

Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet

On 7th June 2011

Report Title: **Recommended Budget Savings Decision – Adult Services Proposals in 2011 – Older Persons’ Drop-In Centres; Jacksons’ Lane Luncheon Club; and Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project**

Report of: **Mun Thong Phung, Director of Adult and Housing Services**

Signed:

Contact Officer: **Len Weir, Head of Provider Services (Older People/Mental Health)**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key**

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of a process of consultation in relation to the future of three separate service areas, one of which is directly provided by the Council. It is also to give Cabinet sufficient information to enable it to make an informed decision about all three services; the Older Persons’ Drop-In service, Jackson’s Lane Luncheon Club and the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project. These decisions are being taken in the context of decisions in principle taken on 21st December 2010 at Cabinet and the wider context of the HESP. The three options to be considered by the Cabinet are as follows:
- a) Withdrawal of funding to Jacksons’ Lane Luncheon Club (£10,500 saving per year);
 - b) Withdrawal of funding for two members of Council staff seconded to the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project (CEDP) (£94,000 saving per year); and
 - c) Closure of four Older Persons Drop-In Centres (Willoughby Road, Irish Centre, Woodside House, Abyssinia Court (£181,000 saving per year).

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member

- 2.1 Adult social care services are provided to the most frail and vulnerable of people living in Haringey. The proposals in this report are calculated to generate a total saving of £285k to the Council's revenue budget in 2011/12 and in following years, whilst continuing to maintain and prioritise services to vulnerable people in need of care and support who have had a Fair Access to Services (FACS) assessment, either at the "substantial" or "critical" levels. It is important to be clear that all the drop-in' services are 'non-assessed' services and that the Council has no legal obligation to provide them.
- 2.2 Two of these services, Jackson's Lane and the Cypriot and Elderly Disability Project (CEDP) are provided by voluntary sector organisations and are not direct Council provision. The third service, the Older People's Drop-In Centres service (OPDICs) is directly provided by the Council.
- 2.3 As part of a complex and wide-ranging process of consultation over the period between 31st January 2011 and the end of April, I have personally attended a number of the consultation meetings held in the OPDICs in relation to the proposal to close this service and have spoken to service users, as have other Members including the Leader of the Council. It is clear how much the Drop-Ins are valued by those who use them. In addition, the argument that they are a preventative service has been strongly made.
- 2.4 However, in a situation where there is a need to meet the challenge of very significant reductions in funding to this Council, I feel that there is no alternative but to go ahead with these proposals. I am hopeful that ongoing discussions with other organisations and the users themselves may enable some elements of the OPDIC service to continue in the same or other settings, without an ongoing Council revenue commitment.

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

- 3.1. ACCS Council Plan Priorities are:
- Encouraging lifetime well-being at home, work, play and learning;
 - Promoting Independent living while supporting adults and children in need; and
 - Delivering excellent customer focused cost effective services.

Full Council Plan Priorities can be found on the left hand side of the page at <http://harinet.haringey.gov.uk/index.htm>.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Jacksons' Lane Luncheon Club

Withdrawal of funding (£10,500 saving per year);

This is a service provided to some 35-40 older people in the Jackson's Lane Arts Centre (Highgate Ward), not all of whom attend every day and not all of whom live in the Borough, given the fact that the Centre is situated on the Borough boundary. It has been provided by the Arts Centre on that site since 1984, having moved to that site from a nearby church hall. The Council provides a grant of £10,400/year to the Arts Centre which is used to part-fund a post to facilitate the operation of the service. The Drop-In Centre provides a mid-day meal which is cooked in the Arts Centre kitchen, for which clients pay. The activities in the Luncheon Club are predominately arts based. The balance of the overall cost of the project is contributed by the Arts Centre.

Jackson's Lane Luncheon Club is a non-statutory, non-assessed open access service for less frail older people – they do not provide services for people assessed as being in the Substantial or Critical bands under FACS, nor do they work as part of the Councils spectrum of day care and preventative services for older people. The Council has been informed by the current Chief Executive of Jackson's Lane that to withdraw the funding will precipitate the closure of the Luncheon Club, due to the fact that all activities in the Centre are funded by specific grants and there is no opportunity for cross-subsidy. It is felt that should this group wish to continue meeting they could do so elsewhere for example in a local library or could continue to meet in Jackson's Lane as part of the wider arts programme on site.

The first quarter payment has been made in 2011/12, pending a decision by Cabinet.

4.2 Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project (CEDP)

Withdrawal of funding for two members of Council staff seconded to the CEDP (£94,000 saving per year);

The Cypriot Community Centre provides the organisational umbrella for a number of projects which are run from the building, including the CEDP. This voluntary/third sector organisation provides a combined day care service to both Greek and Turkish clients living in Haringey as well as some sourced from Enfield. CEDP is a separate organisation from the Cypriot Community Centre and has its own management committee.

The Manager and Deputy Manager posts in the CEDP are funded via the mainstream salaries budget for Older Peoples services and the post holders, though seconded to the CEDP service, were Council employees. The Manager was supervised and appraised by the Deputy Head of Service (Older People/Mental Health) in Adult Services. The income for the CEDP day care service is derived from spot client placements, in the main from Haringey and Enfield. There are currently some 30 service users placed by Haringey Adult social

care receiving support via the CEDP.

Both post holders left the Council in April 2011 as part of the current voluntary redundancy arrangements and the posts will be deleted from the Council structure as a consequence. In the short term, both individuals are currently assisting the CEDP Management Committee to review/reorganise the service following the challenge of their departure, on a voluntary basis. There has been no current interruption of support/care to service users.

The proposal to withdraw the two staff was acknowledged by the Chair of the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project Management Committee, but no further comment has been made to date. There has been no formal consultation with service users in the CEDP in relation to the proposal to withdraw the funding.

4.3 Older People's Drop-In Centre service (OPDICs)

Closure of four centres (£181,000 saving per year);

These are non-FACS assessed services. Following a review of day care in 2002, the then luncheon clubs were transformed into Older People's Drop-In Centres (OPDICs) and their function changed from being basically a catering facility with some social function attached, to one where they became a key factor in the delivery of preventative services to mainly older people. The OPDICs have many functional links with services in health and the voluntary sector and provide services such as basic foot-care.

They are part of the low level support systems for vulnerable older people in Haringey, especially those who are socially isolated or who have low level mental health problems. They provide a non-assessed, walk-in, service and are part of the day care spectrum, being managed within that service. Some of the users attend on transport due to mobility problems.

The OPDICs also work in partnership with a voluntary sector support service for Gujarati elders managed by I-Can Care which is co-located in Woodside OPDIC. The Drop-In service at Abyssinia Court is integral in supporting the Extra Care supported housing project on that site as well as an Age Concern-run stroke project on that site.

There are four OPDICs in the Borough; Willoughby Road N8, Woodside House N22, The Irish Centre N17, and Abyssinia Court N8. Between them they provide a support and advice service to some 600 older people (including the Asian women's group in Woodside House which has its own workers). A mid-day meal is available. Each centre has a service user committee which arranges social activities/outings and raises funds. Each OPDIC has two staff (six currently in post with two vacancies).

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

- 5.1 The Council has no statutory obligation to provide the Jackson's Lane or the OPDIC services. There are already similar drop-in services, albeit on a smaller scale, in the independent sector. Elements of the OPDIC service are provided by the various faith communities and voluntary sector organisations such as Age UK and the Alzheimer's Society. Neither service is provided as a consequence of a FACS-compliant assessment by a social worker. Deletion of these preventative services may have a knock-on effect by increasing demand for assessed social care and health services in the future, though it has been historically difficult to demonstrate cause and effect in this area.
- 5.2 In relation to the CEDP, withdrawal of the management posts has not directly affected the service to users, as the day care service continues to date. The availability of individual budgets will also give additional choice and control to potential users in the future, especially as the CEDP is a unique provider of such services to people from both Greek and Turkish Cypriot backgrounds and a clear social care market leader with a strong "brand" of integrated service to both communities.

6. Other options considered

- 6.1. Discussions have begun with groups of OPDIC users to determine whether they are interested and/or capable of running their own service at nil cost to the Council, should the decision be taken to close the centres. It is unclear as to the future outcome of those discussions, which will depend, in part, on the relevant Cabinet decision. Plans to re-provide the basic foot care element of the OPDIC service are in train, should they be required. An audit of similar drop-in services to the OPDIC service, elsewhere in the Borough, is in progress

7. Summary

- 7.1. As part of a range of proposals to achieve a balanced budget, Cabinet made a decision in principle on 21st December 2010 to withdraw funding to Jackson's Lane and the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project: also to close the Older Persons Drop-In service. The decision to close the Older Persons Drop-In service was to be reviewed, following a 90 day period of consultation which ended on 29th April 2011.

8. Chief Financial Officer Comments

- 8.1. In order to produce a balanced budget for 2011/12 the Council has been required to find savings totalling £41m. The recommendations detailed in this report will achieve savings of £285k (FYE), of which £104k has already been realised. The remaining saving relating to OPDICs assumes a full year saving in 2011/12 of £181k. It is unlikely that this will be achieved in full during 2011/12. However, in anticipation of savings to be made in 2012/13 a number of early voluntary redundancies have been agreed, allowing for savings shortfalls in the current financial year to be met from within existing resources. The full saving will be achieved in 2012/13.

9. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 9.1. The Cabinet in exercising these powers needs to take into account the views and opinions of users, providers and other stakeholders and to have carried out extensive consultation on these proposals.
- 9.2. The decisions by the Cabinet concerning the recommendations set out in the report must be informed by and take into account the outcome of the consultation with service users, providers and other stakeholders, which is set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 9.3. In reaching their decisions the Cabinet must also have due regard to the authority's public sector equality duty and thus should take into account the attached full equality impact assessment included at Appendix 2 to the report. The extent of the public sector equality duty on the Council, enforced by the Equality Act 2010, is set out in Appendix 3 to this report. As the attached equality impact assessment highlights the effect of proposals on a number of specific groups within the community, defined as those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (by reason of their ethnicity, sex, age, disability, religion or belief), particular consideration must be given to those effects and to the proposals made to reduce or mitigate them.

10. Head of Procurement Comments

- 10.1. N/A

11. Equalities & Community Cohesion Comments

- 11.1. The closure of the 4 council-run drop-ins and withdrawal of support to the Jackson's Lane Luncheon Club is likely to increase barriers for service users from groups with protected characteristics. In the case of the Cypriot Centre, though

two manager posts are being withdrawn, the service will continue and clients will continue to be referred, following a social work assessment of need if the service user wishes to spend their personal budget in this manner. There is therefore deemed to be 'no change'.

11.2. Equalities Impact Assessments have been completed assessing the impact of the funding proposals for drop-in centres, the Jackson Lane Luncheon Club and the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project (attached in Appendix 2) .

11.3. The key findings from the EqlAs are as follows:

Age

The main focus of all these services in terms of equalities characteristics is age. Services users across these services are predominantly aged 65+. This is in line with expectations as these services are largely targeted at this age group.

Sex (formerly gender)

Women are over-represented amongst service users across all the services affected by the proposals and outnumber men by approximately 3:1. This is particularly the case for Woodside House DIC (86% female) and Irish DIC (90% female). Any impacts will affect this group disproportionately.

Ethnicity

When the figures are broken down by individual centres it is possible to identify significant variations in the ethnicity of service users. The Cypriot Centre is targeted at the Cypriot community; this is reflected in the composition of the ethnic breakdown of service users (55.2% Greek Cypriot and 44.8% Turkish Cypriot). Amongst Asian service users in Woodside Drop-In 11.4% of users are Indian and 5.8% are Asian Other or Asian British Other, compared to figures for Haringey of 2.9% and 1.6% respectively. However, as these operate under separate management and with their own workers, they are not directly affected by the proposed closure of the Council arm of the Drop-In and can continue to use that space. Irish communities are over-represented at Willoughby and The Irish drop-in centres, and Indian ethnic group at Woodside House drop-in centre.

Overall, when compared to the Haringey profile, the following ethnic groups are over-represented amongst service users:

- White –Abyssinia, Willoughby and Irish drop-in centres and Jackson's Lane
- Irish –Willoughby and Irish drop-in centres
- White Other (Cypriot) – Jackson's Lane and the Cypriot Centre
- Indian – Woodside House drop in centre
- Asian Other –Woodside House drop-in centre

Disability

Given that the main focus of the service is older people many of whom would have some form of age-related disability, it is to be expected that disabled users will also be adversely affected by the proposed changes. This is the case for the Elderly and Disability Project at the Cypriot Centre where 100% of users have a disability. However, for the other services as only a few people provided information on disability, it is not possible to say whether or not disabled people would disproportionately be affected by the proposals.

Impact on religion: Data is not collected in relation to the clients in Jackson's Lane and the Drop-Ins but equalities monitoring from consultation meetings with users, relatives and carers of the Drop-ins would indicate Christianity to be the prevalent religion across 3 of the 4 drop-ins in question. The CEPD service has a mixture of Greek Orthodox (33) and Muslim (27) service users.

Impact on other protected characteristics: There is no data on characteristics of sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership. The protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity is not relevant in this instance as all the service users are older people predominantly aged 65+, although maternity could be an issue for some relatives who might need to additionally care for their loved ones if they could not use the centres.

Note: There are certain conditions such as social isolation and dementia which are age-related and tend to increase with age across other protected characteristics. It is not clear if and to what extent rates of age-related social isolation differ across other equalities characteristics or how the changes proposed could produce a change in rate of social isolation generally or differentially. However, closure of the Drop-Ins and Jackson's Lane could increase the risk of social isolation, especially for those Drop-In clients who have mobility problems and who come in on transport.

Drop-in User profiles

There are about 600 drop-in service users, although about 35% (200 people) of them actually live outside of the Borough. The figures on those coming from the centre and east and west are as follows: roughly a quarter are from the East of the Borough, just under 10% from the Centre and almost a third are from the West, mostly N6 and N8. More women than men use the centres and virtually all are over 65, with some in their 70s and 80s and even 90s. Regardless of where users are from, the profile suggests that they will have very limited means to arrange or purchase their own services; will be reliant on very localised services and will have limited physical means to travel to access services and may have little inclination to do so.

Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project (CEDP)

It should be noted that at this stage it is anticipated that the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project will continue and therefore it is likely that the proposals will have minimal or no direct effect on service users.

11.4. The service has identified the following mitigating actions:

Both **Jacksons' Lane and the Older Peoples Drop-Ins** will be encouraged to:

- investigate the possibility of groups of service users running the services for themselves, support and advice will be given, in line with the approach set out in "Think Local, Act Personal" (Cabinet Office, January 2011), but at nil-cost to the Council
- further develop their existing partnerships with voluntary sector organisations to explore the possibility of them running the services
- inform service users of similar drop-in services in the voluntary/third sector details of which will be compiled and circulated to Jackson's Lane and the Older Peoples Drop-Ins.

Note: we have been working on non like for like aspects of the drop-ins services to offer an alternative to say, combat social isolation and loneliness; foot care etc.

The **Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project** will be continuing into the future as a service. Adult Service commissioners should monitor the quality of service delivery in the short-medium term, pending the outcome of any re-organisation by the Management Committee to take account of the missing/withdrawn staff, as the Council will continue to have service users placed there.

Drop-ins

There has been a detailed and complex consultation process with service users in the Older People's Drop-In Centres (OPDICs) as to their opinion of the proposals – see main consultation report. In addition, a half-day working party of 40 service users (10 from each centre) was facilitated by Age UK. A report was produced as a result. Key issues of concern were around loss of social contact, the hot meal in the middle of the day and foot-care and that Dial a Ride and similar are seen as less efficient than the Council service (provided from down-time in the middle of the day from Older People's Services day care-based vehicles).

Going forward, should the decision be taken to close the drop in centres, the approach with the drop-ins will be to attempt to set up constituted membership groups of older people, supported by organisations in the independent sector to apply for grants from the Millennium Lottery Fund, Comic Relief and so on which, combined with a low level of contributions from members, may enable them to continue as places where older people can meet to socialise. This will only work however if the Council/other organisations agree not to charge a commercial rent/hire charge for the space, even on an hourly basis, or opt to waive it.

Council Officers have been discussing a monthly membership service with

Metropolitan Support Trust that would offer a range of support, including access to horticulture courses, befriending support, exercise classes, minor repair services and advice on finances (£10/month). This service will be launched in July and would appear to be a viable alternative for some of the drop-in centre functions.

The foot care element of the service can be re-provided via the reablement service, free of charge, and/or basing 1-2 specific peripatetic workers in a range of locations and also at the same time increase the number of sessions available.

Information is being compiled on a wide range of other drop-ins/information points that displaced service users will be able to access, including the libraries/community hubs and existing small self-supporting groups such as Young at Heart (N8) who meet once a week. Information on alternative accessible transport possibilities will also be circulated widely.

Haringey Adult Learning Services offers a wide range of activities and supported sessions specifically targeted at older people, including drop-ins, coffee mornings, computer training and support, writing/poetry groups. The library service also offers staff who have been trained in reminiscence work and a comprehensive programme of activities are offered in addition to a monthly reminiscence café.

Drop-In site	Situation to date	Outstanding actions/issues
Abyssinia Court	Discussions held with provider team manager about possibility of Hornsey Housing Trust supporting a group of older people to run a club there. HHT have verbally offered space rent free to service users. HHT are also in discussion with a local church to see if they could support a group	Paper presented to HHT Board on 18 th May – no feedback on outcome to date
Woodside House	There are three groups in the Woodside House space, only one of which is under threat. The I-Can Care Asian women's group has its own staff and can continue. The Tuesday Dance group can also continue.	Dance group and I-Can care group may be liable for rent via Property Services, unless waived. Attendees at each group will not get a basic foot care service as is the case now. Utility costs are currently absorbed by Property Services
Irish Centre	It was anticipated that the parallel CARA (Central &	Notification to the Irish Centre management

	Cecil) day care/drop-in service would absorb the clients from the Council drop-in. However, the CARA service is also now proposed for closure in July. This is the least well used centre.	committee of the Cabinet decision required ASAP - will involve a loss of £10K/full-year rental income to the Irish Centre
Willoughby Road	There is a strong user group in this centre, who have expressed a wish to continue to meet on that site. Cllr Schmitz has been involved in working with them, but nothing concrete has yet emerged	25-year lease runs out on this building complex in 2013, only part of which is occupied by the Drop-In. It is currently unlikely that the lease will be renewed by the Council, even if it were affordable. The allocated cost of that space from Property Services, including energy, is some £90K

Other mitigations should the decision be taken to close the centres:

Issue raised	Mitigating Action
<p>Increased social isolation as social contact services withdrawn</p> <p>Address the needs of Asian service users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information on alternative venues and walk-in services elsewhere in the Borough • Robust assessment, person-centred care management and safeguarding. • A move toward community-based services/community hubs • Development of neighbourhood networks to reduce isolation, maintain independence and promote uptake of self-directed support. • Work closely with BME sector to find a solution to the needs of Asian users in order to match their Personal budget to their needs.
<p>Risks of higher need for other forms of support and care services in future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying non-traditional respite options and improving take-up of personal budgets • Commissioning more services in the independent sector • Developing a diverse market in services

11.5. It is advised that Adult Services should:

- ensure that equalities information continues to be collected by providers and

analysed, and improve the collection of disabilities data

- continue to monitor the impact of the changed services to maintain good quality of provision and outcomes for all service users

11.6 **The key findings from the staffing EqIA** highlight that this proposal has a negative impact on BME staff. In total 9 members of staff were affected by the proposals, who are all from BME groups. The breakdown in relation to each Centre is as follows; Irish Centre 1; Willoughby 2; Woodside 2; Abyssinia Court 2; and Cypriot Centre 2.

12. Consultation

- 12.1 There has been a detailed consultation process in relation to the Drop-In service, which is directly provided by the Council. The consultation ran for three months from 31st January to 30th April 2011. Meetings were held with users of services, relatives and carers as well as staff either immediately before and after Christmas 2010 and at the start of the New Year 2011 to alert them to the proposed budget cuts and that we would be consulting on the proposal. This was followed up, at various stages between January and April 2011, by letters and emails, notices in the local press, via the independent and voluntary sector, the local online community and NHS colleagues so that the message could be cascaded to as wide as possible an audience.
- 12.2 There have been several main channels for people to have their say in relation to the Drop-In service. Cabinet members and senior officers within Adult Services have met with service users, relatives, carers in each of the Council's Drop-In Centres, at least monthly – over a dozen meetings in all. More than 200 users, relatives and carers attended one of these meetings in the first month of the consultation alone. Of the total of 200+ letters, emails, members enquiries received to date on the Adults consultation proposals, over 20 concerned the OPDICs. In addition, interested parties have submitted petitions for the OPDICs collectively and individually.
- 12.3 Some 48 of the 200+ people who have, to date, completed questionnaire surveys have commented on plans to close the drop-ins. We also facilitated a workshop with Age (UK) in Haringey for OPDIC users from all 4 centres on 21st March 2011 which forms part of the consultation findings. We received petitions from 'The Haringey Day Care and Drop-in Centres' (79 signatures, Willoughby Road Drop-in (128 signatures), Woodside House drop-in (108 signatures), the Irish Centre (48 signatures), the Liberal Democrat Group in Haringey (586 signatures) and a further 99 signatures from a joint campaign to defend all adult social care services in the Borough.
- 12.4 There is also a routinely maintained consultation web page ([Adult Services Budget Savings Consultation Website](#)) which has had over 2,100 "viewings".

12.5 In addition, formal letters of consultation were sent to the Chief Executive of Jackson's Lane Arts Centre and the Chair of the Management Committee of the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project (CEDP) as providers of the services in question.

12.6 Comments received have been considered and analysed. The full details of the consultation are contained in a separate more detailed consultation report (Appendix 1). However, in summary:

Impact for users, relatives and carers

Those who attended meetings or who wrote in have understandably expressed a range of emotions and strengths of feeling. Many people who participated in the consultation did so with personal stories and explained the impact of the cuts for them and/or their loved ones or the groups and individuals whose interests they represented. Many said that they looked forward to coming to centres, drop-ins etc. It was said that these preventative services provided a 'life line' for those who used them and that many people would be isolated or lose the only significant social contact they had without them. Closure of non-statutory services such as the drop-ins was also thought to increase the likelihood of a more serious intervention by the Council or NHS.

Understandably some queried what would happen to users of services should the proposed closures go ahead, worried as they were about not having enough time to make alternative arrangements. Relatives and carers worried where else their loved ones would go or receive a service

Impact for the future and the wider community

Some respondents worried that these savings would have lasting consequences for the community and those groups and individuals they supported and cared for. Others pointed to a potential extra demand for statutory and non-statutory services across the Borough and as they saw it the wider social impact of the proposals. There were worries too about current and future capacity if services closed or amalgamated or that the quality could not or would not be replicated in the independent sector or that prices would rise. The prevailing view was that every effort should be made to find suitable community based groups and organisations to take them over and they be offered practical support in doing so.

Comments on the proposal

The general view was that these organisations provided vital, much-needed services and support. People overwhelmingly would prefer it if they remained as they were and 'strongly opposed' or 'opposed' the proposal. Several respondents, including leading charities, expressed their opposition to any cuts in funding that threatened services for vulnerable people within the community and felt that savings could and should be found elsewhere even if they largely accepted and understood that funding shortages lay behind the proposal. Some people said that the proposed savings were a false economy and/or that it would cost more in the long run. Those in favour of the proposals said that the needs of all Haringey residents must be put ahead of the few and suggested a range of alternatives.

Many extended offers of help and/or suggested steps the Council should and could take to mitigate and/or monitor the impact were the cuts to go ahead. Some were pleased to see the personalisation programme moving forward and were keen to work with the Council in developing a diverse market in services. Others like the Unions were concerned that the personalisation agenda was being used to justify the proposal.

Comments on the consultation

Direct feedback would indicate that the meetings we held were sensitively run and generally positively received and that the Council had fulfilled its responsibility of keeping those who attended informed. Others we have heard from said they had struggled to comprehend or hear what was being said, felt the meeting has been dominated by others or that they lacked detailed enough feedback on which to participate effectively.

There were moreover views that the consultation was “seriously flawed, claims that users of services and others have found it difficult to challenge the Council’s figures or offer alternatives because of a lack of a detailed costs or that substitutes/replacements had not been properly costed. It was also stated that there appeared to be no transitional arrangements even though, as was explained, no decision has been taken.

Others suggested that proposals had been hastily arranged or that decisions had already been made, that the questionnaires were biased, queried the levels of advocacy or other support and/or asserted that the consultation was a formality, foregone conclusion or was even a ‘sham’. There was frustration at how long the consultation was lasting, and in the absence of a decision, the ‘lack of progress’ from one meeting to the next or that we’d not listened to specialists or have taken account of their views as service users, relatives or professionals from the outset.

Frequently asked questions

People frequently asked about the reason for the savings and wanted to discuss other ways of saving money, asked what would happen to the buildings or to other groups using the buildings, asked about the consultation, and for more information to enable them to propose alternative courses of action for consideration as part of the consultation. Understandably some queried what would happen to users of services should the proposed closures go ahead, worried as they were about not having enough time to make alternative arrangements.

Consultation on proposals for the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project

As the Cypriot Elderly and Disability Project is not directly provided services, letters were written to the management committee informing them of the proposals and asking for comments. In the case of CEDP, a response was received purely noting the proposals but not raising any objections. There has been no formal consultation with service users in the CEDP in relation to the proposals to withdraw the funding.

Consultation on proposals for Jackson's Lane

Following a letter to the management committee, a meeting was held with the Chief Executive of Jackson's Lane who informed officers that the luncheon club service would be at significant risk if the funding were to cease as all activities were funded by specific grants which did not allow for cross-subsidy. A meeting was held with service users in Jackson's Lane in relation to withdrawing the funding in January 2011 to inform them of the proposal. Feedback from some 35 people present was against the proposal, with no dissenters. It was felt that the service was the only one of its type on the West of the Borough and that their lives would be made much the poorer were the service not to be there. Those corresponding with the Council about the proposed withdrawal of funding said that the luncheon club was an important if not unique part of community that has been in existence for many years. Moreover, it was argued, it was the only such venue for older people in the immediate area and (it is said) provided users with their main meal of the day. The Co-ordinator role was essential, it was argued, as number of members were frail or otherwise in need of support. Given the relatively small saving, people asked that the facility continue and that the Council find other ways to make these levels of savings and that to 'target' older people was unfair.

13. Service Financial Comments

- 13.1. A decision to close the services detailed above will allow savings to be achieved of £285k, full year effect. Delays in implementation will mean that part year savings are achieved in 2011/12, the exact amounts not known until the final decision is reached, with the full saving achieved in 2012/13. Any shortfall in 2011/12 will be delivered from existing budgets.
- 13.2. Efficiencies
N/A

14. Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

- 14.1. Appendix 1 - Adult Social Care Consultation Update
- 14.2. Appendix 2 – EqlAs:- Withdrawal of funding from Jackson's Lane Luncheon Club, Elderly and Disability Project at the Cypriot Centre and Abyssinia Court, The Irish Centre, Willoughby Road, Woodside House drop-in centres for Adults
- 14.3. Appendix 3: The public sector single equality duty

15. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 15.1. January 2011, "Think Local, Act Personal", Cabinet Office
- 15.2. No reason for confidentiality or exemption