


<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>18th March, 2021</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of Janet Fasan Divisional Director Legal and Monitoring Officer</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Call-In: Outcome of consultation on revised approach to day support in adult social care</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	David Knight
Wards affected	ALL

CONSIDERATION OF THE “CALL IN”

Having met the “Call In” request criteria, the matter is referred to the OSC in order to determine the “Call In” and decide whether to refer the matter back to Cabinet for further consideration.

The following procedure is to be followed by the Committee for consideration of the “Call In”:

- i. Chair to invite a call-in member to present call-in.
- ii. Chair to invite members of the Committee to ask question.
- iii. Chair to Invite Cabinet Member to respond to the call-in.
- iv. Chair to invite members of the Committee to ask questions.
- v. Followed by a general debate.

It is open to the OSC to either resolve to take no action (which would have the effect of endorsing the original Mayoral decision/s), or to refer the matter back to the Mayor for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considers:

1. The contents of the attached report, review the Mayor in Cabinet’s decision (provisional, subject to Call In) arising; and

2. Decide whether to accept the decision or to refer the matter back to the Mayor with proposals and reasons.

On 3rd March 2021 Cabinet considered a report that recommended changes to day support in adult social care, in line with the proposals set out in the 28 October 2020 Cabinet report.

RESOLVED

1. To agree the closure of Physical Disability Day Opportunities, Riverside day centre and Pritchard's Road day centre with effect from 4 May 2021
2. To agree to develop Russia Lane as a 'dementia hub' day service
3. To agree to open a community support hub from May 2021 onwards (if it is safe to do so in light of the Covid-19 pandemic)
4. To endorse the proposal to encourage more people to organise their own day support through a direct payment
5. To agree the commitment to make Tower Hamlets a more inclusive place for people with care and support needs.

The above decision has been 'Called-In' by Councillor Gabriela Salva (signed also by Councillors Tarik Khan, Shah Ameen, Shad Chowdhury, and Victoria Obaze). This is in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution.

N.B. In accordance with the OSC Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 4th June 2013, any Member(s) who present(s) the "Call In" is (are) not eligible to participate in the general debate.

Reasons for Call-in

The decision to close the Day Centres warrants further review, as the detrimental impact on vulnerable people's quality of life will be significant. Furthermore, we believe that this decision will result in the loss of a vital community space and community offer at a critical time. We request that the Cabinet review additional funds so that the valuable support to elderly and vulnerable people, particularly around providing a structure and social engagement, continues in Tower Hamlets.

We note that the Cabinet Report (6.2) failed to mention that the Day Opportunities Centres were previously scheduled for closure in 2011, with similar alternatives to be put in place before the then Mayor reversed that decision. It was also scheduled to be merged in 2015, but once again the decision to close was reconsidered.

Following the above reconsiderations there had been a hope that the buildings might be better utilised by the voluntary sector. However, the Council's Asset Management Department did not have in place a workable community offer for these sites. We

believe that this is a failure on the part of the Council's commercialisation programme and not one that the most vulnerable in our borough should pay for.

The tension between Day Centres and individual care plans is one which has been playing out in the sector for a number of years. To quote Catherine Needham's paper "Personalization: From day centres to community hubs?"

"The ambiguous location of day centres in relation to individual choice, collective voice, citizenship and social justice is expressive of the broader moral complexities associated with care and support (Barnes, 2011: 158). Navigating this complexity requires recognition of the clear imperative for social care to encompass shared public spaces not just more tailored personal care, and recognition that the personalization agenda does not give adequate attention to collective aspects of care (Lloyd, 2010; Barnes, 2011; Lymbery, 2012). It also requires an affirmation that poorly-resourced third sector organizations should not be expected to provide shared spaces in the absence of adequate state funding (Lymbery, 2012)."

We ask the Cabinet to review the decision not as an individual saving proposal but as one which is framed by the contexts of social justice and the importance of shared community-led space.

Furthermore, the original Cabinet decision to consult on the closure of these services, and much of the consultation itself, took place prior to the Government's Spending Review Statement, which included an additional £2.9 million Social Care Grant and £7 million more in New Homes Bonus.

As Councillors we believe that the closure of the Day Centres presents a false economy as there would be wider economic benefits in keeping the Centres open. Closures could result in a decline in health and wellbeing of service users, thereby increasing their health and care costs, and have cost implications for carers who may have to give up work and claim benefits.

We strongly believe that there needs to be a fuller review of alternative provision before sites are closed. For example, the response to Overview & Scrutiny PDSQs of 01.03.2021 stated that:

"Review meetings with Physical Disability Day Opportunities service users are due to start in March (2021). Part of the purpose of these will be to discuss who is interested in a direct payment and what support they might need."

The decision, therefore, should not be made without this review of service users.

A further response from Cabinet PDSQ stated, the consultation results and Toynbee Hall co-production work "doesn't go into detail on what the community access project will involve (e.g. what Idea Stores or leisure centres, what activities, what days and times)". In light of this, we ask the Cabinet to reconsider the loss of services as it is unlikely that the alternative provisions due to be implemented will in any way adequately meet the needs of service users.

The timing of these closures in the middle of the covid-19 pandemic is also extremely problematic. While efforts have clearly been made to engage with service users, the level and quality of that engagement has inevitably been limited by the lockdown restrictions.

The pressures that the covid-19 pandemic has imposed on individuals, families and society as a whole mean Tower Hamlets is going to face increased demand for mental health services in the months and years ahead, which make this the very worst time to significantly reduce the Pritchard's Road service.

The Council's Tower Values strive to respect diversity and inclusivity and therefore we believe there is an urgent need to review the equality assessment which found that the proposal to close the three in-house Day Services could '*adversely impact on older staff who have worked for the Council for most of their working life*' and that '*there is a potential for at least 3 ethnic groups to be adversely impacted by the proposal.*'

Alternative Course of Action

1. LBTH should retain the Day Opportunities Centres with a review of the funding that might be sought from assets
2. Funding for these day centres should be drawn down from the additional and unexpected £2.9 million Social Care Grant awarded to LBTH
3. The spaces provided by these centres should be used as part of a wider community offer, including after 4pm when Day Centre service users are not using them, in order to generate income and provide an additional community resource
4. That capital allocation be used to ensure that the centres be suitably adapted to meet the needs of specific types of service users and that all service users, carers, and providers will have confidence that they are suitable high-quality spaces to use to hire for community use
5. The co-production of services needs to include Pritchard's Roads service users, who have not been fully afforded the opportunity to engage with coproduction of services
6. That the Pritchard's Road Day Centre continues as an "in-house" service for the next two years as we are in the midst of mental health crisis
7. LBTH should implement a slower and more phased implementation of the integration of alternative provision
8. That the Council action the Government's guidelines regarding the reopening of day care centre's <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>

9. That a fresh consultation should be carried out with service users from April 2022, once they have had a chance to return to their centres and discuss the Mayor's proposed changes collectively
10. That the council undertake an audit of promotional materials, so that centres are advertised as widely as needed to achieve their full potential

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