

Appendix 3

Consultation Analysis & Recommendations

The Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Team analysed the responses received from the consultation, theming them under the following categories in alphabetical order.

Agree with all the proposals

A number of people strongly agreed or agreed with the recommended Option One for both services. However, we also acknowledge that the majority of people responding did not agree with either Option One or Option Two for both services.

Agree with Option 1

Of the respondents that expressed a preference, 13.5% strongly agreed or agreed with Option One for Day Opportunities and 21.5% strongly agreed or agreed with Option One for Short Breaks.

Option One is the recommended course of action regarding day opportunities and short breaks, for the reasons explained within the cabinet report.

Agree with Option 2

Of the respondents that expressed a preference, 41% strongly agreed or agreed with Option Two for Day Opportunities and 35.5% strongly agreed or agreed with Option Two for Short Breaks.

Option Two has been carefully considered and not recommended due to low current demand, very low projected future demand, financial viability, and alternative provision available such as the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector, Shared Lives and Direct Payments.

Alternative suggestion

Some respondents utilised the open text boxes to make alternative suggestions to the proposals. Suggestions included;

- Alternative similar options (either private or LA ran) must be offered to those who prefer that model.

- Need to make sure there is adequate staff coverage and shift patterns for staff to cope with what must be a demanding role.
- Please think again. Speak to the social workers, senior practitioners, enablement workers. Ask how many families they work with that actually need help.

Alternative suggestions and ideas have been noted and some will influence how we shape future provision through commissioning and market development. Suggestions included developing more Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) provision. We continually work with the sector to explore new opportunities in our local communities. We are offering everyone impacted a review of their care and support, Community Connectors input which will include exploring alternative options in the PVI, Direct Payments and Shared Lives. Community Connectors have a wealth of local knowledge and experience to support people to find provision but also to identify areas for development. Despite having capacity within Morewood for everyone impacted for planned short breaks, we will also explore all options available including the PVI. We will ensure any staffing model in retained services provides appropriate breaks and a range of shift options for colleagues. We have pledged to support anyone who is impacted who accesses services which Cabinet approves to close with a dedicated Social Care Practitioner, robust transitions plans and review of arrangements to ensure working well. The full list of pledges is contained within the appendices of the report (Appendix 4).

Community Connectors

The success of the connector service was questioned by some respondents together with comment that the service was not suitable for most that are now attending building-based services.

Community Connectors work with people for a range of outcomes, and this does include connecting people to a building-based provision. Data regarding outcomes for people supported through the Community Connectors service is detailed in the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 6). Community Connectors work with the individual regarding their support needs and what they want to achieve, this is different for everyone.

Consultation (lack of confidence in the process)

Some respondents commented on and questioned the method of the consultation, others made comments indicating the belief that the consultation was ingenuous, and the decision had already been taken.

The consultation included specific sessions with people who attend the services, family, and carers; public virtual sessions held in the evenings; drop-in library sessions across the County; questionnaires (including easy read) online with paper versions on request and support from the Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Team to ensure people were supported to share their views in the easiest way possible. A decision on the proposed redesign will only be made after the public consultation exercise, the feedback gained being analysed and fully considered, following which Cabinet will decide if the recommendations made are implemented considering the contents of the Cabinet Report and its appendices, including the Equality Impact Assessment.

Corporate finance – lack of forward planning

A small percentage of respondents felt that Derbyshire's poor investment choices and an increase in senior leadership had led to these proposals being put forward.

In proposing the recommendations to Cabinet, we needed to take into account of the fact that, like every Council up and down the country, Derbyshire is facing significant financial challenges that are outside its control. These include inflationary pressures, staff pay awards agreed nationally but paid locally and continuing increasing demand on our services, particularly in adult care and children's services. Demand for adult social care support has also risen dramatically with the cost of providing care and support accounting for 48% of the Council's overall spending. This means in order to set a balanced budget in 2024/25 as it is legally obliged to do, the Council must review how people's assessed needs are met under the Care Act 2014 and to what extent the Council provides a direct care service as a means of fulfilling those needs.

Disagree with Option One regarding day opportunities

87% of respondents disagreed with the proposals contained in Option One regarding day opportunities, stating that Option Two was the more palatable of the two options as it meant more choice was remaining for carers and clients going forward.

It would not be financially viable to continue with the current building-based provision and the recommendations support the demand for community-based support, range of alternative opportunities and essential short breaks for carers.

Disagree with all Proposals

Some respondents simply disagreed without an explanation, with the proposals.

We recognise the strength of disagreement to the proposals from the respondents. We are committed to working closely with people and their family/carers to explore all options available to have their needs and outcomes met (as per our statutory duties within the Care Act 2014).

Financial rationale

Some respondents felt that these proposals did not consider the financial implications for the County Council going forward and the cost of breakdown for the carers unable to carry on in their role – therefore costing the County Council more in the long term.

We are committed to supporting carers and preventing breakdown of informal support arrangements. Included in our statutory duties is the requirement to work with and support carers through carers assessments. We work closely with Derbyshire Carers Association in ensuring carers receive support and advice. The recommendations in the Cabinet Report do not impact on the individual's personal budget and maintains flexibility in arranging care provision both in terms of regular support and short break provision.

Impact on the person with LD and/or autism and their carer

Many respondents told us of the negative impact that these proposals would have on them as carers and/or people with a learning disability and / or who are autistic using this type of support for both building based in-house day centre support and short break services. Carers particularly stressed the importance of respite to both them and the person they were looking after.

These recommendations do not impact on the individual's personal budget or level of formal support or flexibility in arranging care provision or carer breaks. However, we recognise that should the recommendations be implemented, there is likely to be subsequent changes to how formal care and support is provided for some people going forward. We will ensure professional support is available to people and their families, exploration of alternatives, robust transition planning and a review of their care and support outcomes until support provision is stable and working well. We are also committed to working with people to develop contingency and integrated future planning within care and support plans to avoid breakdown of informal care arrangements (see Option One for Short Breaks).

Lack of other opportunity

Many respondents reported that in their experience and understanding, there was not enough good alternatives in the PVI to make the proposal of closing centres viable or changing the location of the available short break's services.

In terms of PVI provision, as referenced in the Cabinet Report, there are many PVI providers that the Council contract with that offer a variety of options both for day opportunities and short breaks across the County. In addition to this, people can have support via a Direct Payment and Shared Lives. We have information available on the Council website for the public to use and search for local provision.

Private Sector concerns

Some respondents told us of their negative experience with care and support provided in the private sector and expressed a wish for there to remain a choice of Council run provision.

Registered services are regulated by the Care Quality Commission and those on the Council's contracted framework will be assessed to ensure they meet our standards and have regular monitoring to ensure a high-quality service is provided and maintained which includes in-person visits and auditing. People can report any concerns to the contracts department regarding standards of care. If people wish to have a review of their support provision at any time, they can request a review or reassessment from an Adult Social Care Practitioner. Everyone accessing services impacted by the recommendations in the Cabinet Paper, if implemented, will be offered a review and support to identify reasonable and suitable alternatives.

Quality of Care

General standards and quality of care in the private sector were questioned. Many participants gave first hand unfavourable experiences, commenting that the standards and quality were not as high as those of Derbyshire County Council establishments. Adding much praise for the standards and care delivered by Derbyshire County Council front line staff.

Please see above response provided to private sector concerns. Praise for Council colleagues is welcomed and will be feedback to colleagues.

Questioning the rationale of the Cabinet Paper

Respondents questioned the contents of the cabinet report indicating a non-belief in the research contained within it. Questioning Derbyshire County Council's under use of some of the building-based day services and short breaks services and the restrictions on attendance that has reduced these current figures.

The rationale is clear in the Cabinet Paper in terms of the Council's requirement to make financial efficiencies and to use its limited resources to meet current and future demand. There has been a reduction in demand for the Council-run day centres and short break services as referenced in the Cabinet Report.

Demand for Adult Social Care is increasing and with the budgetary pressures we are facing, we're having to look at how best we can continue to support those who need us most. The Council does not have to provide residential and day services directly. We are now having to look at doing things differently and consider all areas of spending.

Travel implications

Respondents were concerned that should the proposal to redesign the offer be approved, there would be travel implications with people with a learning disability and / or who are autistic having long journeys and distances to travel to access day opportunities or short breaks services. Further comments described poor transport links that exist in parts of the county.

We recognise that there may be travel implications for people should the recommendations be approved, we would work collaboratively with everyone affected to reduce any negative impact. As part of a person-centred review, we would explore people's individual circumstances, and their identified needs and outcomes. Our aim is for people to be supported in their local communities with inclusive, meaningful activities. We are working hard to develop local opportunities, for example developing and encouraging the use of Direct Payments, Shared Lives and Micro Providers. We are also continually working with providers to develop their appropriate, local, and inclusive services in communities.

People lacking capacity to engage

People that attend these services who were considered likely to lack the mental capacity to engage or who required support to engage in the consultation had access to the support needed either via family support or professional colleagues where this was considered to be appropriate following a best interests decision.