
The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities

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This report relates to a Key Issue

Purpose of this report

For the Executive to consider the options for the future of Ampthill Day Centre for Older People and to authorise the commencement of consultation on the proposals contained within this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. consider the work under way to explore improvements in the variety, flexibility and sustainability of day services for older people in West Mid Beds in line with the new Day Offer adopted by the Council;
2. authorise the commencement of formal consultation on proposals for the future of Ampthill Day Centre for Older People as set out in paragraphs 17 to 27 of this report; and
3. request that a report is submitted to a future meeting of the Executive advising of the outcome of the consultation and making recommendations about the future of the Centre.

Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations

1. This matter has not been considered by Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee at this stage but it is intended that the Committee will be involved as part of the consultation process and that the outcome of the consultation will be reported to this committee prior to a decision being made by the Executive on the future of Ampthill Day Centre.

Background

2. At its meeting on 4 April 2017 the Executive approved the Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities as the shape of future services. The Executive also approved moving into Stage 2 of the project where options for the future of each centre would be developed.
3. The Day Offer was developed following extensive engagement and a formal consultation period. The challenges facing the Council's existing centres were articulated prior to the engagement and these were reiterated during the consultation period.
4. It has been observed that this is the first time in a generation that all services have been reviewed in this way and that this is therefore an important opportunity. From this perspective it is also felt to be important that whatever replaces the existing services is more flexible and person-centred than the current ones and that the ability for the new services to constantly adapt is designed into them.
5. Two development officers have been appointed to deliver on the next stage of reviewing each centre and service area, one with a focus on older people the other on adults with a learning disability.
6. Focused day centre review meetings with customers, carers and staff have been held and detailed mapping has been undertaken identifying where existing customers live and what community spaces could be available for future day services. The views of customers have been collated listing the types of interests and activities that are important to them.
7. The review of Ampt Hill Day Centre for Older People is at the most advanced stage and has reached the point where a formal consultation on its future can commence.

Ampt Hill Day Centre

8. The Ampt Hill Day Centre for Older People is located on the Houghton Lodge site and was built about 40 years ago to provide a social meeting place for older people and adults with a physical disability. The centre is very large and can easily accommodate 80 people, but the facilities are now no longer fit for purpose to cater for the current care and support needs of customers. In particular the changing room facilities for those customers who need a hoist are inadequate.
9. The service has evolved over time as care and support needs have increased, associated with longer life expectancy. The Council has responded to this increased demand in recent years by limiting access to the services available at Ampt Hill Day Centre to those who have eligible Care Act needs that can be met there. This has meant that attendance averages 25 customers per day, Monday to Friday, resulting in underutilisation of the centre, indicating that the services are not meeting many residents' assessed needs.

10. The future of the whole site is currently being considered and having a decision on the future of the Day Centre would assist with this.
11. In line with the agreed Day Offer, activities in Stage 2 thus far have focussed on the looking at the options for alternative venues for the activities currently conducted from Ampthill Day Centre, as well as testing out new activities and making them more person centred.
12. In order to develop these, an analysis of current customers has been undertaken focussing on their home address and their care needs.
13. Some 60 customers attend Ampthill Day Centre for 125 days per week, averaging 25 per day, from a wide area encompassing all of the West Mid-Beds locality and part of the Ivel Valley locality.
14. As expected attendance tends to be proportional to the population in a settlement. The majority of customers live in Ampthill and Flitwick, the two largest towns, and there is a cohort of people who live in Barton and another group from the area in and around Shefford.
15. Customers have a wide spectrum of care and support needs. Some are more able physically and attend because of social isolation, others require a small level of assistance and some require two carers and specialist hoisting equipment to meet their needs. Around half have some degree of dementia, and 20% require a walking frame or wheelchair for mobility.
16. This analysis has led to the conclusion that there will be an ongoing need for the council to provide a five day a week provision to cater for those with greater care and support needs. These customers may require specialist changing facilities with hoists and larger toilets which are not normally available in other community settings. Others with dementia or other cognitive impairments may require the consistency of the same venue each day. For those customers with fewer support needs, more local settings would be more suitable.
17. This has led to the development of a 'hub and spoke' model where it is envisaged that the 'hub' for people with higher needs would operate on five days a week, and the 'spokes' for those with lower needs would operate across the five days between them. Thus, on any given weekday the same number of customers that currently attend Ampthill Day Centre, could attend either a hub or a spoke depending on their needs or preferences or the activities on offer. Each base would thus be smaller offering a more flexible and personalised programme.
18. To test this model, suitable sheltered housing schemes were identified which could act as smaller settings. These are Gale Court, Barton-le-Clay, which is owned by CBC Housing, Wingfield Court in Ampthill, Ellenshaw Court in Flitwick, The Gardens in Henlow and Orchard House in Harlington all owned by the Grand Union Housing Group. These schemes have community lounges which are underused during the day, with adjacent kitchen facilities.

Some are limited in size and toilet provision which determines the numbers and dependency levels of people who are able to safely attend.

19. Pilots have been undertaken in Gale Court and Wingfield Court following engagement with and approval of existing tenants, on one day a week for a period of 10 weeks, for 6 and 12 customers respectively. This has enabled the concept to be tested operationally, and to obtain customers and tenants views. Feedback from customers and their family carers has been very positive. Customers are enjoying meeting new people and being in more comfortable and homely surroundings. Scheme tenants who participated have enjoyed taking part in the activities and having a hot meal. Here are some of the comments from customers and relatives,

“Basing the service at Gale Court reduces the travel time for [my relative]. Everyone there is so friendly, and the activities and entertainment have been more personalised”.

“The proposed offer is very personalised, and Gale Court is a lovely environment to base the service from”

“The environment in Wingfield works well, and I have made some new friends”

“I really like the smaller room and being with a smaller group encourages more socialisation”

“Mum loves [Wingfield Court]. They have so much going on and the ladies are so caring. Mum’s mood has changed so much since going to Wingfield Court.”

20. As part of improving the day offer, customers’ wishes - to experience a wider range of activities as well as occasional outings - have been considered. The pilots have been able to offer a wider range of activities, in addition to the existing ones, for customers and housing tenants which have been easier to facilitate in smaller settings. These have ranged from card making, exercise classes, flower arranging, visiting birds of prey, as well as a virtual reality session. Some centre customers have also enjoyed going out to lunch locally, and some have visited the community café at Silsoe Horticultural Centre.
21. Details of the pilot evaluation reports will be made available during the proposed consultation period. The conclusion from the pilots is that the concept of a more local base works well for the majority of our customers and delivers a better personalised offer. In order to provide at least 25 places per day across two bases each base needs to have at least two accessible toilets and to cater for up to 15 customers. This will rule out the use of Gale Court as a permanent future base.

22. A challenge for the project has been to identify a suitable alternative venue which can act as a hub in the 'hub and spoke' model. This would be required to meet the needs of at least twelve people who have greater care and support needs due to physical or mental frailty. In the longer term there are plans to establish such facilities as part of new care home and extra care schemes but in the shorter term an interim solution was needed.
23. Investigation of suitable facilities in the locality led to the identification of Silsoe Horticultural Centre as an option for 'the hub'. The Centre currently provides day care for up to 20 adults with a learning disability each weekday. Customers undertake a variety of activities involving horticulture, jam and pickle making and supporting the weekly coffee morning which is open to the public.
24. Parts of the building are under-utilised, and it was established that by carrying out some minor internal work, it would be possible to reconfigure the existing building to enable both the existing facility and 'the hub' to operate on the same site.
25. In order to achieve this part of the toilet facilities have been redesigned to create a changing space which will enable both current and future disabled adults and older people and any visitors to the site to be cared for in a safe and dignified manner. As well as enabling older people with greater care needs to use the facility, it will open up the centre to adults with higher care needs who until now have not been able to participate in what the site has to offer.
26. A separate lounge area has also been created by providing additional secure storage on site.
27. This report was drafted prior to the conclusion of a 10-week pilot of customers from Ampthill Day Centre using the new facilities at Silsoe but a verbal update will be provided to members at the meeting of the Executive. So far customers have been very happy at Silsoe.
28. On the basis of the outcome of the mapping, planning and pilot activity set out in the report it will be possible to undertake a public consultation on the future of Ampthill Day Centre with the Council's preferred option being the replacements of the facility with 'hub and spoke' arrangements as set out in the paragraphs above. This option will constitute a better more local offer building on the agreed standards set out in Stage1.

Consulting with day care customers, relatives, staff and other stakeholders

29. The proposals for the future of the Day Centre require a programme of communication, engagement and consultation. The planned phases of this process and timescales are set out below.
30. An initial series of communications and meetings will be organised with day care customers, relatives and staff to explain the background to the consultation, the timescales and how they can be involved.

31. Following this there will be a consultation period which is planned to commence on 20 August 2018 and end on 11 November 2018. This period is 12 weeks and can be extended if required.
32. During the consultation all those affected will be provided with written details of the proposals along with other options and asked their views. A series of events to do this will take place during the consultation period and will facilitate day care customers and their relatives to input into the process in a way that best suits them. This could be through an individual consultation, as part of a small group, or as part of a larger group. Independent advocacy support will be available for all who need it. Consultation will take place in an atmosphere that aims to provide service-users, their representatives and/or their relatives with support and reassurance.
33. The building is used by wider community groups during the evenings such as weight watchers, Alcoholics Anonymous and the Jigsaw Club. These have been informed of the process and assurances given that we will assist with finding alternative accommodation should that be needed. The Jigsaw Club for example has already secured the use of the Flitwick Football Club should it be required.
34. The proposals will also be publicised, published on the Council's website and made available to stakeholders and relevant organisations for their feedback. These would include Older Person's Network, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, Town Councils, Age UK and Alzheimer's Society. Individual members of the public and other interested parties would also be able to participate.
35. As well as setting out the detail of the Council's preferred option the proposal document will identify other options considered in the development of the proposals and the reasons why they are not preferred. Consultees will also be able to propose alternatives and these will be considered.
36. Where possible, questions and options that arise during the consultation period will be responded to before the end of the consultation and made public. Where responses lead to additional options being considered then further feedback will be sought from consultees.
37. During the consultation period the Council will seek to obtain the views of day care customers (and their representatives and/or relatives) about the proposals and also their own preferences as this will help to focus in on preferred options. However, it will be emphasised to customers (and their representatives) that they are not being asked to make any personal decision about their future during the consultation.
38. All consultation feedback will be collated. Where questions are raised during the consultation period these will be responded to if possible in the time frame. The aim is to be as transparent and responsive as possible so feedback will be made public whilst preserving individual confidentiality.

39. The response to the consultation will be used to compile a report for the Executive in December 2018 with recommendations about the future of Ampthill Day Centre. This report will be considered by the Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to consideration by the Executive.

Council Priorities

40. The proposed action supports the Council's priorities listed below:
- Great resident services
 - Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
 - Creating stronger communities
 - A more efficient and responsive Council.

Corporate Implications

41. Whilst the staff who deliver the Council's day services are managed through the Social Care, Health and Housing directorate there is considerable involvement of staff from other directorates such as Community Services which manages the transport arrangements and the repair and maintenance of the buildings. Changes to services may well have impacts on these areas.
42. Steps have been taken to involve staff and managers from these areas in work thus far and this will continue.

Legal Implications

43. The Care Act 2014 confers on the Council the duty to meet the care and support needs of eligible people either by commissioning services from independent organisation or by providing the service directly. The Council's day services form part of this provision. The Care Act also places duties on the Council to carry out an assessment of any carer's needs, which may include taking part in education, training and recreation.
44. Where a Council is contemplating changes to care and support services it has a public law duty to consult with those who would be affected and there is clear guidance and precedent about how consultation should be conducted and the part they would play in future decision-making.
45. The Council has a duty under the Human Rights Act 1998 to ensure that its actions are not incompatible with the Rights under the European Convention on Human Rights, 'The Convention'. The Council will therefore need to consider whether the proposed changes are likely to breach any of the service user's rights under the Articles of the Convention. If the decision is likely to breach the Convention, the Council will need to explore any particular facts and determine if such a breach is proportionate and justified.

46. The Equality Act 2010 also imposes a 'Public Sector Equality Duty' on Councils to consider how they may positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, requiring equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and delivery of services and to be kept under review. This duty should be considered with information gathered during the consultation process and from the Equality Impact Assessment.

Financial and Risk Implications

47. The development of pilot activities at the same time as continuing to run operate Ampthill Day Centre as normal has resulted in some additional running costs. These have been met from budget identified for this purpose.
48. The works undertaken at Silsoe Horticultural Centre to enable the pilot to proceed cost less than £20k. If there is a decision to use this centre as a 'hub' on a permanent basis then further work will be required but this is not likely to exceed £25k. The works will make it possible to use the space in the centre more flexibly and to better be able to meet the needs of people with a range of disabilities.
49. The delivery of the service through the proposed 'hub and spoke' model would lead to significant cost reductions through the transfer of a service from an existing single-purpose building to facilities that are shared with other uses. There may also be reductions in transport costs of customers are travelling to more local centres. The staffing levels and consequent staffing costs for the 'hub and spoke' model are being evaluated. Whilst this may lead to a small increase in staff costs it is envisaged that overall this model will be significantly more efficient than current arrangements.
50. The full financial implications will be set out in the future Executive report detailing the outcome of the consultation and recommending a decision on the future of the Centre.
51. No significant unmanaged risks have been identified. A project management approach will be taken to the process and this will include the identification, assessment, mitigation and management of risks associated with the activities.

Equalities Implications

52. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity and have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

53. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed as part of the development process, and it is available as a background document. Members should read and consider the EIA before coming to a decision on the recommendations in this report.
54. The EIA has identified that the main protected characteristics that define users of day opportunities are age and disability. A change to existing day centres and day opportunities could therefore have the potential to have a disproportionate effect on these groups, especially people that are older, have a physical disability, have a learning disability, dementia, autism and those suffering from anxiety or depression.
55. However, it is also recognised that the day offer's key components and principles provide a good basis for the development of personalised services that meet both carer's and clients' needs. As part of this process the EIA has highlighted that thought will need to be given to ways of designing services that:
 - a) Reflect individual preferences as to how care and support needs can be met.
 - b) Maximise stability and familiarity where appropriate to help those with the transition to new services.
 - c) Maintain friendship groups.
 - d) Ensure there is a specific carer's offer for each service.
56. The EIA will be regularly reviewed and it will be updated and be available to decision-makers prior any decision on the future of Ampthill Day Centre.

Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment