



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST JUNE 2018

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ST. GEORGE'S DAY CENTRE AND TRANSFER THE OPEN ACCESS DAY CENTRE PROVISION TO GILFACH GOCH DAY CENTRE

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR G HOPKINS

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation to close St. George's Day Centre in Tonyrefail and transfer open access day services to Gilfach Goch Day Centre.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Considers the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the closure of St. George's Day Centre in Tonyrefail and transfer open access day services to Gilfach Goch Day Centre.
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, agrees to close St. George's Day Centre in Tonyrefail and transfer the open access day services to Gilfach Goch Day Centre in line with the transfer of the current kitchen facilities.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Increasing financial cutbacks nationally are leading to pressures locally but despite that, the Council is determined to deliver the best services and opportunities for everyone in the County Borough. This proposal seeks to continue to offer a community based service in close proximity to Tonyrefail offering a better environment and greater opportunities to undertake social activities.
- 3.2 Subject to 2.2 above relevant Council Officers can continue to engage with users of St. George's to allay their anxieties. This will include arranging visits to the Gilfach Goch Day Centre to show service users around the Centre and meet its current attendees.

- 3.3 In order to address concerns regarding users ability to access the Gilfach Goch Day Centre due to being unable to drive or unreliable public transport provision, continued engagement will take place with relevant individuals to support them to explore the options available to them that will meet their needs. We are aware that a significant number of the users of Gilfach Goch Day Centre live in Tonyrefail but prefer to travel there for the better environment and greater opportunities to undertake social activities. We will also explore with users the potential for car/lift sharing opportunities.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 St. George's Day Centre is one of the poorest quality buildings in the Council's property portfolio with a maintenance backlog of £578K. Whilst the kitchen is in a good condition, the remainder of the building that houses the restaurant area and the meeting rooms is very poor with structural defects and crumbling plaster due to the water ingress and damp. A maintenance and structural survey has recently been undertaken and £553K of essential works has been identified, together with an additional £25K for further intrusive surveys and statutory costs. It is a former chapel and the building has few alternative uses.
- 4.2 The number of meals sold at St. George's Day Centre average less than 15 per day and is much less popular at lunchtime than Gilfach Goch Day Centre, which is only 3 miles away. Feedback indicates that a significant number of the users of Gilfach Goch Day Centre live in Tonyrefail but prefer to travel there for the better environment and greater opportunities to undertake social activities.
- 4.3 St. George's Day Centre is currently staffed and run by Community Meals Service kitchen staff. However, Cabinet agreed, at its meeting on 25th January 2018 to centralise the kitchen arrangements of the Community Meals Service and would therefore require additional catering and staffing arrangements to be introduced at St George's Day Centre, at an additional cost, to maintain the day service.
- 4.4 At its meeting on 25th January 2018 Cabinet also agreed to undertake an 8 week public consultation in respect of a proposal to close St. George's Day Centre in Tonyrefail and transfer the open access day service to Gilfach Goch Day Centre. This would need to take place by no later than 8th August 2018, in line with the transfer of the current kitchen facilities.

5. CONSULTATION OUTCOME

- 5.1 The aim of the consultation was to gather the views of service users and the wider community on the proposals to close St. George's Day Centre in Tonyrefail and transfer the open access day centre provision to Gilfach Goch Day Centre. The consultation ran for 8 weeks from 9th February 2018 to 6th April 2018 and the full report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 5.2 The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders:

- questionnaire
- two drop in engagement events on 21st and 23rd February 2018
- dedicated email address (consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk) and freepost address

5.3 Overall, only 18 people engaged directly in the consultation process. 16 of these were current users of St. George's Day Centre.

5.4 When asked what they would do if St. George's Day Centre closed, 75% (12 out of 16) of the current users of the day centre said they would stop attending.

5.5 94.4% (17 out of 18) of respondents said they disagreed with the proposals. Comments were focussed around general disagreement, positivity surrounding the existing service, potential for alternative funding and perceived transport and parking issues to the alternative day centre in Gilfach Goch.

5.6 Respondents were asked what impact the proposals would have on them. Comments related to the impact of increased cost to service users, transport issues to the alternative day centre in Gilfach Goch, that they would either cook for themselves or eat elsewhere and there would be a need to use another venue (Bingo).

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Cabinet Members will be fully aware and mindful of the general equality duty introduced by the Equality Act 2010 and the specific public sector equality duties applicable to the Council as a local Council in Wales.

6.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Single Equality Duty) requires public authorities to demonstrate in decision making that they have paid 'due regard' 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.

6.3 A specific question was asked in the consultation questionnaire to reflect the legal duty the Council has in looking at how its decisions affect people with particular protected characteristics - 8 respondents felt the proposal would affect them specifically because of their age.

- 6.4 Given that the proposal to close St. George's Day Centre in Tonyrefail and transfer the open access day centre provision to Gilfach Goch Day Centre will affect persons with a protected characteristic, in particular age; a full equality impact assessment has been completed. The full equality impact assessment is attached as Appendix 2 and shows that although there are areas of concern it is possible to take steps to mitigate any adverse impact.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There is potential for savings from the proposed changes to the current day services provision.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN & OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 9.1 The Report is focused on the delivery of the Community Plan, and in particular the objective of "promoting independence and positive lives for everyone".

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
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Background Papers

Cabinet – [25th January 2018](#)

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