



CABINET – 26TH JULY 2023

SUBJECT: DAY OPPORTUNITIES

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report is to seek Cabinet approval on the Implementation Plan (Appendix 1) to embed the model of day opportunities identified by Hugh Irwin Associates (HICO) (Appendix 2) which was presented to the Social Services Scrutiny on the 11th July 2023.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report identifies the progress made in embedding the model of day opportunities which is based on best practice in achieving outcomes for individuals. It is acknowledged that progress has taken longer than would be ideal however it was important to commission an independent organisation to hear the views of stakeholders and research best practice to inform the model.
- 2.2 The report details the current level of service provision in day bases, community sessions and employment.
- 2.3 Equity is a very important principle thus the report recommends an alternative depiction of the model which is represented as a circle where everyone's outcomes are equal regardless of how they are met which would shift the emphasis from location to outcomes.
- 2.4 The report acknowledges the model could impact on some families/unpaid carers/parents who previously had a higher level of service which focused on respite as opposed to outcomes for individuals who attend. The Bridging the Gap project described later in the report will hopefully go some way to addressing that.
- 2.5 The implementation plan will set out actions and identify progress made to inform practice to ensure the model is fully implemented.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members provide comments on the implementation plan.

3.2 Members endorse the extension of the day bases core hours at Brooklands from 9:30-3:30 to enable individuals to have their outcomes the bi product of which could be seen as respite for some families.

3.3 Members endorse the alternative pictorial representation of the model for day opportunities.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

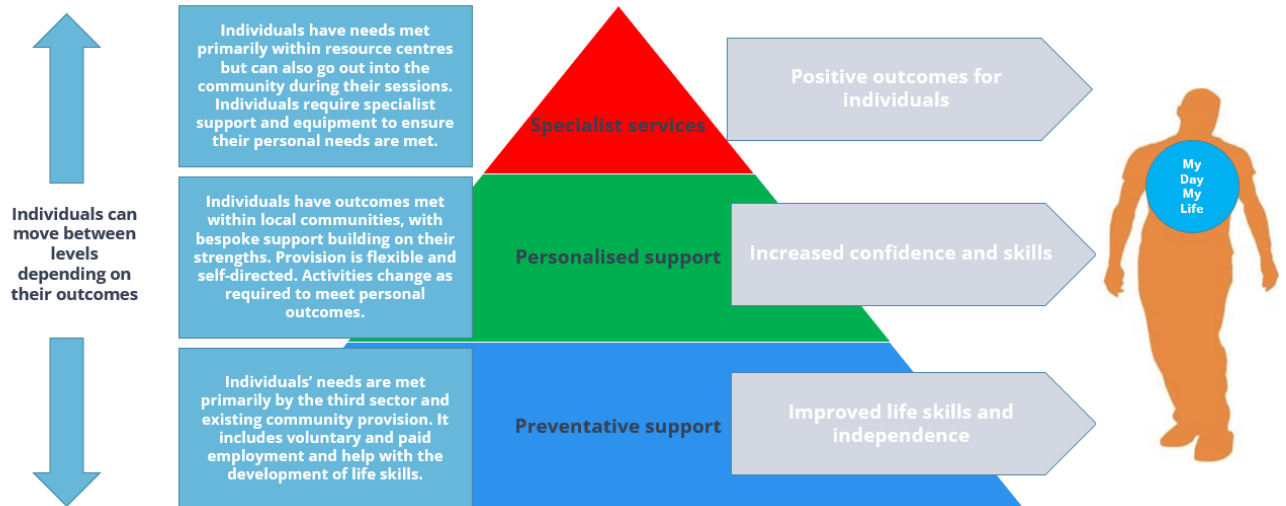
4.1 The implementation plan reflects the actions required to fully embed the model for day opportunities.

4.2 The model actively promotes individuals abilities and offers adults a range of opportunities that promote independence that focus on strengths and outcomes.

4.3 The alternative depiction of the model is more equitable it sees everyone's outcomes as equal regardless of how or where they are being met.

5. THE REPORT

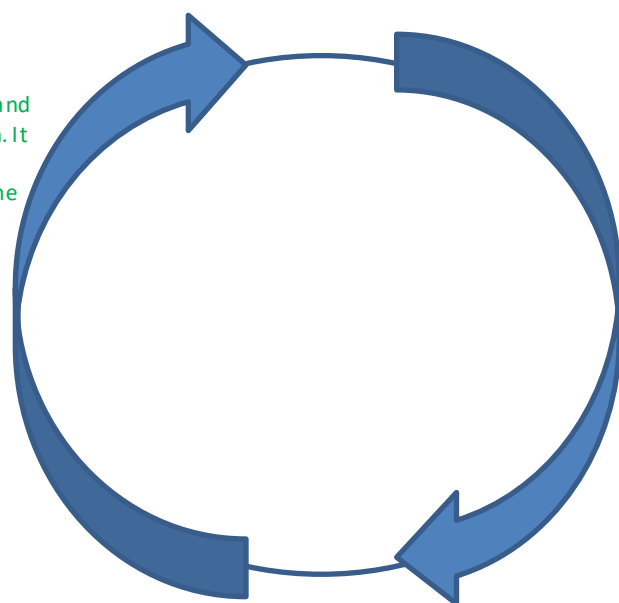
5.1 HICO presented their proposed model for day opportunities to scrutiny committee in January 2023. The model was represented as a triangle which can be interpreted as hierarchy;



5.2 Whereas the above model has its merits it is felt that the model depicted as a circle below would be more equitable. There are no changes to the wording of the model, and it still allows people to move between services as their outcomes change.

Preventative Support

Individual's needs are met primarily by the third sector and existing community provision. It includes voluntary and paid employment and help with the development of life skills.



Specialist Provision

Individuals have needs met primarily within resource centres but can also go out into the community during their sessions. Individuals require specialist support and equipment to ensure their personal needs are met.

Personalised Support

Individuals have outcomes met within local authority communities, with bespoke support building on their strengths. Provision is flexible and self-directed. Activities change as required to meet personal outcomes.

- 5.3 Underpinning the model is the notion that support is allocated to individuals by matching the offer with identified individual outcomes, through a Day Opportunities 'hub' This includes promotion of the use of Direct Payments where appropriate. Direct payments is a means of an individual receiving an ongoing payment to employ a personal assistant to assist them in meeting their outcomes.
- 5.4 In respect of direct payments these are being promoted by Social Workers especially at transition for children's to adult services to give individuals choice and control to meet their own outcomes. A fixed term regional post has been agreed and a candidate appointed and a start date is awaited. The aim of this post is to provide consistency across authorities, simplify the process, provide promotional material and look how we can support people to recruit personal assistants.
- 5.5 The development of a hub is in its infancy and discussions have been held with Pembrokeshire who have developed this way of working. It is proposed a short task and finish group is established. Members to include, an individual who uses services, carer/family member, Assessment Care Management, and the third sector. The remit of the hub will be to see a person as an individual and look at requests received to match outcomes to opportunities available. The hub will be multi agency, will be able to identify outcomes that can't be met under themes and then impact on future developments both in house and in the third sector. For example if there were several requests coming through for people who like to play board games/cards then appropriate groups could be established which could be run by volunteers. A key principle of the hub will be optimising existing resources in the community and working with partners to increase opportunities across the County Borough.

- 5.6 The principle of care closer to home will enable individuals to become active participants in their communities. Activities outside communities do occur when that is what is required to meet someone's outcome and can include one off trips to specific locations or events.

Current Provision

- 5.7 Currently 23 staff provide support to 136 individuals accessing our Community Service. Of these 136 people 65 (47%) have only ever received their service in the community.
- 5.8 Community activities include walks in local parks/areas of interest, cycling, visits to coffee shops, journeys on trains, community classes such as craft, woodwork, cookery, gentle exercise, dementia groups and men's shed groups.
- 5.9 Daytime opportunities has expanded the well-established Windy Ridge garden project model which is based in Blackwood, and developed garden projects within 3 residential homes and one day base. Collectively these garden projects are known as 'Gardenscape'. Individuals access the project and are supported to actively participate in grounds work, growing and nurturing of plants from seed and obtain a vast general understanding of horticulture. The outcomes for individuals having such opportunities in an environment which offers freedom to learn and express themselves reinforced the need to introduce additional opportunities within similar environments. Individuals also regularly attend plant sales and agricultural shows.
- 5.10 The introduction of the garden project within the Residential Homes has created an environment which offers further opportunities for individuals which also benefit our residents who reside within the homes. Plant sales and Garden open days give additional experiences to individuals and are an excellent way of promoting such developments. Feedback from CIW on these projects have been very positive.
- 5.11 Having bases accessible 5 days per week offers further scope to expand future referrals and increase opportunities. There are currently 52 Individuals accessing our Garden Projects and 27 accessing Windy Ridge.
- 5.12 The Craft and Woodcraft projects are based in Woodfieldside and were reopened towards the end of 2020/beginning of 2021, providing sessions for individuals to enjoy vocational opportunities. There are currently 31 Individuals accessing these projects.
- 5.13 Out of the 136 Individuals currently accessing the Community Service 65 did not access any day service support prior to August 2020 and all now receive service in the community.
- 5.14 Islwyn Park Coffee Shop sits within the heart of the community in Pontllanfraith and serves the public 5 days per week. The Coffee Shop is run by individuals with a learning disability some of whom used to access a day base. Since the coffee Shop has opened this has had an incredibly positive response from the public and visiting parties. Footfall has increased week by week with regular groups returning and benefiting from the venue and high standard of service they receive. Feedback from members of the public is exceptional in terms of service and friendliness of the staff.
- 5.15 Although the coffee shop is now generating a healthy turnover, one of the biggest

achievements that has come from this venture is that 5 individuals are now paid employees. There are another 5 Individuals who work at the venue who have chosen to remain voluntary but continue to benefit from the experience and opportunity this brings. There are currently 12 Individuals attending Islwyn Catering. Of these 12, we are progressing paid employment for 4, with 8 choosing to remain working in a voluntary capacity at this time.

- 5.16 Base provision currently offers 72 individuals support across 7 bases. Which are Brondeg, Brooklands, Ystrad Mynach, Oaklands, The Links, Windy Ridge and Markham. Individuals can access the community from their base however they need a base to meet their personal care outcomes or require specialist staff skills.
- 5.17 As part of our ongoing development and service review, we have acknowledged a need to extend the core hours within one of our bases (Brooklands). We consider offering individuals the opportunity to receive support from 9:30 -15:30 a positive development for individual's outcomes.
- 5.18 Incorporated within our base provision is The Links. The Links is a service for individuals who have autism and behaviours that can challenge. The service operates from a base in Wyllie and supports individuals to access opportunities within their local communities. The Links also operates from a former resource base in Markham on a daily basis to offer a range of activities for individuals who need a specific type of environment. There are 10 Individuals currently accessing The Links.

Unpaid Carers

- 5.19 The need to support all unpaid carers to continue in their role is paramount. The provision of carers assessments is a statutory function and Social Workers will continue to offer carers assessments in their own right.
- 5.20 All carers will be offered the opportunity to have their details passed to the carers team, who are responsible for supporting carers in a wide range of ways from access to small grants, carers meetings, activities and opportunities to socialise and have their outcomes met. Carers week this year provided a wide range of activities and opportunities for people, full details can be found in Appendix 3.
- 5.21 Regionally a successful business case has been agreed and funded to implement Bridging the Gap, this is an award project in North Wales. It is a tool kit for implementing respite for unpaid carers, which we are seeking to replicate. Bridging the Gap in North Wales has over 50 providers signed up to the scheme to offer different forms of support to carers. These are presented to carers in a brochure so they can choose what they would like to receive. A carer receives a code which is worth up to an agreed value to use over 6 months. Carers can look through the brochure and book as and when they need support. When consultation for this scheme was taking place, families said they struggled with traditional forms of respite care for things such as needing to go for a haircut or attend a family wedding. This scheme allows carers to have the choice.
- 5.22 Other services that support unpaid carers include overnight respite, one off sitting requests, carers coffee mornings which take place across the borough, access to small grants and carers rights information.
- 5.23 HICO's report clearly indicated a training need for staff, as a result specialist training has been commissioned on collaborative conversations for social work staff which

reflects the Social Services and Well-Being Act. This consists of two days initial training with a further follow up day to ensure practice continues to be developed. There are also sessions for senior managers. Sessions commenced on the 6th June and are scheduled into the autumn. Following this it is hoped mentors will be identified to continue to ensure practice reflects collaborative conversations to reflect individual outcomes.

5.24 Community mapping of activities, groups events etc is now standard practice, new activities are identified regularly and communicated to all staff to enable individuals to have their outcomes met.

5.25 **Conclusion**

Day opportunities is a vehicle for enable individuals to achieve their outcomes, become active citizens in their communities and can offer employment opportunities both voluntary and paid.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The integrated impact assessment has identified no negative impacts in people with protected characteristics all individuals are treated equitably
[Link to full Integrated Impact Assessment](#)

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The 2023/24 original budget for day care provision amounts to a net total of £5,220,346 and included provision for a total of 103.01 full time equivalent staff.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 HICO's report recommended Day opportunities are outcome focussed and provided 7 days a week.

9.2 The job description has been revised to reflect the intention to move to 7 day working although this hasn't been implemented to date. However the 16 staff that have been recruited since August 2020 to work in the community, which is 69% of the team, have been advised of the intention to move to 7 day working with extended hours.

9.3 Trade Unions have requested formal consultation is not commenced until the report has been to Cabinet.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 The Day Opportunities report was considered by the Social Services Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 11th July 2023. Following agreement from the Chair the UNISON Branch Secretary for Caerphilly addressed Committee Members. Ms.

Dallimore outlined how the move to a 7-day service should be carefully managed. Members heard how all staff should be fully consulted on the new model and consideration and flexibility shown to those staff who cannot work weekends. Ms. Dallimore highlighted that UNISON had not seen the revised job description mentioned in the report and would like to be consulted on it. The Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing provided assurances that consultation would be forthcoming on both issues raised by the trade union.

One Member sought assurances on tailoring services for the individual needs of users, ensuring that there is a smooth transition to a 7-day service and the support available to carers. The Assistant Director Adult Services advised that currently 26 people were supported into volunteering opportunities and the mileage policy had been reviewed in order to support the travelling demands of carers. Members heard how care would focus on personal outcomes for service users and that this was reflected in the training programme for the Assessment Care management. It was also outlined to the Committee that the transition to a 7-day service would be done incrementally and involve significant negotiation and planning.

A Member asked about the planned roster system and the method of communication for community activities. The Assistant Director Adult Services highlighted that the rostering system would be the same as is currently used in domiciliary care and she outlined how it worked to Members. The Committee then heard how community activities were updated and communicated by quality assurance staff.

On staffing one Member enquired about the loss of staff due to redeploying them from day care to residential care during the pandemic and asked if a change in roles risked further losses. The Assistant Director Adult Services highlighted that whilst some staff found redeployment challenging at first a lot of staff had decided to stay in their new role once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted. It was reiterated that consultation would take place with staff on where they worked in terms of client group. The Member expressed concerns about a perceived move from respite to outcomes in the report, and also asked about the support to voluntary organisations for providing opportunities in community settings. The Assistant Director Adult Services advised that both outcomes and respite were equally important. The Bridge the Gap project was highlighted as one way unpaid carers were supported in terms of respite. Members then heard about the ways voluntary organisations were being supported in terms of accessing grants available.

A Committee Member requested more information on Direct Payments and working with other Councils on Hubs, the Member also asked if timescales were met for Carer Assessments. The Assistant Director Adult Services outlined to Members that there was a statutory requirement to promote Direct Payments and advised that ways of simplifying the process on a regional basis were taking place. Help available on managing finances was also explained to Members. Members heard how the Council would be part of a learning improvement network so that best practice could be developed and shared with other Local Authorities. It was then outlined that there was a statutory duty to offer Carer Assessments and that these were completed in a timely manner by the care assessment team.

One Member asked if any pre-Covid service users would not be part of the new programmes. The Assistant Director Adult Services advised that there were a small number of users who had decided to make their own arrangements and not return to Day Services.

A Member wished to know about the provision of social group activity for people with Autism and also asked if support was offered to the Third Sector so that they could access specific training for client groups. The Assistant Director Adult Services gave information on a specialist service for people with Autism called The Links. Detail on future training funded by the Welsh Government was also provided to Committee Members.

One Member commented on the provision of services for people with poor mental health. The Assistant Director Adult Services gave information on the work of the in-house support team which included help with budgeting and maintaining their tenancies. Members also heard about a scheme funded through the Regional Partnership for people with low level mental health needs.

A Member sought assurances on effective communication with service users and that proper assessment of their needs had taken place. The Assistant Director Adult Services advised that user assessments and reviews had been completed. Whilst recognising previous challenges with communicating with service users, Members heard that the situation was improving in this area. Conversations were ongoing and the better use of social media platforms were also being considered.

One Member enquired if there was provision within the proposed model for an increase in demand for services. The Assistant Director Adult Services outlined how there was no additional capacity built-in to the proposed model but that regular discussions were taking place with partners such as the Health Board on the best way to meet the challenge of increased demand in the future.

The Chair requested information on skills that can be provided by the Third Sector. The Assistant Director Adult Services gave information on groups run by the Third Sector on such skills as IT, budget monitoring and cookery. Having noted the content of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations are supported and should be forwarded to Cabinet for approval. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 13 for, 0 against and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Implementation Plan

Appendix 2 HICO Report

Appendix 3 Carers Week information