

Central Bedfordshire Council

Social Care, Health and Housing, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Monday 26th November
2018**

The Future of Ampthill Day Centre for Older People

Report of: Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing (carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Responsible Director(s): Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing (julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a decision that is Key

Purpose of this report

To consider the outcome of the consultation into the future of the Ampthill Day Centre and make recommendations to a future meeting of the Executive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

1. To consider the outcomes of the public consultation on the options for Ampthill Day Centre.
2. Provide its views and recommendations which will be communicated to the Executive before it makes a decision on the future of Ampthill Day Centre.

Issues

Background

1. At its meeting on 7th June 2016 the Executive approved recommendations set out in a report on the Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities. The report described the current offer provided, challenges and opportunities facing this service area whilst acknowledging the important contribution that day services make in supporting vulnerable adults and their carers. It proposed a two-phase approach to the development of a new Day Offer for these customer groups.

2. Phase 1 of the project was designed to develop key components and principles which would apply to any future Day Offer whether commissioned externally or provided for in-house. This was achieved by engagement with customers, family carers and centre staff and adopting a co-production approach. Following a period of formal consultation, these resulting key components and principles were agreed by Executive on 4th April 2017. These state that the Day Offer will:

Key components

- 2.1. Meet customer outcomes for social interaction, physical activity and mental stimulation
- 2.2. Meet carer outcomes for respite and peace of mind
- 2.3. Meet customers' care and support needs

Principles

- 2.4. Promote and maintain independence in a way which is personalised, flexible and responsive
- 2.5. Promote learning in a stimulating and supportive environment
- 2.6. Deliver greater partnerships with the local community
- 2.7. Maximise the use of community facilities that can be accessed by older people and adults with disabilities.
3. Further details can be found in Appendix 1 - The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities in Central Bedfordshire. These key components and principles are expected to apply to any proposed changes to the Day Offer in the future.
4. Executive also approved the commencement of Phase 2, whereby specific centres would be reviewed using a framework set out in the report. It is expected that all Day Centres will be reviewed over the next 4 years.
5. The first centre to be reviewed was Ampthill Day Centre for Older People. This day centre has been in operation for over 40 years and is outdated as well as oversized for the number of customers that attend. The catchment area of the centre covers West-Mid Beds and extends to an approximate area between Marston Moretaine in the north and Barton-le-Clay in the south and Woburn in the west and Shefford in the east.
6. A project team was formed, and work commenced to investigate the options available. In order to test potential options and ensure they meet the agreed components and principles, the Council piloted running day services from alternative venues, including in sheltered housing schemes and at Silsoe Horticultural Centre. This enabled the development of options for the future of Ampthill Day Centre.
7. The 4th August 2018 Executive meeting approved the commencement of a public consultation on the options for the future of Ampthill Day Centre and requested that the outcome of the consultation was reported to a future meeting.
8. The Council reviewed a number of options which are laid out in the consultation documents, see Appendix 2. Appendix 3 to this report also provides additional detail and an appraisal of the options considered. The preferred option, which is considered

to deliver the greatest overall benefits, is to offer a day service to be run from alternative venues and to close Ampthill Day Centre, this model is referred to as the ‘hub and spoke’.

- The Council have evaluated a range of community venues including sheltered housing schemes run by Grand Union Housing Group. The proposed option would use a main day ‘hub’ based at Silsoe Horticultural Centre which is an existing Central Bedfordshire Council run day centre for adults with learning disabilities. This would operate from Monday to Friday (as current) and continue to be used as a base for adults with learning disabilities as well as accommodating a day service for older people. There would also be several ‘spokes’ using community venues which would run alongside the hub. Thus, the proposed service would operate from Silsoe Horticultural Centre and one community venue every weekday. The proposed alternative venues are shown in Figure 1.

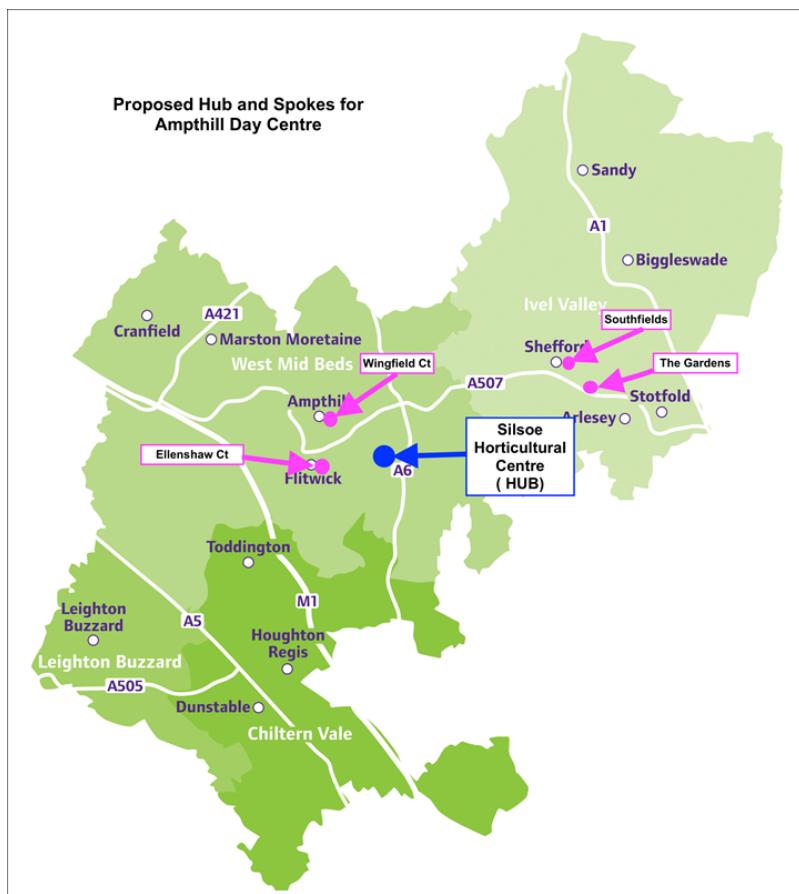


Figure 1 – Map of Central Bedfordshire showing the proposed alternative venues to Ampthill Day Centre

- The preferred option meets the key components and principles agreed in Phase 1 and this is evidenced in the background paper ‘Day Offer Pilot Evaluation Report’.
- The ‘hub and spoke’ option set out in paragraph 9 would replace the service currently being delivered at Ampthill Day Centre and this centre would then close.

Consultation Process

12. A 12-week consultation process was undertaken. This started on 14th August 2018 and ran until 12th November 2018. This report sets out the findings of the consultation, based on results available at the time of writing.
13. Following the engagement with customers, their relatives or representatives and centre staff that had taken place in phase 1 of the project, representatives from these groups were invited to take part in a co-production group. This group included officers from the Council's project team, carers and representatives from a variety of independent organisations. The group continued to meet during the consultation period, making valuable contributions to the process.
14. The consultation papers and questionnaire were published on the Council's website on 14th August 2018. The consultation was also advertised on the Council's social media platforms and sent out as an e-bulletin to those on the Council's consultation mailing list. All customers of Ampthill Day Centre, their relatives or representatives, Ampthill Day Centre staff and other interested parties received a consultation pack which included the 'Have Your Say on the Future of Ampthill Day Centre' document which provides an overview of the proposed Future Day Offer, the 'Options Considered' paper, and a consultation questionnaire. All of the consultation papers were also made available on the Council's website. An easier read version of the consultation questionnaire and 'Have Your Say' documents were also developed and made available at the Ampthill Day Centre and online. These are available as background papers.
15. Members of the project team contacted all 64 customers of Ampthill Day Centre and invited them to individual meetings designed to help customers understand what the proposals might mean for them and provide reassurance about the process. Copies of the consultation documents, including the easier read versions, were available during meetings with customers, and customers were supported to help respond to the questionnaire when requested. For customers with a diagnosis of dementia or those that may require more support, a Social Worker met with them and carried out a mental capacity assessment to ensure that as many customers as possible could have their say about the proposals. An interpreter was provided for one customer whose first language was not English.
16. Consultation meetings were also offered to relatives and representatives either alongside, or separately to the meeting with the customer. These meetings were an opportunity to discuss the proposals in more detail and to answer any questions that arose. In total all 64 customers were invited to a consultation meeting, with 49 customers attending. Relatives were also contacted unless requested not by the customer. 29 relatives attended meetings.
17. Customers at Silsoe Horticultural Centre were invited to a meeting with an independent advocate to discuss how the proposals might impact on them and their day centre. Relatives or representatives for each customer were also invited to an engagement meeting to discuss the proposals, with two relatives accepting this offer and one attending.
18. During the consultation period customers who hadn't previously participated in the pilots were given the opportunity to visit Silsoe Horticultural Centre, so they had the opportunity to view one of the possible alternative venues. This could help those customers to better understand the proposed option.

19. During the consultation period, a Consultation Update report was sent to customers, their relatives or representatives and other interested parties. This set out the consultation activity to date and answered the most common questions asked during the process so far. This document appears as Appendix 4.
20. Additional stakeholders and organisations were also contacted directly and invited to respond to the consultation. This included organisations who use the centre during the evenings and at weekends.
21. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed ahead of the consultation and this is available as Appendix 6. This will be reviewed and updated following the Executive's decision. If the preferred option is approved, the EIA will be kept under review and further updated as required.

Consultation Response

22. At the time of writing this report, only interim consultation results were available. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be provided with the full results to be presented to Executive as Appendix 5. Comments in the following paragraphs relate to the interim results.
23. At the time of writing, the Council had received 61 responses, some 56% of respondents were day centre customers, 26% were relatives of carers using day services, and the remainder were other respondents including provider organisations or staff.
24. Comments received covered a variety of areas however a key theme that emerged was that 21 respondents expressed a preference about the 'hub and spoke' model. Nine respondents stated that they would prefer for Ampthill Day Centre to remain as it is. A further 11 respondents expressed a mixed opinion and gave benefits of both remaining at Ampthill Day Centre and moving elsewhere in their consultation response. Further details of the responses are available in Appendix 5 (to follow).
25. 46% of respondents said that they thought the Council had evaluated all the options correctly although 39% of respondents said they did not know whether the options had been evaluated correctly. Further details of the responses are available in Appendix 5 (to follow).
26. Other respondents recognised that if the proposed model could save the Council money on running costs then that would be a good thing. The Council is committed to delivering an option that delivers the key components and principles set out in Phase 1 and this has been the primary focus throughout the process.
27. Almost half of respondents said they thought the Council did not need to investigate any of the proposed options further. Of the 24% that thought further investigation of these options was required, some respondents said they thought the Council could renovate the existing building and promote it more widely so that it can be utilised by a range of people. Two respondents also said they thought there should be more work to investigate how the proposed model could impact on people with dementia.
28. A number of respondents highlighted that provision of transport would be important to them if the preferred model is agreed. Some customers said they did not want to travel too far whereas others were quite happy to travel a little further as long as they were

enabled to attend. Further details of the responses are available in Appendix 5 (to follow).

29. Friendship groups and socialisation was also identified as important. Some customers reported that they enjoyed meeting the tenants of the sheltered housing schemes during the pilots.
30. Effective communication was noted as important by 13 respondents when asked how the Council could successfully manage a transition period. Several respondents highlighted that they were pleased with how the messages had been communicated to them so far and found that one-to-one consultation meetings were helpful.
31. The full results of the consultation along with the Council's response to the issues raised appears in Appendix 5 to this report (to follow).
32. In response to the matters raised by the consultation, the proposed option, if agreed, would be improved as follows:
 - 32.1. Facilities at Silsoe Horticultural Centre would be adapted to create more capacity to allow for current and future needs. A risk assessment has been carried out and appropriate security measures designed to ensure customer safety remains a priority.
 - 32.2. Further upgrading of the toilets would be carried out to cater for a wider range of customers.
 - 32.3. Access to the site would be improved to create more space for transporting customers as well as parking for the public.
 - 32.4. Consideration of a further, relatively small amount of capital investment, should the preferred option proceed, would have the potential to increase the accessibility to the service by customers enabling a greater number to take advantage of the Silsoe Horticultural Centre and its facilities.
 - 32.5. The preferred option places additional emphasis on providing opportunities for a wider range of activities and integration with adults with disabilities at Silsoe Horticultural Centre and other older people in the community settings.
 - 32.6. The Council and Grand Union Housing Group, who operate the sheltered housing schemes would work together to provide a suitable environment for both our customers and their tenants.
33. In addition, it was noted by the co-production group that:
 - 33.1. Friendship groups should be maintained as much as possible with sufficient capacity to provide for those people who need a consistent venue.
 - 33.2. Opportunities to offer self-funders access to services and future activities should be explored in the future.

Delivery of changes to existing services

34. Should the preferred option be agreed, it is expected that transition to the new day service model would be gradual and involve:

- 34.1. A staff consultation period
 - 34.2. Further individual meetings with customers and their relatives or representatives to discuss next steps
 - 34.3. A transitional approach which will include further visits to alternative venues to promote familiarity ahead of a permanent move
 - 34.4. Further exploration of activities that could be delivered in the new hub and spokes
35. Under the preferred option, it is expected that closure of the Ampthill Day Centre would take place 3 to 4 months after agreement by Executive.
36. It should be noted that whilst these changes would provide a sustainable service for older people in West Mid Beds, the development of new extra care and care home facilities planned for the locality in the next two to three years should offer further opportunities to develop and enhance day services.

Council Priorities

37. The proposed action supports all 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

38. 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.

39. Steps have been taken to involve staff and managers from these areas in work thus far and this will continue.

Legal Implications

40. 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.

41. 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.

42. Central Bedfordshire 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 Day Offer is likely to breach any of the service user's rights under Articles 8, 3, and 2. 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.

Financial and Risk Implications

43. The proposed hub and spoke model has initial implications in terms of staffing. However, the extra cost of running 2 bases will be mitigated by the hub offering a service both to older people and adults with disabilities. This will provide some potential efficiencies in terms of deploying staff more effectively. As the spokes develop it is also envisaged that there will be opportunities to develop the role of volunteers thus reducing costs. These variances are able to be managed within existing budgets.

44. In terms of assets the proposed model does deliver efficiencies as the new service will be using an existing building. This will incur some additional utility costs in the hub and rental costs for the spokes but deliver considerable savings by closing the existing centre. The proposal also means that the Council will not incur ongoing capital costs associated with any older building.
45. No significant unmanaged risks have been identified. A project management approach has been taken to manage the process so far which includes the identification, assessment, mitigation and management of risks associated with the activities.

Equalities Implications

46. 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.
47. 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.
48. 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.
49. 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 carers' and clients' needs. As part of this process the EIA has highlighted that consideration should be given to ways of designing services that:
 - 49.1. Reflect individual preferences as to how care and support needs can be met.
 - 49.2. Maximise stability and familiarity where appropriate to help those with the transition to new services.
 - 49.3. Maintain friendship groups.
 - 49.4. Ensure there is a specific carer's offer for each service.
50. The EIA will be regularly reviewed and it will be updated prior to any future decisions of the Executive about changes to services or individual centres.

Implications for Work Programming

51. As set out in paragraph 36 there is a need to ensure that reviews of centres and any agreed changes are timetabled to take account of other development plans.

Conclusion and Next Steps

1. From the consultation feedback available at the time of writing, it is clear that while there are some understandable concerns about a move away from a long-standing centre, there are a significant number of responses that speak of the proposed ‘hub and spoke’ model favourably and could identify the benefits of this. The hub and spoke model offers variety and opportunity that isn’t deliverable at the Ampthill Day Centre and reduces risk of temporary closures due to building issues.
2. The Council is committed to providing the investment required for the more intensive use of Silsoe Horticultural Centre should the preferred option go ahead, ensuring that it is capable of delivering great services for customers. It will be recommended that the preferred option, the delivery of a hub and spoke model and subsequent closure of Ampthill Day Centre, be approved by the Executive.
3. The Committee is asked to consider the outcome of the consultation and to make recommendations which will be incorporated into a report to a future meeting of the Executive.

Appendices

- Appendix 1:** The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities in Central Bedfordshire
- Appendix 2:** Have Your Say on the Future of Ampthill Day Centre
- Appendix 3:** Options Considered for the Future of Ampthill Day Centre
- Appendix 4:** Ampthill Day Centre Consultation Mid-Point Update Report
- Appendix 5:** Consultation Report on the Future of Ampthill Day Centre
- Appendix 6:** Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

- (i) Pilot evaluation report
- (ii) Easy read versions of consultation documents

Report author(s): Tobin Stephenson

Head of Meeting the Accommodation Needs of Older People

Tobin.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk