

**From: Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director, Social Care, Health and Wellbeing**

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

**Decision No: 14/00082**

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

**Classification: Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway: Social Care Health and Well-being Cabinet Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014 DMT on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014**

**Electoral Division: Swale**

**Summary:**

A report on the outcome of formal consultation undertaken at Swale Learning Disability Day Service and seeking Cabinet Member approval to proceed with moving from the existing base of the Faversham Day Service, at Lower Road, Faversham and the reconfiguration or moving from the existing base of the Crawford Centre, Edenbridge Drive, Sheerness, Isle of Sheppey; to a more accessible community based service model.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to AGREE:

1) To change the Swale Learning Disability Day Services to a community hub based model as outlined in the attached report, subject to the current service being maintained until the replacements are up and running.

2) To utilise the identified capital money to obtain dedicated spaces within community hub buildings in Faversham, Sheerness and Sittingbourne, with the proposal of:

- two sensory multi-use spaces
- two adult changing places
- enhanced accessible features

Where community hubs are in a non KCC building there will be a capital grant agreement drawn up to protect KCC's investment and ensure a rent free period.

3) That the Corporate Director for Social Care, Health & Wellbeing, or other delegated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement this decision.

## **1. Introduction**

This report outlines the views expressed during a 14 week formal consultation regarding the Crawford Centre and Faversham Day Service where the current Swale District Learning Disability Service is based.

The Consultation focussed on the proposal to move the Learning Disability Day Service from its current segregated sites to a community based service offering community hub facilities.

The service has been in the Faversham location since 1972; and the Crawford Centre since 2002; and is attended by a total of 95 people across both services, with an average of 33 people attending in Faversham and 41 attending in Sheerness 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 £445K capital to enable the service to obtain dedicated spaces within community hub buildings in Faversham, Sheerness and Sittingbourne.

It is proposed that the capital will be invested in a minimum of three community hubs, which will aim to include a mixture of the following:

- two sensory multi-use spaces
- two adult changing places
- enhanced accessible features

This will open up the service to those with additional physical needs, and also enable existing people attending the service to be part of the community; together giving greater opportunities to the wider community.

Where community hubs are in a non KCC building there will be a capital grant agreement drawn up to protect KCC's investment and ensure a rent free period.

### **2.2 Revenue**

The Corporate Landlord 2013/14 outturn figures for each premise, including both rental and utility costs are:

Crawford Centre: £129,120.78

Faversham Community Day Service: £47,160.98

These figures have been supplied by Property and Infrastructure Structure

Where community hubs are in a non KCC building, it is anticipated revenue costs will not be generated for the community hubs. The Capital Grant investment will be off-set by a calculated free rental period together with additional benefits to the people attending the service. The facilities management and on-going maintenance of the community hubs will be the responsibility of the landlord. In addition, the landlords of the community hub premises will be able to increase their revenue by renting out the hub spaces to community groups outside of the Learning Disability Service usage.

It should be noted that the rent free period is only for the term of the capital grant agreement and that once this comes to an end a proportion of the current revenue budget will be set aside to cover future rental commitments.

### **3. Facing the Challenge (formerly Bold Steps for Kent) and Policy Framework**

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

Remodelling Swale Learning Disability day Service and relocating to a community hub based model is in line with KCC's Bold Steps Strategy in that it will:

- Tackle disadvantage
- Put the citizen in control

#### b) Facing the Challenge - The transformation plan focuses on 3 themes:

- Service reviews, understanding how services currently operate, the difference they make, and if there's a better way
- Integrating services – bringing services together around customer groups to streamline our operation and avoid duplication
- Managing change better – coordinating all transformation programmes in a single, more efficient way.

We will be:

- Placing the customer at the heart of service delivery
- Shaping services around people and place
- Looking again at our services, the difference they make and whether there's a better way, taking a prompt from our customers and the people working close to them
- Putting a greater focus on outcomes- being clearer on what we're trying to achieve
- A more co-ordinated approach to project and programme management and deliver any potential efficiencies in the service redesign.

#### c) 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.

#### d) 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

e) The Good Day Programme

KCC's strategy for improving days for people with learning disabilities, linking to the five key principles of the programme and the nine programme standards.

f) Care Act 2014

The Care Act is a significant reform of care and support and aims to simplify social care, making it easier for people to understand and navigate and plan, improved support for carers and greater choice of services.

The implications are in a development stage at present. However, it is anticipated the future community hubs established through the Good Day Programme will complement the requirements of the Care Act, and ensure the wellbeing of people are central and aims to build a service around people, in addition, the model will support choice and independence for people who have a learning disability.

## **4. The Report**

### **4.1 Background**

Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Directorate are 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 a 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, Swale Learning Disability 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 Swale and the surrounding area.

The day service is currently based on two sites, the Crawford Centre on Edenbridge Drive, Sheerness and the Faversham Community Day Service on Lower Road, Faversham. The Faversham Day Service building is owned by Kent County Council. The site is shared with Osborne Court Short Breaks Unit. Osborne Court is part of a strategic review of all Short Break services. The Crawford Centre is leased by Kent County Council from a private landlord. The Lease has a further 16 years to run with a fixed increasing rental, hence the significant difference in revenue costs for these two buildings

## **4.2 Community Capacity**

The Good Day Programme is already working with Focus Groups at Faversham and Sheerness to carry out an initial programme of informal scoping to review the needs for the Swale District and identify community hub opportunities. Members of the groups include people accessing the service, family/carers, and staff members.

## **4.3 Consultation Process and timetable**

The purpose of the Swale day service consultation was to:

- Find out from people attending the service 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 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014. A 14 week consultation period followed, ending on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- b) Consultation has been extensive, with information and questionnaires cascaded to all relevant groups and individuals with a total of 446 consultation packs distributed. This included people accessing the service, Parent/Carers, Staff, Trade Unions, Advocacy Groups, Local Residents, Community Partners, Integrated Teams, Borough Councillors and KCC Members. All consultation information was published on the Kent County Council website.

## **4.4 Outcome of the Consultation and Issues raised during the Consultation**

- a) Advocacy services (Advocacy for All) undertook thorough consultation with people attending the service, working in a variety of ways; with individuals, as well as group workshops, ensuring that people attending the service not only understood the proposal but have had a very real opportunity to develop their own viewpoint and to express this.
- b) Views have been collated in a variety of ways, including adapted questionnaires, flip charts, verbal feedback, communication boards, etc.
- c) A Total of 116 completed questionnaires were received overall – 95 from people attending the service and 21 from family/parent carers and other stakeholders
- d) Specific engagement with the Swale District Partnership Group was made during the consultation period with no direct comments received.

## **4.5 Service User Feedback**

- a) Advocacy for All were commissioned to provide independent support to those currently attending the Service. Two advocates worked with people attending the service in groups 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 people accessing the service told advocacy that they are on the whole feeling positive about the proposed service as long as they continued to take part in the activities they valued, have a place to go which is nearer to where they lived. At present approximately 89% of people access activities outside of the current day centre buildings.
- d) The advocates held 46 1:1 meetings and 6 information events with people within the service.

A detailed summary of all service user feedback can be found in the Advocacy for All report about Swale Day Services **Appendix 1**

#### **4.6 Family Carers Feedback**

- a) Of the 45 family/parent carers invited to take part in the consultation one requested a 1:1 meeting.
- b) 19 returned completed questionnaires.
- c) Mostly the feedback (whether verbal or written) has been positive and constructive, 11 parent/carers said the Crawford Centre should stay open for older people within the service.

Some of the comments made by parent/carers are listed below:

“I can understand and accept this as a positive step for all provided that each person is fully involved in decisions about their preferred activities. My concerns would be around transport and financing of this, availability of trained staff and consistency of activities”

“Making sure that everywhere is accessible, especially for people with severe learning disabilities and profound needs. Also check that there is a changing places within the venue or near where they are.”

“With older people developing challenges such as dementia, will there be financial provision for additional support whilst encouraging social interaction, consistency and review?”

#### **4.7 Staff Feedback**

The staff team from the Faversham Day Service have expressed that they see relocation as a positive move and have shown a strong desire to support the people in the service through any future changes. Several staff members have been particularly proactive in identifying community hubs, other venues and activities with people in the service. The staff team from the Crawford Centre have expressed a keenness to embrace opportunities which enhance the quality of service for people attending the service. The staff team said there is a specific need to have a community hub in the town centre of Sittingbourne.

Staff wanted to ensure the service provides positive outcomes for people with complex needs, and the hubs had sufficient space to enable these people to get out of their wheelchairs. Also, staff were committed to ensuring activities were reflective of people's person centred plans.

Some of the comments staff made:

"Our present centre is old and falling apart, we need new premises. New sites needed to improve enthusiasm and enjoyment of service users and staff."

"A new, modern hub, with good equipment. Access to all, by retaining mini-bus service. Quality community activities, including access to members of the public, possibly sharing venues."

#### **4.8 Wider Feedback**

- a) Seven stakeholder workshops were held across both locations, 30 people attended across the workshops. The workshops were held to talk through the proposals, and to support the completion of questionnaires and gather feedback.
- b) Visits were arranged to other community hubs; one to Folkestone Sports Centre and another to one of the Community hubs in Canterbury. The aim was to support the understanding of the community hub model and to give the opportunity for parent/family carers and other stakeholders to look at an example of a successful community hub. Stakeholders were able to speak to staff and people using the service about the change process and the everyday pattern of the day service.

### **5. Property Implications**

Because both Faversham Day Service and the Crawford Centre are a part of the Corporate Landlord, officers within Social Care, Health and Wellbeing have been working closely with officers in Property and Infrastructure Service (P&IS) to help shape the options for the future service model and to ensure that all property implications are considered with regard to the existing buildings and any new buildings that may form the community hubs.

All proposals regarding the existing buildings and any new facilities will be in line with the KCC Asset Management Strategy and will ensure that the core themes: Managing the Estate Effectively and Differently, keeping the estate warm safe and dry, regeneration and growth and Protecting the Environment are met. Any proposals for the buildings will also be aligned with the Facing the Challenge transformation programmes and service reviews

Faversham Day Service is a KCC freehold building, if as a result of reshaping the service model for Swale the building is partially or completely vacated then P&IS will explore an options appraisal to assess how the building can bring most value to KCC and the corporate Estate. Options will be explored as to whether it can contribute to the asset rationalisation and transformation programme and provide facilities for any other KCC service or if it will provide greater value to KCC as a disposal site.

The Crawford Centre is a leasehold property, if the recommendations of this report are agreed discussions and negotiations with the Landlord can be explored to identify what opportunities there may be to vacate the property or reconfigure the existing facilities.

P&IS will ensure that future buildings that may form part of the community hub model will meet KCC statutory standards with regards to access and occupation. If Capital funding is invested into a third party building then a Capital Grant Agreement will be put in place to offset a free rental period together with additional benefits to the people attending the service.

## **6. 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.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessments**

The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Swale Learning Disability Day Service is in addition to the overarching Good Day Programme EqIA.

- 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 of the changes which may effect of the changes on any people who are in one of the protected categories, on existing and new people attending the service. 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 people attending the service 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 (Adult Changing Place) will be placed in community hubs 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.

## **8. Risk and Business Continuity Management**

For the people attending the services the majority of their time is spent accessing community activities, with both the Crawford Centre and the Faversham Day Service providing a meeting place. In the event that any of the future community hubs become inaccessible, it is anticipated that people attending the service will be able to continue to access their chosen activities and contingencies will be identified in the Business Continuity Plan.

## **9. 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 community 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 people that those coming through transition have additional physical disabilities and cannot currently access the Swale day service building in Faversham.
- c) The service already supports individuals from across the Swale area, this will continue with the new service model and it will offer greater capacity to those individuals with additional needs.

## **10. Conclusions**

(1) The 14 week consultation has proved beneficial in that it has meant that people with an interest in Swale Learning Disability 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 future service development.

(3) The majority of feedback from parent/family carers and stakeholders through questionnaires and attendance to workshops has been very positive about the proposal.

(4) 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;

- Make Faversham, Sittingbourne and Sheerness town centres accessible to a wider range of individuals
- Improve Learning Disability Services by providing town centre enhanced facilities and greater choice and opportunity across a wide range of need.

## **11. Cabinet Committee input**

11.1 The 26 September 2014 Adult Social Care & Health Cabinet Committee considered the proposed decision and the recommendation report. Officers reminded Members that this was the latest in a programme of modernisation of day services for people with learning disabilities and had followed a 14-week consultation. They responded to comments and questions from Members, as follows:

- a) the vital importance of good public consultation was emphasised, and a suggestion made that information about such service reviews in future could be sent to local households with council tax bills;
- b) in response to a question about equality impact assessments, how they worked and an example of their importance, Ms Southern explained that the equality impact assessment process was important but complicated, as clients engaging with a service would have a wide variety of complex needs. The equality impact assessment would be reviewed throughout each stage of the project to ensure all needs were included;
- c) a Member who had been involved in the modernisation of services for people with learning disabilities in Ashford, the first such service to be modernised, asked for an update on the progress of those service since modernisation. Ms Southern explained that an annual review on progress was reported to the Project Advisory Group (PAG) and a review of all such services undertaken and reported to the Good Day Board, which would monitor progress and draw out any lessons which could be learnt from previous exercises. That information could be shared with elected Members and made available on the County Council website;
- d) the clarity of the easy-read documents appended to the report was praised, as was the thoroughness of the consultation and the reporting of service users' views. Ms Southern agreed that clarity of information was very important for the client groups concerned; and
- e) the now well-established custom of keeping existing services open until new services were up and running was praised as it would ensure there was no gap in provision.

11.2. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gibbens, emphasised that, in all such modernisation programmes, he had always made sure that no facilities would be closed until replacement services were available. He undertook to ensure that an update report on past modernisation programmes was presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

11.3. The Cabinet Committee resolved that:-

- a) the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, after taking account of views expressed by the committee, to proceed with the transformation of the Swale Learning Disability Day Service

and to continue the service into a more inclusive, accessible, community-based service, operating from community hubs, be endorsed; and

b) the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other delegated officer, undertake the necessary actions to implement this decision.

## **12. Recommendations**

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to AGREE:

1) To change the Swale Learning Disability Day Services to a community hub based model as outlined in the attached report, subject to the current service being maintained until the replacements are up and running.

2) To utilise the identified capital money to obtain dedicated spaces within community hub buildings in Faversham, Sheerness and Sittingbourne, with the proposal of:

- two sensory multi-use spaces
- two adult changing places
- enhanced accessible features

Where community hubs are in a non KCC building there will be a capital grant agreement drawn up to protect KCC's investment and ensure a rent free period.

3) That the Corporate Director for Social Care, Health & Wellbeing, or other delegated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement this decision.

## **13. Background documents**

Appendices: 1 – Faversham Easy read Advocacy Report

2 – Crawford Easy read Advocacy Report

## **14. Contact details**

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