- b) In line with equality duty and KCC's Equality Impact Assessment Policy, an assessment was carried out for SDS Service Users during the formation stage of the new service model. This impact assessment will be revised again at each stage of the remodelling to ensure it addresses the range of need.
- c) Full Adult Changing Facilities will be placed in the new hub to increase accessibility for individuals with a learning disability and the wider community. Designated space will be available to provide an area to maintain privacy and dignity for those requiring additional support.
- d) 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.

7. Risk and Business Continuity Management

The majority of the services user's time is spent accessing community activities with the central hub providing a meeting place. In the event that the Gateway becomes inaccessible it is anticipated that service users will be able to continue to access their chosen activities.

8. Sustainability and rural proofing implications

- a) The new model for future services is based on personalisation, with everyone having choice and control over the shape of their support. Capital investment across the area (in a range of hubs and partnerships) will also provide sustainability for the future. Sharing facilities will ensure better use of the existing revenue, value for money and more personalised support.
- b) It is important to note, evidence from "Valuing People Now" and 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 Swanley day service building.
- c) The service already supports individuals from across the Swanley area and this will continue, with the new service model anticipated to offer greater capacity to those individuals with additional needs.

9. Conclusions

(1) The 12 week consultation has proved beneficial in that it has meant that people with an interest in Swanley day service have been afforded a sufficient period in which to understand what is being proposed, gather their views and comment through meetings, questionnaires, website and email.

(2) Over this period the service has had the opportunity to address some of the practical issues raised and to make considered plans for the future. Throughout this, individuals have continued to be encouraged to speak up and inform viable future opportunities.

(3) The number of written responses from carers and other stakeholders has been low but the majority of those that have taken time to feedback have been very positive about the proposal.

Whilst capital is required to make existing and new facilities fit for purpose, this is seen as a worth while longer term investment, as it will;

- Update, enhance and make better use of existing KCC assets
- Make Swanley town centre accessible to a wider range of individuals
- Future proof Learning Disability Services by providing town centre enhanced facilities and greater choice and opportunity across a wide range of need.

10. Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet Member is asked to:

Consider the feedback gained during the consultation

Approve

(A) To change adult learning disability service in Swanley from the current day centre model to a new community hub based model as outlined in the consultation documentation.

(B) To relocate Swanley adult learning disability day service from its current location in the youth and communities building, The Junction, St. Mary's road, Swanley to the newly refurbished Swanley Gateway building.

11. Background documents

- Briefing Report
- Consultation Pack
- Presentation

- Advocacy report

12. Contact details

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