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| MEETING | PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL (Councillors Qaseem (Chair), Kelly, Ajaib, Basra, Begum, Brooker, Matloob, Mohammad and Sandhu) |
| DATE AND TIME: | MONDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2021 AT 6.30 PM |
| VENUE: | COUNCIL CHAMBER, OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25 WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL |
| DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries) | NADIA WILLIAMS 07749 709961 |

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following Papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting:-

* Items 2, 3 and 5 were not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.

PART 1

| <u>AGENDA ITEM</u> | <u>REPORT TITLE</u> | <u>PAGE</u> | <u>WARD</u> |
|--------------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| 2. | Minutes of the Education & Children's Services scrutiny Panel meeting held on 12th April 2021 | 1 - 8 | - |
| 3. | Appointment of Non-voting Co-opted Members of the Panel <i>The Panel is requested to approve the list of non-voting co-opted members from the previous Health and Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panels respectively:</i> <i>Slough Healthwatch Representative (Rafal Nowotynski)</i> <i>Education Voting Co-opted Members (Vacant)</i> <i>Secondary School Representative (Paul Kassapian)</i> <i>Slough Youth Parliament Representative (FiFi El Sayed)</i> | | |
| 5. | Provider Services Review | 9 - 42 | All |

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Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Tuesday, 20th April, 2021.

Present:- Councillors Basra (Chair), Kelly (Vice-Chair), A Cheema, Ajaib and Sandhu

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Begum

PART 1

49. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Basra declared that she worked closely with a number of organisations in the education sector. There was no conflict of interest with any of the items on the agenda and she therefore stayed and participated in the meeting.

50. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 March 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2021 be approved as a correct record.

51. Member Questions

Responses to Member Questions had been circulated to Members by email. A remaining question would be circulated to members, when available.

52. Youth Offending Team Report

The Youth Offending Team Manager introduced a report that provided an update on the developments within the Youth Offending Team and the Justice sector since February 2020.

Some of the points highlighted included the following:

- The data from March 2021, showed that the average young person referred to the YOT was white, male between age 16 and 17 and charged with the crime of violence against a person.
- The top three offences committed by males in 2019/20 period included Violence against the Person, Drugs, and Criminal Damage with Violence against the person, Theft and Handling Stolen Goods, and Breach of a statutory Order for female offenders.
- Slough YOT had identified through work with community safety partners, Slough safeguarding partnership and violence reduction unit that a tailored response to violence in Slough was needed.
- Slough was required to report key performance indicators nationally on reducing first time entrants, use of custody and reoffending figures.

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 20.04.21

- 54 young people had entered the criminal justice system in 2018, as First Time Entrants, which equated to 332 young people per 100.000, with a slight reduction in 2019 with 52 young people, which equated to 309 young people per 100.000.
- Three young people received custodial sentences in 2018 and 2019, with none sentenced in 2020.
- Reoffending figures were calculated on an 18 months delay and in 2018, 31% of Slough cohort that had ended YOT intervention had gone on to reoffend. Ten of the young people from a cohort of 32 went on to reoffend. Compared to regional data for the reporting period, Slough had the second lowest reoffending rate for 2018. This was due to the preventative measures delivered across Slough with partners providing tailored and unique approach to frontload intervention, in order to build up resilience and capabilities of young people, providing them with better choices and opportunities to resist from further offending.
- In preparation for inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in March 2020, Slough Children's Services Trust (SCST) commissioned Hampshire Children's Services to carry out a peer review of the quality of practice and intervention provided by the YOT (the last YOT full inspection was in 2011 with a short quality screening in 2015).
- In 2020, SCST went through changes resulting in the amalgamation the service with the Front Door element of social care with the aim of referring all prevention cases through the Front Door, in order to monitor, identify and assess any themes and need for future interventions. The YOT also expanding prevention offer to include a more bespoke offer for young people at risk of extra familiar harm and exploitation and working closely with partners to assess and plan to intervene at an early stage in order to safeguard children in Slough.

Members asked a number of question about specific aspects of the report, including the lack of more recent data to those currently provided. It was explained that the reoffending data was reported on an 18 month time delay, due to the time it took to process data on the Police National crime computer and the amount of time it took to convict and process a child through the system. The data for 2019 would be produced in due time. The figures would be circulated if required to Members when they are published.

Referring to the 35% white male offender data, Members asked about the breakdown of the remaining 65%. It was explained that the white male was the predominant young person, followed by young male from the black Caribbean community, followed by young male from the Asian Community and split further into certain demographics.

A Member asked about the age group that the YOT supported. It was explained that the YOT worked with young people from aged 10 – 18; with some caveat depending on the statutory intervention that the young person

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 20.04.21

was subjected to. For instance, if a young person received a referral order a day before their 18th birthday, the YOT would continue to work with the young person until the end of that intervention. This was because referral orders were issued to first time entrants to ensure that work was undertaken under YOT rather than through adult intervention.

A Member asked about the number of 18 year old young people that were going through YOT that had currently progressed into council partnerships and apprenticeships, and about prospective improvement, given the various projects that were going on within Slough. It was explained that YOT had indeed identified these projects but no young person was currently undertaking an apprenticeship. However, YOT had identified the need for young people to have positive life choices and provide the needed support to place them on to those pathways. Members were informed that a dedicated worker was now working from the Virtual School with the role of identifying clear pathways for young people and announced that two apprentices had been recruited within Slough Children First.

The YOT Manager would provide details on the number of 17 - 18 year old young people that were in traineeships or apprenticeships in the Council.

Resolved – That the Youth Offending Team report be noted.

53. Slough Children's Services Trust Annual Report

The Interim Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services presented the Slough Children's Services report for the period of April 2020 to March 2021. The report provided an update on the activities of Slough Children's Services Trust over the last financial year, outlining some highlights of successes and areas of focus for further improvements. It also informed the Panel of the transition of a Local Authority Owned Company and change of name to Slough Children First.

During the discussion, the following points and questions were raised:

A Member asked about the current financial position, given that historical liabilities had been cleared and whether services would be able to operate within current financial and additional pressures. It was explained that pressures on finance and services including those on the safeguarding of children existed nationally. Additional funding had been secured from the Department for Education (DfE) to inject into transformation work and everything that could be possibly done to stay within budget was being done. The impact of Covid-19 had resulted in many families being in stressful situations, as well as impacting on services. Additional work including, workforce development and increasing foster carers was being undertaken.

A Member highlighted that Children's First (SCF) was now aligned with the Slough Borough Council (SBC) and asked about the benefits of the new independent model. It was noted that the major benefits included better

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 20.04.21

integration across the Council and SCF, as well as improved joint working with management teams across children's services in SBC and SCF.

A Member asked about the use of regional agency adoption services. It was explained that nationally, local authorities were required to join a regional adoption service, as having separate services had led to delay in getting satisfactory placements for children. Joint provision enabled quicker responses for children and provided bigger choice of adopters. SBC Adoption Service had continued to work as key partners and would continue to be responsible for taking the adoption process through the court system, whilst the regional agency would focus on recruiting and preparing adopters and in ensuring the right placements and match for children.

A Member asked what incentive had been put in place to retain and encourage staff not to leave, and whether there were any programmes in place for upskilling staff. It was explained that retaining workforce was still an issue that could not be resolved with a single solution and indeed, there was a national shortage of social workers. It was however, acknowledged that the problem was more acute in the Slough region. DfE funding had been secured to help look at the issue of how to improve the image of Slough and to speed up recruitment. A career development scheme was already in place and was being reviewed in order to enhance the programme, in addition to a proposed scheme designed to forge closer links with some universities.

A Member asked about the number of people that were expected to be recruited from the campaigns in India and Africa and it was noted that the aspiration was to recruit five from each campaign.

Members suggested that some residents may question why local residents were not being trained, instead of undertaking recruitment promotion in other countries. It was explained that work had been undertaken in previous years to try and recruit locally. A number of apprentices were currently on social work programmes and new staff had been recruited. The vast majority of staff were new recruits working alongside more experienced staff. However, staff tended to leave once they had been trained, which was a disadvantage.

Resolve – That the Slough Children's Services Trust Annual Report April 2020 -March 2021 be noted.

54. Annual Safeguarding Report on Social Care

The Panel received the Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report for 2019 - 2020 presented by David Peplow, the Independent Scrutineer for the Safeguarding Partnership, which outlined progress made against the objectives set in the 2018/19 annual report and agreed priorities for 2019-20. It also set out the difference, partnership working had made to how children and young people and vulnerable adults were protected from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 20.04.21

Members noted the change to the report heading on the agenda from Annual Report on Social Care to Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report for 2019-2020.

It was reported that the requirement to transition from the previous Local Safeguarding Children's Board to the new safeguarding Partnership arrangements needed to have been completed by 29th September 2019, which was half way through the reporting year.

Events in the report covered up to the end of March 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the reporting period. More details would be provided in the next report.

During discussion, the following points and questions were raised:

In answer to a question about the rise in modern day slavery, it was confirmed that there had been an increase to 3% in Slough and acknowledged that, as this was a new area, it would be reasonable to assume that an increase represented success in the campaign to raise awareness of this issue.

(Louise Noble joined the meeting)

A member asked whether the increase in the last 6 months (2019/20) in child protection activities was due to Covid-19. It was acknowledged that there had indeed been a rise in child protection but the increase in the last 6 months could also be attributed to various factors, including the complexity of children and families, neglect, furloughed jobs, tipping children into poverty as well as legacy work and increased workload.

In answer to a question about sharing good practice with other local authorities. It was noted that the key priorities were in ensuring that the focus was on recording quantitative data and reflecting safeguarding activities in the data. Members noted that Local safeguarding partnerships reflected their differences and shared practices with other forums.

Resolved – That the Annual Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report for 2019 - 2020 be noted.

55. Positive Change to the Commissioning and Delivery of our Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Tier 4 provision in Berkshire

Louise Noble, Clinical Transformation Lead, Berkshire CAMHS Tier 4 and Crisis Service presented a briefing on the Positive Change to the Commissioning and Delivery of our Children & Adolescent Health Service Tier 4 provisions in Berkshire. The report outlined the change to the commissioned service model for the CAMHS Tier 4 service provided by Berkshire Healthcare.

During a presentation tabled at the meeting, it was explained that a review of service provision at the Berkshire Adolescent Unit (BAU) by NHS Specialist

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 20.04.21

Commission in 2015, had concluded that the Willow House building, which operated as 9 bedded CAMHS Tier 4 General Adolescent Unit (GAU) was unsuitable.

The national new Models of Care programme and the Review of the Accelerated Bed Programme for the South East Region in 2020 had concluded that there was not a requirement for more general adolescent beds in the South East region.

Subsequently, a new Tier 4 'out of hospital' clinical model service was developed collaboratively, to deliver an enhanced community care model for the majority of children and young people being admitted to CAMHS Tier 4 inpatient bed. The Willow House inpatient provision was therefore scheduled to close on 30 April 2021 with the new 'Out of Hospital' service model starting from May 2021.

The new service model would support 16 young people, compared to 9 supported at Willow House. Additionally, the service could be provided to more young people closer to home. Through consultation, it had been established that the service would not be suitable for young people who had experienced breakdown of family or of placements; or for those experiencing severe behaviour issues, due to other challenges.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Panel noted the changes to the Tier 4 provision in Berkshire but recognised that the changes did not allow for the provision of inpatient service.

Resolved – That the briefing on the Positive Change to the Commissioning and Delivery of our Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Tier 4 provision in Berkshire be noted.

56. Forward Work Programme

Members noted that the ECS panel would be changing to People Scrutiny, which would have a wider remit.

It was noted that outstanding item on Forward Work Programme would be put forward to the new People Scrutiny Panel meetings.

57. Attendance Record

Resolved – That the details of the Members' Attendance record be noted.

58. 2021 - 2022 Date of Meetings

The 2021-2022 meeting dates would be confirmed once the changes in the Scrutiny Panels have been concluded.

Chair

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 20.04.21

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.08 pm)

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: People Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 13 September 2021

CHIEF OFFICER: Alan Sinclair

CONTACT OFFICER: Marc Gadsby

WARD(S): All

PART I**FOR COMMENT****ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVIDER SERVICES****1. Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out recommendations to Cabinet regarding the continued delivery of Adults Social Care, in-house provider services. The report highlights feedback from a recent public consultation and rationale regarding the preferred option. Cabinet decision is required regarding progression of the recommendations.

Scrutiny Panel members are asked to review the report and make comment on the recommendations and proposals to be present to Cabinet on the 20th September 2021

Recommendations to Cabinet

- 1 To close the following Provider Services currently operated by the Council:
 - Lavender Court
 - Respond (short-term breaks service)
 - Priors Day Service
 - Phoenix Day Service
 - The Pines Day Service
- 2
 - a) To review the needs and aspirations of all people who use the services currently. To identify alternative options, building on people's strengths, across the provider market and through direct payments.
 - b) Deliver flexible and more personalised support, relying less on providing activities or services that are based at the day centres.
 - c) To promote individual choice and independence through accessing services that are being delivered by charities, community groups and other organisations in the voluntary and independent sector.
- 3 To delegate the implementation of these recommendations to the Executive Director of People (Adults), in consultation with the lead member for social care and public health.

2. Rationale

Slough Borough Council (SBC) is committed to ensuring the public money we spend and the resources available, are used in the most efficient and effective way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people within our community.

As a department, Adult Social Care must balance the statutory duties it has with supporting the council to deliver its financial strategy over the coming months and years. We are proposing a change to our few remaining provider services, as outlined in the recommendations above. The proposed strategy for Adult Social Care is to move away from being the direct provider of services and focus on strategic commissioning to meet the needs of all local people. We are proposing to rely less on day centres and other building based services to meet assessed needs of residents and explore other ways to meet them. These may include:

- accessing activities or services run by other providers including local community groups and charities
- using personal assistants
- using direct payments
- accessing other support networks

This does not mean that the Council will stop meeting the needs of vulnerable people and their families, moreover we will work with people and partners to identify alternatives which may include some new relationships with new and existing providers.

A public consultation ran from Monday 5 July through to Friday 6 August 2021 to ask those with an interest in the services affected, what their views were regarding Slough Borough Council no longer being a direct provider of Adult Social Care Services. As part of this process, we undertook a range of engagement activities to hear from people who access these or similar services delivered by other organisations, as well as families, carers, professionals and wider networks.

The following three options were initially considered as part of this review:

Option 1: Reopen the services that were closed during the pandemic and operating them in the same way as they were pre-pandemic. Continue to provide the services that have not been closed with no changes.

Option 2: Move away from being a direct provider of care for long and short-term residential provision, day care and to commission alternatives to meet people's needs.

Option 3: Re-model and operate a significantly reduced provider services offer.

Option 1 and 3 were discounted and not progressed as part of the review as the councils ambition of delivering more personalised services to meet people's needs and delivering value for money would not be achieved.

It is also important to note that upon approval of the recommendations made above, Slough Borough Council will work with other providers to identify other service options.

Slough Borough Council no longer operating a provider service function does not mean that people will not have options to access other services, new or existing.

3. Introduction

The proposed action will support the delivery of Outcome 2 of the Five-Year Plan: *'Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs'*.

The council is taking steps to transform public health and wellbeing, focusing on intervention and prevention built on a strength-based approach. We work to identify an individual's 'strengths', abilities, skills, knowledge and potential as well as their social and community networks, that will help or enable the individual to deal with challenges in life and meet their needs to achieve their desired outcomes. The Care Act (2014) underpins this approach by requiring our Adult Social Care department to consider the person's own capabilities and support available from their wider network or within the community that would help the person, alongside the provision of care and support, to meet the outcomes they want to achieve.

We believe that all adults should have a good quality of life.

We believe that by listening, understanding, designing services together and working without judgement, we can achieve good outcomes for those that need our support.

We believe that this does not have to be delivered within a council operated building.

4. Backgrounds

We are considering the future of services that are currently run by the Council, for older people and people with learning disabilities. This includes:

- **Day services for people with a learning disability and/or autism**, offering social activities as part of assessed needs (Priors Day Service & Phoenix Day Service)
- **Day services for older People** offering social activities as part of assessed needs (The Pines)
- **Residential service for people with a learning disability/autism** (Lavender Court)
- **Short-term breaks service** (Respond)

There are 107 people currently registered to use these services and 61 posts affected which are a mixture of full and part-time posts.

There has been a lot of disruption to services due to the COVID-19 pandemic: people have changed the way in which they access community activities and have experienced changes in the way that support is received. For Slough Borough Council, in line with government guidelines, this meant we closed our building-based day centres and limited the access to Lavender Court. We also trialed new ways of working, including covid-bubbles and on-line events. The services provided at Respond have been closed pending completion of building works.

Other organisations have been offering similar alternatives, to ensure that people continue to receive support in these challenging times. These changes, alongside the Council's Adult Social Care Transformation Programme, have been a driver for us to reflect on how we meet the needs of people using services, and re-evaluate how we offer these types of services, including to consider if we are best placed to be a direct provider of services.

There are many providers of services relevant to this review across Slough. A key part of this re-evaluation has been to understand where we can improve and offer the best range of options and relevant choices that build on people's strengths.

We undertook a public consultation engagement activity and invited people to tell us their thoughts directly, or through their families, carers or professional support. We also completed a review of the market to understand alternative options available currently and where opportunities may exist for the development of new offers with providers.

5. Consultation

We asked people with a potential interest in SBC Provider Services to share their views regarding the options for provider services. This consultation took place prior to any recommendations being presented to Cabinet for decision. To support people to take part in this process, a consultation page was established, 3 on-line surveys were constructed, and a consultation mailbox set up. Easy read surveys were circulated alongside information about the consultation, to people who use services. Telephone calls at different stages during the consultation period were made to all customers and 4 facilitated focus groups were established supported by advocacy. A staff briefing took place 2 weeks before go live and there has been engagement with trade unions through GMB and Unison.

55 People responded to the Online Surveys
31 people signed up for Focus Groups – 18 attended
2 people used the PSPC mailbox
1 Person telephoned the AD directly

Additionally 803 people responded to an e-petition entitled 'Abandon planned closure of day centres'.

The e-petition makes the following statement:

'The day service and short break service centres are vital for people with learning disabilities and autism. They provide social interactions, fun, learning, safety and stability in a way which cannot be replaced by the alternative arrangements the council proposes. There is no other adequate place in Slough for people with learning disabilities and autism. The parents and carers of service users care for the disadvantaged people with disabilities often for their entire life. Closing down the reliable day care offered by the day centres and replacing it with often inadequate alternatives will simply create massive problems for people who are already on the edge of mental breakdown following the long period of closure due to Covid.'

A total of 892 people have shared a view regarding the proposal to close Adult Social Care Provider Services.

The detail from the consultation is attached as Appendix 1 however some key themes are highlighted below:

- Direct Payments don't work for everyone
- A building base is important for some
- Carers need a break
- A day centre environment provides confidence around safety
- People enjoy socialising
- A range of different activities are enjoyed by different people

- People think that services need to be available now
- Communication needs to be better
- More alternatives are required locally
- There are problems with transport
- Lack of equipment such as hoists
- Limits on Personal Assistant support

Our view is that the above outcomes can be achieved in ways other than SBC directly delivering services. Following a re-assessment of need, each person will be supported to build a support plan. This may involve working with existing providers, or shaping new ideas for service development. It may involve groups of people coming together to combine their resources to design a personalised solution to meet common outcomes. SBC will continue to work with service users and their families to identify ways to meet their needs.

6. Market Analysis – Day Opportunities

To better understand the alternative options available to Slough residents, should any changes be made to Day Services, a review was undertaken to gather knowledge from colleagues, an internet search of various websites as well as contact made with several partners within the voluntary and community sector. Alternatives identified include charities, community interest companies, locally ran groups as well private enterprises, who can provide personalised support for individuals to access community activities that they are interested in alongside other service offers such as supported living or homecare.

Of the alternatives, 14 are building based and provide either sessional activities or are available for a whole day. 2 of these are specifically for people with learning disabilities, 9 for older people, 1 for people with an Acquired Brain Injury, 1 for people with dementia and 2 for adults with additional needs. Many of the buildings being used are existing community assets such as local community centres. Those opportunities that are non-building based involve accessing other community resources, led by individual interests, such as Autism Berkshire who will meet for social events at a range of venues.

Across the different client groups, most opportunities are focused on providing meaningful activities that promote social interaction and positive wellbeing. For all client groups this includes activities such as crafting, physical exercise and trips out into the community. For people with learning disabilities there is a blend of activities that promote wellbeing and support the development of independent living skills, whilst for older people and those with dementia the focus is much more to wellbeing. There are 2 opportunities, Friendly Bombs Theatre Company and South Buckinghamshire Riding for the Disabled that have a very focused offer.

There are 5 services offering support with employment opportunities for people with Mental Health issues or a Learning Disability. This can include practical preparation such as CV writing or searching for volunteering, work experience or paid for roles. Other support can include linking with employers to identify opportunities and to check that an individual is succeeding.

| Client Group | Outcomes / Focus | Service Name | Total Services |
|-----------------------|--|--|-----------------------|
| Learning Disabilities | Employment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough Employability • The Light UK • Graft (Thames Valley) • Comfort Care Slough (specialist employment worker) • Compass Slough | 16 |
| | Wellbeing (built around a range of activities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parvaaz Project • Slough Crossroads • The Light UK • Step Together • Voyage Care - Community Support Hub London West • Mencap • Kharis Care • Promise Inclusion • Jump In • South Buckinghamshire Riding for the Disabled • Friendly Bombs Theatre Company • Autism Berkshire • Compass Slough | |
| | Independent living skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parvaaz Project • Mencap • Slough Crossroads • The Light UK • Step Together • Comfort Care Slough • Voyage Care Community Support Hub London West • Kharis Care • Promise Inclusion | |
| Older people | Wellbeing (built around a range of activities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age Concern Windsor (Spencer Denney Centre) • Age Concern Slough and Berkshire East Day Centre • Age Concern Slough and Berkshire Befriending • Age UK Befriending • Age UK Activities • Manor Park Centre • Ascot District Day Centre • All Saints Lunch Club • Ujala Foundation • New Langley Community Association | 20 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough Senior Citizens Group • Recycled Teenagers • Men's Matter • Rise and Shine • Pakistan Welfare Association Slough • Langley Coffee Group • Slough Crossroads • Kharis Care • Movers and Shakers • Burnham Lodge | |
| Dementia | Wellbeing (built around a range of activities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alzheimers Dementia Support • Alzheimers Society • Age UK Dementia Support • Slough Crossroads | 4 |
| Acquired Brain Injury | Wellbeing (built around a range of activities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headway South Bucks | 1 |
| | Independent Living Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headway South Bucks | |
| Mental Health | Employment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Light UK • Graft (Thames Valley) • Slough Employability • Comfort Care (specialist employment worker) • Compass Slough | 9 |
| | Wellbeing (built around a range of activities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends in Need (East Berkshire) • MIND Community Connectors (Registered GP dependent) • Comfort Care Slough • The Light UK • Slough Crossroads • Compass Slough • Voyage Care Community Support Hub London West | |
| | Independent Living Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough Crossroads • The Light UK • Comfort Care Slough • Voyage Care Community Support Hub London West | |

Alongside the opportunities identified above, Slough Borough Council's Community Development Team have a directory of 60 + other local projects, charities and initiatives which are provided either in outdoor spaces or in local settings such as the Windmill Resource Centre, Wexham Bowls Club and the Chinese Oriental Community Association.

Slough Community Transport also offer transport to a range of activities and locations for all client groups.

For those individuals who use a Direct Payment to purchase their own support, there are a number of introductory agencies that will provide a matching service to find a suitable PA, based on the individual's needs and preferences. These include Trust on Tap, Seakr and Curam Care. Slough Borough Council will also provide support to advertise for PAs as well as guidance on becoming an employer. Enham Trust are also available to support individuals who require help in managing their direct payment.

7. Alternative accommodation options

For the 7 residents of Lavender Court a number of options will be explored dependent on the outcome of their Care Act assessment and individual desired outcomes.

Considerations:

1. Find suitable alternative residential placements through brokerage or the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)
2. Find suitable supported living placements through the DPS or brokerage
3. Find suitable accommodation or accommodation that can be developed in Slough and tender for the care/support needs separately

8. Alternative replacement care opportunities

Whilst the Respond service building has been under refurbishment and during the Covid-19 pandemic a block contract arrangement was entered into with Kharis Care. This provision included a 3-bed property located in Reading. As part of the analysis of alternative day opportunities, alternatives for replacement care were also identified. 5 services were identified with a local community-based offer, 4 of which offered respite across the different client groups and one which was focused on those individual's living with dementia.

| Client group | Service Name | Total Services |
|---|---|----------------|
| Learning Disabilities / Mental Health / Older people and Dementia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough Crossroads • Kharis Care • Better Life Care • Macademia Support | 5 |
| Dementia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alzheimers Dementia Support | |

9. Covid-19 and the impact on support services

During the pandemic, services and community groups adapted in order to continue providing a source of connection and a range of activities, often using online platforms such as Zoom or Teams. Some organisations and groups completely re-designed their offer to meet the priority need at that time, for example, ensuring that vulnerable residents had access to food and medication. As restrictions are lifting, services and community groups are still adapting to the new ways of working and developing their offer, something which the Community Development Team and members of the Slough Council for Voluntary Services reported.

10. Implications of the Recommendation

10.1 Financial implications

The current cost of the Provider services are as follows:

| Service | Service Type | Service Users | Actual Service Cost 20/21 (£000's) | Service Budget 20/21 (£000's) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Lavender Court | Residential (respite) | 7 (+19 respite clients – 284 nights per year) | 901.3 | 787.1 |
| Learning Disabilities Day | Day Services | 57 | 970.8 | 1,090 |
| Older People Day Opportunities | Day Services | 24 | 281.3 | 452.3 |
| Total | | 88 (107) | 2,150 | 2,330 |

In 20/21 the budget for all Provider Services was £2.33m, with a previous project to develop savings within day services only proposed to reduce the budget by £150k in 21/22 and a further £350k in 22/23. Although this proposition will supersede those savings, the £150k has already been removed from the 21/22 budget. Therefore, to estimate total savings, the 20/21 budget will be utilised.

The pandemic has impacted significantly on the way that services have been delivered over the past year, whilst building based day services have been closed. Individuals that were previously accessing the building-based provision have had their needs met through alternative support offers.

It is therefore assumed that following a reassessment several people will continue to be supported in the way that they have been over the past year, and that only 75% will wish to return to some form of day opportunity.

To model this, the current cost of provision purchased from the external market, £160.11 per week for people with a learning disability and £123.06 for older people, has been used, however, consideration could also be given upon undertaking reassessments to the provision of shared lives and Personal Assistants to ensure people are able to have their needs met in the way that provides the greatest choice, control, and independence.

There are 7 people living within residential care with a primary support need of Learning Disabilities. The current service cost of £901k per year gives an individual service cost of £2,476 a week. This is significantly above the cost in the external market both in Slough and surrounding areas. All individuals will require a full reassessment to determine the type of provision that will best meet their needs and whether they have formed natural friendships with other residents and would like to continue to live with them. Until this person-centred planning has been undertaken it is not possible to determine the best provision to meet needs so a prudent figure at £1600 average has

been used which aligns to the average cost of residential care for this client group within RBWM but is below the current Slough external market rate of £1,800 to reflect the ambition of achieving comparable target costs.

In addition to the 7 residential clients, there are also 19 respite clients who received 284 nights per year, prior to the pandemic impacting services. The cost of the total combined weekly cost of respite is £1,976, which equates to £102.8k per year. This money will be utilised to recommission a respite provision to replace the 284 nights per year.

The estimated new cost of delivering services is detailed in the table below.

| Service | Number of Service Users | Average Weekly Cost (£) | Total Weekly Cost (£) | Annual Cost (£000's) |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| LD Residential Care | 7 | 1,600 | 11,200 | 582.4 |
| Respite Care | 19 | 104 | 1,976 | 102.8 |
| LD Day Opportunities | 43 | 160.11 | 7,205 | 374.7 |
| OP Day Opportunities | 18 | 123.06 | 2,215 | 115.2 |
| Total | 87 | | | 1,175.10 |

The comparison of the 20/21 budget to the new estimated service cost is detailed in the table below. The full year saving is estimated to be £1.153m.

| Service | Actual Service Budget 20/21 | New Estimated Annual Cost (000's) | Variance (000's) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| LD Residential Care & Respite Care | 787.10 | 685.2 | 101.9 |
| LD Day Opportunities | 1,090 | 374.70 | 715 |
| OP Day Opportunities | 452.30 | 115.20 | 337 |
| Total | 2,329 | 1,175.10 | 1,153.9 |

The saving is due to impact in January 2022, which would mean that 3 months savings would be achieved in 21/22, with the remainder of the full year saving in 22/23. However, the cost of transport services has not been included in the 21/22 saving, as the contract can't be amended until the new financial year.

Therefore, the savings profile is shown below:

| Savings Profile | 21/22 (£000's) | 22/23 (£000's) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Provider Services | 250,975 | 902,925 |

An additional one off cost will be required to support the delivery of the care assessments for all current users. This approximate cost of £67,000 will be provided by the transformation fund allocated to the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme.

10.2 Legal implications

The Council has a statutory duty to meet eligible needs assessed under the Care Act 2014, and whilst day care provision provided directly by the council has been used to meet needs, it is not in itself a prescribed statutory service. Where a person has

identified eligible care needs and provision of day services is assessed as necessary to meet that eligible need, the Council will calculate a personal budget that will meet the market rate for provision of that service and can offer a direct payment where appropriate, but can be commissioned on the service user's behalf where a direct payment is not appropriate.

Current service users of SBC's Provider Services will each have an individual reassessment to ascertain their eligible needs. The resource required to undertake these reassessments is currently going through the procurement process with a view to undertaking this work as soon as possible.

In Section 10.27 of the Care Act, the guidance states that in determining how to meet needs, the local authority may also take into reasonable consideration its own finances and budgetary position and must comply with its related public law duties. This includes the importance of ensuring that the funding available to the local authority is sufficient to meet the needs of the entire local population. The local authority may reasonably consider how to balance that requirement with the duty to meet the eligible needs of an individual in determining how an individual's needs should be met (but not whether those needs are met). However, the local authority should not set arbitrary upper limits on the costs it is willing to pay to meet needs through certain routes – doing so would not deliver an approach that is person-centred or compatible with public law principles. The authority may take decisions on a case-by-case basis which weigh up the total costs of different potential options for meeting needs and include the cost as a relevant factor in deciding between suitable alternative options for meeting needs. This does not mean choosing the cheapest option; but the one which delivers the outcomes desired for the best value.

The Council has a duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Consultation has provided information in respect of the impact of ceasing council provided care services on current users and mitigations proposed, and is set out in paragraph 10.3 and 10.5 below.

10.3 Risk management implications

| Risk Item | Impact | Likelihood | Mitigation | Impact | Likelihood | Notes |
|---|--------|------------|--|--------|------------|---|
| Failure to achieve savings | 4 | 3 | The timeline of the programme has been carefully planned to line up with Cabinet approval dates. Savings forecast has been calculated by P2, who reviewed market prices for comparable offers. | 4 | 2 | Regular project meetings have included representation from LA Commissioners who have undertaken recent market analysis |
| Alternative options fail to meet need | 4 | 3 | Market analysis identified 40 potential alternatives and the LA is keen to support the development of further offers that are co-produced with users | 4 | 2 | Re-assessment of need for all customers affected by this change will be undertaken so that we understand the most up to date needs presentation |
| Challenge of Council's decision prevents service closure | 4 | 2 | There are a group of people who are unhappy with the proposal to close Provider Services however there is no duty to provide services directly. The LA must provide sufficient resource to meet assessed need that this can be achieved in a range of ways | 4 | 1 | People affected by the proposal have been advised at a formative stage via a number of communication methods |
| Appointment of Commissioners changes proposal | 3 | 2 | Should Commissioners be appointed to manage SBC expenditure, it is understood that this proposal represents a significant efficiency based on a model utilised by a number of other Local Authorities previously. Current risk score reflects assumption that Commissioners would view this as an appropriate action to take given current financial circumstances | 3 | 1 | Continued work with P2 and recently appointed S151 Officer and team to demonstrate value and feasibility of this proposal |
| Insufficient resource to meet future demand | 4 | 3 | There is a risk that there will be insufficient capacity in the market to support Slough well into the future. This is not limited to Provider Services. This workstream has undertaken market analysis which has already prompted some providers to want to commence service development conversations | 4 | 3 | Development of more joined up Transitions process helps the authority to forecast future demand |
| Safeguarding alerts rise in number | 3 | 2 | Many customers have not been accessing services referenced here for over a year so this is unlikely | 3 | 2 | Working together to meet need going forward should reduce the probability of need not being met. Consultation feedback suggests that in some circumstances interim Direct Payment arrangements have not enabled all outcomes to be met. |
| Removal of Provider Services destabilises market | 4 | 2 | The opposite is likely to happen. More demand represents more opportunity for service development. There exists good opportunity for alternative providers to obtain a market share | 4 | 2 | Engagement with providers and wider market continues through our commissioning relationships |
| Reduction in Commissioning Team capacity limits market development activity | 3 | 3 | There is a risk associated with a key member of the team moving on however other colleagues are cited | 3 | 2 | We have the benefit of Peopleto's continued engagement through the implementation of the ASC Transformation Programme |

10.4 Environmental implications

None apart from potential carbon reduction by ceasing use of these buildings.

10.5 Equality implications

Assessing the impact on Service Users of not delivering Provider Services

| | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Considering the above information and evidence, describe the impact this proposal will have on the following groups? |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Age (All age groups) | Opportunity to personalise support offer and focus on outcomes with Older People | Some older service users who have used a Council Services for a number of years may not want change. Risk of less opportunity for people of the same age to come together and share experiences. | Proportionately less older people are impacted by the proposal. | <p>The age profile across Provider Services differs on the basis of service type</p> <p>24 People 65+ – OP Day Care 57 People 18+ – LD Day Care 7 People 18+ – Residential 19 People – 18+ Respite</p> <p>Whilst representing only a small section of the total number of people supported by SBC, the proposal has implications for commissioned day support and the future redesign of support services across the wider market.</p> <p>More people with Learning Disability will be impacted by the change, given the profile described above. Changing the model will mean potential change to how services are arranged for everyone going forward</p> <p>The current model enables people of a similar age to spend time together. This may shift as a more outcome focused approach is introduced.</p> <p>The National picture suggests that a traditional day centre model is an increasingly less attractive option for adults of working age coming into adult social care for the first time.</p> <p>Older members may have a preference for traditional building-based day services and could find not re-opening the centre difficult.</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | Co-production of future outcome focus is an important feature when planning options with users of all Provider Services impacted by this proposal. |
| Disability (Physical, learning difficulties, mental health and medical conditions) | <p>Opportunity to personalise support offer and focus on outcomes with People with Learning Disability</p> <p>Opportunity to reduce disability discrimination and increase accessibility.</p> | <p>Risk of less opportunity for people with disabilities to come together and share experiences.</p> <p>Risk that a lack of accessible community facilities, disability discrimination and stigma will prevent people with disabilities making full use wider community offers</p> <p>Some service users who have lived in a Council Services for a number of years may not want change.</p> <p>Risk that people with communication needs</p> | The proposed changes may have a greater impact on the cohort of working age people with disabilities on the basis that this group is larger | <p>There is a mixture of people who use SBC Provider Services. Some people are over the age of 65 and may have some age related needs. Others have Learning and/or Physical disabilities.</p> <p>The proposal could have an impact on people with a disability in the following ways:</p> <p>Not operating Provider Services will mean change to how services are arranged for people with a disability. The current model enables people with similar experiences based on disability or mental health issue to spend time together. Moving to a model that offers a variety of alternative providers, may impact who people spend time with.</p> <p>There is a risk that older people and people with a disability struggle to identify alternative, accessible facilities and transport. This includes a lack of accessible toilets and accessibility issues on public transport.</p> <p>Some people may have communication needs arising from their disability that makes this proposal difficult to engage with. The consultation document includes actions to address this. Advocacy, Focus Groups, Easy Read and proposal that the consultation be discussed at review meetings between adult social care practitioners and service users.</p> <p>The alternatives to Provider Services can be shaped as a result of consultation with people with disabilities and older people, providing an opportunity to shape support around what people with a disability who have social care needs want.</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | arising from disability will have difficulty engaging with the proposal. | | |
| Sex | | Risk of an increased burden being placed on unpaid carers – a group where women are overrepresented. | | <p>There are no sex-specific services. The picture for all in-house and commissioned services is mixed.</p> <p>Carers are more likely to women. Day support often fulfils a dual function of both meeting the needs of a service user and providing carers with a break. There is a risk that the new model might result in changes to care packages that put an increased burden on unpaid carers. This can be mitigated against by offering carer needs assessment at the same time as planned reviews, so that both carer and service users needs can addressed holistically.</p> |
| Gender reassignment | Opportunity to access a wider range of support that needs individual needs. | Risk that transphobia and stigma will prevent people of different genders making full use of community options | | <p>Information on this is collected as part of assessment and care planning.</p> <p>The proposal is intended to provide people with more choice and ability to access community facilities.</p> |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | | | <p>Information on this is collected as part of assessment and care and support planning.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposal will have a disproportionately negative or positive impact as it relates to this characteristic.</p> |
| Religion or philosophical belief | Increased opportunity for people of different faiths to | Risk that alternative provision is not inclusive for people of | | <p>Information on this is collected as part of assessment and care and support planning.</p> <p>The proposal could have an impact on people of different religions or beliefs in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. There is a risk that people with dietary requirements arising from their faith or belief (e.g.Halal) will not be able to identify alternative provision if they do not provide appropriate |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | come together. | different faiths. | | <p>food choices. Space to practice faith based activities, such as prayer, may also need to be considered</p> <p>ii. Future options should provide people of different faiths and beliefs opportunity to meet needs in this area in a personalised way.</p> |
| Race | Increased opportunity for people of different ethnicities to come together. | Risk of language barriers being an issue in alternative provision | | <p>From what we know about people using Provider Services there is a strong interest from all users to mix with other people. The race of people mixed with, has to date no presented a specific issue. The risk presented by language barriers could be addressed by ensuring that there are staff who speak community languages who can help facilitate communication.</p> |
| Sexual orientation | Opportunity to access a wider range of support that needs individual needs. | Risk that homophobia could prevent people of different sexual orientations making full use of a community facilities, | | <p>Information on this can collected as part of assessment and care planning.</p> <p>The proposal is intended to provide people with more choice and ability to access community facilities. For example, no specific LGBT+ groups are run at day support services at present, and the new proposal may support people who want to, to access this elsewhere.</p> |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | | | <p>No service users of Providers Services are pregnant or on maternity leave. Given the age profile described earlier and nature of disability, this is unlikely to change for the majority of service users.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposal will have a disproportionately negative or positive impact on this characteristic.</p> |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Other | | | | |
| Socio-economic | | | | <p>It is not anticipated that the proposal will have a disproportionately negative or positive impact on this. All community provision for adults with support needs under the Care Act (2014) is subject to financial assessment, in line with the Charging Policy in adult social care.</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| | | | | |
| Parents/ Carers | | | | Closing some Provider Services, and not opening others does potentially have an impact on unpaid carers and it will be essential to ensure that individuals needs continue to be met and continued support provided to carers to enable them to continue in their role. |
| People with different Gender Identities e.g. Gender fluid, Non-Binary etc | | | | It is not anticipated that the proposal will have a disproportionately negative or positive impact as it relates to gender identities. |

10.6 Procurement implications

After the care assessments have been completed any procurement activity required will follow all appropriate procurement regulations.

10.7 Workforce implications

The recommendations proposed will have an impact on the current workforce.

The current workforce includes a mixture of full time and part time contracts, across a structure of 61 posts, ranging from level 3 to 8.

If the recommendations are accepted it is possible that up to 61 posts will be redundant, in which case, the proposed considerations for any subsequent workforce implications are:

- First point of consideration would be to redeploy staff through a skills analysis to ascertain transferable skills to roles where skills are considered to be similar. This could then be utilised to review the existing range of relevant vacant posts across the council. For example, Early Years have high vacancies and turnover of staff. This could be explored to ascertain if day centre staff could fulfil these vacant roles; supporting with training and education where this transfer of skills is feasible. Any new posts introduced to manage a new way of operating will also be included in this skills review.
- Second point of consideration, for those staff for whom training is not feasible, would be to review all vacant posts across the council and consider trials in suitable alternative roles, in line with council redeployment guidance.
- Final consideration would be to consider redundancy in line with the council management of organisational change. There may also be some staff who may be eligible to access their pension, if the above options are exhausted.

TUPE considerations:

If the council received proposals or a bid via Commissioning arrangements, this is an option, however at this early stage the council does not have this option to duplicate the kind of provision currently operated by SBC. As the alternative options for clients begin to scope, this as a potential consideration. At present, SBC is not looking for an alternative provider to run the services. The current proposals mean we are keen to move away from a more traditional day centre model.

10.8 Property implications

If the recommendations are agreed the buildings being used by these services will close and will be available for disposal or alternative use by the councils property services.

11. Appendices

Consultation Summary

12. Background Papers

None

Consultation activity

The public consultation on SBC's Provider Services was launched on the 5th July 2021 and closed on the 6th August 2021. There were three surveys made available:

- one for parents and carers of people who access services
- one for individuals that access the services themselves (in Easy Read format)
- one for Providers/Support Services (either SBC or other external organisations)

Questions were worded slightly different for each group but sought to understand what was important about the services that people access? what had been the impact of Covid-19? and how could services potentially be delivered differently?.

To support the survey 4 focus group sessions were organised. These were held over Zoom to reduce the need for travel, to take less time out of people's days as we are aware many families and carers work and also to minimise contact for those people concerned about Covid-19. The sessions were organised on the following dates.

- 28th July for parents and carers of people who access services
- 3rd August for people who access Respond
- 4th August for people who access Day Services
- 6th August for people who access Day Services

All sessions were attended by a representative from Slough Advocacy so that additional support could be offered both during the session and afterwards, should people need it.

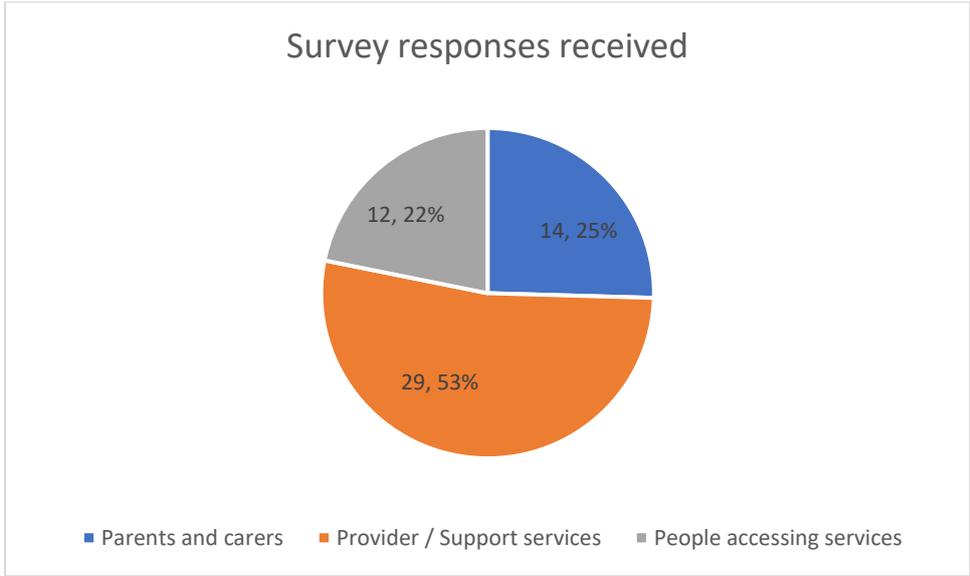
To ensure that as many people engaged with the consultation as possible a number of activities took place:

- An electronic version of the survey was made available on SBCs website
- People who access SBCs provider services were sent a letter to advise them of the consultation as well as a paper copy of the survey
- Telephone calls were made to people who access Provider Services to check that they had received the letter, the survey and they were also given the opportunity to feedback directly over the phone and / or to book on to a focus group session
- Follow up phone calls were made to those people we had not been able to speak with during the initial call

Survey Responses

In total 55 responses were received to the online survey, no paper copies were received. 25% of responses were from parents and carers, 22% from people who access services and 53% from Providers / Support services.

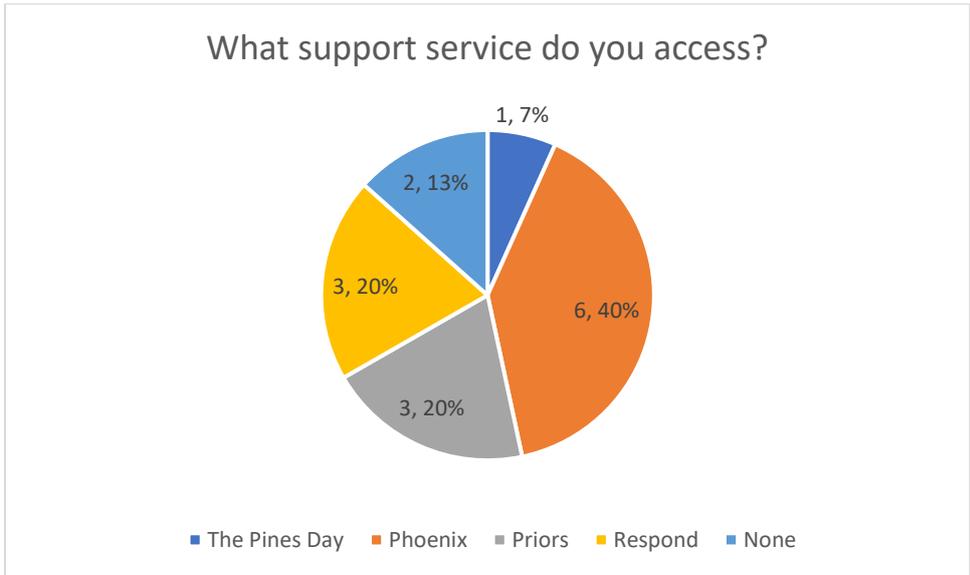
Survey responses received



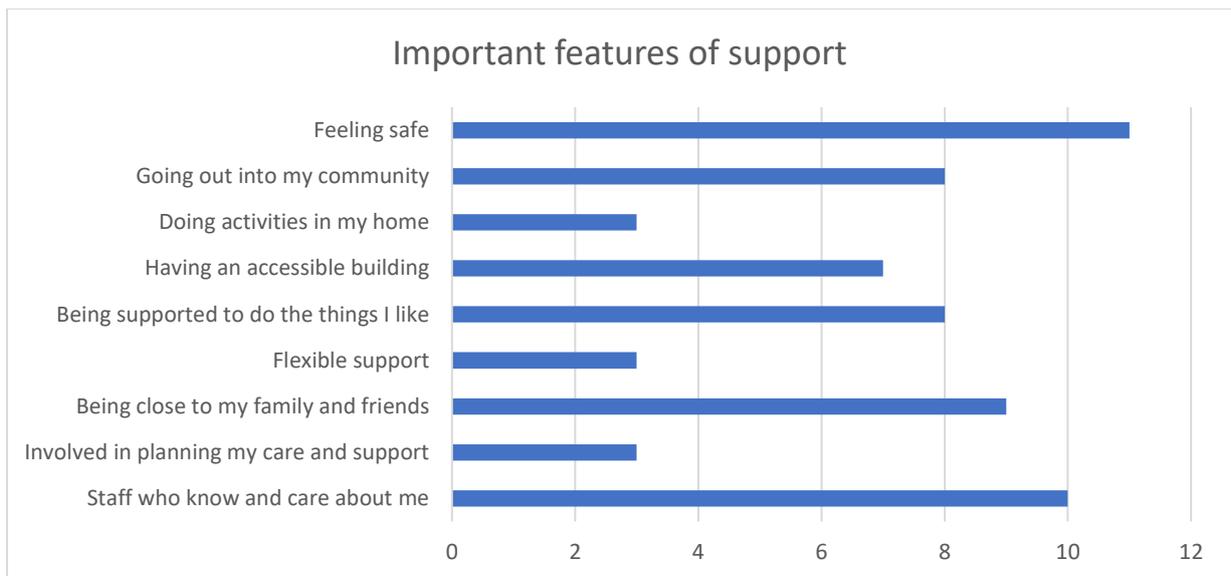
Survey responses - Individuals who access services

Of the 12 people who accessed services, 40% attended the Phoenix Day Centre, 20% attended Priors Day Centre, 20% accessed Respond, 7% accessed the Pines and 13% accessed none of those listed.

What support service do you access?



People were asked to choose 5 things that are most important to them about the care support they receive. The top 3 identified were *feeling safe* with 11 votes, *staff who know and care about me* with 10 votes and *being close to my family and friends* with 9 votes. With the lowest responses (3) received for *'being involved in planning my care and support'*, *'having support that is flexible to me'*, and *'doing activities in my home'*.



When asked what people liked or didn't like about their support and what they would like more support with a number of key themes came through:

- Socialising with friends

'I enjoy taking part in group activities with my friends'

- Doing a range of activities, including developing skills and increasing independence

'Going to phoenix day centre allows me interact with friends who I otherwise would not see. It stimulates me, gives me exercise and helps with my social skills'

'I'm bored with the online meetings. The activities are always similar'

- Having a routine was important and inconsistent support was seen as a negative

'During pandemic I have PAs, bubbles and online meetings. I like my PAs but they change, which I don't like. I like people in my bubble but it's only 2 hours'

- Feeling safe

'.....having great care staff a familiar environment safety and routine'

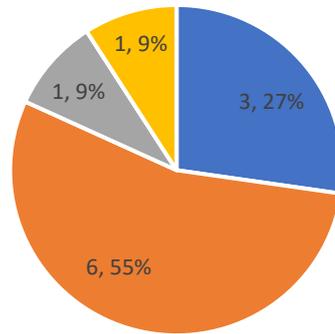
- Returning to services

'I am supposed to get respite (Respond) once a month but not had any in nearly 3 years so some of that again would be very helpful'

'Going to the day centre ASAP so I can see my friends'

When people were asked about the choice of activities to do during the day 55% reported that there was not much choice, 27% said there was lots of choice, 9% said there was nothing to do and 1% was unsure.

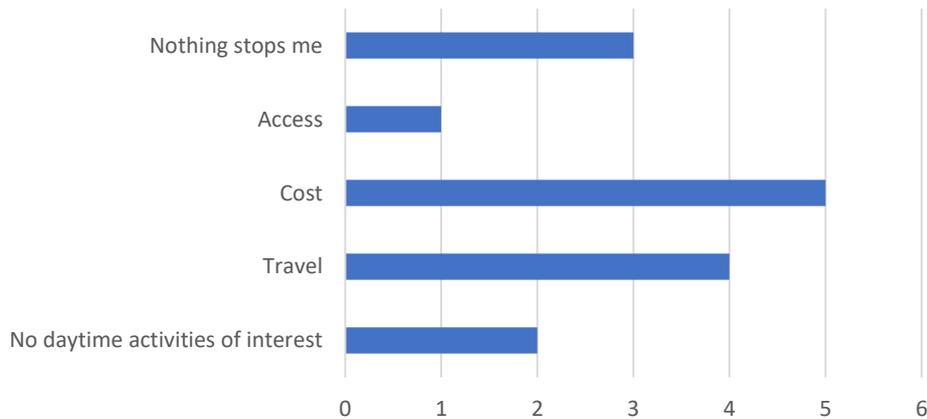
Are there lots of things to do during the day?



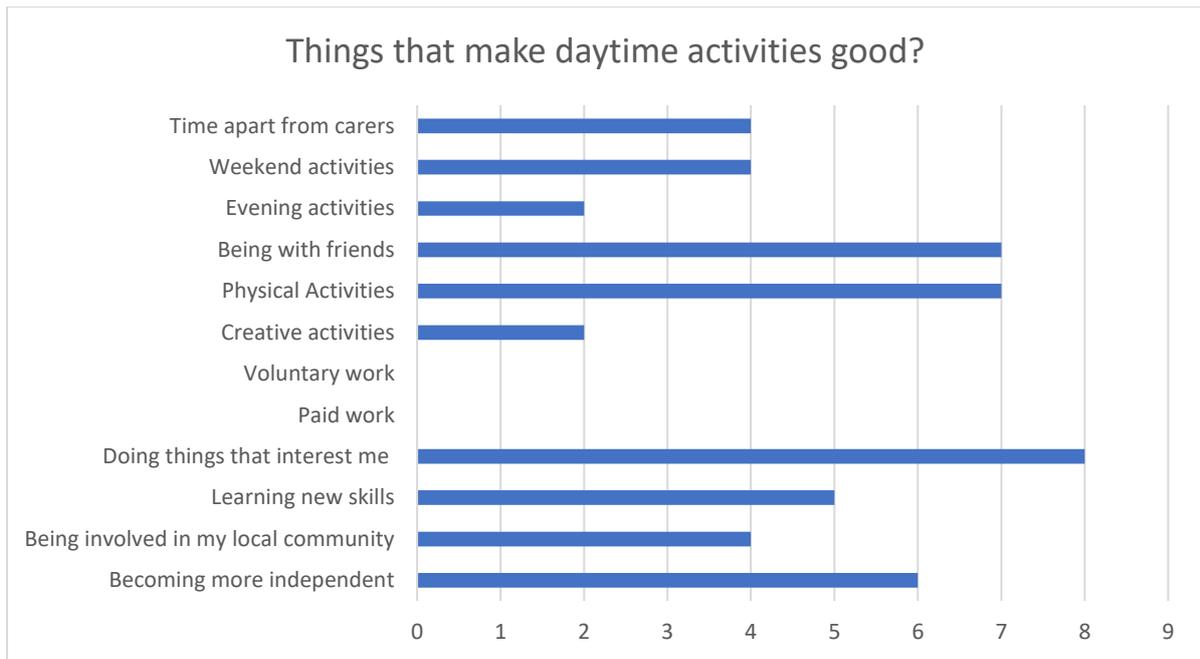
■ Lots of Choice ■ Not much choice ■ Nothing to do ■ Not sure

When asked what stops people from accessing the activities they want to do 13% of people were concerned about cost and 26% were concerned about transport. For those individual's who selected 'other' comments were focussed on the need to have support with them and how this can sometimes limit what they do, 'As my carers are home carers they do not have any idea what to do with my days out. They need to know where the activity are and how to access them'.

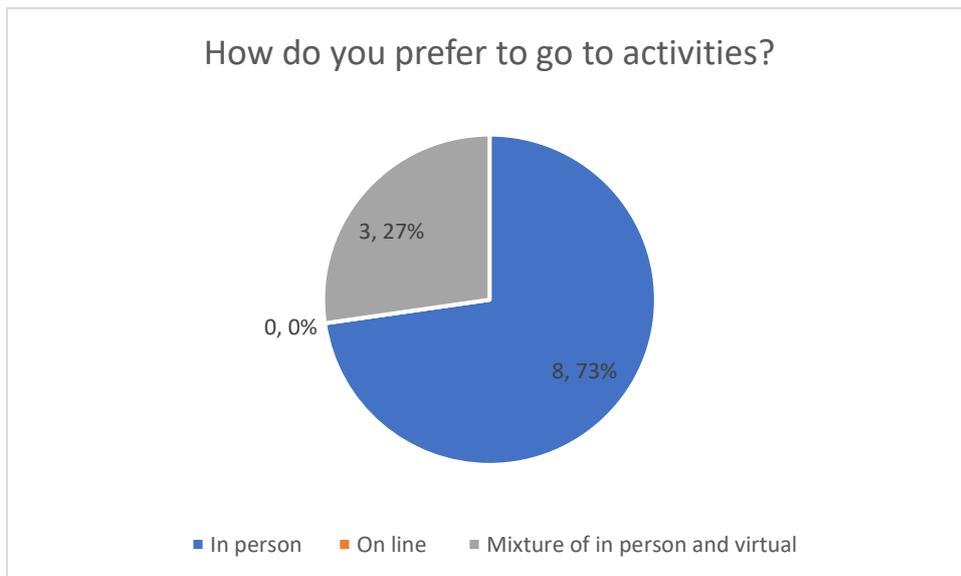
What stops you from doing the activities you want to do?



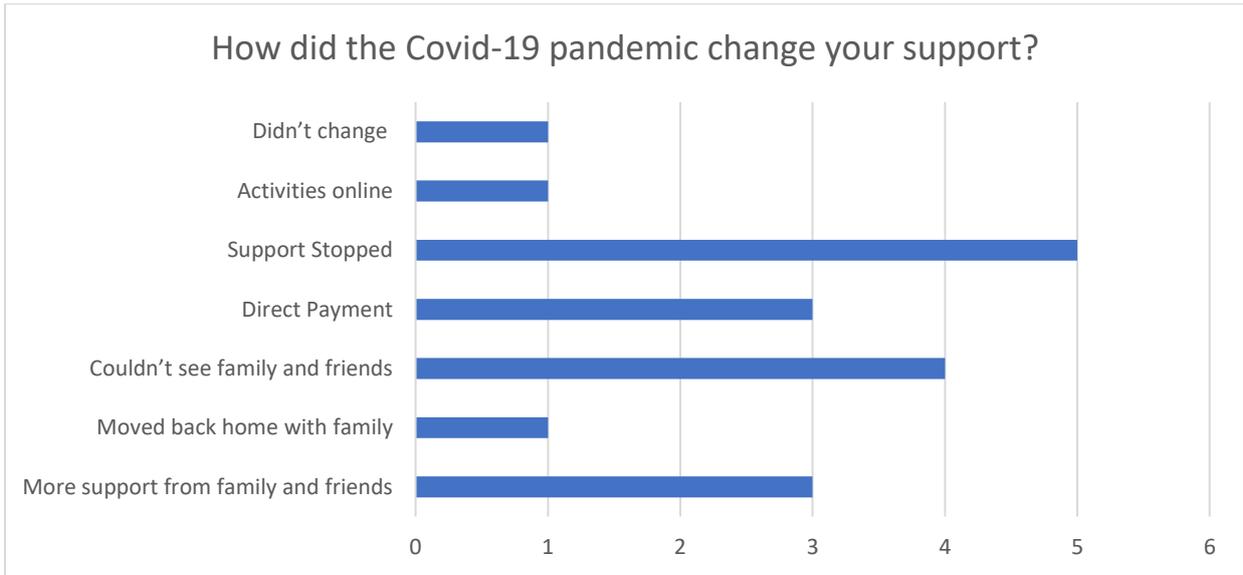
When asked to tick 5 things that make daytime activities good, as with previous comments the top three things picked were *doing things that interest me*, *being with friends* and *doing physical activities*. Voluntary work and paid work were not selected by anyone.



The majority of respondents (73%) indicated that they prefer activities that are in person, which corresponds with comments highlighting the importance of being with friends. 27% people responded to say that they would like a mixture of online and face to face.



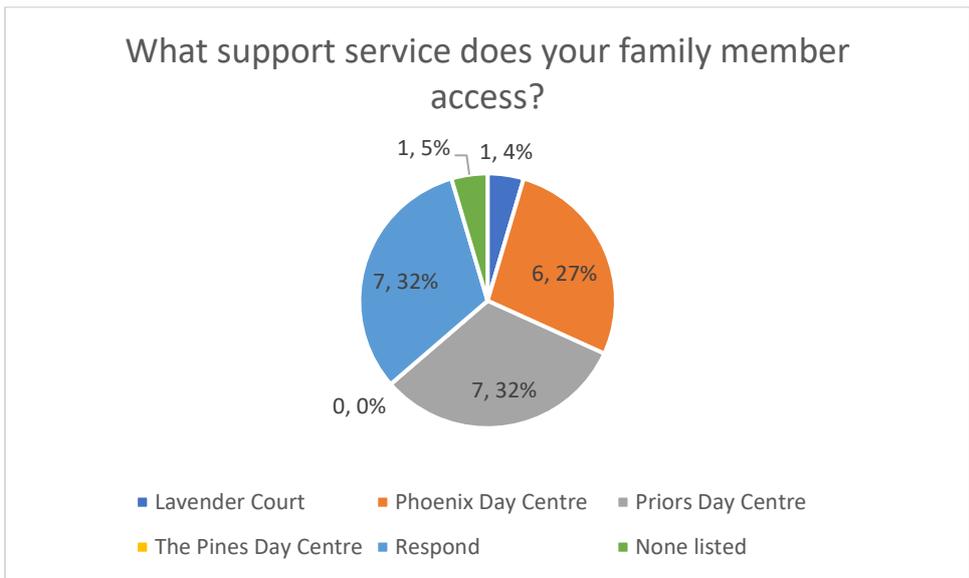
Other free text questions asked, focused on the impact of Covid-19 and how it had changed people's support both for the good and bad. The majority of people (28%) commented that their support had stopped, 22% indicated that they had been unable to see family and friends, 17% had received a Direct Payment and 17% had received more support from family and friends.



People’s responses were unanimous in that covid-19 had not improved their support in any way and comments highlighted the negative impact that the changes and loss of routine had had on people’s mental health and well-being. For example, *‘The routine changes often. The support from bubbles and PAs changes. I feel lonely and isolated staying more time at home. I can’t see most of my day centre friends and carers in person. I miss interactions with my friends. I miss my wider family. I miss stable routine of day centre. There are more days I feel anxious and upset’*. People also commented that they would like services to reopen and know what will happen next, *‘I would like to know when my day centre opens’*.

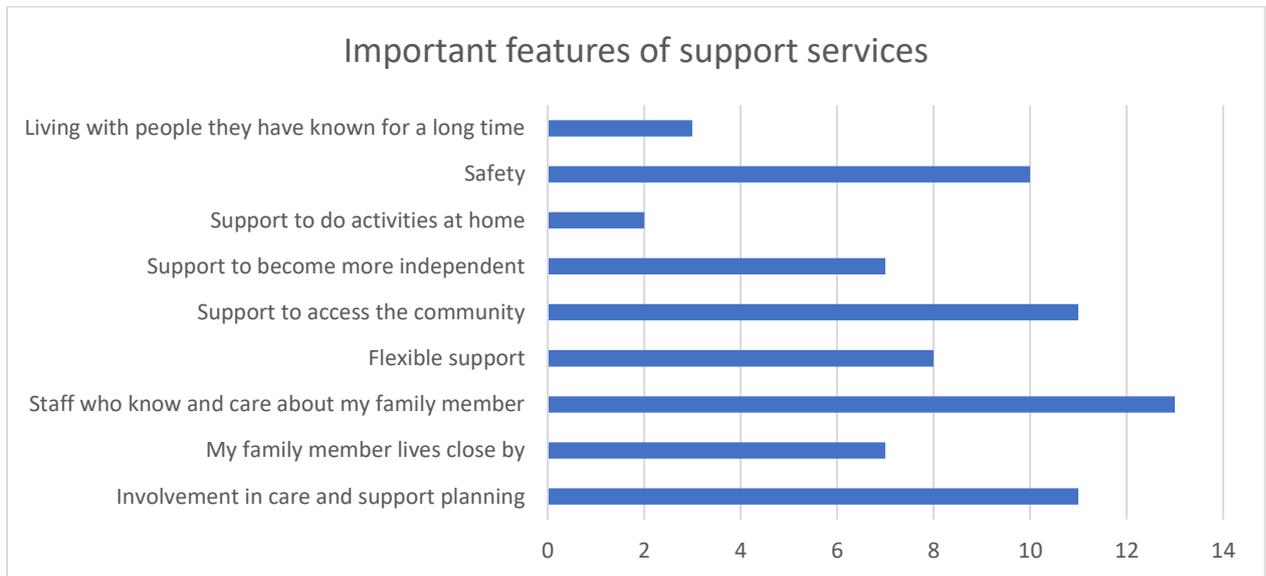
Survey responses - Parents and Carers

Of the 14 parents and carers that responded to the survey, 32% of their family members accessed Priors Day Service, 32% Respond, 27% Phoenix Day Centre, 5% Lavender Court and 5% stated none of those listed. There were no responses for the Pines Day Service.

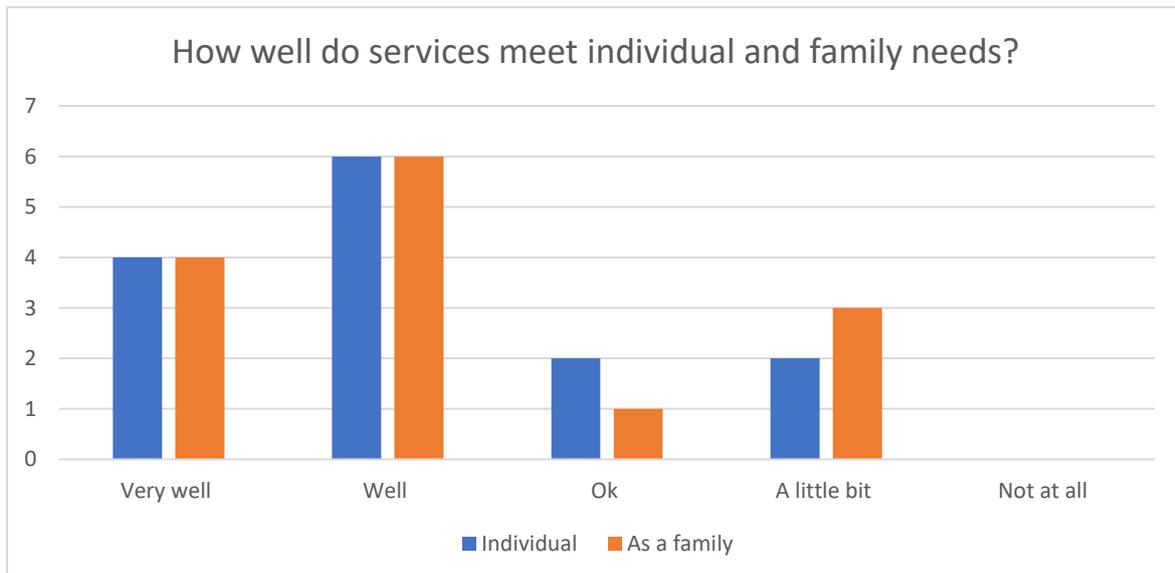


Families and carers were also asked to choose the 5 things that are most important to them about the care and support that their family member receives. The top three identified where *‘staff who know and care about my family member’* with 13 votes, *‘that my family member is supported to*

access the community’ with 11 votes, and *‘being involved in care and support planning for my family member’*, also with 11 votes. *‘That my family member is supported to do activities at home’* received the fewest votes with 2.



When asked about the quality of services and how well the services a) meet the needs of their family member who accesses them and b) meet the needs of their family as a whole. The majority responded well or very well for both.

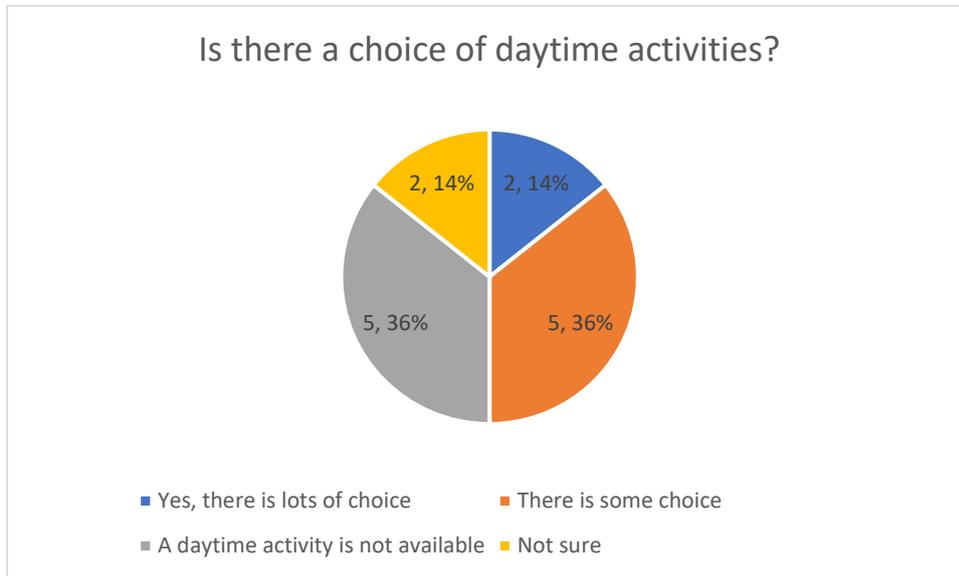


This was supported in the free text comments, that asked parents how services could be changed to provide the right opportunities for their family member and their family as a whole?

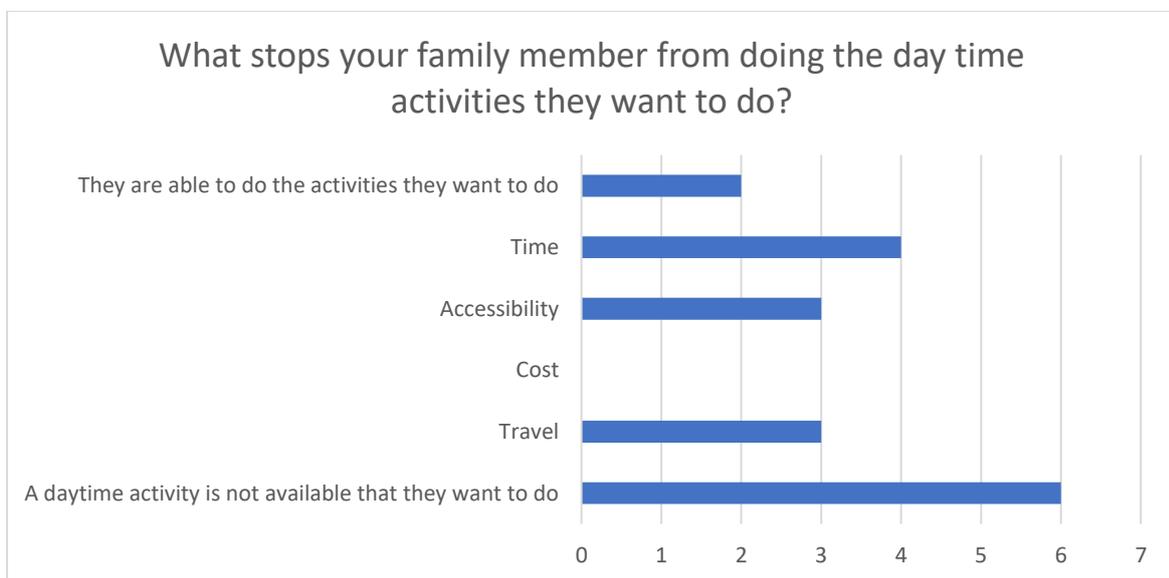
‘The Phoenix and Respond provided us with reliable, consistent, predictable care and support. This was the best care package in terms of meeting their and our family needs’

‘The day service that was used by my family member is very vital for the social integration with their friends. Also when they are at the centre we as a family get a break. Even a few hrs means a lot.’

Parents and carers were asked to comment on what their family member does during the day and if there was a choice of day time activities. 36% felt there is some choice and 36% said a daytime activity is not available. 14% responded that there was lots of choice. This demonstrated an inconsistency of awareness of services and activities available in the local area, similar to the responses from people who access services themselves



When asked what prevents their family member from doing the day time activities they want to do. The majority of responses (33%) said that an activity was not available, 22% commented that activities were not available at a time that suited them, and 17% responded that accessibility both in terms of the building and transport was an issue.



For those parents and cares that responded 'other' use of PAs was mentioned but it was highlighted that they cannot always support people to do the things they want to do or support activities with friends. *'Access to day centre where our family member can take part in activity with their friend (as oppose to be taken alone with PA).,Some PAs cannot swim, some other cannot drive, which makes access to the community activities limited or impossible'*. In relation to Lavender Court specifically, the requirement of additional staff was commented, as additional support is required to facilitate access the community and to take part in activities.

Other questions asked of parents and carers focused on the impact of covid-19 and the availability of services. The key themes that came through the responses received were:

- Services have stopped, placing additional pressure on families

‘Caring for family member 24/7. No break at all. No where to go. No public services open. No support given. Only service is emergency respite but all the way in reading, which is not local at all’

- Respite and day services were closed prior to covid-19 and families have been without a suitable alternative for a long period of time which is also increasing pressure on families

‘Short breaks are an absolute lifeline for families of young adults with learning disabilities’

- Family members who access services have lost the opportunity to socialise with friends and engage in activities

‘My family member has learning difficulties. Staying home so much is very lonely. They are losing their socialising skills that a group setting gives’

- Parents and carers want services to re-open and better communication about next steps

‘Local services to reopen Clear communication with dates. Everytime you speak to someone it’s different. A newsletter’

- There are not enough alternative services to access, covid Bubbles provided some respite but were not always appropriate or reliable and PAs are not an adequate solution

‘Not all places in Slough have hoist changing facilities. Where can people with disabilities safely socialise with their peers on a regular basis and access a range of activities.’

‘The alternative of bubbles are inherently unpredictable and insufficient. They are often late and cancelled at short notice. They often last only about 2 hours at a time. All this doesn’t allow us to plan around them’

‘The PA can never assure this level of support the day centres offer. There is very little scope to change the PA system to achieve comparable level of reliability, stability and diversity of activities provided by day centres.’

Focus Group Feedback - Summary of themes

All focus group sessions had people sign up to attend apart from the session on the 3rd August which was aimed at people who accessed Respond. On the day, less people than anticipated joined in the sessions, however, there was often more than one person from each family and individuals who accessed services were either represented or accompanied by a family member.

| Focus Group Session | Parents & Carers (28 th July) | People accessing Respond (3 rd August) | People accessing Day Services (4 th August) | People accessing g Day Services (4 th August) |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| No. of people signed up | 10 | 0 | 11 | 10 |
| No. of attendees | 5 | 0 | 6 | 7 |

As with the survey the focus group sessions considered what was important for people and what had been both the negative and positive impacts of Covid-19. People engaged fully in the sessions and provided valuable feedback that gives a greater depth of understanding and support for many of the

points raised in the written survey. Following the session, the information gathered was sorted into key themes in response to the questions asked:

1. What is important for the people using these services?

Theme A - Structure:

- Having somewhere to go, out of the house with a structure, purpose, and routine.
- Familiarity and trust with activity, location, and people.
- Reliability to allow carers to have a routine too and work – this is critical.
- Easy to access wraparound support (transport)
- Adults want to do things independently, in a safe environment.
- Safe, secure and accessible (facilities and all-weather)

Theme B - Activities:

- Social Interaction and face-to-face contact.
- Spending time with peers of similar abilities.
- Variety of activities, matched to individual ability to build self-esteem and confidence.
- Physical activities/Exercise to help with weight management.
- Stimulation & relaxation

Theme C - Support Network:

- Interacting with friends and carers, building relationships.
- Qualified, approachable staff with experience.
- Parent/carer support network. “Knowing that you’re not alone, and seeing other families, is invaluable.”
- Parents / Carers worked on things with staff and achieved things together – good, steady progress.
- Great source of information for more than just the care.
- Opportunity for carers to recharge batteries, otherwise they feel drained.

2. During COVID, what did you miss?

- Huge impact on mental health due to lack of routine and stimulation, missing friends and staff, and being isolated at home.
- Also, physical health impact mentioned by quite a few people in terms of lack of exercise, weight gain and other weight-related health issues.
- Communication was poor. Lack of contact from Council or support services was mentioned in 2 groups and carers felt abandoned, alone and forgotten.
- Hard to explain to someone with learning disabilities what is happening when the routine goes. Social interaction out of the home, in a familiar friendship group was very much missed by all.

- Key point that COVID was not an opportunity for new experiences. Carers, and people accessing services previously, just coped...this was not a positive experience for most.
- Bubbles were not consistent, long or regular enough for people's reliance on routines, including to support parent/carer working arrangements, or to be able to plan around them.
- Online sessions ok for some for socialising, "would send parents out the room for her own time with friends!".
- Bubble activities were outside so; weather/transport/carer reliant and didn't always feel it was safe.
- Huge issues with toileting on a day out and for safety, in terms of mobility.

3. What is it people enjoy and want to do?

- Sports (Ball games, Trampolining, Horse riding)
- Arts and crafts
- Games (Bingo, Snooker, Darts)
- Gardening and planting things
- Photography
- Group outings (Bowling, Picnic, Shopping, Garden centre visit)
- Life skills – Using the computer, learning to make tea and sandwiches
- Dance, Music, Singing, Sensory sessions
- Massage
- Socialising with other people
- Full day out with lunch and tea, return at the end of a full day, happy.
- "My son's happiness is interacting with other people of same abilities".

Views on Direct Payments / PAs

- Limited faith as knowledge is so limited and 'finding right person is a job in itself'. Perception that you don't get the same level of care from agencies.
- "Come into our world and see what it's like. No good giving us the money, we don't know where to find options and or have time or energy or health left to find it."
- Very few examples where family found it quite helpful as had same carers for years and they are more flexible and can work together. Depends on the relationship with carers. It does give more flexibility and has worked quite well. Continuity of the carer is important. Can work for some people, everybody is different.
- Not enough info available on this, to encourage the usage or expanding the options and particularly around non-home-based care options.

- Some tried but had poor applicants and couldn't get assurances on reliability, safeguarding, personal security and safety.
- Consistency of care is less, so behaviour can deteriorate, and it is really hard for parents with jobs.
- Confusion over impact on benefits and if you can't find the help, you lose the money.
- Value for Money is questioned.

Other feedback captured, that was recurring in each session was also grouped in to themes:

Communication:

- Communication over the last 18 months has been perceived as very poor.
- It is not understood why the centres have not re-opened if they are covid-friendly or why no reasonable alternative is offered now?
- An explanation of what is happening, and the options is needed in simple terms. Not the inconsistent message from various points of contact and lots of rumours creating uncertainty and anxiety.
- People want to work collaboratively to work out a sustainable solution. "This has been coming for longer than covid in Slough".
- People need to understand what SBC's plan is, so they can make their own plans.
- Very vulnerable people in the community don't feel they have a voice.

Financial Position

- "Where is the financial accountability from SBC?" "Why refurbishing the centres to close them?"
- "The Council needs to stop spending money on roads, houses, etc and taking facilities from the vulnerable people with no voice to pay for it." Why is this a business decision to economise, over prioritising a vulnerable person's needs?
- How is this efficient long term when it will create bigger issues further down the line for more complex care for the vulnerable, caring for elderly carers, people having to give up work, etc?

Alternative Options:

- People's needs may have changed considerably over the past 18months, how do we know what's available to support these new needs, both now and in the future?
- What the alternatives the Council Leader suggested in his letter to the family who raised the petition?
- What does 'in the community' mean?
- What if the alternatives don't cater for your needs?

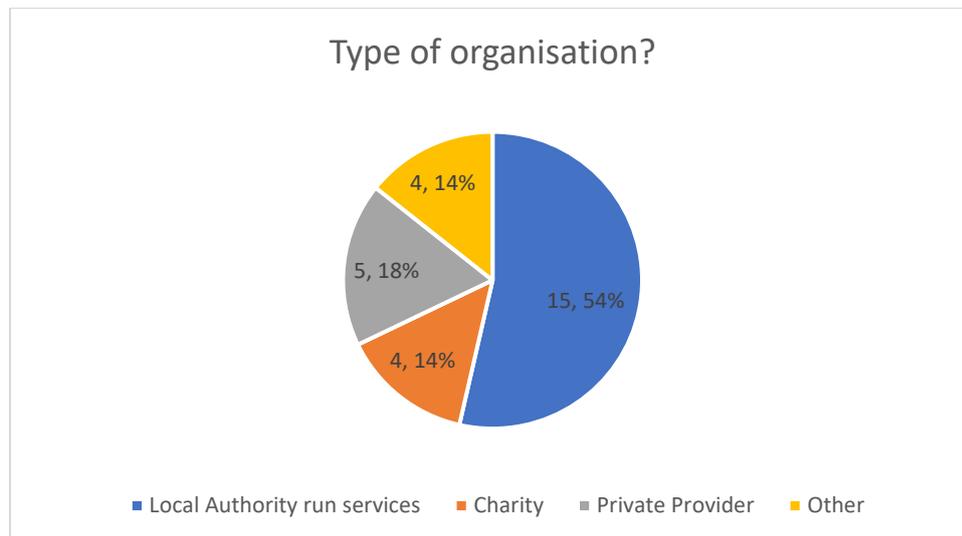
Welfare:

- Where is the equality consideration when closing the centres increases inequality for vulnerable people?

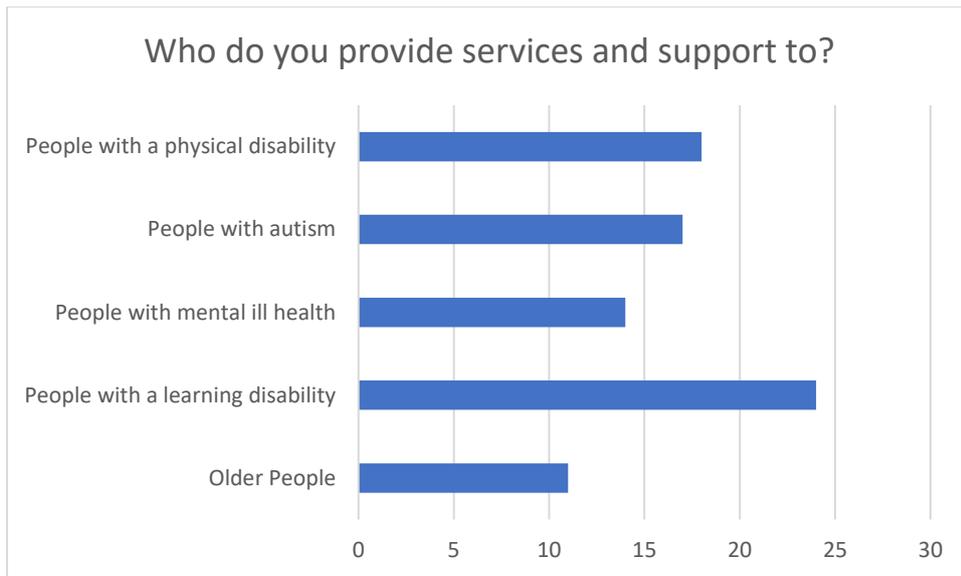
- How are the mental health needs of these vulnerable adults being considered and understood? You are compromising their quality of life.
- The places in the day centres were given based on people’s assessments so you should open the day centres and give them what they need.
- What happens if a carer can’t help if they have their health issues? There is no supporting infrastructure.
- What help and support is there for carers, mentally, physically, and financially?
- “Respite care is impossible to get now so we only have the day centre. If the Council take that away, we have nothing.”

Survey responses - Provider / Support Services

Of the 29 responses received from provider / support services, 54% were from Local Authority ran services, 18% were private sector providers, 14% were from a charity and a further 14% were classed as ‘other’ which included the NHS.



When asked who they provide support and services to, the majority of responses were for people with learning disabilities, however, from the supporting comments it was clear to see that many of the support services that responded provide support across a range of client groups.



The types of support that were described in the free text included supported living, residential and nursing care, emergency respite, homework, employment service for adults with disabilities and day centres. The support provided to access activities included activities coming in to settings and supporting people to go out into the community and the opportunities described included arts and crafts, music, horse riding and developing life skills and reflected the offer that SBC Day Centres provided pre-lockdown.

As with the surveys for parents and carers and people who access services, a number of questions were asked in relation to the impact of Covid-19 both positive and negative and how services could be changed, to provide the right opportunities for the people they support. From the free text responses a number of themes were identified. The negatives included:

- The impact of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of staff, service users and families

‘The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic affected many service users, their families were concerned about the reduction or removal of support since the beginning of lockdown; amongst people with learning disabilities increased social isolation was reported. This was compounded by digital exclusion, and the mental health impact this is having on people with learning/intellectual disabilities. Emerging evidence of the impact on staff mental wellbeing led to staff feeling tense and uneasy or worried’

- The reduction in opportunities and limited resources in Slough

‘The day centre being closed has provided no positives for the people I support, there are no activities and facilities in the community for the people I support who have profound disabilities and very little for the more able people.’

‘The lack or limited availability of community services (including face to face lunch clubs, day centre and other regular and structured activities for individuals and groups) has had a huge impact on their physical and psychological/mental, well-being as well as on their family carers' well-being (with increased experience of stress and distress)’

- The shift to on-line

‘virtual sessions are not accessible for all as some people do not have the necessary equipment to be able to join in. They are also very difficult to maintain engagement in the session. You need to have a

family member available to set up the session but to also remain present so they can help encourage the engagement throughout'

- The challenges to adapting services and the importance of a building base

'We do not have enough buses for everyone and not all staff can drive the larger minibuses. Community sessions have been limited due to weather. Throughout the pandemic we were not allowed to go indoors, so our only options were parks which is not ideal in the rain. Moving forward I don't feel that there enough places in Slough that are suitable for adults with disabilities. Building based day services really is the best way forward.'

The positives included:

- Engaging people online who wouldn't usually use technology

'Older Adults have shown us that they can learn about and engage with digital solutions, often with kind input from their Carers/Family Members'.

Suggested changes and alternative offers included:

- Reopen services and / or ensure that services are available for people who need them

'To reopen day services to allow us to continue to provide a service for vulnerable adults'

'Provide more outreach work, provide 1:1 support for the elderly, provide social settings for the vulnerable to attend like day centres and lunch clubs'

- Utilise existing SBC resources for the wider community, income generation as well as expanding the current offer

'Maybe the (SBC) building could be opened up more as a community facility, with the rooms being rented out. It would be a tragedy and a crime if such a fantastic building is not used. Time and a lot of money has been spent on this project, it needs to be used and treasured'

'....Opportunities for volunteering, training within the Day Service need to be more explored...'

- Ensure that changes are underpinned by a person centred approach and based on individuals needs

'Person Centred Planning needs to be at the very centre of the service and consequently and consistently be the basis for all planning and actions'

'Many need to be re-assessed as their conditions deteriorated eg mobility, personal care support etc'

- Have virtual and face to face options but be aware of those without online access

'Virtual activities have been a real lifeline, as have more virtual/techology focused support. We do not believe this should or would ever replace face-to-face contact but a blended approach actually provides more engagement opportunities for those supported'

- Better communication with people affected

'....clients, families and carers need to have a clarity of the situation and to be able to make an informed choice based on true and realistic facts'

A number of Providers also provided their organisational details:

- Grin Care Services
- Apple Hill
- The Riders
- Proactive Life South
- Kharis Solutions
- Beecholme
- Clean Conscience

Berkshire College of Agriculture was also referenced as an alternative solution identified during the pandemic.