

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

8TH MAY 2019

**THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY DAY CENTRES –
CONSULTATION REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION &
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR GERAINT
HOPKINS, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT COMMUNITY SERVICES &
WELSH LANGUAGE**

Author Paul Mee, Director – Public Health, Protection & Community
Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the outcome of the six week focussed consultation exercise undertaken on the future of the remaining open access community day centres and to make recommendations to Cabinet following that consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Considers the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the remaining four open access community day centres as identified in paragraph 4.1 of the report;
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, approves the closure of the remaining open access community day centres, with the exception of Gilfach Goch Community Day Centre which will remain open; and
- 2.3 Subject to 2.2 above, authorise the Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services to explore alternative provision for existing service users through existing third sector organisations in the communities concerned or where appropriate, through the developing Community Hubs.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 There are four remaining open access Community Day Centres in the County Borough. These provide a relatively small number of daily meals and a limited programme of activities for people over 50 years of age.
- 3.2 The majority of the remaining open access community day centres are under-utilised and the current service model does not meet the needs of the majority of older people in our communities and is no longer sustainable. There is a need to continue to modernise and reconfigure the community services offer to our people through the continued development of Community Hubs that support a wider range of service provision through a neighbourhood network working in partnership with the third sector. It is proposed that any potential contribution these proposals will make to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan will be used to maintain essential assessed adult social care services.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At its meeting of the 21st November 2018, the Cabinet approved that a six week focussed consultation with service users and the local communities be undertaken on the future of the remaining four Community Day Centres:
- Gilfach Goch Day Centre;
 - Brynnar Jones Day Centre, Gelli;
 - Teifi House Day centre, Maerdy;
 - Nazareth Day Centre, Williamstown.
- 4.2 This decision was made in response to concerns over the low usage (people are choosing not to attend); the increasing cost to the Council of providing the day centres; the potential significant capital investment required to retain the centres, and the wider pressures on the Council's budget from the growing needs of residents requiring assessed care and support. These issues were set out in greater detail in the [Cabinet paper presented on 21st November 2018](#).
- 4.3 The consultation exercise ran for a period of six weeks from the 21st January 2019 to the 4th March 2019. The consultation exercise involved eight drop in events; two held at each of the four day centres. An online survey was created and placed on the Council's website.
- 4.4 In total, 331 responses were received to the consultation survey. The drop in sessions at each day centre were well attended by service users and in some instances residents of the local communities. The full consultation report is presented at Appendix I and the key points are summarised as follows:

- 89.4% of the respondents to the survey attend one of the four days centres.
- 82.7% of the respondents said that the main reason for using the day centres was to meet friends and socialise.
- Many respondents said they would not access alternative community facilities if the day centres were not available.
- Some service users were also concerned about clients attending the learning disability services at both Brynnar Jones and Gilfach Goch day centres.
- Respondents suggested more promotion, broadening the use of the facilities and including intergenerational uses as ways to improve the centres.

4.5 A petition was received in support of Gilfach Goch Day Centre with 488 signatures. A letter from Councillor A. Roberts was also received in support of Gilfach Goch Day Centre and this is included at Appendix II.

4.6 The most significant potential issues identified by current service users are the perceived loss of opportunities to meet and socialise in these premises and the loss of access to a subsidised meal.

4.7 Other residents who attended some of the drop in events were concerned over the buildings being potentially left empty and falling into disrepair. They expressed support for exploring wider community uses that would keep the buildings open and may be more sustainable.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 It is clear from the consultation exercise that the majority of service users would understandably prefer that the centres remain open and that the provision of hot meals and activities remain available. Service users identify the potential for greater social isolation and the loss of hot meals as being significant impacts from the potential closure of the day centres.

5.2 The centres are clearly valued by the existing service users. However, this must be considered in the context of relatively low usage of these facilities by people over 50 in the communities. Table I provides a detailed breakdown of the average meals provided each day and the net cost to the Council.

Table I – Community Day Centres – Usage & Net cost per meal

Community Day Centre	Average meals per day			Net cost per meal served 2018/19
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	
Teifi House	15	13	11	£20.96
Brynnar Jones	29	25	22	£11.43
Nazareth House	21	19	20	£16.90
Gilfach Goch	30	29	34	£7.03

- 5.3 The low usage levels at these facilities has remained fairly static with relatively few meals being provided each day. The net cost per meal to the Council is significant at all centres and in one case is nearly £21 per meal.
- 5.4 There is a programme of activities at Teifi House and Brynnar Jones (only one afternoon each week) and Gilfach Goch although these programmes are generally very limited. There are no activities held at Nazareth Day Centre in Williamstown.
- 5.5 Members will be aware that following the closure in 2018 of St George’s Day Centre in Tonyrefail, service users were signposted to Gilfach Goch Day Centre as an alternative. The usage for Gilfach Goch Day Centre is therefore likely to increase in 2019/20. This centre has the highest usage of the remaining four centres and the lowest net cost per meal. Gilfach Goch Day Centre and Brynnar Jones Day Centre support clients from learning disability services who also access meals at the centres.
- 5.6 The repair and maintenance requirements for each building have been assessed by Corporate Estates and it is estimated that over the next five years repair requirements of all four buildings would cost the Council approximately £500k. The estimated repair costs for each building are all significant; the greatest cost being in respect of Nazareth House, Williamstown estimated at approximately £165k and Teifi House, Maerdy, estimated at £193k.
- 5.7 On the evidence of the small number of service users it can reasonably be argued that the existing model no longer caters for the majority of older people in our communities. The low usage and ongoing cost to the Council is not sustainable in the long term.
- 5.8 The Council has recognised the need to reconfigure its community assets and services through the development of Community Hubs. These facilities include a range of services provided by the public and third sector in accordance with the direction of travel set out in the

Social Services and Wellbeing Act. Bringing services together provides a better public service offer and creates economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or retrofitted, fit for purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

- 5.9 In Aberdare, through the RCT Together programme, the Council has agreed a leasehold transfer of St Mair's Day Centre to Age Connects Morgannwg (ACM) who are developing a Community Hub with a range of services for the local community. The Council in partnership with a third sector organisation Fern Partnership, is developing a Community Hub in Ferndale at the former Ferndale Infants School that will serve the Rhondda Fach. The South Cynon area will be served by a Community Hub located at the former Mountain Ash Day Centre. The capital investment works at both Ferndale and Mountain Ash Community Hubs is nearing completion and both are expected to be open in the early summer of 2019. Plans are also being prepared to open a Community Hub at Porth Plaza as part of the Porth town centre regeneration strategy and similarly plans are also being developed to situate a Community Hub facility at the Llys Cadwyn (former Taff Vale) site, which will be retained by the Council to provide a number of community-based functions.
- 5.10 It is anticipated that each Community Hub supports a "neighbourhood network" of community based services and provision within each community zone or area. This will link services and communities together and ensure a more strategic and sustainable approach to the delivery of community based services. The third sector provide a number of excellent facilities across the County Borough that make a significant contribution to the health & well-being of our communities with or without direct support from the Council.
- 5.11 In Maerdy for example there is a well-equipped Community Centre a short distance from Teifi House privately run by a community group. The Council could explore opportunities to link this and other facilities to the neighbourhood network model, thereby making it more sustainable and increasing usage. Residents of Maerdy will also be able to benefit from the newly developed Community Hub in Ferndale.
- 5.12 Similar opportunities exist elsewhere in the County Borough. For example, service users from Nazareth House could be signposted to nearby and well established facilities. Strengthening the links and relationships between these community assets and services will assist in mitigating and potential negative impact on service users from changes to the Community Day Services and create more sustainable services with an enhanced Community based offer.

- 5.13 RCT Together is the Council's innovative approach to engaging with its residents and communities to explore how they can work together to develop alternative delivery models that maintain services and facilities for the future. This approach has successfully led to a number of community asset transfers that has ensured that those community assets have continued to provide valued services to their local communities.
- 5.14 This approach may provide a further opportunity in respect of the community day centres should the Council determine it can no longer support the current services. This may particularly be the case in respect of facilities such as Brynnar Jones day centre which is in relatively good repair, has a design that lends itself to a variety of uses and has good transport connections.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general equality duty and a specific public sector equality duty that is applicable to Councils. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Single Equality Duty) requires public authorities to demonstrate that they have paid 'due regard' in their decision-making process to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

6.2 The Council must have due regard to the impact of any proposals on those with a protected characteristic. The Council has a specific duty to publish information to demonstrate how it has paid due regard to the aims above as part of its decision-making. Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise (and if necessary a full Equality Impact Assessment) would be evidence that the Council has considered its legal obligations in making the decision on the recommendations in this report.

6.3 There is a potential impact on some vulnerable groups with protected characteristics (specifically older people) due to the proposed changes. Consequently a full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken, informed by the consultation feedback and is included at Appendix III.

7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 At its meeting of the 21st November 2019, the Cabinet approved that a six week focussed consultation with service users and the local communities be undertaken on the future of the remaining four Community Day Centres.
- 7.2 The consultation exercise ran for a period of six weeks from the 21st January 2019 to the 4th March 2019. The consultation exercise involved eight drop in events, two held at each of the four day centres. An online survey was created and placed on the Council's website. The full consultation report is presented at Appendix I.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The net budget for the Council of providing the four remaining Community Day Centres is £267,380, excluding management and support costs which it is proposed are retained to support the developing Community Hubs programme. The detailed breakdown of the 2019/20 budget for each centre is presented at Table II.

Table II – Community Day Centre 2019/20 Budget

Community Day Centre	Expenditure Budget 2019/20	Income Budget 2019/20	Net Budget 2019/20
Teifi House	£96,320	-£30,860	£65,460
Brynnar Jones	£100,720	-£38,180	£62,540
Nazareth House	£101,600	-£25,160	£76,440
Gilfach Goch	£97,410	-£34,470	£62,940
	£396,050	-£128,670	£267,380

- 8.2 There is a growing demand for and pressure on assessed social care services. Any potential financial contribution these proposals will make to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan will be used to maintain essential assessed adult social care services.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There is no statutory duty on the Council to provide Community Day Centres.
- 9.2 Where consultation is undertaken it should be done when proposals are at a formative stage; give sufficient reasons for any proposal to

permit intelligent consideration and allow adequate time for consideration and response. Following completion of the consultation process Cabinet must now give consideration to the outcome of the consultation process prior to any decision(s) being made on the future of the remaining open access community day centres.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 10.1 The development of Community Hubs contributes to the Council's corporate priorities through redesigning local services to ensure they are integrated and efficient. The Council is committed to working in a way that makes the best and most sustainable use of our limited and decreasing resources, always looking at alternative ways of doing things.
- 10.2 This proposal contributes to the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the well-being goals under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The proposals set out in this report support the Council's aim to provide a **long-term sustainable future** plan for the delivery of community services in RCT and the region's aims set out in the Area Plan and Well-being plan. Working in **collaboration** with communities and third sector organisations creates the opportunity to address unsustainable service models and **integrate** service delivery for the benefit of residents

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The Council must continuously review and challenge its service delivery to ensure it is cost effective, remains fit for purpose and is meeting the Council's commitment to deliver the best possible services for our communities.
- 11.2 The consultation exercise has demonstrated that existing service users highly value the service provided through the existing service model. However, the fact remains that the current service model in three of the four locations is no longer sustainable.
- 11.3 Gilfach Goch Community Day Centre is the most well used centre providing nearly 40% of all the meals sold across the four open access day centres. Furthermore, the recent closure of St George's Day Centre, Tonyrefail, is expected to result in a further increase in the usage figures of the Gilfach Goch facility. Also the level of subsidy provided per meal in Gilfach Goch is significantly lower than the other day centres.
- 11.4 In the context of sustained and growing pressure on the services providing for assessed care needs of vulnerable people in the Council's

care, it is increasingly difficult to justify the continued support for three of the four open access day centres. It is therefore proposed to recommend to the Cabinet that the Council retains the Gilfach Goch Community Day Centre but closes the other three open access day centres.

- 11.5 However, the Council recognises the need to build a sustainable model of provision for the wider range of community based services it supports and this is best done through the development of more innovative service models in partnership with the wider public and third sectors. This is being taken forward through the developing Community Hub model being rolled out across the County Borough.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Health & Well Being Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background Papers

- Cabinet; 19th April 2018 - Developing Community Hubs in Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Cabinet: 21st November 2018 - Proposals to Review the Provision of Community Day Centres in Rhondda Cynon Taf

Officer to contact: Paul Mee – 01443 425513