

# DISABILITIES COMMISSIONING PLAN 2011 - 2015: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Philip Corthorne
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Social Services, Health and Housing
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<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix 1 - Draft Disabilities Commissioning Plan 2011-2015

## **1. HEADLINE INFORMATION**

<b>Summary</b>	This report provides Cabinet with feedback from the consultation that has taken place on the proposals contained within the Disabilities Commissioning Plan. The report identifies the proposed changes to the plan arising from the consultation process and seeks Cabinet approval for a number of recommendations relating to them.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	The Disabilities Commissioning Plan supports the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	Consistent with the proposed budget
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Social Services, Health and Housing
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the Report on the Disabilities Commissioning Plan consultation programme (attached as Appendix 1)
2. Approve the amendments to the Disabilities Commissioning Plan resulting from the consultation process as set out in paragraph 25 of this report
3. Authorise officers to implement the amended Disabilities Commissioning Plan and the following specific recommendations:
  - a. Develop a new resource centre for people with complex needs at the Queens Walk site;
  - b. Decommission the services for disabled people with complex needs provided currently at the Phoenix Day Centre;

- c. **Decommission Park View and Woodside Day Centres and use the sites to develop extra care supported housing for people with learning disabilities;**
- d. **Implement the proposed eligibility for transport as set out in the Disabilities Commissioning Plan and as further clarified in paragraph 25 (I);**
- e. **Implement the positive commitment from Cabinet for officers to carefully support service users through the process of change and potential uncertainty as well as work closely with parents and carers to tailor services to the needs of their sons and daughters (including the design and development of the new resource centre at Queens Walk).**

### **Reasons for recommendation**

The delivery of the Disabilities Commissioning Plan will lead to:

- Improved access to information, advocacy and advice services
- Better outcomes for people – social inclusion, promoting independence, choice and control; access to employment
- A specialist resource centre for those with the most complex needs
- A programme to transfer most other people with a learning disability to personal budgets so that with support they can purchase and arrange their own services from a range of providers in a number of community settings
- Increase the choice of services available from the voluntary sector to assist service users and carers with support planning
- Increase the extent and range of supported housing available for people in the borough people

### **Alternative options considered/risk management**

Cabinet could decide not to approve the Disabilities Commissioning Plan or to amend specific proposals contained within the Plan.

### **Policy Overview Committee comments**

The Social Services, Health and Housing Policy Overview Committee has recently undertaken a review of Personalisation and Disabilities. Within the review POC members received witness evidence from carers and disabled service users in receipt of personal budgets. The witnesses reported that personal budgets had been used to purchase social care services for the past three years and had proved to be more flexible in meeting individual needs than the traditional approach. Members acknowledged that both witnesses (including a carer) felt more supported within the new personalised arrangements.

Part of the review included a review of safeguarding arrangements within the personalised approach to social care services including the use of pre-paid cards.

### **3. INFORMATION**

#### **Supporting Information**

1. The Disabilities Commissioning Plan 2011-2015 (“The Plan”) outlines the Council’s proposals for services for people with learning disabilities and people of working age with physical disabilities.
2. At its meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 Cabinet gave in-principle approval for the Plan, subject to consultation. This report provides Cabinet with a summary of the views received during the consultation process as well as setting out a number of proposed changes to the Plan.
3. The Plan has been developed in response to the changing needs of disabled people in Hillingdon as well as the direction of travel taking place across the country, inspired by national policy directives from successive governments over the last decade.

#### **The national context**

4. National government policy has for some time been focussed on changing the lives of disabled people. Key themes have been the promotion of independence and choice via Self Directed Support. In future, all adults who are eligible for social care will have a personal budget in order to ensure they have more control over how their needs are met.
5. In December 2007 the Government published ‘Putting People First’; proposals for the transformation of adult social care. The introduction of “personalisation” meant that service users could take control of their own care through a support plan funded by a personal budget calculated according to their need. This prompts a gradual shift in the role of statutory services and social care staff from providing care directly to one that is more focused on ensuring that people have access to advocacy, information, advice and ‘brokerage’: Helping people to arrange their own services and make their own choices.
6. Two years later the Government published ‘Valuing People Now’, a strategy for people with learning disabilities which set the agenda for health, housing, employment, education and community inclusion. Personalisation would be embedded within all local authority services. The vision of people with disabilities leading fulfilling lives with opportunities to study, work and enjoy leisure and social activities was a powerful one which raised the sights of service commissioners and providers beyond the scope of traditionally defined services.
7. In February 2011 the Government published ‘Think Local, Act Personal: the Next Steps for Transforming Adult Social Care’, which linked ‘Putting People First’ with the new Vision for Adult Social Care (published Oct 2010) to assert that councils, health bodies and providers need to work more collaboratively to personalise and integrate service delivery across health and adult social care; and make vital public funding go further. The new Vision for Adult Social Care sets out a new agenda based on a power shift from the state to the citizen, by committing to extend the rollout of personal budgets, increase preventative action in local communities, keeping people independent and helping to build the Big Society.

#### **Transforming social care for people with disabilities**

8. Social care services must be transformed in order to ensure that people with disabilities are enabled to be active within the community.

- People with disabilities can be disconnected from their communities, without any meaningful programme of vocational, social, leisure or learning activities.
- People with learning disabilities can find it difficult to use local mainstream services such as leisure centres, sports facilities, libraries, cinemas, restaurants and shopping centres. While inaccessible facilities can be a practical obstacle, there has also been a lack of accessible information as well as a lack of appropriate support. The tradition of providing a specific building in which activities for people with learning disabilities can take place is not an acceptable replacement for community based activities.
- Another challenge is how to provide meaningful learning opportunities for people with learning disabilities who want to re-enter adult education in later life or take up learning programmes for recreation.
- Ensuring that people are able to use public transport safely and easily and with confidence is a critical part of the changes that need to be made. Being able to use public transport is vital in connecting people to jobs, services and social networks. The lack of access to good, regular and accessible transport seriously impacts on people's ability to get and keep jobs and friends or get an education.

9. To address these issues local authorities across the country are undertaking a major programme of transforming social care services as well as the lives of the disabled people who use them.

### **The local context**

10. The Disabilities Commissioning Plan is the latest development in a ten year programme of modernising services for people with disabilities.

- *The Best Value Review of Accommodation and Residential Care for Adults with Learning Disabilities 2001* - Hillingdon was noted as having a high level of in-house accommodation with an over reliance on out of borough residential care compared to other authorities.
- *The Joint Review in 2003* underlined Hillingdon's reliance on traditional services and confirmed that the council was the second highest provider of residential care for people with learning disabilities in the country.
- *Supported housing developments* were achieved in the period 2002-2005 with a number of new housing opportunities for people with learning disabilities including Horton Road in 2002, Hyde House in 2004 and Herne Close in 2005.
- *The Learning Disability Modernisation Programme (A Strategy for Housing, Accommodation, Care and Support 2005-10)* was approved by Cabinet in 2005 with a number of components including increasing the range of housing, care and support options for people with disabilities; encouraging more independence and reduce over reliance on residential care; providing more opportunities for people with disabilities to live in an independent tenancy with floating staff support; improving the quality of council buildings providing services or accommodation; shifting the focus of residential care towards people with complex disabilities and, above all, enabling people with disabilities to express their preferences about the options available to them through person-centred planning.

- *Opportunities For All: the council's strategy for day and employment services 2006-2011* was approved by Cabinet in 2006. The strategy identified that while the number of people with a learning disability was growing, the number of people attending council provided day services had been incrementally declining over the previous five years. The move away from day centre services was particularly evident amongst younger adults who preferred being supported to access colleges, community facilities, paid employment opportunities or community outreach services through the use of direct payments.

## **Transforming services in Hillingdon**

11. There is still much to be achieved however and Hillingdon is less advanced in some areas than comparator authorities.

12. Compared to other areas of London, Hillingdon has the highest gross spend on social care for adults with learning disabilities and the fifth highest spend on adults with physical and sensory disabilities. The high spend is the result of more people being placed in expensive and often inappropriate residential and nursing care placements than in neighbouring boroughs, where there is greater use of supported housing.

13. Disabled people have said they prefer services that give them greater independence and more control over their lives and there is currently an over provision of institutional forms of accommodation. Wider housing options are required in Hillingdon including models that support independence rather than promote dependence.

14. There is a greater demand for services from the Council due to the increasing number of disabled people living in the borough, with more complex and higher levels of need. In addition, the aspirations of disabled people are changing with an increasing demand for community based services that enable people to lead more independent lives. At the same time the money available to councils is reducing and the national financial situation provides greater impetus to change the way services are delivered and take confident steps towards a modernised set of services capable of meeting people's needs for the years to come.

15. The Plan sets out a vision of how modernised social care provision can meet these challenges. Many of the proposals continue the direction of travel established over the past ten years. Disabled people will be supported to live independently in the community where this is appropriate, with housing and support services tailored to their needs. The development of more supported housing within Hillingdon will enable people to live in their own homes for as long as they wish, rather than in inappropriate institutional forms of care. Disabled people will be supported to access a far wider range of activities and opportunities which already exist in the community. Opportunities to work and be active are strongly valued by service users and will be supported by the Council in partnership with the private and third sector. The way in which these changes are realised will be influenced by the choices that disabled people make, using their personal budgets to ensure that social care services support them to live the lives they aspire to.

16. Service users already using personal budgets are choosing their own activities and making arrangements to access a variety of educational, skills development and leisure pursuits. The use of personal budgets will expand to all service users over the next year or so which will enable a tailored approach to day time activities rather than the tradition which assumes that peoples' needs can only be met from group activities within a specific building. Activities can be organised from home with increasing use of locally based, universal services such as leisure facilities, libraries and community centres as well as preventive and voluntary sector services.

This will deliver a modernised approach to meeting people's needs and an inevitable reduction in the number of people attending buildings based day centres.

17. People with learning disabilities with more complex needs will continue to require a buildings base from which they access other forms of support including universal services. It should be noted that buildings based day opportunity services for people aged 18-64 with physical disabilities are shared with older people. These services will be specifically considered by Cabinet later this year as part of a draft Joint NHS and Hillingdon Council Commissioning Plan for Older People.

18. Encouraging more independent travel arrangements is a key part of the plan for the future. Many people are in receipt of DLA mobility component which is there to meet transport needs. Others have Freedom passes and motability payments towards cars. Direct council funding of transport to adult social care services will be focused on people who do not have access to these alternatives. This will enable a greater equity in transport subsidies across all users as Council funding will be focused on those people without alternative forms of transport or alternative forms of financial support.

19. Decommissioning of services no longer required will enable reinvestment in personal budgets and the development of a more tailored and more person-centred approach to social care.

### **The case for change**

20. In short, Hillingdon's approach to the provision of adult social care has been very traditional and heavily reliant on institutional care and buildings based services. There has been a tendency to refer people to existing Council provided services rather than develop a more personalised approach to delivering the outcomes that people need. The Council spends a higher proportion of its overall care budget for people with learning disabilities on institutionalised care than any other London authority, while the Council's pattern of spend related to people with physical disabilities is also far more focused on institutionalised care than is good practice. While out of step with the need to support people independently and within the community, the projected demographic changes over the coming years will also mean that the likely increase in demand from people with more complex needs will be unaffordable unless a different approach is adopted.

21. A number of specific actions are required in order to effectively respond to this set of circumstances:

- We must enable more people to be supported to make use of personal budgets to buy and arrange their own day opportunities.
- We must increase the use of universal facilities in the community e.g. by transferring activities from day centres to community centres; and make better use of local organisations.
- We must enable more people with complex needs to access the community and improve facilities in the community to make them more accessible.
- We must reduce reliance on the use of Council provided transport for people with a learning disability and support independent travel, with support from travel assistants where necessary.

- We must support more people into work, work placements and volunteering.

22. These actions will enable us to reduce reliance on day centres and provide people with a much wider and more exciting range of opportunities, whilst still retaining a buildings based resource to support users with the most complex needs as well as their carers.

### **Feedback from Consultation and Proposed Response**

23. Following the report to Cabinet in September 2011, the Council has undertaken a comprehensive consultation programme with service users, carers and other stakeholders.

24. **Appendix 1** summarises

- The key proposals from the Plan
- Feedback from the consultation process
- Response to the points raised by service users, carers, staff, voluntary and community organisations and other stakeholders during the consultation process.

25. The following summarises the changes that are being recommended to Cabinet to make to the Disabilities Commissioning Plan as a result of comments received during the consultation process:

#### *Personalisation*

- a) The role of the online directory in enabling residents to use their Personal Budgets will be widely publicised through media such as Hillingdon People, partner newsletters and posters in places such as GP surgeries. Officers are working with the West London Alliance (WLA) and developing a facility to enable service users to upload reviews of the services they are considering whether to purchase. This will act as a very powerful guide in helping people to decide how best to spend their Personal Budgets. Library staff will be able to assist people to do this where they do not have access to computers or where they need support to do so.
- b) Information will be available online and provided directly by care managers on the availability of externally provided support planning and brokerage services designed to enable residents eligible for community care services to make the best use of their Personal Budgets.
- c) Information about personalisation is being reviewed directly with service users to ensure it is clear that there are a number of options available to residents as to how they use their Personal Budgets are managed, e.g. direct payment or managed by the Council on their behalf.
- d) The Council is also in the process of reviewing communication directly with service users to ensure that clear messages are available to users, their carers and other stakeholders regarding how vulnerable adults are safeguarded in circumstances where residents are contracting directly with providers.

#### *Advice and Information*

- e) Officers will explore ways of ensuring that the information contained in the online Directory is accessible to people from Hillingdon's diverse communities. Organisations commissioned to provide information and advice (which will be primarily from the voluntary and community sector) will be accessible by residents with a range of needs. Access to services is reviewed as part of the Council's contract monitoring process.
- f) Library staff will be equipped to assist Hillingdon's diverse communities and support their independence.

- g) As part of the development of the information directory, officers are working with partner agencies as requested by respondents to link up the different directories that exist to provide a single, comprehensive directory of services. This will avoid residents having to go to different places in order to obtain the information and advice they require.

#### *Modernisation of Day Services*

- h) Officers will ensure that users and carers who have expressed an interest in being involved in the design of the Queens Walk Resource Centre will be able to contribute their views.
- i) In partnership with service users and carers, the Council will take forward the views that have already been provided on the key elements that need to be included within the state of the art, borough-wide specialist resource centre (including a hydro therapy pool, sensory room, snoozalem, café open to the local community and a garden area) as well as ensure that a range of services provided within the facility include therapies (such as physiotherapy, music and drama), information and advice on employment and training, and outside activities. In early deliberations on the proposed centre, officers have been considering a zoning design to enable all of these facilities to be provided.
- j) The Council will work with and support private and voluntary providers of residential care to ensure that current users of day centres have a tailored programme of community based activities.
- k) The Council will build in provision for community spaces, activities and drop in facilities within current and future extra care schemes across the borough to maximise the services and activities that are available for people with disabilities

#### *Transport*

- l) The availability of accessible transport will be considered when assessing users for the Queens Walk Resource Centre. The variety of different circumstances facing service users makes a blanket approach to travel inappropriate. However, the Council will, on a case by case basis, ensure that *every service user* assessed for the Queens Walk facility will have appropriate transport arrangements in place in order to address the concerns raised during consultation. These arrangements will be discussed and integrated into the individual's support plan.

#### *Supported Housing*

- m) The Council will work with partners to ensure that the development of supported housing schemes is accompanied by access to day activities and appropriate community equipment. This will assist with the transition as some people move from residential accommodation to more independent supported living arrangements.
- n) Arrangements with housing providers will be explored in order to address the practicalities of people moving from residential care into their own home, such as the provision of furniture packages.
- o) Officers will create working groups of disabled residents and their carers to discuss proposals for supported housing schemes.
- p) Officers will explore the potential for enabling residents to "stay the night" in a supported housing scheme to help with the decision-making concerning moving

#### *Transition from Children's to Adults' Services*

- q) Officers will establish regular open meetings to give young people and their carers the opportunity to be informed about developments in meeting the needs of young people in transition from children's to adults' services. The frequency of meetings will be determined in consultation with young people and their carers.



## **Financial Implications**

26. The savings quoted in the September Cabinet report of £4,479k are net and make due allowance for replacement costs. The savings are calculated on an assumed rate of transfer of people from residential placements into community based accommodation over the period up to March 2015. They take into account an assumed level of on-going need for transport; a building based resource centre; the expected value of individual personalised budgets; rising demographics, as well as the ongoing cost of maintaining a number of people in residential placements.

27. The model has been refreshed as part of the current MTFF and now reflects more certainty with regards to the new build supported accommodation programme. The model estimates that the number of people in long term residential placements with a disability will fall over the 3 year period to March 2015 from 261 to 107. This represents a gross reduction in spend of £16.8m compared with the 'do nothing' option. The difference between this figure and the £4.5m MTFF saving represents the estimated on-going costs of supporting this group to live in a community based setting and absorbing rising demographic pressures.

28. It should be noted that the MTFF and associated capital programme would need to be revised if the proposed changes were to be amended. Should the current service delivery remain unchanged the demographic modelling indicates that the costs of residential and nursing care totalling £20.4m in table 2 on page 11 of the Disability plan, would rise by 17.6% to £24m by 2014/15.

## **4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

29. An equalities impact assessment has been conducted by officers on the proposed changes to social care provision for people with disabilities. The impact of the reduced provision of buildings based day services will be mitigated by a range of positive and constructive work with each service user. People will be given more control on how money is spent on social care services through the use of personal budgets and there will be greater transparency about the cost of services and how public money is used to address need. Disabled people will be supported to live independently in the community where this is appropriate, with housing and support services tailored to their needs. The development of more supported housing within Hillingdon will enable people to live in their own homes with security of tenure. Buildings-based services will continue to support people with complex needs.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

30. The comprehensive consultation undertaken is summarised on page 1 of Appendix 1.

31. The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Housing chaired a Petition Hearing on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012 attended by approximately 60 residents. The petition was signed by 1,812 people who wished to register opposition to proposals to decommission the Phoenix Centre as well as the proposals to develop a new resource centre at Queens Walk. Many of the issues raised by the lead petitioner during the hearing are reflected in the consultation report attached as Appendix 1. However, the key points raised by the lead petitioner are outlined below with a brief response to each:

*Issue 1 – The Lead Petitioner first heard of the proposals from an article in the Gazette*

Detail – As Appendix 1 details, all service users and carers were written to at the start of the consultation process. Prior to this, the modernisation of services for people with disabilities has been an ongoing issue raised with service users and carers at the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Parent Carer Reference Groups.

*Issue 2 – Only three meetings have been held with no minutes sent to attendees*

Detail – The whole list of meetings held as part of the consultation programme are listed on page 1 of Appendix 1. There were many meetings held with a variety of stakeholder groups. The vast array of comments made at these meetings, in letters and in one-to-one discussions were comprehensively recorded and used in order to prepare the consultation report. The document now acts as a formal record of the consultation process.

*Issue 3 – The proposals are a “done deal”. Parents were not asked for their opinions and no alternatives have been presented.*

Detail – Service users, carers and other stakeholders were, in a variety of ways, presented with proposals. The meetings were designed to maximise people’s ability to give their opinions (using small table based discussions that allowed everyone to speak openly for example). The proposals are the result of a carefully considered programme of modernisation with a variety of elements, each linked but also able to be considered individually such as the increased use of personal budgets, the broadening of services for people with disabilities and the increased use of supported housing. As such, the proposals represent the direction of travel that the Council feels is most appropriate. Where a variety of options can be presented – such as the facilities that would be available at the Queens Walk site, the consultation has focused on these. As Appendix 1 demonstrates, the Council has certainly listened to and responded to people who were not in favour of the proposals.

*Issue 4 – The proposals to close day centres have arisen in order to enable the Council to fund its supported housing programme*

Detail – While the Council’s proposals are certainly that the sites for Woodside and Parkview would be used to develop supported housing for people with disabilities, it is important to establish the order of events. The proposals to decommission Woodside and Parkview were developed as part of the overall strategy to modernise services for people with learning disability and a move away from traditional buildings based services. Although a consequence of this was that the sites could be used for much needed supported housing, the driver for the proposal was the need to modernise provision.

*Issue 5 – Transport issues*

Detail – These are addressed in detail in Appendix 1.

*Issue 6 – Concern over potential under-provision linked to the estimated 70 users for Queens Walk*

Detail - The proposals for a new resource centre to serve the needs of up to 70 service users is based on the current attendance at day centres taking into account those service users living in residential accommodation that will have their needs met by the residential provider and those who will be able to access alternative activities using personal budgets. While this is an estimate and subject to individual assessment, the Council is confident that it reflects the number of people with complex needs who are likely to need a specialist resource in the medium term including the potential for a small number of young people who will be coming through the social care system. In the longer term, while there will be an increase in young people with complex needs it is unlikely they will require day centre provision due to the increased use of personal budgets.

### *Issue 7 – Standard of day activities provided within residential homes*

Detail - Residential providers are already providing alternatives to day centres. This includes a range of activities that are personally tailored to the individual. The transition to increased activities within residential provision (rather than continued reliance on externally provided day centres) is being supported by the Council. One of the Council's day centre managers has been helping to develop a day opportunities programme with residential staff to provide activities for residents. It is important to note that activities are not restricted to the building so the issue is less about the facilities available within residential homes than the imagination and person-centred nature of the activities that are being arranged. As a comparison, 70% of the activities currently organised by Woodside Day Centre take place *outside* the centre.

### *Issue 8 – Lack of opportunities to use personal budgets*

Detail - As is noted within Appendix 1, a degree of the concern from carers has been caused by the lack of full understanding of how personal budgets will transform the opportunities available to people. While current day activities are often focused on what is available within a specific building (the day centre), personal budgets enable service users with support to explore personal interests and activities unlimited by the availability of community facilities or services. People will positively identify the recreations they want to pursue – including the pursuit of existing interests and hobbies as well as the development of new skills. Increasing numbers of people are able to employ personal assistants to help them meet their support needs, building on the experience of those with direct payments at present.

### *Issue 9 – Best use of Council sites including Bourne Court*

Detail - The proposals do not involve financial gain for the Council but the public funding of a range of modernised services and housing for people with disabilities as well as other vulnerable people. The Council must use its own resources and assets in order to invest in the future of Hillingdon and Bourne Court offers the best potential for the Council to be able to ensure it can deliver modernisation within its own resources. To retain and expand upon the Bourne Court site would not be the best use of the Council's limited assets. Money and housing is not being put before the needs of vulnerable people but in fact the opposite – the supported housing programme is focused on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable people in Hillingdon including those currently attending day centres. Supported housing is an example of the Council planning for the future needs of people with disabilities – including the needs of people with learning disabilities who may be currently cared for at home but where circumstances may change such as the ill health or death of the carer. Overall, the Disabilities Commissioning Plan represents an investment of over £26m in supported housing, a significant part of which is focused on people with physical and learning disabilities. These issues are also addressed in more detail within Appendix 1.

32. The overall plan is designed to dramatically improve service provision for people with learning disabilities – a holistic approach addressing new homes tailored to people's needs as well as social care services that are fit for the future.

## **5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

33. Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and is satisfied that the savings as stated are consistent with the current MTFF strategy. Corporate Finance is also satisfied that the savings proposals have been developed using sound financial modelling. It should be noted that the MTFF would need to be revised if the proposed changes were to be amended.

## **Legal**

34. This Report advises Cabinet of the consultation process that has been completed in relation to the Disabilities Commissioning Plan, and seeks approval to amend the Plan to accommodate views that have been expressed during the consultation process.

35. The courts have held that consultation exercises by public bodies must be:

- 1) undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage;
- ii) include sufficient reasons for proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response;
- iii) adequate time must be given for this response and
- iv) the product of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken:

36. The Report shows that every service user and/or their carers were invited to participate in the consultation, and that a series of meetings with service users/carers, staff and stakeholders were also held. The consultation period extended over 3 months and a summary of the responses received has been included in this report. Further, a number of comments have been accepted by the Council, including a commitment to involve service users/carers in the design of the new centre at Queen's Walk.

37. The Borough Solicitor therefore advises that the consultation process has complied with legal requirements.

38. With regard to the proposal to develop a new resource centre at Queen's Walk and to decommission the existing day centres in the Borough, all Service users will have their needs assessed. Those who need services at Queen's Walk will be provided with those services and transport to the centre will also be provided when necessary.

39. As stated in the report, following assessment of their needs, some existing service users may no longer be provided with services.

40. The Equalities Impact Assessment details the potential adverse effects for service users of the Council re-assessing their needs and sets out the steps that the Council will take to ameliorate any adverse effects.

41. In addition, the Council has a duty under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to "have due regard to the need to take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others'. Legal advice will be provided on a case by case basis to ensure that the Council continues to comply with this duty.

## **Corporate Property and Construction**

42. The land currently occupied by the Day Centres at Woodside and Parkview will be used to provide supported housing in-house. The land currently occupied by Phoenix Day Centre will be sold with planning permission in order to generate a capital receipt. This receipt will be maximised by the fact that the Wren Centre are also being asked to move. Negotiations have begun with the Wren Centre on the idea of them sharing the Queens Walk building once it is completed.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Cabinet report 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

# Consultation Report

## Disability Commissioning Plan

### Methods of consultation

1. This summary represents the views of over 350 individuals including service users, carers and service providers who work with relevant groups including the Disabled Association for Hillingdon, Age UK, the Local Involvement Network (LiNK), the Association for Multiple Sclerosis, The Stroke Association, Hillingdon Centre for Independent Living, Ear4U and Perfect Start. The consultation commenced with a letter to all carers and service users in October 2010 providing details of how to access further information and take part in the consultation. The text of the letter is provided in **Appendix 2** for information. As the letter outlines, service users, carers and stakeholders were invited to a range of meetings in order to offer their views on the proposals. Those unable to take part in the group meetings were offered interviews on a one-to-one basis. LiNK provided a detailed submission – key issues are covered in this report although a separate response from the Council will be provided to LiNK in advance of the Cabinet meeting.

2. Aside from this specific consultation programme, it is important to emphasise that the Disabilities Commissioning Plan has been influenced by the ongoing consultation with service users and carers on the direction of travel required for social care services. The needs, requirements and aspirations of service users are the core of regular care management reviews and support planning. Service user feedback on services such as day centres, residential care and supported living arrangements are important sources of data as are the trends of service user activity and the patterns of spend for people using personal budgets.

3. Consultation on the Plan has been undertaken in order to influence the Council's proposals which are at a formative stage. The chart below provides details of the comprehensive consultation programme which gave service users, carers and stakeholders the maximum opportunity to give their views.

Date w/c	Consultation Activity
w/c 26 Sep 11	Key themes and frequently asked questions documents published
w/c 26 Sep	Easy read version of key themes and frequently asked questions published
3 <sup>rd</sup> October	Disabilities Commissioning Plan published on the 'Have Your Say' web pages with emailed link sent to over 900 stakeholders
5 <sup>th</sup> October	Consultation with Council staff affected by the proposals
7 <sup>th</sup> October	Information presented at the Learning Development Provider Group
7 <sup>th</sup> October	2 consultation meetings with Council staff affected by the proposals
14 <sup>th</sup> October	All carers/service users written to with information on how to access the information on line and how to request a paper copy
10 <sup>th</sup> October	Consultation with the Disability Assembly (92 people attended)
18 <sup>th</sup> October	Consultation with the Learning Disability Service User Forum – key themes presented in easy read version (30+ people attended)
20 <sup>th</sup> October	Consultation with the Adult Learners with Difficulties and Disabilities Forum – key themes presented in easy read version (20+ people attended)
25 <sup>th</sup> October	Consultation with Partnership Board / Valuing People Now Group – key

Date w/c	Consultation Activity
	themes presented in easy read version (15+ people attended)
1 <sup>st</sup> November	Consultation with the Parent Carer Reference Group
9 <sup>th</sup> November	Parent-Carer meeting at the Phoenix Day Service
10 <sup>th</sup> November	Special meeting of the Disability Assembly to discuss key themes from disabilities plan (120+ people attended)
16 <sup>th</sup> November	Service user meeting at Woodside Day Centre
17 <sup>th</sup> November	Parent-Carer meeting at Woodside (23 people attended)
18 <sup>th</sup> November	Service user meeting at Charles Curran House
21 <sup>st</sup> November	Parent-Carer meeting at Parkview (9 people attended)
22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Parent-Carer meeting at Charles Curran (17 people attended)
22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Service user meeting at Phoenix Day Centre
23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Carers Meeting (35 people attended)
22 <sup>nd</sup> December	Meeting with Parents and Carers of children in Transition (51 attended)
16 <sup>th</sup> January 12	Petition Hearing related to the proposed closure of Phoenix Centre (approximately 50-60 attended)

4. This report takes the main themes of the Plan and presents a
- short reminder of the key proposals
  - summary of the comments from the consultation process and
  - response to the comments.

## **Personalisation**

### Key proposals

*5. All users will have a personal budget by April 2013 that will give them greater choice and control over how their care and support needs are met. Services within the voluntary sector will assist service users and carers with planning and meeting their support needs.*

### Outcome of consultation

6. The majority of people who responded agreed that personal budgets create greater choice, independence and flexibility for some individuals. Personal budgets were seen to enable people to recruit and employ staff with the right skills and training to meet needs. Continuity of support could be improved in the process. Personalisation could enable access to universal services such as community activities, libraries, swimming and other leisure services. There was also acknowledgement that personal budgets may encourage the development of services and support being in the community that may not have been available before. It was felt that personal budgets would be particularly beneficial for people with less severe learning disabilities who are more capable of choosing services.

7. Respondents to the consultation (“respondents”) recognised that a directory of services was a vital part of helping people to exercise choice and control as was a greater range of support and assistance available in the social care “marketplace” such as personal assistants. The Council was encouraged to work with the voluntary sector so that organisations were in a position to offer a varied set of day activities for groups and individuals.

8. A number of comments made during the consultation process strongly suggest that people do not fully understand personal budgets and how they will work. There were many calls for greater clarity about personal budgets, the process and procedures, as well as the support that will be available to enable people to access and use personal budgets. There is also a general concern around safeguarding vulnerable people who may receive personal budgets to ensure they are not subject to financial abuse and to ensure that the money is used to meet care needs identified in assessments. It is unlikely at this point in time that people understand the positive opportunities that will be opened up by the introduction of personal budgets.

9. There were also concerns and anxieties expressed regarding the process of managing a personal budget for a family member who has complex needs or regarding older carers who do not want the responsibility of managing a personal budget on behalf of the cared for person. Some carers were concerned that if they have to manage a personal budget *and* the package of care, they will not be able to continue to cope with their caring role.

10. Other concerns from carers focused on people with disabilities accessing public transport and universal services. Some carers reported a general feeling that some residents do not tolerate people with disabilities on buses, in libraries and other community settings. Community facilities were said not to always have suitable toileting facilities for disabled people while the new swimming pools at Uxbridge and Hayes were said to not be suitable for some disabled people. It is clear that many carers value day centre services for their dependants due to the benefits of respite for the carer as well as the social interaction day centres provide.

11. There were specific requests for:

- Good quality care assessments that are robust, are carried out regularly and at an appropriate time and identify the main aspirations of service users – the skills of staff carrying out these assessments were recognised as critical
- Greater information about how to use personal budgets, including how flexible they are, what they can be used to purchase and whether they will cover the actual cost of activities needed by the service user
- Support for people who cannot choose or who cannot manage a personal budget independently as well as support for those who want to manage a personal budget but who may be fearful of organising national insurance and tax or entering into contracts with personal assistants
- A list of day activities that people can access with clarity about what services are available – some people also wanted to know whether personal budgets could be used to access day centres
- Help for people to pool personal budgets as a group in order to get better value for money
- The development of the right kind of services that people will want to purchase including qualified, experienced personal assistants
- Good financial systems within the Council to protect vulnerable service users with a personal budget including safeguarding them from financial abuse

### Response to consultation

12. A range of information on services, support and activities will be available to residents, service users and carers within the online directory of services ('Careplace'), which is due to be launched. More information about this is provided in the section on Information, Advice and Advocacy below.



13. One of the main emerging roles of the Council will be to work with other west London authorities, the voluntary sector and other external providers to develop services that people want to purchase with their personal budgets. This involves a number of steps:

- Assessing the needs of individuals, determining a support plan including activities that will meet the needs identified
- Collating the range of ideas and activities across all service users
- Sharing information with service providers about the kinds of activities that people are using their personal budgets to fund. This will help to stimulate the market and meet needs that may not be addressed adequately at the present time.
- Engage with the voluntary sector to evaluate options for new services and support the process of development
- Encourage innovation in support planning and grouping of personal budgets where this helps to address particular needs

14. It is important to emphasise that this is not an overnight process but the start of a gradual transformation of social care delivering changes over the next few years, particularly over the next 12 months as the use of personal budgets increases. It would not be possible for the market to be fully developed at the present time as the information from support planning is a critical part of the process. For a number of respondents, particularly carers, the transformation process is currently difficult to envisage and therefore is the subject of concern but the evidence shows that personal budgets lead to service users having greater choice and control about how their needs are met. To assist the process of market development the Council is currently working with a specialist and developing a calendar of activities in coordination with voluntary and private sector providers.

15. It is also important to stress that the shift from buildings based services to community activities is not all about *new* services being put in place. Currently, 70% of the activities for service users attending the Woodside Day Centre are taking place in the community rather than within the confines of the building. The situation at Phoenix Day Centre shows a similar pattern – there are currently only 13 service users attending, with a daily attendance of approximately nine people. Usage has reduced with older service users retiring from day services and those living in Council provided residential care receiving a personalised day opportunities programmes.

16. As respondents identified, people will need practical support to manage their finances, plan their support and find the right services and activities to meet their needs. Across the country, this support will increasingly be available from the voluntary sector, commissioned by local authorities. In Hillingdon, the Council is tendering for a service to provide financial advice, support planning and brokerage for personal budget holders which will be available in the early part of 2012. Support planning will stimulate and support the imaginative use of personal budgets as well as helping people to get greater value for money by pooling budgets (e.g. for travel). Experienced support planners will help service users tap into community centres and other existing community facilities. Work is in progress to help ensure that swimming pools in the borough are more accessible for people with disabilities.

17. Where service users do not wish to manage their personal budget, the new personalised system will be flexible. If requested, the Council will manage the personal budgets of service users which should help to ease the anxieties that have been expressed by carers during consultation. Overall, this will not be a dramatic process of sudden change but one phased over a period of time. Personal budgets will be introduced for new service users from late-January

2012. For existing service users, personal budgets will be introduced from the point of their care review. By April 2013, all service users will be in receipt of a personal budget (including those managed by the Council).

18. Effective support planning and brokerage services will ensure that a personal budget is sufficient to cover the cost of activities identified to meet a service user's needs. Council expenditure on social care has never been unlimited and, similarly, personal budgets will need to be managed so that the cost of activities is contained within the available resource. Experience in other areas of the country more advanced in the use of personal budgets shows that this is more than possible and capable of meeting the needs of people effectively but with greater flexibility and value for money than the current system of a local authority determining how social care needs can be met within a limited range of traditional services.

19. Financial systems will be in place to help the Council to protect personal budget holders. Personal budget holders will use a pre-paid card that is capable of alerting the Council very quickly to spend that does not fit the agreed support plan which will enable appropriate action to be taken. Personal budgets will not however enable a person to purchase services from day centres unless this has been approved as part of an individual needs assessment.

## **Information, advice and advocacy**

### Key proposals

*20. There will be an on-line information directory on the council's website. The contact centre and local libraries will be developed as local information hubs. A range of voluntary sector organisations will provide specialist information and advice. A generic advocacy service will support people who lack capacity but who are not eligible for assistance through the Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMCA) Service. The service will be available to people in care homes, regardless of whether they are funding their own care. It will be a service that is jointly commissioned by a number of west London councils.*

### Outcome of consultation

21. Comments in this area were supportive of the Council's proposals. A number of suggestions were made about how best the Council can ensure that the Information and Advice Directory will be comprehensive and accessible to all of Hillingdon's residents. Amongst the key issues raised were:

- The Directory should be comprehensive and include details of universal services, services and activities across borough boundaries as well as information held by other partners on existing directories.
- The Directory should be developed in easy read with picture options for people with a learning difficulty; in audio for visually impaired and British Sign Language (BSL) for the deaf and hard of hearing. Provision also needs to be made for people who do not read English or where their reading ability is poor.
- The Council should consider designing the directory with an on-line mechanism for residents to feedback on services.
- A communications campaign will be needed to raise awareness of the Directory including Hillingdon People. The campaign should also be in easy read format and sign-post residents to where they can get further information.
- There should be a Contact Centre free phone number that residents can use so that any delays in answering the phone do not cause expense for residents

- Accessing specialist systems (e.g. talking books, learning disability packs) in libraries will require sufficiently trained staff.

22. A number of suggestions were made concerning the Council's proposals for advocacy including the need for the council to support voluntary and community groups to provide more services for Hillingdon residents which are available for people with personal budgets. It was also suggested that advocacy services should be developed that can be accessed by *all* residents, whether or not they qualify for services. Existing services should also be reviewed to ensure they offer value for money.

#### Response to consultation

23. The need for a single directory combining all the information from other partners' directories is recognised, although it may take time to achieve this in full. The Directory has been developed by the West London Alliance (WLA) and will initially include organisations, services and activities available across West London with information drawn from the databanks of local authorities. All of the options for making the information available in different formats will be explored. Enabling service users to provide on-line feedback on services they have received will be planned as part of the development of the Directory although this facility will not be available immediately. The suggestions concerning the need for an awareness campaign are accepted and agreed.

24. Providing a free-phone number for the Council's Contact Centre would not be affordable in the current financial climate. However, the Contact Centre is currently under review to ensure that residents receive a quick response as well as a good outcome to their query.

25. Library staff will be given disability awareness training, including effective communication with people with learning disabilities

26. The Council will work with voluntary sector organisations to develop services that help people identify the support they need and the services and activities they require to meet those needs – otherwise known as support planning and brokerage. There will also be independent advocacy for people receiving or who might want to receive personal budgets. These services are currently being tendered and should become operational in the early part of 2012.

27. The Council is undergoing a fundamental review of all internal and external services to ensure that they are focused on achieving the right outcomes for Hillingdon's residents as well as being value for money.

28. The Council unfortunately does not have the resources to fund advocacy services for people who do not qualify for services. It will, however, help to promote services provided by the voluntary sector that are universally available.

#### **29. Consultation with service users currently using the day centres and/or living in residential care**

From December 2010 to January 2011, 197 service users and carers spoke to Community Peer Researchers, either face to face or over the telephone. This gave them the opportunity to share their concerns and say what they needed the Council to do to support them through the modernisation of services. The following is a summary of the views of 26 service users from Woodside Day Centre and 9 service users from the Rural Activities Garden Centre:

Service users expressed their desire to take part in activities and outings. 13 service users when asked “why do you come to the day centre?” spoke positively about activities and outings. Service users that are active from their homes also take part in sporting activities such as football, bowling and swimming.

When asked about using a personal budget, 7 service users expressed a wish to attend sporting activities and outings like dancing and the theatre in the future

Some service users enjoy swimming: 3 services users said this was an activity they did when not at the day centre. 2 service users spoke of the possibility of going swimming in the future using personal budgets.

College courses are also popular, 6 service users said in the future they would like to continue to attend college courses.

27 - 31 service users (depending on topic) were interested in further support with cooking, shopping, home help and budget planning. 6 service users said they wanted to use a personal budget to continue with day services.

23 service users expressed an interest in work or work experience.

Many service users with a learning disability can use public transport with support. 21 service users asked said they can travel by TfL when supervised. Good use of travel passes combined with planned trips to London landmarks and other places of interest would provide alternatives to day services and meet the needs of service users who have stated that they would like to go out on trips and go shopping. Shared personal assistants would make good use of a personal budget for service users who have similar interests.

112 service users attended outside clubs or activity outside of day centres. 6 service users listed their college course as an activity outside of day services.

During the consultation on the Disabilities Commissioning Plan, people using day services were consulted on the main proposals. This was conducted by the Upward Group, a peer group of people with learning disabilities trained in presentations. Discussion included the new resource centre at Queens Walk which would replace the current day centre provision for people with complex needs. Service users also gave views through the Disabilities Assembly and the Learning Disability User Forum. A group of adult learners with learning disabilities were also asked for their views.

Most saw the day centres as an alternative to staying at home. They were clear they wanted to get out and about and the social element provided by the centres was very important to them. They responded with specific activities that were important to them such as swimming, work experience, shopping and socialising.

While a number of service users did not have a positive or a negative response to the proposals to close the day centres, a number of people did provide a range of comments which are summarised below:

*Likes to go on days out and socialise*

*Likes shopping, swimming, lunches out and loud music*

*Likes company, evenings with other people and companionship*

*Worried about the day centre shutting if this means being at home all of the time*

*Likes to go out and does not mind the centre shutting if this means going out every day – would not like to be at home every day*

*Would like to go out for lunch*  
*Would like to go to Uxbridge*  
*Looking forward to paid work as has done this before*  
*Happy with the day centre and doesn't want it to close*  
*Does not want to stay at home and enjoys coming to the day centre*  
*Would be very upset if the day centre closes down*  
*Would be OK if I went out every day and did nice things instead*  
*Would be concerned about the day centre – where else would they go?*  
*Would like work experience*

While there is clearly some concern about the future of day centres, the focus is mostly on alternative activities rather than the specific building based service itself. For those service users who will not receive a service at Queens Walk, careful support planning will enable people to identify the activities they want to meet their needs.

## **The proposed Queens Walk resource centre**

### Key proposals

*30. Buildings based services will be focussed on supporting those with the most complex need and/or to provide respite for carers where no other service is available. People in registered care homes accessing day services will have their needs reviewed to identify how their need for day opportunity services can be met. A new resource centre will be opened at Queens Walk, South Ruislip for people with complex needs. Existing day centres at Park View, Phoenix and Woodside Day Centres will be decommissioned with service users supported to use personal budgets to use community based services or supported at the new Queens Walk facility depending on their needs.*

### Outcome of consultation

31. During the consultation, carers in particular were concerned about the proposed changes to day centres – disruption for service users and carers as well as specific concerns about the location of the proposed new facility at Queens Walk and the problems this may pose in terms of transport. A number of requests were received for more information on the proposed site, the design, the activities that would be available and the general benefits to service users and carers. There was also a great deal of constructive and positive engagement with service users and carers.

32. There were a number of responses to the consultation that were fully in support of the day centre proposals. Respondents commented that the council had overly relied on building based services for people with a learning disability despite the fact that people's needs would have been more appropriately met within the community. It was recognised that there was a need for a buildings based service for people with complex needs so the Queens Walk proposal was welcomed.

33. People made a wide variety of suggestions concerning the way the Council should **plan for the changes to day centres**. The Council should:

- Ensure that decisions made by Cabinet are implemented quickly to avoid a long drawn out process of uncertainty
- Plan the transition appropriately with adequate time for changes – e.g. the new facility should open before the closure of the remaining day centres.

- Ensure access to information about changes and progress is disseminated to service users and carers in a timely and appropriate way
- Put in place appropriate services (community based and preventative activities) via a personal budget before stopping any day care provision. Many service users could access colleges, sports centres, take part in work experience and would like ongoing work either paid or voluntary.
- Ensure that providers of residential services are supported to organise day activities for service users and ensure that the day activities are in place before stopping any day care provision for service users.
- Review the capacity of the new resource centre to ensure that it will accommodate current and future need. There were concerns that the Council was underestimating the demand for day centre services and that, once the plans to reduce the number of day centres in the borough had been implemented, it would be too late to turn back.

34. There were some specific queries about service users in residential placements where day activities were expected to be offered by the residential provider. Respondents said that not enough time was being built in to ensure that service users have activities in place and that there was not always enough staff to enable the activities to be personalised. The Council was asked to ensure transition from buildings based day services to personalised community activity is well planned and that resources (including personalised budgets) are in place to enable the changes to happen.

35. Respondents offered a range of comments on the **ideal design of Queens Walk** as well as the type of services that could be provided at the new facility. The Council was requested to:

- Involve service users and carers at every stage of the process in relation to the design and development of the new facility
- Make certain that the new facility enabled service users with different abilities to access services and activities
- Consider the needs of service users with complex behaviour.
- Ensure that the following provisions were included within the design of the building:
  - Hydro therapy pool, sensory room and snoozalem
  - A café open to the local community and staffed by volunteers
  - Accessibility: ramps, doors and space for wheelchairs
  - Equipment: hoists, lockers, showers, changing rooms
  - Cooking facilities: Kitchen, cooker and a microwave
  - Toileting facilities: changing tables, washing machine and dryer for soiled clothes.
  - Staff: sufficient numbers to manage the centre safely
  - Outside area with parking facilities
- Ensure that service provided within the facility included therapies (such as physiotherapy, music and drama), information and advice on employment and training, and outside activities.

36. There were also questions about the cost of the proposed Queens Walk facility and the length of time it would take to develop. Respondents inquired whether the Queens Walk facility would be a new build development of a refurbishment of the existing facility on the site.

37. There were a number of comments and suggestions made in relation to the **location of the proposed resource centre**:

- Develop one of the existing day centres (Phoenix, Woodside and Parkview) as the site for the new resource centre as these were said to be fit for purpose, in a good location

for where the carers/service users reside and more suitable in terms of the space for outside areas. By using existing buildings the Council would also prevent the need for demolition and rebuilding and save money.

- There were questions as to why the Council's plans for supported housing could not be satisfied on the Queens Walk site rather than the other day centres as proposed.
- As Queens Walk is situated in the north of the borough, this will be difficult to access for people living in the south. Respondents said that access would be made more difficult by poor transport networks and difficulties with traffic, especially around the A40. Some respondents asked for a feasibility study to be carried out to see whether Hatton Grove and Colham Road could be used for day placements for those with complex and high support needs as a way of giving a local solution to those people living centrally or in the South of the borough.
- Some respondents however, aware of the discussions concerning the suitability of the Queens Walk site, pointed out that there were currently a number of people living in the *north* of the borough who were attending Park View Day Centre without undue problems. Queens Walk was also said to be more centrally located than either of the two schools for children with severe learning disabilities.

### Response to consultation

38. The location of the proposed new facility has been chosen following a full review of all the Council's available sites.

39. The cost of the 4 year supported housing redevelopment programme is £27.4m and only £3.4m is funded by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The rest of the programme will be funded from the Council's own resources - including land - and from partner housing associations that will identify sites and provide funding as part of the normal planning process for affordable housing.

40. The closure of Phoenix Centre enables a large site (Bourne Court) to be sold which will contribute towards generating the capital required to fund the Council's capital programme. This includes much needed supported housing which will benefit people with physical and learning disabilities. Also located on the site is the Wren Centre, a Mencap provided social club for people with learning disabilities. As the Wren Centre requires a new facility, the proposal is for it to be moved, enabling the whole Bourne Court site to be sold. Discussions will be undertaken to enable the club to utilise the proposed Queens Walk facility. This will be reflective of the current Wren Centre activity (evenings and some weekend use) and will be complementary to the proposed use of the resource centre as a whole.

41. The disposal of the Bourne Court site means that the Park View and Woodside sites can be retained and these are most suitable to develop supported housing for people with learning disabilities. There are a range of needs the Council must consider including older people, people with physical disabilities and people with mental health needs. This has led to the need for a difficult choice to be made concerning the most appropriate sites that need to be sold in order to fund the modernisation programme.

42. Queens Walk is not suitable for developing residential accommodation due to the planning restrictions. It does however offer a good sized piece of land on which to develop a state of the art resource centre for people with learning disabilities. The design of the building will reflect the needs of the people who use it and the Council is committed to involving a range of stakeholders in the design and development process including service users and carers. It will be totally refurbished, both internally and externally with the grounds around Queens Walk

remodelled to increase the space available and develop a garden. The importance of managing a mix of need levels at the new resource centre is fully recognised and accepted.

43. In response to the concerns about the specific location of the proposed resource centre in terms of travel, it is important to maintain a balanced view. There are two schools for people with severe learning disabilities in the borough with the primary school (Grangewood) in the north of the borough and the secondary school (Moorcroft) in the south. While young people with learning disabilities have certainly had to cross the A40 north-south divide at some point in their school life, there is no evidence that this has resulted in significant hardship. It is also important to be aware that 25% of the current users of Park View (located in Farriers Close, Hillingdon) have to travel from the north of the borough to use the service; 45% of the current users of Woodside (located on the Uxbridge Road in Hayes) travel from the north of the borough and 47% of the current users of Phoenix (located in South Ruislip) have to travel from the south. The current proposals are not significantly different from that faced by a large number of users and their carers at the present time.

44. The use of the term “resource centre” as opposed to the more traditional “day centre” is deliberate – a resource centre is expected to be more dynamic than a day centre with programmes tailored to the needs of individual users rather than people participating in pre-arranged and more general activities.

45. The Queens Walk facility will be used by approximately 70 people a week although this will be spread across the week as not everyone will need a five day per week service. It is envisaged that there will be no more than 35 people using the centre each day. Moving to one centre – as opposed to two as requested by some respondents during the consultation – enables the Council to focus on providing a single, excellent facility and get better value from limited capital and revenue resources.

46. Many authorities are closing all day centres as part of their transformation of social care services although Hillingdon is approaching this in a more balanced and managed way, with buildings based services remaining for people with complex needs. Managing and maintaining two centres for people with disabilities within a population of 260,000 would not be sustainable for the future.

47. Subject to Cabinet decision, the closure of Phoenix, Park View and Woodside will be phased over an 18 month period with the Council working closely alongside service users and carers to enable a smooth transition. The number of services will reduce from three to two and the new resource centre at Queens Walk will open before the closure of the remaining services. The majority of current day centre users will be fully supported to access services in the community, leaving approximately 70 people per week requiring a building-based service which will be provided at Queens Walk. The actual timetable will be developed once Cabinet has made its decision on the Disabilities Commissioning Plan. Although the existing day centre sites at Parkview and Woodside will be used to develop supported housing, the comments concerning the potential to also build in accessible community facilities for people with learning disabilities will certainly be explored.

48. In terms of the impact upon people living in residential accommodation, there has been good experience to date of working with service users in council residential accommodation to access appropriate day activities. In response to the comments received, the Council will share good practice and support private residential providers to continue to work with their residents to ensure a positive transition from day centre attendance to a programme of day activities in line with their needs and requirements.



# Transport

## Key proposals

49. *Transport that is provided and funded by the Council will be available to those in the greatest need. People on benefits with a mobility element (including motability cars) will be asked to make alternative arrangements and will be signposted to other options.*

## Outcome of consultation

50. The main transport issue raised by respondents was linked to the proposed site at Queens Walk. Those people living in the south of the borough said that the travel distance would be considerable. Carers said they were accustomed to those cared for being collected and brought back from day care so taking responsibility for transport would lead to a significant amount of their respite (the time they do not have to care) being reduced. Carers also reported that this additional responsibility will be too much for them to cope with due to the reduction in their free time and the additional stress caused by having to provide transport. Although raised less frequently, there were also concerns around cost. Many carers asked whether there would be an option to pay for council provided transport.

51. It was reported that some individuals, unable to be travel trained, would need to be escorted to and from Queens Walk which would take a significant amount of time on a daily basis. It was considered quite a long walk from the nearest bus stop to Queens Walk - a resident reported that they walked briskly from the bus stop to Queens Walk to measure the time and said that it took 20 minutes.

52. Some carers and service users wanted to pursue supervised travel with the aim of working towards independent travel where this was suitable. Personal budgets were seen as a way of achieving this.

53. Other comments were received from carers concerning service users who would not necessarily have the ability to take a bus or tube train just because they were eligible for a Freedom pass or receive DLA/Mobility Allowance. Some service users would not be able to access public transport due to a physical disability or behavioural problems. A number of carers reported their concerns about service users having to use public transport as they had previously experienced verbal abuse from other passengers and no longer felt comfortable using this option. Other issues related to the use of taxis (including the cost and reliability of adapted taxis) and the lack of wheelchair access at some stations including Uxbridge.

## Response to consultation

54. The proposed facility at Queens Walk will be focused on those with the most complex needs and it is not envisaged that service users will be using public transport for travel.

55. The variety of different circumstances facing service users makes a blanket approach to travel inappropriate. However, the Council will, on a case by case basis, ensure that every *service user* assessed for the Queens Walk facility will have appropriate transport arrangements in place in order to address the concerns raised during consultation. These arrangements will be discussed and integrated into the individual's support plan.

56. The experience of providing travel training for people with disabilities in Hillingdon, particularly with less complex needs, has been positive and encouraging. Many people have been supported to become more independent, opening up access to the community in a way that can make radical changes to people's daily lives

## **Community Equipment Model**

### Key proposals

*57. The introduction of a retail model for equipment services will provide service users and carers with greater choice in how their needs for Simple Aids to Daily Living are met.*

### Consultation Outcome

58. Respondents were supportive of the proposals for the retail model with a number of suggestions being made about how the equipment service could work including:

- Develop an accessible catalogue of items
- Promote the range of providers that offer community equipment
- Reduce waiting times for an assessment for equipment to avoid accidents, possible hospital admissions and reductions in independent living
- Increase advertisements about equipment, including hosting exhibitions to increase awareness and produce a DVD
- Tell service users at the point of assessment the type of equipment which is available
- Work with hospitals to ensure that people are discharged with the equipment they need

59. There were queries about

- The process for requesting an assessment
- Whether providers were already in place to provide equipment
- Service users who may be unable to go to a retailer in order to choose the equipment they require
- How service users would access equipment if they were in a hospital
- Whether suppliers outside of the borough could be accessed for those people who live on the borders of the borough
- Whether equipment could be traded or exchanged if a persons needs change in order to make best use of resources

### Response to consultation

60. Assessments can be requested through Hillingdon Social Care Direct (HSCD), the Council's contact centre for social care services, or at HCIL in Hayes. Anyone receiving a prescription following an assessment will receive information about other types of equipment that they may wish to consider. This information will also be written on the prescription form.

61. The catalogue of available items is already accessible to all service users. Information available on the Council's website and in leaflet form signposts service users to all of the available community equipment retailers spread across the borough. The information advises residents that retailers may be able to deliver equipment if they are unable to collect it and also explains that they can approach any accredited retailer to redeem their prescription. Service users are asked to contact the Council's special delivery service if the equipment is no longer required.

62. The suggestions for an exhibition facility have already been taken on board. Residents can see the types of equipment that are available by visiting the Hillingdon Centre for Independent Living (HCIL).

63. The Council is intending to introduce more trusted assessors which will enable occupational therapist (OT) resources to be focused on the assessment of people with more complex equipment needs. Trusted assessors are trained by the Disabled Living Foundation to prescribe items of equipment of low risk.

64. These are very early days for the new prescription service but it is intended that over the next few months it will be introduced into the Hospital. This will mean that family or friends of people in hospital will be able to collect the desired equipment on their behalf before they return home.

## **Supported Housing**

### Key proposals

*65. There will be a dramatic increase in supported housing options. Approximately 279 homes will be developed for disabled people as part of a programme of supported housing development in the borough. The Council will work with third sector providers of residential homes for people with learning disabilities to convert them to supported living where this is appropriate.*

### Outcome of consultation

66. All of the people who commented on this section were in support for the proposals around supported housing and extra care. A number of suggestions were made for the Council to consider including:

- Ensure that residents have access to a range of activities
- Ensure that 24 hour support is available including a buddy service to show new tenants around
- Install equipment and minor adaptations based on the assessed needs of each resident
- Ensure care and support needs are met, including shopping and money management
- Ensure transition plans are in place for those moving from residential to supported housing/extra care
- Give potential residents the opportunity to stay in a placement overnight to see if it suits their needs
- Increase promotion of the available schemes, including on the internet
- Increase the ability to move from private to public sector housing for people who need supported housing or extra care facilities
- Create communal areas for people to meet and socialise
- Ensure there are adequate staff to support people moving in
- Ensure that support staff take into account mental health as well as physical needs
- Involve disabled people in the design and planning of schemes
- Consider employing service users of low and moderate needs to work in the reception areas

67. There were queries in a number of areas including:

- Provision of furniture for those moving into an empty apartment
  - Whether there would be access for couples who live together but only one is disabled
-

- Eligibility for people who own their own home but who need supported housing or extra care housing

#### Response to consultation

68. The Council will consider all of these positive and constructive comments as part of the development of each supported housing scheme. “Supported housing” covers a wide spectrum of models including those that are suitable for independent and semi-independent living. Not all housing will require 24 hour on site support, although all extra care housing will certainly include this as part of a standard package of services available to residents.

69. The suggestion of enabling potential residents to “stay the night” in a supported housing scheme as part of the decision-making concerning moving in is a most interesting suggestion with great potential. This will be explored across all schemes.

70. The requests for residents to be able to purchase supported housing is reflective of the high proportion of owner occupiers in Hillingdon, particularly amongst older people. As a result, the Council will be working with providers to ensure there is a supply of supported and extra care housing available for residents to purchase on a shared ownership basis for those with some capital or to purchase outright.

71. The Council will include a number of two bedroom properties in supported housing and extra care developments to reflect situations where the disability of one person in a couple prevents the sharing of a room.

72. It is clear that a number of people moving into supported and extra care housing will not have adequate furniture. The Council will therefore work with housing providers to ensure that furniture starter packs are available if required and these packs will also include crockery and cutlery.

73. The Council will set up a group of users and carers to look at the design of supported housing schemes. Users and carers will be identified through existing groups such as the Learning Disability User Forum and the Parent/Carer Reference group. We will also seek to involve some of the users and carers who have responded to the consultation but are not generally part of these other groups.

### **Closure of Charles Curran House**

74. This section relates to the comments made by service users who will be moving from Charles Curran House to more suitable housing. There were a number of queries raised including:

- The timetable for residents moving out of Charles Curran House
- Whether all residents at Charles Curran House would be located together
- Location of the new supported housing and extra care schemes
- Whether the schemes would be run by the council
- How people would be given a choice

#### Response to consultation

75. It is generally accepted by stakeholders that the lifespan of Charles Curran House is limited. The individual needs of current residents are being assessed in full discussion with them to

ensure everyone has a well managed transition to safe and appropriate accommodation. The alternative option of moving to a scheme such as Cottesmore House has been well received. Six residents will be moving into their own flats with a package of support to meet their assessed needs. There will be opportunities for people to move into new accommodation in small groups.

76. The Council's supported housing programme is in progress to deliver further new build developments similar to Cottesmore House as well as smaller schemes (e.g. for four people) and people from Charles Curran House are already being identified for these. Further schemes are likely to be built on behalf of the Council by registered providers such as housing associations at a number of locations under discussion at the present time. All of the moves from Charles Curran House will be completed within 18 months.

## **Transition from Children's to Adult's services**

### Key proposals

*77. A simple pathway through transition will be in place that is agreed by all agencies. This will enable all those involved in transition including young people and their families to know how to access information, what is likely to happen and when, and with whom, things are likely to happen. Reduced funding will be available for 3-year placements at residential colleges. Instead young people in transition will have services provided within the borough.*

### Outcome of consultation

78. A number of specific queries were raised by young people during the consultation period.

- How to access supported housing.
- The timescales for the development of college courses with accommodation for Hillingdon.
- Whether there will be any future information sessions to keep young people and their parents informed of developments.
- Whether special educational facilities will be developed locally to prevent young people with complex needs having to be placed outside of the borough.
- How professionals in adult social care become aware of the needs of children being supported by children's social care services.
- How the Council will ensure that supported housing is available only for Hillingdon residents and not people from other boroughs.
- Whether carers' assessments are carried out at the same time as the assessment for the person with disabilities.
- Whether the most is being made of services outside of the borough, i.e. whether we are using existing services in neighbouring boroughs that might be nearer than other parts of Hillingdon or not available at all locally.

### Response to consultation

79. The comments made during the consultation process show that there is a need to improve communication between the Council and young people and their carers. This will be addressed by arranging more opportunities for young people and carers to meet with Council officers to discuss the transition process, the modernisation of social care and the implications of this.

80. Integral to the modernisation process is the provision of supported housing rather than residential placements that are invariably outside of the borough. Generally supported housing developments will be for people with higher needs (although some housing developments will

cater for people with lower needs). The Council will nominate people to supported housing schemes and schemes will only be available to Hillingdon residents.

81. The Council is working to prevent the need to make out of borough placements in residential colleges. The number of young people with more complex needs such as autism is increasing and we will explore how personal budgets can address needs more effectively. Discussions are in progress with local colleges to identify specific courses required. By July 2012 we plan to be able to meet the needs of people currently in out of borough college places who will be leaving in 2012. Firm proposals will be in place for people who would otherwise have to be placed outside of the borough.

82. It is recognised that there are some users who have difficulties in expressing their choice and the Council is seeking to address this by putting appropriate support services in place. A support planning and brokerage service is currently being tendered and will be provided by an external organisation with experience in assisting people in these circumstances.

83. Early planning is the key to ensuring a smooth transition from children's to adults' services. The Council's Transition Team acts as a conduit between children's and adults' services and has a central role in the planning process. The planning process, which currently starts from around age 16, will start earlier at age 14.

84. Supporting carers is critical to enabling vulnerable young people to remain independent. Identification of the support needs of carers is achieved through the carer assessment process. The assessment of the carer's needs is something that should be offered to the carer by the social worker at the time of the user's assessment.

85. The Council is aware that neighbouring boroughs have a range of services that Hillingdon residents may wish to access. The online information directory which is being developed in partnership with neighbouring London boroughs will include services, including clubs and societies that are available across the region. This will not initially include services that are available across the border in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire but this is something that can be developed once the directory is established.

## **Other Comments**

86. Some detailed responses to the consultation queried the needs assessment that the Council had undertaken in order to develop the Plan.

- The Council was said to be relying upon unreferenced national data and local intelligence. There was an assumption that no more than 70 people would need the resource centre at Queens Walk without the supporting evidence.
- The information from consultation exercises does not indicate dissatisfaction with day services in principle. The face to face interviews focus on physically disabled and older members of the Asian community rather than people with learning disabilities.
- There would appear to be a gap in residential provision for the future.
- The Commissioning Plan includes data on comparative spend among councils which represents less than 1% of the total spend on learning, physical and sensory disabilities.

### Response to consultation

87. In developing the Plan and the associated Equality Impact Assessment, the Council has used a variety of information sources including data from the Council's social care data management system (Protocol) as well as data from individual social care assessments of

people with disabilities, Personal Social Services Expenditure data, population projections (Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System data) and research by the Centre for Disability Research.

88. The proposals for a new resource centre to serve the needs of up to 70 service users is based on the current attendance at day centres taking into account those service users living in residential accommodation that will have their needs met by the residential provider and those who will be able to access alternative activities using personal budgets. While this is an estimate and subject to individual assessment, the Council is confident that it reflects the number of people with complex needs who are likely to need a specialist resource in the medium term including the potential for a small number of young people who will be coming through the social care system. In the longer term, an increase in young people with complex needs is unlikely to need to be met within day centre provision due to the increased use of personal budgets by young people.

89. Consultation with service users – the document refers to specific consultation with carers and service users attending day centres as well as the Rural Activities Garden Centre. The Council's understanding of the needs of service users has also emerged from in depth discussions with all service users as part of the annual support planning and review process. Consultation was not intended to find evidence of dissatisfaction with the *principle* of day centres but did illustrate that service users enjoyed a wide range of activity outside of a traditional building based service. The Plan is proposing a *transformation* of the approach to providing services for people with disabilities. A key part of this is not assuming that the majority of disabled people who are assessed as requiring a service can have their needs met within a specific building. Most people's needs can and will be met by identifying a range of activities within a community setting. The understanding and the use of personal budgets will gradually support this transformation by enabling people to identify for themselves (with support) the components of the plan to meet their needs.

90. The Plan outlined the fact that Hillingdon relies upon residential accommodation for people with learning disabilities far more than other local authorities. The pattern of spend is therefore similarly disproportionate. Part of the reason for the over-reliance upon residential accommodation has been the lack of genuine alternatives. It is likely that a number of people with learning disabilities are inappropriately placed in residential accommodation rather than a more independent and less institutional form of living. A key part of the plan centres on the Council's proposals to develop supported accommodation for people with physical and learning disabilities. There will be a number of different types of accommodation developed in order to meet the spectrum of needs. Accommodation with 24 hour on-site support will be provided, as well as accommodation for people capable of more independent living. So, rather than experiencing a gap in the provision of residential accommodation, the Council actively plans to reduce this type of provision and radically expand on the use of supported accommodation.

91. In terms of the financial case for change, the Plan (page 11) outlines the gross spend on social care for people with physical, learning and sensory disabilities. This shows that day care is 12% of the overall spend rather than 1% as suggested – a total of £4.8m. Residential care constitutes 55% of overall spending on people with learning disability (£16.7m) as opposed to 15% which would be in line with good practice.

### **Consultation Letter to Service users and carers**

Dear Service user/Carer,

#### **Disabilities Commissioning Plan 2011 - 2015**

I write to invite you to attend a consultation meeting regarding the Disabilities Commissioning Plan 2011 -2015, please also see below details of how you may 'Have your say' on Hillingdon's web pages and also obtain and read documents pertaining to the proposals.

As you may be aware, Hillingdon council is proposing to change the way it provides services. In line with the government targets on meeting the Personalisation agenda, the focus will be on promoting choice, control and independence for people living in Hillingdon. Proposals to help us achieve the changes have been written in the following plans:

- Disabilities Commissioning Plan 2011 - 2015
- Adult Social Care Personalisation and Commissioning Plan

The documents above, including executive summaries, easy read versions and frequently asked questions are available on Hillingdon Council's the 'Have your Say' web pages: <http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=8876>. If you go to the 'Have your Say' web pages you can also complete an online survey asking for your views on the above documents.

During the next 2 months we would like to hear from Hillingdon Residents to find out what they think about the proposals. You can do this in the following ways:

- Go to the 'Have your Say' web pages
- Contact the Customer Engagement Team on 01895 250270, or email [jhawley@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:jhawley@hillingdon.gov.uk)
- Attend one of our consultation meetings
  - Disabilities Commissioning Plan – 10 November 2011, 11 pm to 1 pm
  - Adult Social Care Personalisation and Commissioning Plan – 8 December 2011, 11 pm to 1 pm

Please call 01895 250270, or email [jhawley@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:jhawley@hillingdon.gov.uk) if you:

- Want paper copies of any of the documents outlined in this letter
- If you want to register and get further information about the special meetings
- If you want to talk to us about anything in this letter

I have enclosed a copy of the frequently asked questions in relation to the Disability Commissioning Plan and I hope this will be useful. We look forward to hearing from you.

End