

# **ADULT CARE AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 23 JANUARY 2023**

## **UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAY OPPORTUNITIES REVIEW**

---

### **Summary**

1. The Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel has requested an update following the implementation of the Day Opportunities Review.
2. This update is part of the Panel's Work Programme following earlier scrutiny of the Directorate of People's Review of Council provided Day Opportunities for adults with a learning disability.
3. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care and the Strategic Director and Senior Officers from the Directorate of People have been invited to the meeting to respond to any questions the Panel may have.

### **Background**

4. The purpose of this report is to update the Scrutiny Panel on the outcome of the changes made to Day Opportunities following the decision of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care, on 13 December 2021 (details available under background papers of this report). The decision made was that:
  - The County Council would continue to provide Resource Centre/building based offer for service users with complex needs where a staff to service user ratio is 1:1/1:2/ 2:1 including young people transitioning into adult services, and;
  - All community-based day opportunities for individuals with less complex needs (staff to service user ratio of 1:5/1:8) would be provided externally to the Council – meaning all in-house community-based provision (i.e. Connect Centres) would close.
5. The Council has directly provided internal day opportunity provision for over 25 years through Resource Centres and Connect Services. Resource Centres operate Monday to Friday and provide a variety of activities for people with complex learning disabilities. Many of these activities are building based with some community-based activities planned according to individual needs and preferences. Support for individuals includes personal care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language support, behaviour support, psychology support and support to access the community.
6. There were five Connect Service locations across the county, which operated Monday to Friday, providing mainly community-based day opportunities to adults

with less complex learning disabilities. This service provided support such as: access to employment/work experience, education and volunteering, personal care, meeting friends, computer/IT literacy support.

## Outcome of Day Opportunities Review

7. The project has successfully been delivered within timeframe and within scope and achieved savings. The achievements have been -
  - Most staff have successfully found alternative roles within the Council or formally made the decision to leave prior to the consultation. 11 Staff have been made redundant and the cost of this has been paid from the savings made.
  - All Service Users have been offered alternative provision within the external market and this cost has also been met through the savings made.
  - Savings achieved - In year savings 2022/2023
    - **£24,063** excluding any transport savings
    - Full year estimated saving on the 2023/2024 budget is **£189,378** - *Potentially increasing to £207,378* pending the Redditch college property review (excluding transport savings).
8. Five properties were reviewed as part of this process: Redditch Connect, Worcester Connect, Bromsgrove Connect, Malvern Connect and Evesham Connect. All five properties have been closed from a Connect Centre perspective, however there are financial commitments/responsibilities that the Connect budget needs to cover until other providers are identified to use the spaces.

### Advocacy

9. Throughout the process there was a contract with Onside Advocacy who worked to ensure the voice of the customer was heard and that options identified were in the individual's best interest. A leaflet was developed which was given to service users to explain what an advocate can support with and to reduce any anxieties. The advocate would support the service user at their assessment, to have as much control as possible, to understand the information that was presented to them, to enable them to say what they wanted and what they needed and to ensure their needs were met in a person-centred way.
10. The advocate supported 29 individuals who were referred through from their Social Worker and of the 29 individuals, 12 remained or moved to a Resource Centre and 17 were supported to find alternative support.

### Key findings

11. The key findings were:
  - Many individuals have embraced the change and have been excited about attending new services
  - Some complaints have been received from family members. When these have been explored, this has been due to miscommunications from Connect

staff and Social Workers around timings and expectations. This was put right in the feedback to the complaints

- Friendships groups have been maintained through the microenterprise service and support to attend the local drama groups
- Service users, when visiting taster days, have re-connected with friends they haven't seen for a while who left Connect services previously to explore alternative options
- Several individuals have been interested in looking at voluntary work opportunities
- Individuals who haven't returned to Connect following the Covid 19 outbreak have found alternatives at home they prefer to do, or family have explored other opportunities.

### Carers/Service User Feedback

12. Examples of feedback received following changes included:

“Carer is the main carer for her sister; her sister was attending Connect Services but they both feel happy with the new day service she will be attending on the same days as it has a lot to offer. Carers sister's social worker took her to have a look round the new day service and she is really impressed with the new setting and feels it has a lot more to offer to her sister”

“Carer stated that she and her daughter are happier with the services they receive after the Connect Service ended, activities are more person centred and (her daughter) is enjoying them more as she is now receiving more 1:1 support that she hadn't had previously”

“My son is enjoying his new service after Connect closed, he only has support for a few days now but is doing activities he enjoys and is being taken on visits to different places”

### Advocacy Feedback

13. Examples of feedback include:

“Service users have successfully transitioned across to their new service and this appears positive for the service users that I have reviewed”

“Service users have reported greater flexibility when choosing to have a Personal Assistant as they can choose a more person-centred activity. This has been for two service users I have supported”

### Staff Consultation

14. Following staff consultation, most employees were found like for like roles within the Resource Centre, Reablement or within Social Work Teams. However, 10 individuals through the support of Human Resources have received redundancy payments. Due to the increase in needs of some users in the Resource Centres and those individuals in Connect whose needs would be better met in a Resource centre, an increase in staffing levels was required to meet demand.

## Legal, Financial, and HR Implications

15. 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. Following the changes in Day Opportunities the Council continues to support external provision through a Dynamic Purchasing System contract and continues to provide internal support for high level needs services provided internally by the Council's Adult Social Care Provider Services.
16. Savings were achieved through the changes to provision although this wasn't the driving force for the change. It was established that provision in the market could meet need and was more cost effect for the taxpayer and gave a better variety of options for individuals.
17. Staff who were directly impacted through the changes made to Council operated Day Opportunities, were offered redeployment opportunities within roles in the Council to retain valuable skill set and minimise any compulsory redundancies. Resource Centres staffing was increased to meet the demand of individuals requiring 1-1 or 2-1 support. 10 individuals were made redundant within the process

## Equality and Diversity Implications

18. A **joint impact assessment (JIA)** full assessment was carried out in respect of these changes. Although there were changes to the provision for service users, the focus was still on meeting assessed care needs so impact was minimalised.

## Purpose of the Meeting

19. The Panel is asked to:
  - Determine whether any further information or scrutiny of Day Opportunities is required
  - agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility.

## Contact Points

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844964 / 844965  
Email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

## Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Adult Care and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 15 November and 28 January 2021
- Agendas and minutes from Cabinet on 22 July and 4 February 2021 and 22 October 2020
- [Cabinet Member Decision – Day Opportunities from 13 December 2021](#)

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.