

Consultation on the future of Day Services

Summary of responses received

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1 Consultation approach

- 1.1 Relatives and carers of day service users were invited to a meeting that took place at day centres on Monday 7 July 2014. At the meeting, they were advised that Cabinet would be considering a proposal to hold a public consultation on the future of day services. A staff briefing was held on the same day. A copy of the presentation was posted to relatives after the meeting.
- 1.2 Cabinet considered this proposal and approved a public consultation on the future of Day Services on 15 July 2014 and this ran from 24 July 2014 to 23 October 2014. The consultation was covered by local media, including the local newspaper (Daily Echo) and local radio (BBC Radio Solent).
- 1.3 The schedule of meetings was published on the council's website and relatives and carers of Day Service users were sent this by post with an invitation to attend. Staff were briefed so that they could give information about the proposals and the ways in which to respond. The schedule of meetings is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.4 A consultation document including a questionnaire was published on the council's website, where it could be downloaded, and was made available at all of the consultation meetings and from Day Service Staff. The consultation document is attached at Appendix B.
- 1.5 A total of 13 meetings were arranged as part of the Day Services Consultation. 3 meetings were arranged for service users, families and carers and were held at Sembal House. 10 meetings were arranged for relatives and carers and these were all held at a variety of Day Centre buildings. Representatives from Choices Advocacy and, or, Carers in Southampton attended meetings and were able to support relatives, as required. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care attended some of the meetings.
- 1.6 The format of the group meetings consisted of a presentation given by the Interim Head of Adult Services followed by a question and answer session. Notes of these meetings were taken and these are attached to Appendix A.
- 1.7 In addition to the 13 meetings held at Day Centres, two public meetings were held at the Civic Centre at 6pm on 8 August 2014 and 22 October 2014. These meetings covered the proposals regarding Day Services along with separate proposals for the future of respite services and the future of a residential home, Woodside Lodge. A verbatim record of these meetings, chaired by the Director of People, was made and this is attached to Appendix A. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care also attended these meetings, along with representatives from Choices Advocacy (both meetings) and Carers in Southampton (the second meeting).

- 1.8 In addition to the above, a meeting for carers was hosted by Southampton Mencap (carers' lunch); two meetings were held with the council's partners and care providers; and meetings in public were held at Consult and Challenge (Spectrum Centre for Independent Living) and Southampton Healthwatch. These meetings included the proposals for day services along with those for respite services and Woodside Lodge. Notes from these meetings have been placed in Members' rooms and are available on request.
- 1.9 Several briefings were also held for Members of the council and the consultation and proposals were considered at a meeting of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) on 11 September 2014. The minutes of this meeting are available online at <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=2852&Ver=4>
- 1.10 A dedicated email address was publicised on the council's website and at all of the meetings outlined above. Everyone who attended the meetings was invited to respond to the consultation in the way that best suited them, including a direct invitation to phone or write to the Interim Head of Adult Services or a member of the project team, whose contact details were included in the presentations.
- 1.11 Independent advocates from Choices Advocacy worked separately with the service users of day services and were able to record the views of 102 of its current service users, where appropriate.

2 Questionnaire responses

- 2.1 163 questionnaire responses were received related directly to day services. The majority were received by users of day services, however other respondents included members of day services staff (7), other staff member (4), carer of person using day services (2) and those interested in the ways adult services are provided in Southampton (3). 102 of the responses were received from services users with the help and support of independent advocates.
- 2.2 27 responses (16.5%), from all completed questionnaires agreed that the way the council provide day services should be reconsidered. 15 respondents did not mind or felt unable to answer the questions. The remaining 121 (74%) respondents felt that the council should not change the way day services are provided.
- 2.3 A number of questionnaire responses contained questions. These requests have been summarised and the councils response is, as follows:

Comment	Council's response
One response suggested that reasons for consultation had not been clear.	At all meetings time was taken to explain why the decision to consult has been made. These reasons include: a need to ensure that services fit with current lifestyles, promotion of independent living where individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, services need to be more flexible to ensure all needs of people are fully met, with life expectancy ever increasing a growing demand is highly likely and current provision may not be providing the best value so we want to ensure individuals, who are eligible, are supported to achieve the best outcomes for the money available.
Concerns were raised that it was not suitable to consult with service users.	Different approaches were taken on how to consult with individuals based on their needs and understanding. Individuals were supported by their families, carers, social workers and care managers and independent advocates were also used to gain the views of service users where appropriate.
It is not always suitable for serviced users to manage their own budgets.	Direct payments do required a managed approach but this is not required to be the service user themselves. They are able to receive support from relatives and carers in this matter and are also able to, if they wish, use some of their finance to buy help to manage their direct payment.

2.4 From the responses received a number of themes emerged of areas respondents felt were of particular importance. These are summarised as follows:

- The potential loss of friendship is of major concern to service users. Many service users explained that the day centres have led them to create their friendship circles and fear how they will recover this if the day centres are lost.
- Service users, relatives and carers alike explained that the activities provided by day services have both social and educational benefits to

them. They fear that alternatives will not combine both important aspects.

- The wide range of activities provided by all day centres was also discussed. Many praised the wide range and the benefits these brought. On the other hand other responses also suggested that day services need to be more flexible in the activities they provide. Further suggestions made also noted that other services in addition to day services should be provided however no detail about what these services should be was given.
- Staff are clearly seen as a valuable resource within day services. Concern was raised that staff who know service users and their needs will be lost. Furthermore some individuals expressed that these links can take a long time to be built up making them very important.
- Concerns were raised as to how service users often struggle with change and that that settling into new services can sometimes be a slow transition.
- A couple of responses suggested that the way services are already provided are innovative and “forward thinking” and suggested that the council do not provide services in a “traditional” way.
- One respondent stated “the fees are not fair and do not represent the service that clients receive”. The council’s response is that if services are changed then service users would be able to choose the services of most value to them.
- A number of respondents explained how safe the environment the day service provides makes them feel very safe – this is something they really value.
- A few respondents explained that they already use services provided by both private and public sector organisations. They explained that both had real value to them and that they enjoyed both aspects.
- A fairly large number of responses made reference to the Café provision at day centres. Many explained that the skills running the café bring are incredibly important.
- A few respondents explained that having teams based in some of the building in which day services are provided is valuable as it mean that “there is always someone around”.

3 Written responses

- 3.1 In addition to the questionnaire responses, 25 letters from a number of sources were received. The respondents included relatives of service users, carers of services users, social workers and managers contacting on behalf of service users as well as local voluntary sector groups.
- 3.2 The majority of responses were strongly in favour of ensuring day services are retained in their current state as they are viewed as a valuable service. A number of people expressed concerns about where alternatives may be sourced from should day services not be provided in their current state.

- 3.3 One respondent raised concerns with the manner in which the consultation had been conducted. The concern continued to explain finding materials on the council's website had been difficult. The respondent queried whether the consultation has been publicised well enough. The Council's response to this is that the consultation was listed on a dedicated page on the council's website. The consultation was also covered in the Daily Echo and by BBC Radio Solent.
- 3.4 Concerns were also raised that following the consultation the council should ensure they interact with those effected by the changes to ensure that their needs are being met. The council's response to this is that any service user who is eligible to receive services is entitled to a statutory review of their needs. As a minimum these reviews must be carried out annually, although the frequency of review will depend on the level of need and risk, and will be agreed with the individual and/or their carer.
- 3.5 A number of responses stated that current provisions are not flexible enough. One response stated the "flexibility is the key". Another response stated that "the current service does little to empower service users". The council acknowledges that the current service has areas for improvement and flexibility is one of those areas for development. This is one of the reasons that this consultation is being undertaken, to explore how personalised care can be better implemented within the service.
- 3.6 One response raised that the consultation process appeared to have failed to have consulted with future service users.
- 3.7 In addition to the above points raised a number of consultation responses received contained questions. These questions have been summarised and the council's response is as follows:

Comment	Council's response
Is it suitable for service users to be consulted with? Are they in a position to make informed decisions?	Different approaches were taken on how to consult with individuals based on their needs and understanding. Individuals were supported by their families, carers, social workers and care managers and independent advocates were also used to gain the views of service users where appropriate.
How will the implementation of the Care Act impact on service user and carers assessments? Do they have to be provided jointly?	The Care Act will bring changes in the way that the assessments for carers are conducted. The act does not make it a requirement for the assessment of carers and those they care for to be carried out jointly. However should both parties consent,

4 Meeting notes held at Day Services		in certain situation, the council may decide to combine the assessments.
	One response stated that “one size fits all questionnaire” was not suitable for everyone.	The council made clear that throughout the consultation a number of methods for providing feedback were provided. The questionnaire provided was just one of these methods. Other have been detailed through part one of this report.

5.1 Notes from the meetings are attached to Appendix A.

5 Public meetings held at Civic Centre

5.1 Notes from the meetings are attached to Appendix A.

6 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

6.1 The minutes of this meeting are available online at <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=2852&Ver=4>