

# ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMISSION REPORT

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Impact of Covid-19 on Day Care Services for  
individuals with a Learning Disability

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Cllr Sarah Russell – Deputy City Mayor – Lead for Adult  
Social Care

Martin Samuels – Strategic Director – Social Care &  
Education

8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Wards Affected: All

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## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission with an overview of the work in progress to understand the impact of Covid-19 on individuals with a learning disability and to consider new models of support.

## **2. Summary**

- 2.1 The majority of building based day care and respite services for individuals with a learning disability have been closed since March 2020.
- 2.2 Over recent weeks some family/carers have been reporting concerns about the negative impact that the current arrangements are having on their loved one, due to the lack of attendance at their normal day care or community-based service.
- 2.3 As it unlikely that individuals will be able to return to their usual services in the near future, consideration needs to be given to developing different models of support. Therefore, City Council is working with other local authorities to share good practice and to understand what options could be developed. See paragraph 4.6.
- 2.4 Also, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care Services (ADASS) for the East Midlands region have appointed consultants (at no cost to the City Council) to undertake a review to understand what is happening regionally and nationally and to present alternative models of care.
- 2.5 Whilst priority has been given to looking at the options for people with a learning disability as they are most at risk of admission to specialist hospital and family/carer breakdown, work has also started on understanding the impact on other groups who would usually attend day care or community-based support. This will be reported to Scrutiny at a later date.

## **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission is recommended to:
  - a) note the content of the report and to provide comment/feedback.

#### **4. Report**

- 4.1 Adult Social Care (ASC) funds in the region of 359<sup>1</sup> individuals with a learning disability to attend day care or community-based services (these include services directly commissioned (92), funded by a direct payment (235) and those who have both (32)). These are individuals who are eligible for support as defined by the Care Act 2014. The majority funded by the City Council are supported by the independent or voluntary sector.
- 4.2 The City Council operates one 'in house' day care service for individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities at Hastings Road Day Centre (HRDC). There are currently 29 people who attend the service on a regular basis and some of those (11 individuals) are 100% funded by health due to the severity of their condition.
- 4.3 During the closure period, HRDC has continued to support one individual for 2 hours a day, to assist their carer. However, with the current social distancing requirements, it would be difficult to allow many more to attend safely and at this time the authority is currently undertaking welfare calls and providing an outreach service where possible.
- 4.4 Most external services have been closed since mid-March 2020 although they have been offering services virtually. These include welfare calls, delivering activity packs, online (Zoom) activity sessions and groups chats, advice and information for carers. A few external services have remained open to a very small number of complex individuals in order to support those people and their family/carers. Whilst all services report that this virtual offer has been extremely valuable, some family/carers have been reporting concerns about the current arrangements and their inability to cope without a break.
- 4.5 Whilst Council officers and health colleagues work together to prevent carer/family breakdown, there have been several hospital admissions of individuals with a learning disability over the last few weeks, which appear to have been triggered by the lack of daily routine and social interaction.
- 4.6 As it is unlikely that individuals will be able to return to their usual services soon, due to issues of social distancing and other Covid19 related considerations, consideration needs to be given to developing different models of support. Therefore, City Council is working with other local authorities to share good practice and to understand what options could be developed. This includes retaining the virtual offer to add value to packages of support. In this case consideration will be given to implementing flexible costing options which better mirror a move to online engagement activity, utilising technology to support families and individuals receiving services and looking at outreach models.

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<sup>1</sup> Information correct as at 14.08.2020. Source: service provision in period – data warehouse

4.7 Also, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care Services (ADASS) for the East Midlands region have appointed consultants (at no cost to the City Council) to look at the recovery of day care and community-based services, including new models of support.

4.8 Their work is due to be completed mid-September and includes the following objectives:

- Audit the current work on co-production and understanding the impact of Covid19 on individuals and their family/carers focused primarily those with learning disabilities who access day services or short breaks.
- To identify new types of support and identify what could be built into transitional and new models of care
- To identify best practice both regionally and nationally

4.9 Once further details are available the Council will seek to develop new models of care and will engage with the learning disability community and other partners to understand if the proposed changes can deliver the required outcomes.

4.10 Any new developments will be shared with the ASC Scrutiny Commission in due course.

## **5. Scrutiny Overview**

5.1 An overview of the impact of Covid-19 was presented to the ASC Scrutiny Commission on 30.6.2020, which included information relating to day care services.

## **6 Financial**

The department spends £4m on day care including direct payments. The financial impact of any changes to the current provision will be looked at following the completion of the work outlined in this report.

***Martin Judson, Head of Finance***

## **7 Legal**

Awaiting legal comments.

## **8 Equalities**

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

There are no direct equalities implications arising from the report recommendations as the report provides an overview. However, COVID 19 will have disproportionately impacted on particular protected characteristic groups, either directly or indirectly. Underpinned by the Care Act, adult social care supports many different people, including older people, disabled people and those with long-term conditions, those in need of support to maintain good mental health, and those who are mentally unwell, along with their carers.

The PSED has remained in force throughout this time and considerations on the impacts of the immediate response to COVID 19 and the actions that the Council and partners take going forwards into recovery should fully consider the needs of people with different protected characteristics and where disproportionate negative impacts are identified, steps should be implemented to mitigate this. Risk assessments should take account of the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics or who appear to be in particular at-risk groups.

Any lessons learnt that may develop into recovery plans for opportunities to do things differently, for people needing ASC support including any changes to service delivery or policy as a result of COVID 19 and future new ways of working, should be equality impact assessed prior to making a decision on those changes, to ensure that there are not unintended consequences for people with protected characteristics. This includes circumstances whereby channels of contact for support or the communication of information are changed, for example utilising technology to support families and individuals. Where equality monitoring information is collected, it may be useful in establishing where and for whom COVID 19 has had disproportionate impacts and may provide a useful indication for further work, for the Council and partners.

**Surinder Singh**  
**Equalities Officer**  
**Tel 37 4148**

## **9 Climate Change**

There are limited climate change implications associated with this report. However, continued provision of services online in the future has the potential to reduce carbon emissions from the operation of buildings and travel to services, but only where this is judged to be safe and appropriate.

**Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284**

**10. Appendices**

None

**11. Background Papers**

None