

**CABINET**  
**15 NOVEMBER 2018****COUNCIL-PROVIDED DAY SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH  
A LEARNING DISABILITY AND CONNECT SHORT-TERM  
SERVICE****Relevant Cabinet Members**

Mr A I Hardman, Mr J H Smith

**Relevant Officers**

Interim Director of Adult Services  
Director of Public Health

**Local Members**

Mrs R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mr R Morris

**Recommendation**

- 1. The Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Adult Social Care and Health and Well-Being recommend that Cabinet:**
  - (a) notes the feedback from formal consultation with individuals using services and carers on the proposal to close the Wyre Forest Connect Long-term Learning Disability Day Service;**
  - (b) notes the feedback from engagement with stakeholders regarding other services located at Wyre Forest Connect (Blackwell Street, Kidderminster), namely the Wyre Forest Connect front desk service, the Wyre Forest Connect drop-in service and the Personal Care Suite;**
  - (c) notes the work carried out on options to remodel the Connect Short-term Service for adults with lower and medium levels of need, specifically the option of aligning the service with the Three Conversation Model social work teams;**
  - (d) notes the detailed Equality Impact Assessment completed on the proposals previously approved by Cabinet on 14 June 2018 in relation to Council-provided Day Services for Adults with a Learning Disability and the Connect Short-term Service;**
  - (e) approves the closure of Wyre Forest Connect Long-term Learning Disability Day Service, Wyre Forest Connect front desk service, the Wyre Forest Connect drop-in service and the Personal Care Suite, with effect from 1 April 2019;**
  - (f) endorses the continuation of the Connect Short-term Service and relocation of the service into the Three Conversation Model social work teams with effect from 1 April 2019, on the basis set out in paragraphs**

**18-22 below, with the detail of implementation and how the service will operate in the future to be decided by the Director of Adult Services and the Director of Public Health;**

**(g) notes ongoing work in relation to the Council's other Learning Disability Day Services (Resource Centres, Connect Long-term Services and Leisure Link) to develop strategies for cost reduction and income generation in order to reduce the gap between the cost of the in-house services and the external sector and deliver planned savings; and**

**(h) authorises the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care to commence any formal consultation in relation to the services in (g) above, to the extent that any proposed changes are required to achieve the ongoing financial sustainability of the services.**

## **Background**

2. As part of its duties under the Care Act 2014, the Council must meet assessed eligible needs for those people in Worcestershire with a Learning Disability who are eligible for care and support, including the provision of day services where specified in an individual's Care and Support Plan. The Council funds a wide range of day services and opportunities for adults with learning disabilities, currently commissioned from two types of provision – from external providers, through a Dynamic Purchasing System contract (new contract commenced 1 October 2017) and services provided internally by the Council's Adult Social Care Provider Services.

3. The total 2018/19 budget for Learning Disability day services is £4.2 million, of which £1.9 million is spent with external providers, funding just over 200 service users. The total 2018/19 budget for internally-provided Learning Disability Day Services and the Connect Short-term Service is £2.3 million. This is inclusive of a savings target of £0.6 million, agreed in the budget approved by Council in February 2018.

4. The in-house provision consists of 12 separate Day Services across the county for adults with learning disabilities (four Resource Centres, seven Connects and the Leisure Link service) and a countywide Short-term Service which currently operates as part of Connect. 218 adults receive a regular day service in these services and there were 499 referrals to the Short-term Service during the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. There are 128 FTE staff employed in the services, equating to just under 180 people employed.

5. During the period January to April 2018, a large-scale pre-consultation engagement exercise was carried out with people using services, family carers, staff and other stakeholders to explore options for future delivery of the services. Cabinet received a report on 14 June 2018 reporting the results of the pre-consultation engagement and approved the commencement of formal consultation on the option to close Wyre Forest Connect Long-term Learning Disability Day Service as well as endorsing the development of alternative options for the Connect Short-term Service.

6. Wyre Forest Connect is located in Blackwell Street, Kidderminster. At the start of consultation, seven people (subsequently reduced to five due to two people leaving the service) attended the Long-term Learning Disability Day Service as part of their support package to meet their eligible needs under the Care Act 2014. Of the five current attendees, one individual attends for three days per week, one for two days per week and three for one day per week. The service also offers a number of non-statutory services: a front-desk open from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday, a weekly Connect Drop-in (10am to 3pm every Tuesday) and a Personal Care suite, open to the public from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday. The total budget for all of the services operated from Wyre Forest Connect (before any planned savings) is £281,000, made up of a direct budget of £247,000 and £34,000 apportionment of central overheads.

7. The countywide Connect Short-term Service, currently co-located with Connect Long-term Day Services, is a wide-ranging service which provides short-term support to clients over a period of up to 12 weeks. Typical support given is support to access the community and social activities, support to become more mobile, support with finances and form completion e.g. benefits applications, support with housing, and support to find volunteering and employment opportunities. Client groups include people with physical disabilities, older people and people with mental health needs, as well as people with learning disabilities.

8. The core purpose of the Connect Short-term Service is to promote the health and well-being of individuals using the service, and be a preventative service, preventing those being supported from requiring other, higher cost services in the future. The service also aims to reduce escalation of need for specialist NHS services enabling individuals to be healthy for as long as possible, self-managing long-term conditions or avoiding them altogether. The service is funded by £603,000 Public Health Ring-fenced Grant.

### **Wyre Forest Connect – Feedback from Formal Consultation, Assessment of Equality Impacts and Recommendation**

9. Formal consultation with the seven people using Wyre Forest Connect Long-term Learning Disability Day Service and their carers commenced on 25 June 2018 and lasted for 12 weeks, completing on 18 September 2018. This consultation also included discussions with the people who use the service and their carers about the availability of potential alternative options to meet their identified eligible needs as part of their package of care and support. The consultation timeline is included as Appendix 1 and the feedback from the consultation is summarised within the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2.

10. Due to the small number of individuals attending the service, specific consultation feedback has not been included in this report because of potential privacy and data protection implications. However, in summary, people who use the service expressed sadness at the prospect of the service closing, but all already access services with alternative providers or Personal Assistants on other days. Some people using the service were already beginning to identify where they would want to go to receive support if Wyre Forest Connect closes. Two people have stopped using the service during the consultation period. Consultation with carers of people who use the service indicated a low level impact for carers if the service closes due to the fact that the people they care for already access alternative services other

days of the week. Carers were able to appreciate the financial/value for money driver to close the service based on the low level of usage.

11. Social worker reassessments of care and support needs for each person currently using the service have been carried out and alternative services have been identified which it is considered would be suitable to meet people's eligible needs. Other similar services in Kidderminster and the surrounding area which hold contracts with the Council and which would potentially be able to meet eligible needs are the Odell Centre, Emily Jordan Foundation, Reach Community Services, Fundamentals, Muddy Boots, EduLife, Nineveh Ridge and Wildgoose. People are also able to access services using a direct payment if they wish to organise their own provision. If the decision is taken to close Connect Wyre Forest, social workers will develop support plans with individuals as appropriate to identify which alternative services would be the most appropriate to meet eligible needs, and ensure the transition to new services is as smooth as possible for individuals and their carers.

12. Detailed information is also included in the Equality Impact Assessment in relation to work done to assess and mitigate the impacts of potentially closing the Wyre Forest Connect Front Desk service, the Wyre Forest Connect drop-in services and the Personal Care Suite located in Blackwell Street, Kidderminster. These are discretionary services with a non-fixed client base; the services were not subject to formal consultation requirements. However, stakeholder consultation and engagement included letters to people known to have access to and/or use these services, questionnaires for people known to currently use the services, discussions with local partner organisations and representative groups and discussions with staff.

13. In relation to the Front Desk service, evidence suggests use is limited and there are alternative provisions of this type available in the area (for example Hub service provided at Kidderminster Library by Wyre Forest District Council). Feedback on the Wyre Forest Drop-In service shows that people value this service predominantly as a social opportunity and also for information and advice. It is considered that alternative services available would be sufficient to meet these needs and to meet the Council's duty to provide information and advice under s.4 of the Care Act 2014. People can make contact with their District Hub or with the County Council Access Service where social workers will provide information, advice and signposting through the conversations they have with people during their interaction with them. Alongside this, the Council continue to provide information and advice through the County Council's website. A full plan for mitigation of impacts is included in the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2.

14. In relation to the Personal Care Suite located at Connect Wyre Forest, there is limited evidence of the actual usage of the facility by members of the public and no responses were received to letters sent to the holders of key fobs for the facility. Other disabled toilets are available in Kidderminster, however the facility in Blackwell Street is the only 'Changing Places' personal care suite. Commissioners have explored whether any partners would be able to take on the running of this facility but no alternative provider has been identified to date and it is therefore proposed that the service would close with the building, should that decision be taken by Cabinet. It should also be noted that it is not a statutory duty of the County Council to provide this type of service.

15. The total budget for all of the services operated from Wyre Forest Connect is £281,000, made up of a direct budget of £247,000 and £34,000 apportionment of central overheads. After re-providing a day service for the individuals who currently attend (approximately £35,000 cost), removing the cost of the Wyre Forest element of the Short-term service (approximately £85,000) and allowing for the fact that no immediate saving can be delivered against corporate overheads, it is estimated that the closure of Connect Wyre Forest would generate an ongoing saving against the Council's revenue budget of approximately £127,000 per annum. There are likely to be some one-off costs of vacating the rented property to comply with the terms of the lease, which have been estimated at £75,000, although this cost will be mitigated should an alternative use be found by the Council for the building. These one-off costs, should they need to be incurred, would be funded by Adult Services capital budget. Revenue savings generated will contribute to savings targets for day services (see paragraphs 39-43 below).

16. Based on the results of the formal consultation and assessment of equality impacts, and the reasons set out in paragraphs 9-15 above, it is recommended that Cabinet approve the closure of the Connect Wyre Forest Long-term Learning Disability Day Service and the withdrawal of services from Blackwell Street, Kidderminster, including the closure of the Front Desk Service, the Wyre Forest Connect Drop-in and the Personal Care Suite located in the Blackwell Street building. The Wyre Forest Connect Short-term Service will be included in options for the Short-term Service outlined below and relocation of those staff who work predominantly on the Short-term Service will therefore be included in the wider piece of work to restructure that service.

17. Efforts will be made to mitigate any negative equality impacts identified from the proposed closure, as outlined in Appendix 2. For the five current attendees impacted by the closure of the Connect Wyre Forest Long-term Day Service, social worker reassessments have been carried out and suitable alternative services identified. This work will continue and will be built into finalised support plans should closure of the service be approved by Cabinet.

### **Connect Short-term Service – Results of Engagement on Options for Future Delivery and Next Steps**

18. The engagement work and activity analysis, reported in detail in the report presented to Cabinet on 14 June 2018, demonstrated the role that the Connect Short-term Service currently plays in supporting individuals to achieve outcomes which improve their health and wellbeing and in meeting unmet needs, particularly in relation to individuals with lower or medium-level needs. The engagement also identified synergies between the work of the Connect Short-term Service and the work of the Three Conversation Model social work teams, and pointed to the need to strengthen the service specification and monitoring arrangements to provide additional evidence of achievement of Public Health outcomes.

19. The Three Conversation Model is a strengths-based approach to social work which considers an individual's own strengths and capabilities and builds on the resources and resilience that an individual already has, including family, friends and the wider community. The approach focuses on an ongoing conversation about how the individual and their wider networks can support and increase their own

independence. It has recently been implemented for most social work teams in Worcestershire.

20. The option to relocate the Connect Short-term Service into the Three Conversation social work teams has been worked up in detail to establish how this proposed change can be implemented in order to achieve the outcomes specified in the most effective way. A proposed model has been developed based around a revised service specification for the Connect Short-term Service, which retains the identity of the service while aligning Connect workers to localised Three Conversation teams, with day to day links at a practice level to Neighbourhood teams in GP clusters also incorporated. Further information in relation to how the service will meet Public Health outcomes is set out below in paragraphs 33-38.

21. It is proposed that we will implement a new operating model for the Short-term Connect Services by 1 April 2019; we will consult with our Trade Unions and Staff in line with our Core Employment policies and procedures. Due to the fact that Public Health Ring-fenced Grant funds the service, it is proposed that internal contracting mechanisms be put in place, performance will be carefully monitored against performance indicators and continuation of the service will be dependent on performance against the agreed indicators. If performance is not delivered, improvement plans and re-design will be developed. Ongoing review of the specification and close monitoring of health outcomes being delivered will ensure value for money against Public Health Ring-fenced Grant investment, and the best possible outcomes for residents.

22. Cabinet is asked to endorse this approach and direction of travel which has been based on the results of the pre-consultation engagement, the analysis of the service and requirements of Public Health Ring-fenced Grant funding. If agreed, the detail of implementation and how the service would operate in the future would then be decided by the Director of Adult Services and the Director of Public Health.

### **Other Long-term Learning Disability Day Services (Resource Centres and Connects Long-term Services) and Leisure Link**

23. Following the pre-consultation engagement exercise and the 14 June 2018 Cabinet report, work has been commenced by the services, working with commissioners, to identify opportunities for further cost efficiencies and income generation. This work has already generated a number of efficiencies which have already been implemented and it is expected that around £0.3 million of the £0.6 million savings target will be delivered either through vacancy management, efficiencies or additional income opportunities during 2018/19.

24. The proposals to move the Connect Short-term Service into the Three Conversation social work teams will involve a restructure of the staffing in the Connect service and the opportunity will be taken to ensure that the management and the staffing structures of all the Council-provided day services (including Resource Centres, Connect Services and Leisure Link) reflect the requirements of the new service specifications to deliver the outcomes required and best value for money. The results of the engagement exercises carried out with people using the services, carers and staff will continue to be used to inform any reorganisation of services in the future.

25. There are no proposals at the current time for further changes to the other Long-term Learning Disability Day Services, other than the operational changes outlined in paragraphs 23 and 24 above. Given the scale of the previous pre-consultation engagement, which has been reported in detail in previous Cabinet meetings, it is proposed that, should any future proposals be brought forward which require formal consultation with people using services and carers, the approval to commence consultation be delegated to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

26. The Council must, during planning, decision-making and implementation, exercise a proportionate level of due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

27. The proposals set out in the 14 June 2018 Cabinet report have been fully assessed in relation to equality impacts and the results are summarised in paragraphs 9-17 above and in Appendix 2.

28. The Equality Impact Assessment indicates some potentially adverse impacts on people with a disability if the decision is taken to close Wyre Forest Connect Long-term Day Service and facilities based in Wyre Forest Connect. Actions to mitigate any adverse impacts have been identified in Appendix 2 along with a plan for monitoring and review. Positive impacts on people with a disability are identified as a result of the proposed alignment of Short-Term Connect to the Three Conversation Model social work teams and by ensuring that the Council's in-house Learning Disability Day Services are financially sustainable, which will contribute to increased choice and quality of available day services for people with a learning disability.

## **Legal and HR Implications**

29. The Council has a duty to promote the well-being of individuals in its area under the Care Act 2014 and to provide a range of social care services for meeting assessed eligible care and support needs of adults, including care and support needs resulting from disabilities. The Council also has a duty to prevention under s2 of the Care Act 2014 and a duty under s4 to provide information and advice. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the council has a duty to improve the health and well-being of its local population, and to have regard to narrowing health inequalities.

30. As described in paragraph 11 above, if the decision is taken to close Connect Wyre Forest, duties to meet eligible care and support needs for those individuals who currently attend will be addressed through appropriate support planning to access alternative provision. Care Act duties in relation to prevention, wellbeing and information and advice will be met countywide through the continuation of the Connect Short-term Service and integration with the Three Conversations Model,

through the Council's Access Service which provides information, advice and signposting, via the Council's website, and locally in the Wyre Forest area through other available access and information services such as District Hub.

31. The Council values the feedback and input of its residents and users of services to inform service development. In order to inform its proposals, as well as meeting required legal duties, the Council has carried out consultation with individuals using services and family carers, and will give proper consideration to the outcomes of consultation before any substantive decision to implement any proposal is made.

32. Appropriate statutory consultations with staff will also be carried out as appropriate based on the nature of proposals and the impact on specific staff groups. Any changes to staffing arising out of future proposals would be subject to the Council's Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

### **Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments**

33. The Connect Short-term Service is funded by £603,000 of Public Health Ring-fenced Grant and future service design therefore needs to be clearly shaped by a robust public health evidence base, with the work of the service clearly achieving an improvement in health and well-being and a narrowing of health inequalities, as evidenced through the Public Health Outcomes Framework. This requires a strong focus on promotion of good health outcomes and prevention of physical and mental ill-health, with a whole population lens.

34. The proposals contained in this report in relation to service redesign of the Connect Short-term Service are supported by the engagement and analysis work previously reported to Cabinet in June 2018. A service specification will be developed based on securing outcomes specified in the Public Health Outcomes Framework, in order to maximise positive health impacts. The service specification will draw on further co-production work in line with the wider Council commitment to co-production.

35. The two high level Public Health outcomes which need to underpin services funded by Public Health Ring-fenced Grant are "Increased healthy life expectancy" and "Reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities". The relevant domain objectives for the Short-Term Service are "People are helped to live healthy lifestyles, make healthy choices and reduce health inequalities" and "Reduced numbers of people living with preventable ill-health and people dying prematurely, while reducing the gap between communities".

36. The new specification for the Connect Short-term Service will directly address these objectives through short-term interventions which deliver the following aims:

- To promote the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals using the service, by better supporting people to manage their own health
- To identify when a non-clinical intervention will produce the best experience and outcomes for individuals and reduce escalation of need for specialist health services, enabling individuals to be healthy for as long as possible, self-managing long-term conditions or avoiding them altogether
- To prevent those being supported from developing ill-health and health-related care and support needs

- To help individuals to learn new skills and retain or regain skills so they can increase confidence and independence, through harnessing an individual's strengths and assets
- To link individuals with social support systems available locally in their communities, better enabling them to access these resources independently.

37. These outcomes will be enabled by support with areas such as developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships, accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering, enabling people to take part in their local community, making use of facilities or services in the local community, enabling people to deal with housing-related issues, enabling people to manage their finances and enabling people to plan for the future.

38. The impact of interventions will be measured through an outcomes monitoring framework, incorporated into Three Conversations workflow, which records baselines before intervention and evidences the impact following intervention.

## **Financial Implications**

39. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Full Council on 15 February 2018 anticipated a need for around £65 million of expenditure reductions or increases in income over the 3 year period 2018/19 to 2020/21. The subsequent report to Cabinet on 27 September 2018 identified a forecast overspend of £14.2 million in 2018/19, along with additional proposals to address the potential position. There is a risk to the Council's overall sustainability and delivering Social Care to those that need it most if expenditure reductions or increases in income are not delivered as required.

40. The total 2018/19 net budget for internally-provided Learning Disability Day Services and the Connect Short-term Service is £2.3 million (inclusive of the savings target outlined in paragraph 41 below). Since 2016/17, the general prevention element of the Connect service (the Connect Short-term Service) has been funded by Public Health Ring-fenced Grant, with total funding of £0.6 million allocated in 2018/19.

41. Savings of £611,000 in total for 2018/19 in relation to Learning Disability Day Services were agreed in the budget approved by Council in February 2018. The proposals outlined in this report in relation to Wyre Forest Connect would deliver approximately £127,000 from 2019/20 onwards. Work is ongoing to deliver the remaining £484,000, including through the restructure of Connect services as outlined in this report, as well as the work which has already been commenced by the services to deliver cost efficiencies and additional income.

42. In total, it is expected that around half of the £611,000 savings target will be delivered either through vacancy management, efficiencies or additional income opportunities during 2018/19, including one-off savings opportunities. However, as reported to Cabinet in June 2018, due to the nature of some of the proposals and related consultation requirements the savings are not likely to be delivered in full on a recurrent basis until 2019/20.

43. A wider review of all Council-provided adult services is also in progress, as part of the management actions identified in the 27 September 2018 report to Cabinet,

with a view to ensuring that value for money and potential savings opportunities are maximised.

## **Supporting Information**

- Appendix 1 – Consultation Timeline
- Appendix 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment completed 2 October 2018

## **Contact Points**

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## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Adult Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meetings of the Cabinet held on 2 November 2017, 14 June 2018 and 27 September 2018

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of Council held on 15 February 2018