

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

### 1. Contact Details

**Service/department/section:**

**Full name:** Ruth Corden, James Ironside

**Job Title:** Development Lead – Information and Advice; Development Manager  
Engagement, Advice and Information

**Email/phone:** [ruth.corden@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.corden@westsussex.gov.uk); [james.ironside@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:james.ironside@westsussex.gov.uk)  
/ 033022 23705; 033022 22534

**Submission date:**

### 2. About the Policy, Procedure or Change

2.1 Shaw Healthcare Day Service review.

2.2 The county council spends around £950k per year on day services for older people provided by Shaw Healthcare, as part of the current block contract. The contract has been in place for approximately 16 years and day services are provided at six of the twelve residential settings.

2.3 The day services closed on 25 March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and have not re-opened. Prior to the pandemic, occupancy at the day services had been historically low, averaging 40% in the first months of 2020.

2.4 As a result, a review of demand, value for money, and relevance for the future, commenced in January 2020. A corporate savings target of £750k was set against the review.

2.5 The recommendation following the review is to permanently close all six Shaw day services and to utilise existing provision as alternatives and the development of already existing services.

2.6 The following list are the key stakeholders.

- People who use the Shaw Healthcare day services
- People who would have used/required the services during the period of closure
- Family and friend carers of people using the day services
- Future users of the day services
- Shaw Healthcare
- Other day service providers
- Voluntary and community sector organisations and groups

2.7 A comprehensive stakeholder list was developed as part of the engagement and consultation planning.

2.8 At the time of the March 2020 closures, 91 people were registered as attending the day services. Over subsequent months the number of people either able to or wishing to return has dropped to 36.

2.9 The services are aimed at older and/or disabled people. Current customer numbers for the day services are as follows.

Table 2.1 – Current customer numbers

<b>Day service</b>	<b>Number of current customers</b>
Rother Lea	2
Waremere	4
Mill River	11
Deerswood	6
Forest View	9
Burleys Wood	4

- All current customers have been assessed as having eligible social care needs
- The level of need varies among customers, ranging from lower level to more complex needs, but all have a personal care requirement for day activities
- All customers have a level of disability
- 10 customers (18%) have a dementia diagnosis
- 29 customers (64%) require support to communicate/someone to communicate on their behalf
- Six (13%) are Lifelong Services customers who have learning disabilities and live in a residential service which does not offer day activities. These have been accessed externally, via Shaw Healthcare day centres
- 18 customers (40%) are male and 27 (60%) are female
- One customer lives in sheltered accommodation
- Approximately two-thirds of family and friend carers/representatives are female and one-third are male.

### **3. Data collection; consultation; and evidence**

Following closure (March 2020 – present), the needs of current Shaw Healthcare day service customers and their family and friend carers have been paramount during the period of the day service closures owing to the pandemic. Multiple contacts were made with these people throughout this period, as outlined below.

- Shaw Healthcare contacted every customer and their family and friend carer to check on their wellbeing, to find out how people were managing following the closures and they referred people to Adults' Services, as necessary.

- The county council has been working with current customers and their family and friend carers during the period of closure to ensure that their social care needs continue to be met. This has been through the provision of alternative support that has been tailored to individual needs.

### **3.1 Pre-consultation engagement (15 March- 6 April 2021)**

The county council commissioned Impact Initiatives to carry out a survey with current customers and their family and friend carers on its behalf to enable to find out the following.

- understand the outcomes they want to achieve,
- their views on how these have been met during the day service closures,
- how they could potentially be met differently in the future.

Impact Initiatives is an independent charity experienced at working with and supporting people with disabilities. They worked to a comprehensive service specification focussed on enabling people with disabilities to participate and share their views.

The Impact Initiatives findings report highlighted several impacts on current customers and family and friend carers of the ongoing closure of the day services. These include the following.

#### *Current customers*

- Loss of regular social contact. None of the current customers who participated in the engagement were able to socialise independently.
- Some reported a loss of stimulation from not taking part in regular activities.
- Loss of opportunity for a regular 'change of scenery' with a reason to get dressed, travel and a meal away from their home.

#### *Family and friend carers*

- Loss of respite and, for some, potential risk of carer breakdown
- Some family and friend carers had been required to increase their caring responsibilities
- Some family carers had changed their work arrangements to provide additional care, whilst others had been required to purchase additional care

#### *Other findings*

- Anxiety at the potential lack of suitable alternative options should day services remain closed.
- Concern that other venues or activities may not be suitable owing to the level of additional support current customers required to participate.
- 92% of current customers were not able to travel independently and 87% used the day centre vehicle as their method of transport to the centres.

It is important to note that the engagement was conducted following a year of day centre closures because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of 2020-21 many other services, sources of community support and sectors of the economy, had also been severely limited, suspended or withdrawn and many remained either closed or restricted at the time of the engagement. The findings of the pre-consultation engagement should be understood within this context, as this may have exacerbated people's more negative experiences.

### **3.2 Public Consultation 21 June – 5 August**

The public consultation ran from 21 June 2021 to 5 August 2021. Full details of the consultation and the comprehensive findings analysis are available at appendix A to the decision report.

Older people are disproportionately impacted as the services which are changing are essentially aimed at this demographic, as evidenced in sections 5.1 to 5.2 of the public consultation findings analysis at appendix A.

84% of current and former customers were aged 65 years and older, including 26% who were aged 85+ years old.

The services which are changing also provide respite for family and friend carers, including those who are themselves older people. 36% of family and friend carer respondents to the consultation were aged over 65 years old, and a further 36% were aged 55-64 years old.

### **3.3 Impacts for day centre customers**

- The potential loss of the principal, or only, opportunity to get out of the home and take part in stimulating activities and socialise with a familiar group of people (both other service users and staff). This could lead to a loss of motivation and increased risk of isolation.
- The Shaw Healthcare day centres were able to support people with more complex medical and personal needs, which alternatives may not.
- Day centres acted as a stepping-stone to residential care for people as their needs progressed, making the transition easier to manage.
- Care at home could be isolating and support provided in the home, including personal assistants, was not equivalent to the benefits of attending a specialist day service.
- Day centres provided dignified care, in a 'near normal' setting.
- The COVID-19 pandemic had negatively impacted many consultation respondents, some of whom reported increased loneliness and worsening physical and mental health. The lengthy closure of the day centres owing to the COVID-19 restrictions had contributed to this experience.

### **3.4 Disability:**

Disabled people are disproportionately impacted. The services which are changing are aimed at older people, some with higher-level social care and health needs, including dementia and physical and sensory impairments, and some adults with learning disabilities.

Impacts for day centre customers

- The day centres provided a familiar environment, with a regular group of attendees and staff. This was of particular importance for people with conditions such as dementia and autism, who benefit from routine.

- Activities offered by the day centres could help delay the progression of conditions such as dementia.
- Day centres provided for people with complex needs and conditions such as dementia that the voluntary and community sector could not easily replace.
- There was a potential risk of social isolation for people with dementia in rural areas, owing to a lack of suitable alternative provision.
- 70% of customers responding to the consultation said it would be difficult for them travel to activities in different locations. 3% said it would be easy whilst 23% said it would be neither easy nor difficult. A further 3% did not know.

### **3.5 Gender (sex):**

The changes are to services which are not gender (sex) specific, and gender (sex) specific activities are not part of the service offer. However, family and friend carers of day service customers will be disproportionately impacted as the services which are changing provide respite opportunities.

Two-thirds of family and family carers of current customers are women (see above data). In addition, see the 'caring responsibilities' section below for further discussion of impacts on carers.

### **3.6 Race**

Prior to the pandemic, Burleys Wood in Crawley had developed culturally competent services, working with the local voluntary and community sector. Closing the site risks undermining ongoing work to encourage South Asian families to seek support and turning the widespread stereotype that South Asian families provide care within the family into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Encouraging people from diverse communities to come forward earlier for diagnosis for conditions such as dementia requires a range of suitable, culturally sensitive support for people to access at all stages of their care pathway.

### **3.7 Caring responsibilities**

Carers will be disproportionately impacted by any changes to the Shaw Healthcare day services. The services provide opportunities for a break for carers, which are crucially important to enable them to maintain their wellbeing and fulfil their caring role with the assurance the person they are caring for is appropriately looked after and safeguarded.

As evidenced above, this group intersects with gender (sex) as two-thirds of family and friend carers of current customers are women and age, as most of this group are likely to themselves be older (see under section 'who the changes apply to').

76% of family and friend carers thought the proposal would have a negative impact, 85% of whom thought the impact would be serious.

- The age and frailty of many carers was highlighted in the public consultation, as was the demanding nature of care for people with complex conditions such as dementia and the importance of regular respite.
- The loss of a break for carers was by far the most frequently cited negative impact in the public consultation, with many carers expressing concern as to whether they would be able to cope without the opportunity for a break that the day centre had afforded them, increasing the risk of carer breakdown.
- Home-based care alternatives would not offer the same opportunity for genuine carer breaks as a day centre.
- Closure of the centres may lead to increased demand for residential respite, which was more expensive and had less availability.
- The day centres provided carers with peace of mind that the person they cared for was in a safe and secure environment. This enabled them to feel comfortable taking respite.
- The day centre had enabled one family carer responding to the public consultation to continue to work full time.
- The prolonged restrictions imposed by COVID-19 and the closure of services and support meant that some carers had been providing care without a break for a prolonged period.
- 87% of family and friend carers responding to the public consultation said it would be difficult for them, or the person they care or cared for to travel to activities in different locations.
- Alternative provision for five of the day centres may require individuals to be accompanied throughout a session by a personal assistant or family and friend to enable attendance if the individual has personal care needs. This could significantly reduce the opportunity for carer respite and increase the burden on carers.

### **3.8 Gender reassignment:**

No impact – the changes are to services which are offered on a health and care needs-basis only. They are not gender-specific and therefore people undergoing or having undergone gender reassignment will not be disproportionately impacted.

### **3.9 Marriage or civil partnership**

No impact – the changes are to services which are offered on a health and care needs-basis only. This would not disproportionately impact on people's marriage or civil partnership status.

### **3.10 Pregnancy and maternity**

No impact - the changes are to services which do not provide maternity or pregnancy-related support. This would not disproportionately impact on pregnancy or maternity status.

### **3.11 Religion or belief (including no belief):**

No impact - The changes are to services which are offered on a health and care needs-basis only.

### **3.12 Sexual Orientation:**

No impact - The changes are to services which are offered on a health and care needs-basis only.

### **3.13 Part time workers:**

Not applicable

### **3.14 Socio economic groups (e.g. unemployed; students;):**

Not applicable

### **3.15 Other socially excluded communities or groups (e.g. homeless):**

Not applicable

### **3.16 Mitigations**

In response to the review and consultation findings, the county council proposes to:

- Continue to direct customers to preventative community-based activities and groups as part of the Council's commitment to community led support and to source solutions based on individual circumstances and need.
- Provide an additional 40 places across the week within the county council's directly provided day services to incorporate places for older people at the Strawford Centre, Horsham and the Burnside Day Centre, Burgess Hill.
- Further develop the Personal Assistant (PA) market to support customers to access community provision with the support of a PA.
- Increase the uptake of direct payments to people with support needs to enable them to directly employ PAs.
- Work with providers to identify gaps in day service provision and to inform areas for future service development in the independent provider market.
- Feedback the information on transport from the day services review and public consultation findings to the Transport Coordination Team, enabling people to access care and support in the future.
- Adults' Services staff adopt a 'Think Carer' approach when working with people needing social care support and are mindful of the needs of carers and the impact of their caring responsibilities on their mental and physical wellbeing.

- The council contract with Carers Support West Sussex to carry out carer assessments on its behalf and to provide a wide range of services to meet carer needs. This includes information and advice, equipment to support independence and signposting carers to other appropriate services.
- A team of health professionals (the Carers Health Team) work on a one-to-one basis with carers whose health is beginning to suffer as a result of their caring responsibilities.
- Complete the review of services that provide, or indirectly provide, family and friend carer breaks which is currently underway. On completion, an outline of the potential gaps in service will be circulated to providers with a view to working with them and other partners to address any shortfall in places, geographical gaps in provision, and transport/accessibility matters.
- Develop the day opportunity offer within current and new extra care schemes. This includes an understanding of the potential capacity, capability and range of day activity provision at extra care schemes that can be made available to the wider community.

#### 4. Summary and Progressing the Equality Duty

- a) Is there an opportunity to use this policy, procedure or change to show we are working to progress any of part of the Public Sector Equality Duty?

Replacing geographically based services with community-led support can benefit some individuals unable or unwilling to travel any distance where there are lower levels of need. In addition, tailoring support to people's individual circumstances can enable the provision of specific services to meet diverse needs, thereby helping to improve equality of opportunity between different protected groups.

Adults' Services operates in full knowledge of the need to acknowledge diversity, meet its duties under equalities legislation and to minimise disadvantage and this will inform implementation of the decision.

Every effort was made to enable people from under-represented groups, and those with protected characteristics to share their views and influence proposals.

The County Council will ensure that any alternative provision meets equalities legislation through the commissioning process.

- b) Please provide a summary of the overall findings and rate your analysis.

**Red** – As a result of performing the analysis, it is evident a risk of discrimination exists (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) to one or more of the nine groups who share Protected Characteristics (and/or local non-legislative factors). In this instance, **it is recommended that the use of the activity or policy be suspended** until further work or analysis is performed. If it is considered this risk of



discrimination is objectively justified, and/or the use of this proposal (policy, activity, function) is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, this should be indicated, and further professional advice taken.

**Amber** – As a result of performing this analysis, it is evident a risk of discrimination (as described above) exists and this risk may be removed or reduced by implementing actions or control measures detailed in the action planning section of this document.

**Green** – As a result of performing this analysis, **no adverse effects** on people who share Protected Characteristics and/or local non-legislative factors are identified – no further actions are recommended at this stage.

Following the day services review and public consultation, a number of potential impacts for selected 'equality groups' have been highlighted in this Equality Impact Assessment. A range of mitigations has been outlined and as a result, the analysis is rated as Amber.

## **5. Action Planning**

As per mitigations, above. Planned timescales following decision.

## **6. Identified Impact(s) on Protected Characteristic or local non-legislative factor(s):**

As above.

### **Recommended Actions:**

As per mitigations above. Action plan to be developed.

**Responsible Lead Officer:** Juliette Garrett

**Completion date:** to be agreed following decision.

**Review date:** TBC