

MOTIONS

9.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MAJOR

That this Council calls upon the Cabinet to reconsider the decision to close the three Day Centres – Parkview, Woodside and Phoenix.

This has been done under the guise of giving people more choice. The removal of any service clearly gives people less choice. These closures are taking away a much valued service, that is a certainty. Whilst not explaining what the replacement will be, that is clearly an uncertainty.

This was clear to all who attended the individual consultation meetings about the centres. When questioned, those leading the meetings were very vague about what was to be the replacement. Vague references were made to a directory of services that was not yet available. It was not available when the closure decision was taken and carers are still in the dark about what is available.

These carers are amongst those who save the Statutory Authorities in Hillingdon £442.6 million annually, according to Leeds University research. Surely we must owe them something?

Day Centres are valued by carers as having a dual benefit. On the one hand they are a safe environment that their dependents enjoy and on the other hand they give valuable 'me time' for carers. This enables these beleaguered families to survive. Removing these centres puts that fragile situation in jeopardy.

The decision to close the centres sent a clear message to carers. Day care will be a thing of the past in Hillingdon. This is demonstrated in the Council's 'Frequently asked questions' document, question 9 – what will people be able to buy with a personal budget? Part of the answer states 'people will be able to use personal budgets to buy back a service from the Council, provided the service is not a Day Centre'. What could be clearer? Less choice for users and carers.

Please rescind this desperate situation and give Carers hope.

9.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ALLEN

This Council welcomes the recommendation, in the recent independent Mary Portas Review into revitalising our high streets, which called on the government to reclassify betting shops in planning law to give local authorities more control over the number of betting shops in their area.

Council also notes.

1. The results of a recent survey by the Gambling Association which show that problem gambling has increased by 50% since liberalisation in 2005.
2. There are currently 450,000 problem gamblers in the UK and they are hugely expensive to treat.
3. Evidence from the Responsible Gambling Fund shows that there is a clear targeting of betting shops machines in poorer areas with disproportionately high levels of unemployment and young people.
4. The proliferation of bookies on the high street in our poorest communities can exacerbate debt and problem gambling and create demand for pawnbrokers and payday loan companies who move in and can put more productive businesses off.
5. Betting shops are currently included in the same use class as job centers, restaurants, estate agents and banks under planning law.
6. A betting shop wanting to open in a property formerly occupied by a business such as a bank or post office does not have to seek planning permission.

This Council therefore Resolves:

1. To back the High Streets First campaign, which calls on the government to reclassify betting shops in planning law and give local authorities control over their numbers.
2. To write to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government asking him to implement the recommendation contained in the Portas Review to reclassify betting shops.
3. To encourage all Council Members to sign the High Streets First petition.
4. To write to the local MPs and ask them to sign the petition and endorse the campaign.
5. To ask the appropriate Cabinet Member to submit evidence on the prevalence of betting shops and associated problems to the government's upcoming use class review.