

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION
by
COUNTY COUNCILLOR MYFANWY ALEXANDER
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

22nd December 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: Michael Gray, Head of Adult Services

REPORT TITLE: The Impact of COVID-19 on Provision of Daytime Opportunities in Powys

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

1.1. This report further considers the impact of COVID-19 upon the provision of day services in Powys.

1.2. An assessment of the viability of opening day centres and day services was undertaken on 29th July 2020. On 12th August 2020, a Portfolio Holder delegated decision concluded that:

*“it **is not** possible to re-open day centres safely in Powys at this time. This outcome will remain the position while the physical/social distancing and PPE/hygiene legislation remain in place.”*

1.3. The decision was that day centres and day services would remain closed for 6 months, e.g. up to 12th February 2021. Any decision to re-open day centres and day services following this time period would follow a review of the current risk assessment.

1.4. This report provides an updated risk assessment (see appendix A) and concludes that it will still not be viable to open day centres and day services after the initial 6-month time period.

1.5. This report asks for the Portfolio Holder’s agreement to maintain closure of day centres and day services for a further 6 months, up

to 12th August 2021. This acknowledges the inability of opening up day settings to previous levels during the pandemic. The timeframe will also provide Adult Services with sufficient time to consider alternative day opportunity models based on what matters conversations with citizens.

- 1.6. It also requests the Portfolio Holder's agreement to continue to utilise different methods of achieving what matters to residents while the day centres and day services remain closed.

2. Background

- 2.1. Powys County Council's Social Services invoked business continuity on the 16th March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Within a week all day care centres/services for adults and older people were closed to minimise the risk of infection and in response to the national government's 'lockdown.'
- 2.2. The day centres remain closed with service users living at home either with redeployed support, or with family support. "What matters" conversations are being had with residents who were attending these services to identify alternative day opportunities.
- 2.3. Since 12th August 2020, there has been an increase in COVID-19 infection rates, which led to a 17-day firebreak period between Friday 23rd October and 9th November 2020. Following the firebreak period there has been a new set of measures put in place by Welsh Government. This guidance states that up to 15 participants can participate in an organised activity if this activity takes place indoors.
- 2.4. Attendance at day centres and day services could be classified as an organised activity. For such an activity to be permissible, the organiser of the activity must complete a risk assessment and take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus. During such an activity, people should remain physically distanced from others outside of their household.

- 2.5. The majority of individuals who attend day services do so in order to attain social interaction while receiving care during the day. It is not currently possible to provide such a service due to the requirements of guidance to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.
- 2.6. Individuals who were attending the day services have either been supported in different ways (e.g. supported living, care at home, family support) or have chosen to not receive alternative support.
- 2.7. Whilst the roll-out of a new Coronavirus vaccine in Wales is to be welcomed, the World Health Organisation estimates that between 65-70% of people will need to be immune before transmission is interrupted, herd protection achieved and everyone and everywhere declared safe. Professor David Salisbury, a former director of immunisation at the UK Department for Health has stated it “unlikely” that vaccines will be able to take us back to where we were pre-COVID by Easter next year.¹
- 2.8. A second coronavirus strain has been detected, which has been described as more transmissible than the first variant. This has contributed to an increase in infection rates and in turn, a new period of lockdown under Alert Level 4² has been imposed by Welsh Government.

3. Advice

- 3.1. There is no specific guidance for day services in relation to COVID-19. However, there are examples of good practice. Worcestershire Council have formulated guidance and a checklist for day care providers to implement when considering the potential for re-opening their day care facilities. This guidance is noted by the Social Care Institute for Excellence as an example of good practice.³
- 3.2. The checklist provided by Worcestershire Council was used in July 2020 by Adult Services when assessing the viability of re-opening day centres and day services. This assessment has been reviewed on the 24th November 2020 to review this decision. The detailed assessment can be found in appendix A.

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-b6360f40-84f9-469b-b6a3-a4568e161c4f>

² <https://gov.wales/alert-level-4>

³ <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/day-care/safe-delivery/assessment>

- 3.3. The most recent risk assessment concludes that it remains unfeasible to re-open the day centres and day services following the initial 6-month period.
- 3.4. Re-opening these settings relies on sufficient staff availability. This is not currently possible. As of 27th November 2020, there are 34 staff in substantive day centre/service posts who remain redeployed to business-critical activities. This is made up of the following:
 - 3.4.1. 10 staff with substantive day centre/service roles who cannot return to work to deliver care within 2 metres.
 - 3.4.2. 12 staff have been redeployed to our domiciliary care team.
 - 3.4.3. 4 staff have been redeployed to facilitate collection of PPE.
 - 3.4.4. 2 staff have been redeployed to the Council's track and trace team.
 - 3.4.5. 3 staff have been redeployed to supported living tenancies.
 - 3.4.6. 1 staff member has been redeployed to support business administration.
 - 3.4.7. 2 staff have been redeployed to support Assist.
- 3.5. The conclusion reached results in further work for social workers to engage with all individuals who made use of the day services and day centres previously to explore alternative meaningful day opportunities.
- 3.6. Maintaining closure of day centres and day services for a further 6 months provides the service with adequate time to work alongside individuals and partners to design and embed alternative day opportunities.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1. The service is currently fully funded, even though it is not open. The different options available to the service area will have different resource

implications. Closing day services permanently would make financial savings within that service area but could create further service demand and costs to provide support to individuals within the community or in their own homes. Any further investigation would require a full evaluation of costs.

- 4.2. The Deputy Section 151 Officer on behalf of the Section 151 Officer supports the approach to review the current and future arrangements of day centres with regard to continuing with the closures, with regard given to affordability of the potential alternative options and the need to remain within the current budget levels.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1. There are no legal requirements to provide day services, as such. The needs of individuals can be met in different ways according to what matters to those individuals.
- 5.2. There are a number of legislation and guidance that are relevant to the physical distancing and PPE use in Wales and the UK. These include the:
 - 5.2.1. Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020
 - 5.2.2. The Welsh Government's Unlocking Our Society and Economy
 - 5.2.3. The Welsh Government's guidance on PPE and working within closed settings
 - 5.2.4. Health and Safety guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

- 5.3. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "*I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report*".

6. **Data Protection**

- 6.1. The proposal does not involve the processing of personal data.

7. Comment from Local Members

7.1. Not applicable, as this service is across the county.

8. Integrated Impact Assessment

8.1. An impact assessment has been undertaken. This considers the impact on all stakeholders. The impact upon individual service users will be considered and mitigated through individual assessments with social work staff.

9. Recommendation

9.1. For the Portfolio Holder to agree:

9.1.1. For day services and day centres to remain closed for a further 6 months.

9.1.2. For social workers to work with individuals and their carers to support them to utilise different methods of achieving what matters to them while the day centres/services remain closed.

9.1.3. For Adult Services to undertake an evaluation of the implications of maintaining closed day centres/services in the longer term (recognising that physical distancing will be required for some time), including a potential consultation with staff on alternative roles that promote day opportunities.

9.1.4. To continue to work alongside providers of externally commissioned services to provide home based support on a long-term basis, whilst supporting residents to engage in day opportunities.

9.1.5. To return to Health and Care Scrutiny Committee/ Cabinet with the findings in order to enable informed decision making about the future of day services across the county.

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Appendix A

Risk Assessment of Opening Day Centres and Day Services to Service Users During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Title	PCC Day Services – Assessment of Opening to Service Users During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Date	27 November 2020
Version	1.0	Status	Draft
Distribution	Confidential – for Joint Adult Services Management Team	Authors	ASC Joint-SMT

Introduction

On 29th July 2020, the Adult Services Joint Senior Management Team undertook a risk assessment that concluded that it was not safe nor feasible to re-open day centres and services. It was subsequently agreed on 12th August 2020 that these settings should be closed for a period of 6 months.

Since 12th August 2020, there has been a period of increased community infection rates, which resulted in a “firebreak” lockdown between 23rd October and 9th November. Updated guidance has now been published by Welsh Government which confirms that organised indoor activities are permissible for up to 15 participants if all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to Coronavirus are undertaken.

This risk assessment review considers whether, under the current guidelines for physical distancing (‘social distancing’), it is possible to re-open day centres, in the manner undertaken pre business continuity. It also considers the viability of opening these settings on a reduced level considering current Welsh Government guidelines

Methodology

The risk assessment checklist template used on 29th July 2020 has been used again to provide a means of recording the rationale and to facilitate logical and consistent decision making.⁴ A revised and completed checklist can be seen below.

Results and Recommendations

On 12th August, we stated that the settings would almost certainly remain closed for at least the next 6 months, e.g up to 12th February 2021. We

⁴ Risk assessment template can be found on the Social Care Institute for Excellence website: <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/day-care/safe-delivery/assessment>

recommend that these settings continue to remain closed for a further 6 months, e.g up to 12th August 2021. The rationale for maintaining closure for this period is below:

1. The assessment has shown that it is still not possible to re-open day centres and day services in Powys at this this time due to the practicalities of maintaining safe physical distancing.
2. There is insufficient staff to safely manage the re-opening and running of these settings. Our day centre and service staff are either unable to work within 2 metres of others due to underlying health conditions or have been redeployed to statutory business critical activities within the service. This will continue to be the case for as long as Welsh Government infection control and physical distancing guidance remains in place.
3. The current situation has brought uncertainty to both citizens who attended these settings and staff. Feedback from what matters conversations has shown that people who use these services are unable to make informed decisions around alternative day opportunities without clarity on longer term plans for these settings.
4. Maintaining closures for a further 6 months provides Adult Services with more time to determine how day centre and day service staff can be utilised to provide meaningful day opportunities to citizens in a different way.

The decision will be reviewed after 6 months. A review will take place before this date if there is a significant change to Welsh Government guidance.

It is recommended that this decision is considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee's Working Groups.

Actions

Further actions required because of the outcome of the assessment are:

1. For the appropriate social work teams to continue to undertake 'What Matters Conversations' with citizens and their carers to enable those individuals to make informed decisions about how to achieve what matters to them. Carer's assessments should be undertaken separately if appropriate.
2. For this paper to be considered by the ASC Scrutiny Committee Working Group.
3. For the Head of Service to advise the Council's Senior Leadership Team.
4. For the Head of Service to advise Cabinet on the decision and possible implications and to request their ratification.
5. For the Provider Services managers to consider the staffing implications of the decision in the short, medium and long term (assuming ongoing physical distancing measures remain in place) and to work with the trade

unions and Human Resources to support staff in re-aligning their work where possible.

6. For the Health and Care Change Managers (Live Well and Age Well) to liaise with external day care providers to support an informed decision on their services and realigning support, as appropriate.
7. For a Communication Strategy to be developed to ensure that all service users and staff understand the situation fully.
8. For the existing Impact Assessment to be reviewed to ensure that all potential implications have been considered and mitigated fully.

Risk assessment

Below are areas which day services need to consider as the risk assessment for re-opening of services. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and that this checklist is for guidance only. Decisions around re-opening and appropriate risk assessments remain the responsibility of providers and will also need to take into account the most up to date government guidance and rules around physical distancing (please see links at the end of the document).

This service-wide risk assessment may also be accompanied by appropriate risk assessments on an individual basis for those adults who may be considering returning to day services, in discussion with social work teams where appropriate.

Area	Factors to consider	Yes/No (Based on full capacity attendance)	Yes/No (based on existing COVID-19 legislation)	Potential mitigations
Outdoor and community-based day services	Can the service ensure social distancing rules are met, including legal requirement for 2 metre distancing?	No	No	Insufficient staff due to redeployment to other business critical activities
	If yes, will this require changes in the way people attend e.g. reduced days/ reduced hours?	N/A	N/A	
	If yes, will there be a need for increased staffing/changing patterns of staffing /consistency of staffing?	N/A	N/A	
	Would the service be able to ensure social distancing rules are met, including legal	No	No	

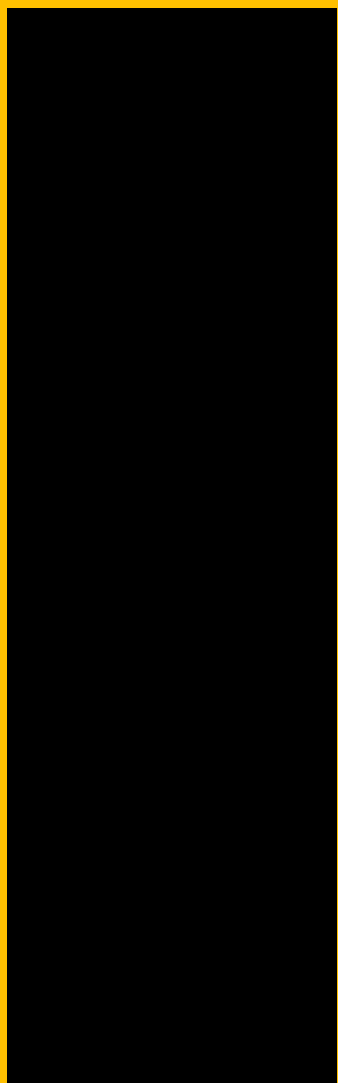
	requirement for 2 metre distancing in bad weather?			
Day Centre environment without personal care	Is it possible to provide a service in a different way which doesn't involve individuals coming to the centre?	Yes	Yes	Ongoing "what matters" conversations are taking place to identify alternative day opportunities. Third sector support cannot take place in peoples' homes at this point in time.
	Are there other ways to meet individual need without attending the centre?	Yes	Yes	See above
	If government guidance confirms that centred-based services can re-open are the centres big enough to zone and allocate a space dedicated to small number of individuals compliant with social distancing guidelines to remain two metres apart?	In part	In part	4 out of 12 settings will not be big enough for zoning.
	Is it possible to minimise the time individuals spend indoors?	No	No	Winter weather does not make this feasible.
	Will this require changes in the way people attend e.g. reduced days/ reduced hours/ extended opening times but staggered hours?	Yes	Yes	
	Will there be a need for increased staffing/ changing patterns of staffing?	Yes	Yes	We cannot compel staff to change their working patterns.
	Can indoor places be kept well ventilated?	No	No	
	Is it possible to operate a one-way system for entering and leaving the buildings?	In part	In part	4 out of 12 settings will not be able to operate a one-way system.

	Can the service implement policies for administering first aid or non-expected personal care and ensure appropriate PPE is available.	Yes	Yes	This would only be possible if there were reduced numbers of people attending the settings.
More specialised day centre environments e.g. with personal care or for people behaviours which may challenge services	Are service users vulnerable and at high risk of increased impact from COVID-19?	Yes	Yes	
	Is it possible to provide a safer service of reduced hours in or from the individual's home?	In part	In part	Insufficient staff available due to COVID-19 guidance and inflexibility around working alternative contracted hours
	Is it possible to adhere to PPE and relevant guidance specifically for personal care?	Yes	Yes	
	Does the service have access to a robust supply of PPE?	Yes	Yes	
	Are there measures in place to manage people with behaviours which challenge services such as spitting, biting, hitting or kicking or people who may not be able to observe social distancing rules?	No	No	Insufficient staff available due to COVID-19 guidance and inflexibility around working alternative contracted hours
Safe Travel – how will people get to your service?	Can individuals travel safely to use services? (including physical distancing)	No	No	See above
	Can individuals avoid public transport? (including all shared transport)	No	No	
	If not, is it possible to ensure any shared transport provided meets physical distancing guidelines?	No	No	There would be reduced numbers and masks would need to be worn if appropriate to do so. This may be difficult to manage. Also relies on sufficient staffing.
	Is third party transport available if required?		Unknown	Would need to assess availability

	Can the service ensure the use of face coverings if using public or shared transport? Can the service support service users, where possible, to adhere to this?	No	No	
Meals	Will the service be preparing meals for attendees	Varies	Varies	Meals are not provided in younger adult day centres. Meals are provided in older adult day centres.
	If preparing food, are any additional precautions needed (such as use of PPE)?	Yes	Yes	Meal preparation guidance required
	If providing drinks, is it possible to do so and to wash up without breaching distancing requirements?	Yes	Yes	
Good hygiene	Are there sufficient and appropriate handwashing facilities?	No	Yes	
	Are tissues and lidded bins available in all appropriate areas?	No	Yes	
	Is it possible to teach use of arm not hand to catch cough/sneeze if no tissue available?	No	No	
	Can hand washing be repeated at every possible opportunity?	No	Yes	
	Can attendees wash their clothes each day and wear fresh ones the next day?	No	No	
	Is it possible to provide appropriate signage and easy read materials?	Yes	Yes	

Use of shared areas e.g. toilets and kitchens	Is it possible to ensure social distancing when using these facilities?	No	In part	Dependent on layout of buildings and relies on sufficient staffing which cannot be guaranteed for as long as staff are redeployed to other business critical activities.
	Is it possible to provide signage relevant to service user group?	Yes	Yes	
	Is it possible to ensure areas are kept clean during the day?	No	No	Would require additional cleaning staff
Maintaining clean environments as evidence suggests that the virus can exist for up to 72 hours on surfaces	Are there plans for a daily deep clean/increased frequency of cleaning? (Frequent cleaning is particularly important for communal surfaces like door handles or lift buttons and communal areas like bathrooms, kitchens and tea points)	Yes	Yes	This would require additional staffing resource which cannot be relied upon at the moment considering cleaning resource being diverted to other business critical settings.
	Is it feasible to clean communal resources or learning aids (remove items that cannot be effectively cleaned) regularly?	Yes	In part	For 4 out of 12 centres
	Can room layouts be changed to facilitate cleaning and/or social distancing (e.g. reduce clutter, remove unnecessary furniture/resources etc)?	No	Yes	This would only be possible if numbers of attendees reduced from pre-COVID levels
	Are there sufficient supplies of PPE for cleaning use and cleaning products, sanitisers etc. to cope with the increased cleaning demands that will be required?	Yes	Yes	
	Can cleaning be supervised and checked?	Yes	Yes	This would require additional staffing resource which cannot be relied upon at the

				moment considering cleaning resource being diverted to other business critical settings.
Checks and testing (staff and service users)	Is it possible to identify individuals who are infectious?	No	No	This would rely on regular testing capacity with quick result timeframes. Such capacity is not in place currently.
	Are there policies for managing symptomatic attendees/ staff?	Yes	Yes	
	Can all potential contacts with COVID-19 be reviewed prior to every visit to the service?	No	No	
	Are there systems in place to ensure someone attending doesn't have COVID-19? • Pre-arrival checks? • Temperature checks?	No	No	
	Are there measures in place if someone starts to exhibit Covid-19 symptoms whilst in the service and are there agreed steps to be taken to ensure they are isolated from other people until they can be collected from the service?	Yes	Yes	Powys County Council office guidance would be adapted accordingly.
PPE for all settings?	Is there sufficient PPE in line with guidance?	Yes	Yes	
	Is there a robust supply chain for any PPE the centre will require?	Yes	Yes	
	Is there adequate PPE before re-opening?	Yes	Yes	
Staffing safety and staffing levels	Note that as an employer, you also have a legal responsibility to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety.	N/A Guidance only		

	<p>This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them (recognising you cannot eliminate the risk of COVID-19). More guidance at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19</p>			
	Have you conducted a risk assessment for your staff?	Yes	Yes	Welsh Government Workforce Assessment undertaken for all
	Are there sufficient staffing levels?	No	No	
	If staff need to be moved from other services to support re-opening of settings, will this impact on our ability to deliver business critical services?	Yes	Yes	
	Are there staff who are shielding or isolating?	Yes	Yes	
	Will there be a requirement for return to work discussions with any staff advised to self-isolate?	Yes	Yes	
	Will there be a requirement for return to work discussions with any staff advised to self-isolate?	Yes	Yes	
	Are there clear reporting systems for staff with symptoms / positive test results?	Yes	Yes	
	Can staff get to work?	Yes	Yes	
	Are there issues re childcare for some staff?	Yes	Yes	
Are there specific staff training required?	Yes	Yes		

	Can information be cascaded effectively from management?	Yes	Yes	
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