

THE STAFF CONSULTATION PROCESS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF COUNCIL RUN DAY SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.

On 20 December 2011 the Director of Adults Culture and Community Services (as was) wrote to all staff stating that due to the significant savings that had to be made, proposals were going to Cabinet on 21 December 2011 regarding a number of options to reorganise services, including options to close or cease a range of services.

On 21 December 2011 Cabinet gave the approval to commence formal consultation with stakeholder groups.

This paper focuses on the process that was applied in connection with the staff consultation process for the 4 Day Centres.

The proposals were as follows

Woodside Day Centre – closure by March 2012

The Haven – closure by March 2012

684 Centre – closure by March 2012

All of above would result in staff being made redundant unless they requested voluntary redundancy or were redeployed.

A further proposal involved merging The Grange and the Haynes however this did not impact on staff since it only concerned the deletion of vacant posts.

The formal staff consultation process commenced on 31 January 2011 and was due to last until 30 April 2011 however this was extended until May 2011 in order to allow sufficient time for full responses to be received.

2 briefing sessions were held with the staff teams in each of the 4 Day Centres. UNISON trade union representative also was present at these sessions. The dates are set out in the table below.

Unit	Posts	People	Briefing 1	Briefing 2
Woodside	8	8	23 Feb	14 Apr
Haven	11	7	24 Feb	n/k
684	10	7	14 Mar	12 Apr

At the sessions various issues were raised regarding ways in which staff could contribute to the consultation process about the proposals as well as the timetable and process that would be applied if Cabinet did agree that these Day Centres would be closed. The majority of the issues that were raised by staff focussed on matters to do with the value of the service to service users and the implications if the service closed and these have been encompassed in the Cabinet Report and the Service Consultation report that

are going to Cabinet on 4 October 2011. Staff also raised questions about the timetable and likelihood of deployment and/or redundancy if approval was given. Council procedures regarding reorganisations were fully explained.

Staff were handed a leaflet at each of the first briefings. This leaflet confirmed the ways in which staff could contribute to the consultation process with contact details for trade union representatives and managers and the dates of Formal Trade Union Consultation meetings so that they could feed into these via their trade union representatives. It also set out ways in which staff could make enquiries about voluntary redundancy and redeployment as well as ways staff could access support that had been put in place for staff at them at this difficult time.

In addition to the above 6 Formal Consultation meetings were held between Senior Managers of the Department and Trade Union Representatives on 25 January 2011, 17 February 2011, 15 March 2011, 6 April 2011, 7 April 2011 and 26 May 2011.

The formal Trade Union Response to the proposals was submitted on 6 May 2011 and is attached.

Throughout the process the main focus for staff and trade union was the nature of the impact of the business changes on the various user groups. These comments and the response to them have been covered in the Cabinet and Consultation report that is going to Cabinet on 4 October 2011 in connection with the service changes.

Neither staff, nor trade union representatives, have raised any issues to do with the characteristics of the workforce that is affected by these potential closures.

We have done our best to work with staff during the course of the consultation to enable them to contribute to the consultation process, to come to terms with the impact of the proposals on them and to identify ways in which we can mitigate against compulsory redundancy by identifying those employees who have decided that they was to leave voluntarily as well as identifying suitable deployment for those that don't – should the proposals be agreed.

We have also emphasised the benefits to staff of the 'supporting changes' package that has been put in place in terms of dealing with change and other forms of staff support.

Update on Consultation

The proposal to close the Haven has been changed as a result of the feedback received from the Consultation exercise. In the light of this staffing requirements will have to be reviewed in terms of skills sets and numbers of required staff. This has meant that it is less likely that so many staff will be displaced from the Haven and there is more likelihood that a small number of staff will be redeployed to the reconfigured services run from the Haven.

Details on this will be presented to the Corporate Committee as required and Impact Assessments will be reviewed in the light of any changes at that time.