
**MODERNISING DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH
A LEARNING DISABILITY**

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Veronica Copeland
Adult Social Care and Housing Portfolio**

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of People

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek agreement from Cabinet to implement the findings from the review of day services for people with a learning disability.

Summary

2. The Council directly funds and provides day opportunities for people with a Learning Disability through nine individual services. The current offer of day opportunities has evolved out of the Council's statutory duties towards people with a learning disability and family carers. The Council has a duty to ensure vulnerable people remain safe and a duty to enable carers to have a break from their caring responsibilities. Day services meet these duties.
3. The national direction of travel for Adult Social Care is a move towards increased personalisation, including an increase in individual choice and control, greater use of existing social capital and more effective use of existing universal services i.e. "the general support available to everyone within their community, including transport, leisure, education, employment, health, housing, community safety and information and advice" as per Statutory guidance issued by the Department of Health in February 2010.
4. The Government have set an ambitious target of 100% of people using adult social care having a personal budget by 2013. This will require the authority to review its current strategy, which has been based on a much lower percentage of people allocated a personal budget
5. Given that resources are limited and individual's expectations are changing, an evaluation of current provision was required. The decision taken in February 2011 by The Grange Baptist Church to close down the facility rented by the Council to deliver day services has contributed to the review of current arrangements.

6. In July 2010, Cabinet approved an extensive period of consultation with key stakeholders. The outcome of the consultation is that there are now proposals to increase the number of personal budgets and to consolidate the remaining requirement for day centre provision onto fewer sites. This would ensure that resource could be freed up to support the personalisation agenda as well as ensuring value for money.
7. Three existing council funded and run services have been proposed for closure - Lifestyles, Grassroots and Lawson Street, in addition to The Grange which has already closed. (Appendix 1). This will impact on 47 people with a learning disability and 11 staff members plus a further 14 service users and 5 staff who have been temporarily relocated from The Grange. The proposal will not leave any individual without a service or support unless that is their choice. The impact on staff will be managed through existing human resources processes.
8. The three services proposed for closure are those which are the least fit for purpose.
9. This review of provision will deliver some efficiencies in line with the approved medium term financial plan.

Recommendation

10. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) The Council funded services at Lifestyles, Grassroots and Lawson Street are closed, and that the alternative arrangements and choices made by individuals are implemented during a transitional period of three months.
 - (b) Following the decision regarding closure all individuals affected are offered individual transitional support.
 - (c) A sustainable Learning Disability Strategy is developed, the Strategy will be presented to a future Cabinet.

Reasons

11. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The Council needs to respond to the roll out of more personalised services where people, through a choice of their own, increasingly direct their own care and where personal budgets are the norm.
 - (b) The expectations of service users and their carers are changing and the facilities proposed for closure are no longer fit for purpose.

Murray Rose
Director of People

Background Papers

Our Care, Our Health, Our Say – DoH 2006

A Life Like Any Other? – House of Parliament 2008

Valuing People Now – DoH 2009

Valuing People into Employment Now – DoH 2009

Putting People First – Gov 2007

Commissioning for Citizenship Darlington 2009

Think Local, Act Personal – Gov 2010

Ann Workman : Extension 3258

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report will address the health and wellbeing for the service users and family carers who use specialist learning disability services.
Carbon Impact	Issues relating to Carbon Emissions will be dealt with through the reduction in surplus capacity.
Diversity	The provision of these day opportunities services is targeted at vulnerable local people with assessed needs
Wards Affected	This report impacts on residents with learning disability within all Wards of Darlington,
Groups Affected	This report impacts on adults with a learning disability, their family and carers
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend any changes to the Council's Budget or Policy Framework
Key Decision	This is a Key Decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an Urgent Decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This links to theme 3 'Healthy Darlington' specifically addressing health inequalities to narrow the gaps in health and wellbeing.
Efficiency	This report delivers the efficiency savings identified in the MTFP.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

12. The future direction of Adult Social Care has been set through a number of key national policy documents, notably “Putting People First”, “Our Health, Our Care, Our Say” and more recently “Think Local, Act Personal”. A major theme of this direction is personalisation; the principle that people have as much choice and control over how they receive the support they need. Personal budgets have recently been developed to support increasing individual choice and control.
13. Valuing People Now (Department of Health 2009) set clear targets to promote more personalised services, where people have more control over their lives, including what they do during the day, evenings and weekends. This is a 3 year strategy and the Government wants to see: -
 - (a) All individuals have personalised, high quality support and care plans
 - (b) More people in employment
 - (c) More people able to live in their locality
 - (d) The needs of people with the most complex needs are met in a creative and personalised way.
14. ‘Putting People First; Personalisation through Person Centred Planning’ (Department of Health 2010) recognises that a one-size-fits all approach to service provision is no longer appropriate, as aspirations and experiences change through the generations. Person centred approaches are seen as key to planning. The need for local authorities to develop self directed support and maximise choice and control for individuals is emphasised. In person centred reviews in Darlington, service users are asking for more personalised day opportunities where they have more personalised support and control over their lives.
15. There is agreement that day opportunities can have an important role to play in the overall health and wellbeing of people who have a learning disability and their carers. Equally there is an acceptance that some services do not meet the modernisation agenda for health and social care. Hours of opening are limited to Monday to Friday 9am till 4pm, and many of the Council provided services are based in buildings and with facilities which are not ideal.

Current Position

16. Darlington Borough Council currently provides 9 in house services that offer day opportunities to people with a learning disability. These services offer support to 144 people from Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm. Recent service reviews have shown that most of the services are not operating at their capacity and a number of the services take place in buildings that are not fit for purpose.

17. Alongside the Council's provision there are also a number of Third sector providers who offer support to people with a learning disability. A number of these providers are able to offer support to individuals and their families which are both flexible and person centred. For example, support is offered during the day, evenings and weekends. People with a learning disability and their families/carers can access these services through their personal budgets.
18. The resources available to local authorities to meet growing demand (demographic increase) and increasing expectations (raised aspirations) are limited. The Council will need to ensure that all individual clients are offered a personal budget, which will lead to increased choice for service users. The Council will not be able to sustain the current level of in-house provision and meet the increasing cost of personal budgets unless budgets are increased or savings can be made in direct provision costs. Action is also needed to increase the cost effectiveness of services by avoiding the duplication of costs. For example, management action is required to avoid double funding services such as providing day services for someone who is living in a service that is already funded to provide 24 hour care and support.
19. In July 2010 Cabinet agreed to undertake formal consultation with key stakeholders to review current day opportunities.
20. There are a range of Council provided specialist services for people with a learning disability plus those that are commissioned from the independent sector. Current Council services provide for a range of needs from those with very complex support needs, including behaviour that challenges services, to those with less complex support needs. The range of services available from the independent sector is continuing to grow and expectations of the standards, range and flexibility of day options are increasing.
21. The Council provides some activities which are called 'employment schemes', although few people who attend have been able to move into employment, and most are in reality a day service with an 'employment' feel. Unlike other day services, those called 'employment schemes' are not charged for services under the Council's Fairer Contributions Policy. This review has identified that there are individuals who attend these services for whom retirement planning now needs to take place.

Proposed changes

22. The consultations held during the summer of 2010 made it clear that Self Directed Assessments and Support Plans needed to be undertaken for all clients. All 47 individual clients who attend Lifestyles, Grassroots and Lawson Street, in addition to 14 clients who previously attended The Grange, have now received a Person Centred Review through a supported self assessment and support planning for their future. Some of the clients attend more than one service.

23. There is a clear way forward in terms of the alternative options and choices each individual has made:

Clients who want a Direct Payment / New Services	Clients who want Residential Care	Clients Over 65	Clients who want places available within existing services
20	9	15 (inc.8 within residential care)	25

24. Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations, the 25 individuals who have requested places in similar day centres will move into the retained services, which have sufficient capacity to absorb the increase in numbers. There will be a transitional period when individuals and families will be supported to take up their preferred options and this work will be completed within three months. There will be a focus upon:

- (a) Increasing the numbers of people in receipt of a Personal Budget, supporting people to make choices and take up other options.
- (b) Further development of business plans and consideration of viability of social enterprise models

25. Work will be undertaken to review the strategy and the outcomes and objectives of the Learning Disability Strategy to ensure that a sustainable model is brought back to a future Cabinet meeting.

Outcome of Consultation - Service Users and Carers

26. The consultation process was extensive, and efforts were made to ensure it was as inclusive of service users, their carers, and staff as possible; through the invitation process, ensuring that venues were accessible and that meetings were held at different times of day to allow attendance, ensuring that familiar members of staff and other staff with specialist communication skills were available to assist service users to understand, as far as possible, the consultation process (Appendix 2).

27. Hundreds of comments were made and these were collated into key themes;

- (a) Many service users, particularly those who are more able, want more choices, more variety of activities, and more flexibility and choice of what they do and when.
- (b) There are lots of things people like about the current arrangements; seeing their friends, being supported by staff who know and understand them, and having an established routine.
- (c) Many carers valued these things too and also want to be sure that the people they care for are safe.

- (d) There was widespread lack of knowledge about what the alternatives there are to conventional day activities, so that even where desired alternatives might already be available people didn't know about them. A very successful Provider Event was held on 14 March 2011 where a range of providers attended in order that individual clients and carers could gain an understanding of the different types of services which could be available to them using a personal budget. This was a successful and well attended event.
- (e) Change can be a very difficult issue for many adults with a learning disability, and carers, both formal and informal, were anxious to emphasise the care, and time, that needs to be taken to manage any proposed changes.
- (f) Some people saw change an important catalyst for development and becoming more independent.
- (g) Problems were reported with transport; its lack of flexibility, the impact of transport changes on planned activity, the limits on the length of any day or employment experience as a result of transport arrangements.
- (h) The physical base used for the provision of day or employment services is highly significant. A number of people with complex support needs, need access to a building that has specialist facilities such as hoists and changing facilities. Few buildings with universal access in Darlington have such facilities, indeed only the Dolphin Centre was mentioned as being adequately equipped. This constrains access to universal services for the small number of people with such needs. Of the buildings used for day and employment services, only a few are of an acceptable standard to provide these services. Other services are in buildings designed for other purposes and the quality of the environment is inadequate for purpose (for instance The Grange, Grassroots and Lifestyles). Some are simply in the wrong place to achieve their stated purpose (Lowson Street). Others are limited in capacity and the facilities they can offer.
- (i) The Council provides four services which are called employment services. However, these are very much day services with an employment feel. Few, if any, people move on from them into employment. Most people are content with this arrangement as their day service has the feel of employment and this generates self respect and a feeling of doing a valued activity. Others though want the opportunity to progress to actual paid or voluntary work, whether full or part time.
- (j) There were some comments about the cost of services. One person was worried that new arrangements will cost them more, and several others commented on what is seen as the unfairness of 'employment' services not being within the scope of the Fairer Contributions Policy and subject to charging.
- (k) A number of other issues were raised which were important to the people concerned, but did not relate specifically to this consultation e.g. in relation to housing issues, and college and training opportunities. These are being addressed separately.

28. Alongside the consultation process a full Disability Impact Assessment has also been undertaken (Appendix 3). The impact assessment outlines the potential positive and negative impacts upon individuals from the modernisation of day and employment services. The impact assessment is disaggregated into two sections, the first detailing the potential impacts associated with any action to modernise day and employment applicable to any process of change. The second section details potential impacts arising from the different modernisation options. Following Cabinet's decision, transitional plans will be completed for each of the clients looking at the impact on them as individuals. An executive summary of key potential impacts has been detailed on pages 2-4 of Appendix 3.

Workforce Implications

29. Staff have been involved throughout the process and fully involved in the discussions regarding potential changes to day services. There is potential for 16 redundancies; some of which may be able to be absorbed by not renewing temporary contracts or by redeployment. Full consultation will need to take place with individual members of staff and the trade unions.

Financial Implications

30. The table below shows the maximum and minimum efficiencies to be achieved from closing the four day services identified in the report. Estimates have been made for the direct payment and these will be firmed up. A number of posts have been filled on a temporary basis, however there will be some redundancy implications.

	Maximum Efficiency		Minimum Efficiency	
	£		£	
2011/12 budget	405,993		405,993	
Direct payment requirements	95,000		132,000	
Budget transfer to alternative in house services	139,935	234,935	139,935	271,935
Saving	171,058		134,058	