Appendix 4: -

Draft Day Opportunities Strategy Consultation

Consultation Findings Common Themes
(Revised August 2020)

Common Themes from Comments and Questions

Appendix 4 will examine common themes that have emerged from the comments and questions received by respondents throughout the consultation process.

Over 700 questions were received, and over 5000 comments gathered from a range of sources which included; returned Standard questionnaires, returned Easy Read questionnaires, event feedback sheets, e-mails received to the Consultation e-mail address and notes taken at consultation events.

The number of questions and comments analysed in this section differs slightly from the number stated above. This is because when a comment or question covered several different themes, these have been split and assigned accordingly. All comments and questions received have been reviewed and analysed.

Comments and questions have been categorised according to 9 identified themes plus one additional heading for miscellaneous comments that could not be easily categorised.

The themes identified from the comments and questions are;

- **A.** Carers
- **B.** Closures
- **C.** Community Activities
- **D.** The Consultation
- **E.** Direct Payments
- **F.** Draft Strategy
- **G.** Funding / Savings
- **H.** Social Work
- **I.** Transitions
- **J.** Miscellaneous

In addition to the nine themes a range of sub-categories have been identified to assess the views relating to the consultation.

Theme A: Carers

Analysis identified 174 comments and 7 questions.

This theme has been split into two sub-categories on the perceived impact that the proposals in the draft Day Opportunities Strategy would have on the lives of carers whose family members attend day opportunity services. As with other categories the anticipated impact of the proposals in the draft Strategy centred on the perception that there would be closure of some or all building based day opportunity services.

- **Carers' Concerns**

Just over half of the comments related to the level of support that either carers provide to and/or receive from the current day opportunities system. It was clear from respondents that many carers feel that the support they receive from day centres alleviates the pressure that they feel that they are under. Many stated that if day centres were to close this would increase stress levels both for carers and their family members or the person they support. Carers also cited that were day centre provision to reduce or close completely this would also impact on their carer/work/life balance. Carers commented that day centres allow them to go out to work and should this provision no longer be available the resulting impact would either mean a loss of income or their family member having to move into residential care.

Another visible feature in this category was the issue of both ageing carers and ageing citizens who access day opportunities services. Older carers (some who are 80 years plus and caring for more than one family member) may have their own health and social care needs, which impact on their ability to care for their family member, access the community and organise and manage alternative provision of support in the day. Respondents felt that building based services were vital to supporting them to continue to care for their family member in circumstances that are becoming more difficult to manage due to their advancing age.

- **Respite**

The respite that building based services provided was mentioned in a number of comments in this category. Respondents again referenced the importance of respite for carers who are elderly or have their own health issues that they need to manage. There was also further mention that the respite current day services provide enables carers to have some degree of independence and to be able to live their own lives (e.g. attend appointments, shopping, housework, etc.). Several respondents referred to day centres as being their "life-line" and the only break that they get in a job that lasts "24/7".

Respondents also referred to the assurance that they receive, in the knowledge that family members are being supported in a safe environment, is a form of respite in-itself as it alleviates some of the stress that they are under.

There was also mention of the lack of dedicated respite service provision which could be an alternative option to help with the pressures of caring full-time.

The need for carer support also dominated the questions asked relating to this category.

Theme B: Closure of day centres

Analysis identified 200 comments and 12 questions.

There are no additional subcategories within this theme. All comments and questions related directly to closure of day centres.

Respondents were concerned that the proposals put forward in the draft Day Opportunities Strategy would result in the closure of building based day centres. Some respondents felt that the Strategy

would result in the closure of all building-based day services, while others focused their concerns on the closure of the day centre that they or their family member attend. The topic dominated a lot of discussions held at consultation events in both Birmingham City Council run services and those delivered by external providers.

Respondents referred to the importance of the routine of attending a day centre regularly as they are not able to cope with change. Carers also referred to the importance of maintaining a routine, not only for the welfare of their family member but also because it enables them to manage other areas of their lives.

Respondents also expressed concerns about the costs of accessing the community if they no longer had a day centre to regularly attend. Costs relating to transport, adequately trained staff to support them and costs of activities in the community were mentioned. Some carers also expressed concerns that if centres were to close this would impact on their ability to work and therefore their income. Respondents felt that accessing a day centre affords them the social contact, range of activities and safety that they would not be able to afford if they had to access the community independently.

There were many comments referring to the importance of friendships and concern that opportunities to make and maintain these friendships would be lost if day centres were to close as a result of implementing the proposed Strategy. Carers felt that attendance at a day centre enhanced their family member's independence as it enabled them to make friendships and participate in activities in a safe environment.

Both the comments and questions reflected the belief that what is being proposed in the draft Strategy is already being carried out in the day centres, therefore, there is no need for change.

Comments received expressed concerns that the closure of day centres would negatively impact on the health and well-being of those that currently access the services and their family/carers; and that the prospect of centres closing has led to an increase in stress levels. Carers, in particular, thought that attendance at a day centre kept their family member safe and that it was important that trained staff were on hand to support those with more complex needs.

Theme C: Community Activities

Analysis identified 2079 comments and 66 questions.

Due to the volume of comments and the range of areas encompassed by the views expressed seven subcategories have been identified.

- **Accessibility**

There were comments and questions on accessibility to both the local and wider community. There were five issues that emerged from comments and questions on this theme. These were access to the community, transport, public awareness and attitudes and costs of accessing support and activities in the community.

Respondents commented on difficulties with accessing the community, and that work needs to be done to facilitate access if people are to be encouraged into more community-based activities.

Respondents cited a number of obstacles, and lack of facilities in the community currently. These included a lack of suitably equipped toilets and changing facilities, wheelchair access to shops, restaurants, and cafes, and difficulties with operating wheelchairs on pavements. There were also comments regarding access to places of worship and people requiring support to practice their faith.

Transport was also referred to in comments and questions. Respondents referred to the cost and suitability of public transport, availability of affordable specialist transport, availability of services such as Ring and Ride, and difficulties experienced by some respondents with public attitudes on public transport.

Public attitudes towards, and awareness of, conditions such as learning disability or physical disabilities featured in a number of comments and questions. Respondents stated that more needs to be done to make businesses aware of issues if places in the community are to become more accessible. Awareness would need to be raised around behaviours that people may have which members of the public would perceive to be challenging. Carers have stated that members of the public have misinterpreted the way that their family member behaves. Service users, carers and staff at day opportunity services have all reported verbal abuse and negative behaviour from members of the public. This has been led to perception that going into the community is not safe.

Respondents also commented on the costs of both transport and activities in the community.   From comments received this is seen as another barrier to accessing the community.

- **Activities**

388 comments in this theme were from service users and carers stating the range of activities that they would like to do, or currently do, within their day service provision. These included a mix of centre-based activities and activities that can be accessed out in the community.

- **Community integration and support**

Respondents stated that to integrate them into the community more a number of factors need to be considered such as; what options/activities are available for people to access, the affordability of these activities, options need to have appropriate facilities, transport needs to be accessible and affordable, businesses and members of the public need to understand disability and different behaviours.

Respondents stated that the nature of their conditions can limit what they do or are able to access, e.g. mobility, cognitive function and chronic pain. Furthermore, the activities on offer can limit people's integration into the community, for instance those with severe learning disabilities may be limited to what they can access.

A number of respondents expressed that they would like to access the community more, to meet new people and try more things. People stated that they would like to know more about what is in the community and that it may be that more investment is required to develop what is on offer to people in the community.

Respondents also suggested that a future model of day opportunities could include a combination of community activities and building based day centres as not everyone wants to go out into the community, or, at least not all of the time.

Some respondents stated that although they would like to access the community, they are nervous of doing so due to a sense of vulnerability. To access the community, they would require sufficient support which, for some, would be 1:1 support. Some respondents commented that they are unable to go anywhere on their own, for example one respondent stated that they have a tendency to wander, another person stated that the individual they care for has little awareness of risks, therefore requiring support to go out and about. Other comments made by respondents stated that they would not go out at all if they didn't have support or that they would be distressed if they were out in the community without someone to help them. Respondents stated that they would need support with using transport, managing, and using money and in some cases with their communication skills.

Reference was made to a publication by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) published in 2007 called 'Having a Good Day?' which said that doing an activity in a community setting "does not automatically ensure that an individual has contact with non-disabled people or is living an 'ordinary' life".

- **Day centres are important**

A number of respondents referenced the importance of day centres for those who use the services and their carers and families.

Respondents stated that attending building-based day centres gave them the opportunity to meet friends and have regular social contact. Many respondents simply stated that they want to stay at their day centre, that they enjoy their time there at it makes them happy.

In some cases, respondents reported that they had been attending the day centre for a long time, in some cases 25 years plus, and that to change would be upsetting. It was reported in comments that not attending the day centre would have negative impact on health and wellbeing, e.g. resulting in anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Attending the day centres provides a structure and routine which is important to many people who responded.

Respondents also commented on the importance of day centres in combatting loneliness and how having a disability in itself increases the risk of loneliness, as it can make it difficult to access the wider community. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) report "Disability, well-being and loneliness, UK: 2019" reported that a higher percentage of disabled people feel lonely compared to non-disabled people, with the proportion of disabled people reporting to feel lonely "often or always" being four times that of non-disabled people.

Having a centre to attend enables people to meet and make friends in a safe environment and creates a sense of belonging. It was asserted that this would be difficult to replicate if the only option to access day opportunities was through activities in the community. Respondents felt that doing activities in the community does not in itself combat loneliness. Furthermore, if a person is lonely then they are also less likely to engage in the wider community. To mitigate against the impact of loneliness it was suggested that day centres could play a greater role in providing access to activities in the wider community while still acting as a focal point for people to meet and socialise.

Comments also stated that people do not necessarily want to go into the community and prefer the sense of safety and security that building based services provide, and that this type of provision is

best suited to those with complex needs. For example, one commentator with complex needs stated, "If having complex needs means I still have the opportunity to access the day service then that's okay. Without my day service I would be without support, I'd be stuck at home more and more and would lack things I can access and do." People also reported that they do not feel safe in the community, find activities difficult to access and that there aren't enough suitable alternatives in the community that provide the facilities and staffing that they get at their day centre.

A response quoted a Government policy document from October 2018, called "A connected society a strategy for tackling loneliness - laying the foundations for change".   It reported that having access to buildings where people can get together "was a frequent theme in response to government's call for evidence on loneliness".

Other benefits of building based day centres was the support with personal care, communication, range of activities and skills that could be learnt.

Having a reliable service to attend also supports the families and carers of those who require a day service. As stated in other themes of this analysis day centres provide respite and support to families and carers.

Some respondents did voice support for accessing activities in the community but would like to combine this with regularly attending a building-based day centre too.

- **Friendships**

Friendships made at day centres were referred to in a number of comments in relation to accessing the community. As referenced in other themes, respondents stated that they value the day centre as a place to meet and make friends. If they were to no longer attend the day centre there would be concerns that they would be lonely, isolated and bored at home.

Respondents also stated that they valued the opportunity to meet with people of a similar age group and to take part in shared activities with other people. Respondents stated that being at a day centre provides not only social contact but also a sense of security. Questions on this theme queried how this could be replicated out in the wider community.

- **Information**

There were comments and questions relating to information about what activities are available in the community for people to access, that may be an alternative to, or in addition to, building based day services. To aid access to community activities will require up to date and accurate information on as broad a range of services as possible to be available.   Respondents stated that this not only needs to be comprehensive but also easy to access and in a simple format.

Questions submitted relating to this topic asked for information on what service are currently available and how they could be accessed. Day opportunity provider services also enquired as to how they could better promote their services to social work teams and potential users of their services.

- **Referrals**

19 comments within this theme referenced referrals into day opportunities services. The perception among respondents was that referrals to day centres was slowing down, and for people seeking a

referral found the process difficult to access. Providers of day opportunity services commented that social work teams did not have a clear overview of services that were available to which to refer people.

Theme D: Consultation – process and governance

Analysis identified 613 comments and 55 questions.

Due to the volume of comments and the range of areas encompassed by the views expressed five subcategories have been identified.

- **Capacity to understand**

The ability to understand either the presentation or the questions asked in the questionnaires. Some felt that more explanation of the proposals was required, and that the information relayed in the consultation was too complex for some people to understand.

- **Documentation**

A number of comments reflected on the consultation documentation, including the questionnaires and the draft Day Opportunities Strategy. The majority of these comments referenced the questionnaire with many stating that they felt that the questions were biased towards encouraging certain responses. Others felt that they did not have sufficient information with which to make an informed decision.

- **Events and presentations**

Views ranged from the presentation being clear, understandable, and informative; an appreciation of group discussions; and the opportunity to express views; and some being enabled to have their say; through to a lack of trust in the intentions of the consultation, that the information was not clear enough and the content of the presentation was too vague. There were also comments on the large numbers of people and noise levels at events held at internal Birmingham City Council day services. However, additional small group discussions were arranged to mitigate against this and enable more meaningful participation of citizens who use these services.

- **Governance – Decision making**

Comments referring to the Governance and decision-making process. mostly expressed a perceived lack of transparency around the governance process and a lack of trust in Birmingham City Council.

- **Process**

Comments on the consultation process ranged from those that were dissatisfied with promotion of the consultation events, the length of time taken to respond to questions, and that the process was going through the motions through to positive comments about the person-centred approach.

Most of the questions related to the analysis of data, the process of approving the analysis report and how people will be notified of the outcomes of the consultation.

Theme E: Direct payments and personal budgets

Analysis identified 231 comments and 30 questions.

Concern was expressed around the process of managing direct payments, which was viewed by many to be challenging. Two subcategories have been identified for this theme.

- ## Direct Payments

Concern was expressed around the process of managing direct payments, which was viewed by many to be challenging. Some said that they didn't have the capacity or support to take on the responsibility and others said that they did not want to take on this responsibility and that day centres are more convenient. Some felt that it placed more responsibility on the carer and that they were too complex to manage, e.g. responsibility for Income Tax and National Insurance. One respondent likened the administration involved in having a direct payment to a job.

In addition to the level of support required to manage finances, employ Personal Assistants, etc. objections were raised around potential for mismanagement of funds. It was felt by some respondents that having a Direct Payment was not suitable for those with complex needs. Furthermore, the level of funds available through Direct Payments does not always afford adequate support. It was pointed out that Direct Payments are not in line with the cost of living and higher rates are often charged for support at weekends.

Some respondents felt that Direct Payments were forced upon them and that by encouraging this would result in less need for day centres.

Respondents in support of Direct Payments were in favour because they enable access to more activities. They can also provide increased opportunities for independence and enable services that suit people's needs more. Overall, respondents who favoured Direct Payments thought that they allow for greater control and therefore are better for all.

It was suggested in several comments that it would be good to have more information, e.g. a resource directory of services to purchase with a Direct Payment.

- ## Personal Assistants

Most of the comments expressed difficulties in employing and managing PAs, including sourcing training, paying adequate wages, and supervising PAs. It was also suggested that the employment of Personal Assistants would be more costly than attendance at a day centre, due to 1:1 time and where necessary, provision of care needs. There were also concerns expressed about safeguarding with respondents saying that they would feel safer at a day centre where they know that staff are well trained and supported.   Although some respondents recounted bad experiences with PAs there were some positive examples too, but this often depends on having adequate support and funding to get the right personal assistant.

Theme F: Draft Strategy

Analysis identified 1515 comments and 71 questions.

Analysis identified comments and questions relating specifically to the Six Draft Aspirations and Draft Service Model. Due to the volume of comments and the range of areas encompassed by the views expressed nine sub-categories have been identified.

- **Draft Model**

Respondents expressed concerns about the graphical representation of the model as a triangle and what each tier represents. Responses focused on whether or not the structure of the triangle should be inverted so that the Specialist Intensive Support tier was moved from the bottom to the top so that it represented the largest section. There was concern expressed that, as the model currently stands, it suggests that priority would be given to the Enablement tier at the expense of the Specialist Intensive Support tier resulting in more able people receiving a greater level of support than those with specialist and complex needs. In addition, some respondents felt that the model was too restrictive in its categorisation of people and their needs, and hope was expressed that in practice there would be a more fluid approach. Also, it was felt the model misrepresents the numbers of citizens who would be placed in the different categories of the model.

There were also comments querying how assessments would be made and how people's level of need would be determined. There was scepticism that the process would be fair and transparent and that it would result in service users not receiving an adequate level of support. Furthermore, concern was expressed about the time limit applied to the Enablement tier of the model, with some respondents saying that this would not suit some client groups, e.g. mental health, dementia, etc. where capabilities can change in a short space of time. It was suggested that the time limit of 12 weeks be made flexible and be dependent on an individuals' needs. Respondents also queried whether there would be ongoing support for those who have completed the Enablement stage, as skills learned can be lost if they are not supported to be maintained.

Again, people expressed the desire to stay within their current day centre provision and a number of comments stated that the model is already being implemented in the service that they attend and that this meets their needs.

Those who expressed support for the model commented that they felt it was logical and made sense. Respondents welcomed the structured approach and the focus on enablement. Some respondents also welcomed the focus on the individual and their capabilities. Commentators felt that the proposed Model was a positive step towards helping people to improve and better themselves.

There was support for the concept of improving people's level of independence and the positive impact that this can have on confidence and self-esteem.

The remaining comments under this theme were undecided or could not be determined as either being in support or not in support of the Model.   Respondents who were undecided stated that they would need further information and detail, particularly in relation to how assessments and reviews would be conducted, before they could comment on the model. Others commented on the structure

of the model such as the need to clarify how flexible movement would be across the tiers in the triangle as boundaries are not always clear when applied to an individual's circumstances.

The questions received also asked for clarity on the stages of the model, what they meant, how assessments would be made, who and how decisions would be made and what implementation would mean for current service provision.

- **Draft Strategy**

Those not in support of the strategy voiced concerns that implementation of the strategy would result in the closure of day centres, and that this in turn would leave to insufficient support for service users, families and carers. Comments revealed a degree of uncertainty as to what the impact of the Strategy would be and what would replace day centres if any were to close. Some respondents felt that implementation of the Strategy would result in them having to organise daily activities for their family member, should they no longer be attending a day centre, and that this would increase the work and pressure put on families and carers.

Respondents quoted research to challenge the Council's view that day centres are old fashioned, and that the Strategy is not based on evidence.

As with comments made in the "Funding" theme there was a perception that the proposals in the draft Strategy were related to budget cuts within Birmingham City Council, and that the Council wanted to force people into private day care provision.

As in previous themes people also referenced that they do not want or like change and are happy with the way that things are currently. Some respondents said that the thought of change caused them stress and anxiety. There were also concerns that changes would result in social isolation, safeguarding issues and would not be suitable for those with more complex needs.

There was challenge to the Strategy's suggestion that implementation would likely lead to a reduced demand for building based day opportunities which in turn could lead to closure of day centres.

There were also comments that the proposals in the Strategy have been made in the past and nothing changed, this has resulted in people having no confidence that things will change this time either.

Those in favour of the draft Strategy welcomed the person-centred approach and a focus on a person's needs and abilities. Respondents felt that the Strategy would increase the confidence and independence of those who use day opportunities services should changes be implemented.

There was recognition that things need to change and that this was long overdue. Respondents expressed that people should have the right to do what they would like to do with the right support, and that they are entitled to the same rights as others in the community.

There was a sense that the changes would have a positive impact on lives, with a greater choice of activities, the opportunity to learn new skills and access to different environments. Some commented that it was good to be focused on the future and positive to focus on empowering people and enabling them to be more included in the wider community.

Others commented that the Strategy proposes what is on offer elsewhere in the country, including neighbouring boroughs.

The remaining comments in this sub-category were either neutral or undecided about the proposals presented in the draft Strategy. Comments were undecided about the impact of strategy and that it would depend on how it was to be implemented. Others stated that it may work for some people more than others. In particular, it was felt that the proposals may be more suited for the younger generation rather than older adults or those who are older and have complex needs.

Other respondents stated that it was difficult to decide whether or not the Strategy was good or not unless they had examples of how the changes would work in practice.

- **Equality and diversity**

The comments and questions relating to equality and diversity in terms of the proposed draft Strategy covered very similar issues.

Firstly, generational issues with comments and questions stating that the proposals favour the younger generation more than the older generation of service users. Some respondents felt that there was not enough focus on the older population in the draft Strategy, and that those with dementia need particular consideration and services that are centre based and structured, due to the nature of the condition.

Ethnic and cultural issues were also mentioned in both the comments and questions. Respondents felt that more engagement and consideration should be given to ensure that cultural, religious, and ethnic groups are accommodated and engaged with the in the future model of day opportunities. Some respondents expressed that there needs to be awareness of how cultural practices and religious beliefs may impact on implementation of the proposals in the draft Strategy.

Views were also expressed that the draft Strategy was perhaps too broad in scope and that the needs of certain groups should have been included and considered. These include people with; brain/head injury, autism, sensory loss or impairment and people who have multiple disabilities. Questions were asked about what can be done to improve public attitudes towards those with a disability to enable people to have more confidence in accessing the community.

- **Person centred planning**

There was a positive response to person centred planning with support for giving service users the choice to do things that they enjoy doing throughout the day. Of the 35 comments on this topic, it was felt that a focus on the citizen is a positive move as people have different needs which need to be accommodated. To get this right it is important to ensure that the right people are involved in developing person-centred plans with clarity whose contribution is required including the service user, carer, social worker, and service provider.

There were also questions in relation to person centred planning and what the implications of implementing the draft Strategy would be for existing packages of care. There was some anxiety that this would mean an end to current provision and the subsequent impacts that this would have on the wellbeing of those affected. There were also questions around choice and how meaningful this would be and whether changes would mean that people would no longer be able to attend their day centre.

- **Quality**

The comments relating to quality issues and how these will be monitored and assured. Respondents expressed the need for a guarantee that care and support provided is adequate and of a high standard. There was reference to external providers services for day care, who are not regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and how this needs to be done by Birmingham City Council. Respondents requested a system of preferred providers, based on assessment of quality service, so that both service users, carers and service providers have more confidence in the day opportunities market.

The questions reflected the issues raised in the comments, many questions centred on the process of ensuring quality in service providers and the role of the CQC. Questions covered both external and internal (BCC) day centres and how and why approaches to assuring quality were different.

- **Resistance to change**

In many of the themes already examined, a recurring feature is a reluctance from respondents to change the day opportunities system as it currently stands. Comments indicate that this is a concern of those who use day opportunity services and their carers and family members. The resistance to change being expressed in the comments comes from respondent's perception of what implementation of the proposed draft Day Opportunities Strategy and draft Service Model means to them, e.g. changes to package of care, reduced hours at the day centre, closure of day centre, etc.

Previous themes and sub-categories have referred to comments where respondents have stated that what is being proposed as part of the consultation is already being delivered by the day centre that they or their family member attend. Consequently, they feel that there is no need to change the status quo.

Comments have also expressed concern about the impact that a change of routine would have for service users and their families and the importance of stability for those who need a more structured environment. Some comments of this nature appear to have been made in the context of the closure of day centres and service users being forced to find alternative provision in the community as one commentator expressed concern about what accessing the community would have on those who require more routine and structure.

Respondents also expressed their unhappiness at the prospect of change and how this causes them anxiety and distress. Some felt that change would lead to loneliness and isolation and loss of friendships made at the day centre that they currently attend.

- **Safeguarding**

There were comments and questions relating to safeguarding issues and implementation of the proposed Six Aspirations and Day Service Model. Comments were largely in terms of the vulnerable nature of those accessing day opportunities services and how safeguards need to be put into place to avoid exploitation where people are accessing the community or employing staff directly, e.g. financial exploitation. Other respondents expressed that they want to be looked after in a safe environment by staff who are trained to support their needs and have also been DBS checked. In addition to this there was support for better regulation of day care provision and assurance that safeguarding training was available to, and taken up, by all staff.

The questions also reflected the issues raised in the comments with concerns about what will be done to protect vulnerable people who may be exercising greater independence out in the wider community and how to identify and report abuse.

- **Six Aspirations**

Those in support welcomed the focus on person centred planning, in particular identifying people's strengths and abilities. One commentator felt that this was particularly important when supporting those with dementia.

Respondents felt that the Strategy displays a positive attitude towards those who use day opportunities services and that the proposals would make things better. There was support for people having more choice, control, and independence and that this is turn would help to increase people's self-esteem and confidence.

Respondents also felt that it was good to have a focus on outcomes and what people have the potential to achieve. It was felt that people should have choice and control in their lives. Some commented that they supported the concept of more choice but that this ought to be meaningful.

The issue of choice was a key feature among those who did not support the Six Aspirations. Respondents felt that this would be dependent on whether or not a service user has the capacity to make a choice or not. Somme commentators felt that this aspiration did not apply to those with complex learning disabilities or older people with dementia.

As with previous themes the prospect of closing day centres arose again, along with a reluctance to change current arrangements. A number of commentators said that the Six Aspirations proposed were already implemented by their Day Centre, so there is no need to make any changes.

There were concerns expressed about access to the community, in terms of transport and issues of safety and that to implement the proposals there would need to be a commitment to increased numbers of staff and funding.

Those who were neutral, or undecided showed some support for the proposals but were sceptical or unsure of how they would be implemented. One commentator expressed that success of implementation would depend on changing mind-sets, of both services and service users, and this would be difficult in some cases. Others felt that the Aspirations would work for some but not for others and that this would depend on the abilities and needs of the service user, i.e. not suitable for those with more complex needs.

Some respondents felt that the proposals would work as long as sufficient support structures were in place e.g. staffing levels, funding, transport, facilities, etc.

- **Skills and employment**

Public attitudes towards those with a disability was an issue raised in the comments and questions relating to skills and employment.

There were comments which raised issues such a potential prejudice from employers against employing people with a disability. Some respondents expressed concerns that employment could present opportunities for exploitation and bullying and that safeguards need to be in place to prevent such things from happening.

Respondents felt that sufficient support needs to be in place to help people with the application process and during the period in which they are employed or undergoing training. In addition to support, respondents also expressed the need to manage expectations of service users as to the type of employment and training they would be able to access and that social workers need to have a better understanding of an individual's suitability for employment and types of employment available to them.

There were comments from people who use day centres expressing what kind of employment and training that they would like to do. This ranged from computer courses, working in a shop, office work and working on reception.

There were a number of questions that reflected the issues raised in the comments and centred mostly on the process of people gaining employment, finding training courses, etc. Some respondents queried whether employment would be meaningful and whether or not businesses are on board with offering employment to people who access day centre services.

Theme G: Funding/Savings

Analysis identified 109 comments and 17 questions.

Concern was expressed that the draft strategy is produced as a means of achieving savings by Birmingham City Council.

Many comments from respondents suggested that they thought the Strategy was an agenda to save money. There were many references in both the questions and comments to savings and budget cuts faced by Birmingham City Council. Respondents felt that the proposals in the Strategy would cost money to implement and respondents queried whether or not Birmingham City Council has the money to do this in conjunction with budget cuts.

As with the overall strategy, the view was expressed that investing in community day opportunities would be "investing in a model without a firm evidence base" which would "cause increased social isolation, which risks greater calls on public money."

There was support for the proposals put forward in the draft Strategy, but respondents stated that sufficient funds need to be available if implementation of the strategy is to work.

In relation to this, respondents also referred to the value of direct payments which currently, it was claimed, makes it difficult for people to be able to afford to employ staff, pay for transport and activities. In particular, the cost of assisting people to access the community was referred to in both comments and questions related to this topic.

Other respondents wanted to see more investment in in the day centres that they currently attend with a commitment to making them better.

Theme H: Social work

Analysis identified 75 comments and 21 questions.

Comments were prominently negative around this theme.

Comments reflected existing concerns with social work practices and how these might be improved and how they will be impacted on by the proposed Strategy. Based on previous experiences some carers expressed a lack of trust in social work practice, with particular reference being made to the assessment of needs. This was also reflected in comments made by day care providers, who like carers, felt that their knowledge of service users should form an important part of social work assessments and reviews. A number of respondents also referred to difficulties in contacting social workers, a number would prefer to have a named social worker, in obtaining a social work assessment and any follow up required as a result of an assessment. Support was expressed for the Three Conversations Model, however, some commented that implementation of this was not always consistent.

The questions asked were primarily concerned about social work processes and practices. These ranged from how to find a social worker, how social workers are allocated, how will the strategy impact on assessments and client reviews to queries relating to the safeguarding process. Respondents also wanted to know if implementation of the draft Strategy would result in increased numbers of social workers. As with comments in the 'Funding' theme the perception among respondents was that the draft Strategy would require increase in resources in order to be implemented safely and effectively.

There were also several questions related to how service users or their carers can exercise choice if what they wanted contrasted with a social worker's recommendation.

Theme I: Transition

Analysis identified 25 comments and 4 questions.

The majority of the comments were concerned with the transition process.

There were comments relating to the transition of young people from school/education to adult services, and what services need to be provided to accommodate the needs of this group which may be different to what existing services currently provide. Comments in this category made particular reference to young people having different needs, and expectations, to older adults. Therefore, services ought to take this into consideration. Young people will not necessarily want to spend their days with older adults, and the choice of activities available to them ought to reflect their age and skills (e.g. computer skills). It was suggested that services aimed at 18-30 age group be designed to accommodate these interests.

Respondents made reference to the referral process from education into adult services which they said ought to be reviewed as it is too complex and takes too long for young people to access day opportunity services.

Theme J: Miscellaneous

There were a selection of comments and questions that could not be easily categorised into a theme. For details of these comments please refer to Appendix 6 where they are listed in full.

Appendices:

Following the identification that some responses to the consultation had been omitted from the published document set available for public viewing and the document set provided to Members in advance of the Cabinet meeting of February 11th 2020, and that the issues raised in the submission had not been specifically referenced in the suite of documents which reported on the outcome of the consultation, an audit of all consultation responses was carried out to identify if there were any further missing comments.

Appendix 1a: A response made on behalf of a day centre attendee was not included in the analysis of responses. The redacted response is included in full below with additional references also included in this document above. The response makes reference to several articles and published research which can be made available on request. (Dayopportunitiesvision@birmingham.gov.uk)

RESPONSE TO BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL'S CONSULTATION ON ITS ADULT CARE DRAFT DAY OPPORTUNITY STRATEGY ON BEHALF OF XXXXX

Introduction and summary of response

We are instructed by XXX on behalf of XXX, a user of the XXX. We have been asked to assist in the preparation of the response they are submitting, on XXX's behalf, to Birmingham City Council's consultation on its draft Day Opportunities Strategy (the Strategy).

The aim of the Strategy is that people should be able to access resources with their local communities (p4). It says that *"The strategy proposes to gradually move away from people traditional building-based services"* (p3). The consultation paper which accompanies the Strategy explains that *"if the draft strategy were to achieve that aim, we may need fewer day centres, and, in future, it might be proposed to close some day centres"*.

The consultation document sets out two proposals but, as we understand it, both are made for the purpose of achieving this overall aim and the second is actually part of the overall Strategy. The proposals are to adopt:

- the draft Day Opportunities Strategy
- the draft Day Service Model

We wish to comment on both in detail below but, in summary, XXX are strongly opposed to the Strategy because the evidence is that it will not achieve the Council's aim but will:

- increase the risk of social isolation and of loss of community, which are needs which day centres currently meet;
- reduce effective access to the wider community because day centres help deal with the many barriers to access, including societal attitudes;

- end up costing more whilst being less effective than day centres.

The evidence (copies of which can be provided and which is set out in detail in the paper which follows) is that:

- Learning disability increases the risk of loneliness.
- Loneliness causes serious harm and increases financial costs to society.
- Doing activities in the community does not in itself combat loneliness for a disabled person.
- One of the barriers is one that is not addressed in the Strategy is negative societal attitudes to disabled people.
- If a person is lonely they are less likely to engage in the wider community.
- Buildings for people to meet and pass time in are vital to combat loneliness.
- Day centres enable their users to develop friendships and to have a sense of belonging to a community and coproduction found that this is important to Birmingham day centre users
- Day centres provide a base from which disabled people can participate in the wider community with their friends.
- Birmingham day centres could be improved to do more to facilitate the community engagement of their users and this would be more cost effective than the Strategy.

This is why XXXX advocate an alternative model to the one proposed in the Strategy. The alternative is to improve the ways in which existing day centres facilitate engagement with the wider community. This would address the concern that day centres can become disconnected whilst retaining their strengths. It is a model which, on the basis of the available evidence, is more likely to achieve the Council's aim. It is also likely to be more cost effective.

The importance of social connection

The Government has very recently recognised the importance of tackling loneliness. It published a major policy document in October 2018, called *"A connected society a strategy for tackling loneliness - laying the foundations for change".* Tracey Crouch, who was the minister leading on the policy, said in her Foreword:

"The relationships we have with our friends, family, neighbours and colleagues are, for many of us, the most important things in our fives. Increasingly we understand the fink between having

strong meaningful social connections and living a healthy and successful life." (p3)

This is no less true for people with a learning disability.

The policy looked at who is more at risk of experiencing loneliness. The evidence is that disability increases the risk. This comes from a recent analysis by the Office for National Statistics which identifies the factors affecting the likelihood of feeling lonely. They found that:

"People who reported being lonely more often were likely to have at least one of several specific characteristics. This included ... having a long term illness or disability ....".(p20)

This is supported by further evidence quoted in the policy at p30. A survey was carried out by the disability charity, Scope UK, which found a *"high level"* of loneliness experienced by working age disabled people. From a survey of 1004 disabled people, 45% of working age disabled people said they always or often feel lonely.

The consequences of loneliness are very serious. The Government's policy sets out the evidence of the serious impact on those who feel lonely, including early death, risk of depression and cognitive decline. The evidence is also that it can increase social anxiety which causes further withdrawal, *"creating a vicious* cyc/e"(p18.) So, if a person is lonely they become less likely to get out into the community.

It also has impacts on society more generally, for example lonely people are more likely to be admitted to hospital, more likely to visit a GP and more likely to end up in residential care (p19).

Will the Strategy be effective in ensuring social connectedness?

The Strategy says that it wants to ensure that Birmingham is compliant with "significant national policy" (p5). The first piece of national policy that it mentions is a publication by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) published in 2007 called 'Having Good Day?' This was concerned with community-based day activities for people with learning disabilities. It said that people need day activities which *"ensure friendships, connections and a sense af belonging develop in the process."*

But there is worrying evidence that the Council's proposed Strategy of moving away from using day centres and towards participation in activities in the community will *not* ensure this, but have the opposite effect. 'Having a good day?' said that doing an activity in a

community setting *"does not automatically ensure that an individual has contact with non disabled people or is living an 'ordinary' life"'* (p9) There is evidence that attitudes in wider society cause a significant problem.

The national charity SENSE, in its response to the Government's loneliness policy, explained that the causes of loneliness among disabled people are complex and include not only physical barriers, such as accessible buildings, but societal attitudes. They said:
"A lock of understanding and awareness of disability is also a significant obstacle to making connections and forming friendships. 49% of non-disabled people feel that they do not have anything in common with disabled people and 26% admit to avoiding engaging in conversation with a disabled person".

In October 2018, the Independent newspaper reported on research by the charity SCOPE which found that one in four disabled people say negative attitudes from other passengers prevent them from using public transport.

There is further evidence that society's attitudes make it difficult for learning disabled people to participate in the wider community. 'Having a good day?' is a review of research that had been carried out, rather than a piece of research itself, and it reports on academic work that it reviewed which concluded that:

" The discrimination, abuse and rejection that they suffer at the hands of the community has Jed some people with learning disabilities to seek "safe spaces" and networks." (p9)

The findings from the Council's own Stage 1 coproduction (which aimed to find out what the users of Birmingham's day centres thought about their day opportunities) were completely consistent with this. Council officers visited day centres across the city between January and March last year. They asked 541 service users the same 3 questions:
- What do you enjoy doing at the centre and away from the centre?
- What don't you like doing at the centre and away from the centre?
- What might you like to do that you don't do currently?

The top four responses to the second question (what don't you like doing outside of the centre were):
- Using public transport
- Feeling isolated

- Feeling misunderstood
- Not feeling safe

The coproduction report concluded that, although many of the activities which are important to current users of the day centres can be accessed in the wider community, *"the sense of belonging and being part of established groups is harder to replicate in the immediacy".* [Emphasis added.] There is no mention of this in the Strategy or the consultation paper. XXX asked at a consultation meeting they attended how the Council proposed replicating the sense of belonging and being part of established groups that day centres offer. The reply in the FAQ was:

" *The Council acknowledges how our day centres are valued and how they help maintain friendships and a sense of community. The draft strategy and proposed model focus on the individual and what is important to them. Friendship groups give a sense of wellbeing and we would want to harness that."*

But this does not answer the question which was *how* this would be achieved. XXX have been advised in one of the supplementary consultation meetings to submit a follow up question. They have submitted the following question:

" *Please could you tell us in detail how the Council intends in practice to replicate in the new model the sense of belonging and being part of established groups that is currently provided by day centres. Please could your answer address in particular how this to be done for people with a significant learning disability."*

At the time of submitting this consultation response there has been no response. That is very worrying indeed given the evidence about the damaging effects of isolation and the benefits of social connection. It also means that the Council is leaving itself at risk of being unable to meet the eligible needs of disabled adults in Birmingham in breach of their statutory duties. One of the outcomes against which statutory eligibility must be assessed under the Care Act 2014 is the ability to develop and maintain relationships with others.

What can be done to develop and maintain social connectedness -the evidence
The Government's loneliness strategy recognises that it can't make friends for people, but it does say that various agencies including local authorities can make changes which support the development of friendships and community. It says that *"infrastructure empowers social connections".* It reported that having access to buildings where people can get together *"was*

a frequent theme in response to government's call for evidence on loneliness". People need places which make it *"natural for people to see each other, chat in passing or spend time together, building friendships over time".*

So buildings for people to meet and pass time in are vital. But for people with learning disabilities it is important that those buildings are ones in which they meet and pass time with people who are prepared to engage with them. (That is not currently the case generally in the wider community. (See above.) This is exactly what day centres provide.

This is supported by very recent research into day centres carried out between 2014 and 2017 by Katharine Orellana of Kings College London. The research found that one function of day centres was found to be supplementing or replacing "social networks" and concluded:

"day centres still play an important role for people involved with them. There is clear evidence that they deliver outcomes that are highly relevant to social care and health policy themes such as: promoting wellbeing..."

The Council suggests in the Strategy that day centres are old fashioned ('traditional') and that change is needed to promote well-being in line with the Care Act (p4). However, this research is clear evidence that this is wrong. Day centres promote wellbeing.

In an article for Community Care (4 January 2018) the author of the research,, said:

"Reports that centres are receiving fewer referrals and applications for day centre attendance, as part of a wider care package, being rejected by panels for unclear reasons, may be linked to financial constraints. But not only does this counteract the choices older people may be voicing during care and support planning, it suggests day centre attendance is not always being considered as part of a wider package. It also suggests a lack of understanding of the evidence concerning day centres and the relevance of their outcomes to policy goals." [Emphasis added.]

This is very important. The Council is proposing a new Strategy that is not based on evidence. It says that it is developing an approach which is consistent with national policy and points to 'Having a good day?' But this report was a review of research rather than research itself and that review found that there was little research evidence on which new models were being based. It found: *"Significant gaps in information about ...the knowledge base for practice. They reflect the paucity of research on day services for people with learning disabilities to date*

and the recent paradigm change that has resulted in new ways of supporting people to 'have a good day'."

We now have some very recent research. Although Ms Orellana's research focused on older people, it raises serious doubts about the effectiveness of the Council's proposals not only for older people but for all user groups. In her research review she found a report of a 2010 study of the practice in Scotland of 'retiring' people with learning disabilities from day centres. Users of the day centre were interviewed. One of the key themes was the importance of the day centre as social hub, a place to make friends and provide a community.

Is the Strategy cost effective - the evidence

The Strategy aims be consistent with local priorities which include: *"Resources need to be used effectively for the benefit of individuals using day opportunity provision. Every pound that Birmingham spends on care must represent a pound well spent..."* (p7)"

In the implementation of the Strategy the Council says it intends to make a financial investment in 'community day opportunities' to make the Strategy work. But this is investing in a model without a firm evidence base. In fact, there is clear evidence set out above which suggests that it will not be able to deliver but, in fact, will cause increased social isolation, which risks greater calls on public money.

Not only is there evidence that service users want to continue to have day centres available, but there is evidence that they can be an effective way of delivering on national and local policy (see above). It is possible to hold on to day centres and all that they offer to promote social connectedness and also use them to as a base for linking into the local and wider community.

This not to say that there is no need to improve the existing service. The NDTi review, commissioned by the Council, found there is more that could be done to link existing day centres into the local and wider community. XXX's opposition to the Council's proposal is not a case of being fearful of change, but of the Council getting this seriously wrong which will have an impact for years to come not only on their daughter but for all people with learning disabilities for many generations. This is about the Council recognising that, in day centres, it has something that already has a unique contribution to make to what it is trying to achieve. They can be improved but there is no need to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

The Council envisages that it will make significant savings. The 2019+ Budget included savings flowing from the new Day Opportunities Strategy in each of the 4 years starting with 2019/20. XXX have asked in the consultation how these savings have been calculated but have not yet received a response. However, it is believed that the main source of savings appears to be the envisaged closure of at least some day centres because fewer people will be using them as a result of the Strategy. There appear to be two reasons why the Council thinks that there will be reduced use which will allow closure.

The first is the planned increase in people making use of direct payments to employ personal assistants who will support them to access community activities. Not only does this risk reducing rather than promoting social connectedness (see above), but there are good and evidenced reasons for thinking that it will not save the Council money.

The first point to be made is that direct payments and how they are used are a matter of choice for the adult (or the person dealing with them on their behalf). The evidence from the coproduction work is that service users would choose to attend day centres and, although it has been suggested by the Council in the past that people cannot use a direct payment to go to a Council day centre, that is not the case. (See paragraph 12.56 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance.)

In addition it is likely to cost the Council more. Many people who attend a day centre require 24 hour care and support (such as personal care, eating, supervision for their own safety, etc) and those needs are met by day centre staff during the hours they are there. If they were not attending the day centre those needs would still need to be met. The Council cannot assume that unpaid family carers would be willing or able to do so. This is prohibited by the Care Act 2014. This means that it must be assumed that those care and support needs will need to be met by paid carers. If the personal assistant employed using a direct payment is to do it then this will clearly cost more than the day centre service. A PA will be providing this help on a 1:1 basis whereas, in a day centre, the staffing ratio is much lower because all service users share support from the staff.

The proposed approach of using direct payments to employ a PA will also cost more money even if the adult does not live with family but in supported living or residential care. In these circumstances, the care provider will want to be paid for the additional hours of care and support they are providing if the adult is not at the day centre. (XXX's care provider reduced their fees on the basis that XXX would be at the day centre 5 days a week.) It is extremely unlikely that the cost of this would be less than than the day centre.

We don't know if the Council thinks there will be a reduction in day centre users because of proposed focus on enablement. Under the new model enablement services will be provided for some people. But the evidence is that the numbers would be very low. At page 13 of the Strategy there is a table which sets out the number of people attending Council day centres and categorises them as having moderate, substantial or complex needs. The numbers in each category are 10, 111 and 473. This clearly suggests that here are very few users of day centres with a level of needs who the Council thinks might benefit from enablement. The diagram of the upside down pyramid in the draft Strategy, which puts the enablement category at the top, implies this is the largest group. But this is clearly incorrect.

But there is an additional issue. It is said that those in the enablement categories would be helped to regain skills, improve independence and connect to their communities. But as detailed above, disabled people generally are more likely to experience loneliness and there are barriers (in particular societal attitudes) to disabled people connecting to the wider community which cannot be addressed simply by improving an individual's independence skills. There is absolutely nothing in the Strategy which explains how enablement is going to help people connect to their communities.   The evidence is that that those in the enablement categories   will still need to have a day centre base even if they have gained some independence skills

In summary, the draft Strategy is proposing an investment of money in an untested and unevidenced approach which may well end up costing the Council more money.

Developing the Strategy   - compliance   with the Council's legal obligations

The Council has a duty under the Care Act 2014 to promote an efficient and effective operation of a market in services. The Statutory Guidance says that a Council's local strategies   should be evidence-based. (See paragraph 4.52.) But the proposed Day Opportunities Strategy is anything but evidence-based. It has no evidence base at all. In fact, as pointed out above, a resistance to the use of day centres suggests to the author of the most recent research on the subject *"a lack of understanding of the evidence concerning day centres and the relevance of their outcomes to policy goals."*

The Guidance also says at para 4.55 that local strategies should be developed using co-production. But although the Council said that it undertook coproduction to inform the development of the Strategy, in fact it has ignored what service users and carers said. At

stage 1 of the coproduction process the top 3 positive aspects of the day centre *'mentioned'* by service users were not particular activities but:

- 'visiting the day centre' 81.7% 442 of the 541 services users taking part),
- 'support from staff at the day centre' (61%} and
- 'meeting friends and family' (58%)

87% of the 113 family carers involved at this stage said that what was working well about current day opportunities was that service users enjoy attending the day centre and 100% of carers said that it was important for day centres to remain open. But the views of service users were dismissed as being the result of *"a culture of dependency"* created by regular use over many years which *"leaves service users feeling that there is very little that can be accessed outside of day centre provision".* This is quoted in the Strategy as being a 'finding' of the coproduction work. But it is not a finding; it is simply an assertion. There is absolutely no evidence given in support of this statement. In fact the most frequently mentioned problems with participating in activities outside the day centre (using public transport, feeling isolated, feeling misunderstood and feeling unsafe) are consistent with the findings of surveys and research into the experiences of people with disabilities as outlined above. There is no suggestion that those findings were drawn only from day centre users. The evidence is that there are real problems for people with disabilities when trying to participate in the wider community and not all of them, in particular societal attitudes, can be solved by the Council.

The Strategy suggests that younger adults are choosing not to use day centres with the inference that younger people do not want to use day centres. In fact, what the figures in the Table 3 in the Strategy show is that is not the case for people with learning disabilities. There are 273 people with learning disabilities aged 18 to 34 attending a day centre, 271 aged 35 to 49 and 241 aged 50 to 64. (People with learning disabilities make up over half of the people currently using day centres (861 out of a total of 1540)).

The impact on XXX

XXX are concerned about the impact the proposed Strategy would have on their XXX, XXX, who has been attending XXX as a central part of her life for many years. The following is a short statement from them.

Attending the day centre has enabled XXX to enjoy the development of an independent life and participate in a community which accepts her for the person that she is. It provides a safe, respectful and organised environment within which she can flourish.

Attending a day centre is no more institutionalisation than children attending school or someone going to their workplace every day. Day centres should be seen as what they are; safe, well-run communities providing care, community, hobbies, and stimulating activities for service users. It also provides the hub for the exploration of the outside community and public facilities. It means those experiences can be enjoyable experiences that can be shared with friends.

Without the day centre, XXX main social relationships outside of her family would be largely limited to the staff in her care home, and the 4 women with whom she lives. XXX would have no access to the variety of peers provided by the day centre. The loss of a day centre would deny her the opportunity of making friends of her own choice.

The day centre also provides a safe physical environment for her which means that she does not have to be closely supervised at all times. She has the freedom to roam within the limits of the centre.

In these many ways XXX's day centre gives her more freedom, more choice and control, greater independence and greater opportunities to explore the wider community because it is a safe, specialist base. The loss of the day centre would in fact mean that she would be more restricted with less choice and control. And this is the case for many who use day centres.

XXX are not only concerned about the impact on their XXX but also on the wider community of adults with learning disabilities. They have had contact for many years with many families whose members include an adult with a learning disability who makes use of a day centres. They have also attended many of the consultation meetings including those at the other day centres in the city. They are aware that their view (that the Council would be making a very serious mistake) if it were to adopt the proposal is widely shared.

An alternative

The SCIE review, 'Having a good day?', found that, where day services had been modernised, it had not been the case that building bases had been abandoned for stand- alone activities in the community. *"The move had most often been to smaller bases where there is designated space for people with learning disabilities to use".* The providers emphasised that these then acted as a base to access the wider community.

An alternative model for Birmingham would be to work with existing day centres to improve their integration into the community. This would address the concern that day centres can become disconnected from the wider community whilst retaining their strengths in supporting social connectedness and providing a base from which to enjoy shared participation in community activities. It is a model which, on the basis of the available evidence, is more likely to achieve the Council's aim. It is also is more likely to be cost effective than the proposed model.

Missing information

XXX asked a number of questions during the consultation process which have not yet been answered. This is likely to have hampered their ability to make representations. In particular they asked

- Please could you tell us in detail how the Council intends *in practice* to replicate in the new model the sense of belonging and being part of established groups that is currently provided by day centres. Please could your answer address in particular how this to be done for people with a significant learning disability.

- Many of those who attend day centres require care and support (in addition to care and support to access activities) throughout the waking day e.g. supervision to keep them safe; assistance with all personal care and so on. If such a person attends a day centre 5 days a week 09.30-15.30, would they receive a direct payment which is enough to fund the same number of hours from a personal assistant who would provide all the care and support that they need throughout that period?

- Please could you provide the details of what community day opportunities and assets the council has identified it would need to invest in? Is there any other planned investment which is to be invested in day centres? If so, could you provide the details of what the council has identified it would need to invest in for day centres?

- The 2019+ Budget included savings flowing from the new Day

Opportunities Strategy in each of the 4 years starting with 2019/20. Please explain in detail how these savings were calculated   for each year including where the savings come from.

- The consultation paper says that during 2018 that a group of adults with disabilities and BCC officers visited range of community facilities to assess accessibility. Please could you provide all the details of what was done, the kinds of disabilities of those who were involved and the conclusions reached. We understand that there was a report on this that was prepared. Please can we have a copy. If it does not contain all the details requested please could you provide these as well.

XXX request that consultees are given the opportunity to make further representations once the answers to these questions are available.

Central England Law Centre

 2 August 2019

Appendix 1b – Summary of feedback in relation to missing consultation submission

The response raises a number of concerns about the proposals in the draft day Opportunities Strategy. Detailed below is a summary of those concerns and how the Council has taken these into account in the revised document set.

Summary of Respondent Concerns
The presented evidence base is that the draft strategy will increase the risk of social isolation and of loss of community, which are needs which day centres currently meet; reduce effective access to the wider community because day centres help deal with the many barriers to access, including societal attitudes; end up costing more whilst being less effective than day centres. Learning disability increases the risk of loneliness. Loneliness causes serious harm and increases financial costs to society. Doing activities in the community does not in itself combat loneliness for a disabled person. One of the barriers is one that is not addressed in the Strategy is negative societal attitudes to disabled people. If a person is lonely they are less likely to engage in the wider community. Buildings for people to meet and pass time in are vital to combat loneliness. Day centres enable their users to develop friendships and to have a sense of belonging to a community and co-production found that this is important to Birmingham day centre users. Day centres provide a base from which disabled people can participate in the wider community with their friends. Birmingham day centres could be improved to do more to facilitate the community engagement of their users and this would be more cost effective than the Strategy. The alternative is to improve the ways in which existing day centres facilitate engagement with the wider community. This would address the concern that day centres can become disconnected whilst retaining their strengths. It is a model which, on the basis of the available evidence, is more likely to achieve the Council's aim. It is also likely to be more cost effective.
The Cabinet report of 11th February 2020 recommended the co-production of an Implementation Plan to be approved by Cabinet when completed. The Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested on 18th February 2020 that the co-production work is led by an independent, nationally recognised organisation. Officers will support that organisation. The City Council will be a stakeholder along with citizens, carers and providers in the decision-making process.

Respondent Concern	Council Response
The consultation response refers to a number of reports to support the views expressed:	
"A connected society a strategy for tackling loneliness - laying the foundations for change". (HM Government 2018)	A copy of the report can be made available on request.
The Government report refers to use of analysis by the Office for National Statistics.	The Office for National Statistics (ONS) routinely reports on personal well-being but does not routinely disaggregate this information by disability. Related to well-being is loneliness, where disabled people have previously been shown to be at a disadvantage (ONS, 2018). Reference to a range of ONS data now included in the revised Appendix 4.
Independent. Confident. Connected. Achieving equality for disabled people. Scope 2018	A copy of the report can be made available on request.

'Having Good Day?' Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) published in 2007	A copy of the report can be made available on request.
Reference was made to research into day centres carried out between 2014 and 2017 by Katharine Orellana of Kings College London.	The Council was unable to access the research.
Reference is made to an article published in Community Care January 2018.	A copy of the report can be made available on request.
The national charity SENSE, in its response to the Government's loneliness policy, explained that the causes of loneliness among disabled people are complex and include not only physical barriers, such as accessible buildings, but societal attitudes. They said: *"A lock of understanding and awareness of disability is also a significant obstacle to making connections and forming friendships. 49% of non-disabled people feel that they do not have anything in common with disabled people and 26% admit to avoiding engaging in conversation with a disabled person".*	Throughout the consultation events reference was made to the importance of addressing issues of safeguarding, accessibility of venues and activities, transport and how individuals will be treated. The same issues are reflected across the comments document previously published with the February Cabinet document set and which has now been revised. Accessibility – 223 comments, safeguarding - 69 comments, community integration and support 445 comments. The EA of the consultation process and findings has been amended to include reference to the issues discussed in the submission.
The findings from the Council's own Stage 1 coproduction (which aimed to find out what the users of Birmingham's day centres thought about their day opportunities) were completely consistent with this.	Both stage 1 and 2 co-production reports remain on the Consultation website and were also included in the document set available for viewing at the Council House from 4th February 2020 immediately before the Cabinet meeting of 11th February 2020.
XXX asked at a consultation meeting they attended how the Council proposed replicating the sense of belonging and being part of established groups that day centres offer.	The comments document previously published with the February Cabinet document set and which has now been revised contains many comments received in response to the consultation regarding the social inclusion aspect of day care centres. Day centres are important – 866 comments Friendships 75 comments.

"But this does not answer the question which was *how* this would be achieved. XXX have been advised in one of the supplementary consultation meetings to submit a follow-up question. They have submitted the following question:

" *Please could you tell us in detail how the Council intends in practice to replicate in the new model the sense of belonging and being part of established groups that is currently provided by day centres. Please could your answer address in particular how this to be done for people with a significant learning disability.*"

At the time of submitting this consultation response there has been no response. That is very worrying indeed given the evidence about the damaging effects of isolation and the benefits of social connection. It also means that the Council is leaving itself at risk of being unable to meet the eligible needs of disabled adults in Birmingham in breach of their statutory duties.

The question referred to along with others referred to at the end section of the response "Missing information" were included in the Consultation Correspondence (Emails) section of the document set available for viewing at the Council House from 4th February 2020 immediately before the Cabinet meeting of 11th February 2020. They were submitted as a separate document by XX on the 16th August.

In response to an e-mail regarding the Council's publishing of response to questions, the Council responded: "The Council is consulting on the Strategy, not on its' responses to questions which have been put by the public. That is, the Council does not agree with the suggestion that it is necessary for consultees to see answers to all questions that have been asked in order to respond meaningfully to the consultation.

In response to the 4 questions contained in your email, we would respond as follows:

1. Yes. In terms of the questions that have been received to date, the target is to publish all replies by close of business on 16th August 2019.
2. The Council does not consider that it is necessary for the public to see replies to questions that have been put in order to respond to the consultation. The Council does consider the consultation to be valid.
3. The Council will accept responses received until 23rd August, after which date no further responses will be taken into consideration.
4. The Council does not consider that the erroneous date that briefly appeared on the web-site will have had any impact on the ability of any individual to respond to the consultation. Furthermore, the Council believes that its' acceptance of responses received after 4th August will address any risk that the appearance of the erroneous date may have had any such impact."

The Council is proposing a new Strategy that is not based on evidence. It says that it is developing an approach which is consistent with national policy and points to 'Having a good day?'	Objectivity, transparency and organisational continuity will be integral to any future approach to be taken by the Council with regard to day opportunities, as well as ensuring that the necessary human resource capacity is made available. If the Council were to propose any such activity it will require Cabinet approval prior to implementation.
Is the Strategy cost effective - the evidence Reference is made to the NDTi report of June 2018. The 2019+ Budget included savings flowing from the new Day Opportunities Strategy in each of the 4 years starting with 2019/20. XXX have asked in the consultation how these savings have been calculated but have not yet received a response. In summary, the draft Strategy is proposing an investment of money in an untested and unevidenced approach which may well end up costing the Council more money.	The NDTi report is available on the Consultation website and was also included in the document set available for viewing at the Council House from 4th February 2020 immediately before the Cabinet meeting of 11th February 2020. The revised comments document contains 109 comments specific to funding and savings.
The submission refers to concerns and practical issues regarding the use of direct payments and personal assistants	There are 231 comments related to direct payments and personal assistants in the revised consultation comments document.
Concern is expressed regarding the draft model described in the draft strategy.	The issues referred to might form part of any future discussions about day opportunities in the future.
Developing the Strategy - compliance with the Council's legal obligations "The Council has a duty under the Care Act 2014 to promote an efficient and effective operation of a market in services. The Statutory Guidance says that a Council's local strategies should be evidence-based. (See paragraph 4.52.) But the proposed Day Opportunities Strategy is anything but evidence-based. It has no evidence base at all. In fact, as pointed out above, a resistance to the use of day centres suggests to the author of the most recent research on the subject *"a lack of understanding of the evidence concerning day centres and the relevance of their outcomes to policy goals."* Early co-production not reflected accurately.	The issues referred to might form part of any future discussions about day opportunities in the future. The co-production reports are published on the Consultation web page.
The impact on XXX **A statement is made about the likely impact**	Any potential or adverse impact on individuals because of changes made to day care services

on a current day centre service user.	would be addressed through reviews and other established processes.
Alternative An alternative model for Birmingham would be to work with existing day centres to improve their integration into the community. This would address the concern that day centres can become disconnected from the wider community whilst retaining their strengths in supporting social connectedness and providing a base from which to enjoy shared participation in community activities. It is a model which, on the basis of the available evidence, is more likely to achieve the Council's aim. It is also is more likely to be cost effective than the proposed model.	This suggestion might form part of any future discussion about day opportunities.

Appendix 2

Although there was no suggestion that the consultation response submitted by the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee was missed, it is noted that the response was included in the published Themed Comments document at 3345, 3346, 3347, 3492, 2306, 981, 2560, now to be found in the revised Themed Comments document at 4508, 4509, 4510, 4766, 3156, 1290, 3483. The response as received can be found below.

Health and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee response to the draft Day Opportunities Strategy Consultation

Introduction

This submission originates from comments made and points raised by members of the Health and Social Care O&S Committee (HOSC) following the presentation of the proposed strategy to the committee on 14th May 2019 and visits made to two Day Centres (Harborne Resource Centre and Heartlands Resource Centre) on 23rd July 2019.

Draft Day Opportunities Strategy Consultation Questionnaire

Q.4   **Our Draft Day Opportunities Strategy is based on the following statements. Please give us your view on the statements listed below:**

- **Focus on the individual, their strengths, choices, assets, and goals through person centred planning.**

  The committee **strongly agrees** with this statement. In particular, the focus on users' assets and strengths rather than inabilities and deficits, ensuring that the focus is not on financial assets.

- **Focus on the outcomes that service users and carers wish to achieve.**

  The committee **strongly agrees** with this statement. It is especially important that individuals are able to open up their own ambitions and aspirations by themselves supported by day opportunities. It will be important to note that ideally these should be shared by carers but the principle is that the individual user should be the author of their own ambition, on the understanding that any user choice can be amended on review.

- **Provide support that enables the person to access a range of opportunities in the wider and their own community as an active and equal citizen.**

  The committee **strongly agrees** with this statement. It is however important to recognise that the ability to do this is dependent on and can be at times restricted by the range of opportunities available in their own and the wider community, which can be limited.

  Over time, Neighbourhood Network schemes should be looking to address shortfalls in available community support opportunities.

- **Focus on skills development, improving independence in daily living i.e. travel training and employment where possible.**

  The committee **agrees** with this statement. It is important to recognise that for high dependency users this has limitations, so we need to ensure this principle does not distort the service unfairly towards the most enabled. Also, note that carers need to share individual goals of enablement to avoid the progress made through day opportunities from slipping away when users return home.

  Whilst carers should share enablement objectives, if they are not directly able to support the person they care for when that person returns home, they should not feel obliged to do so.

- **Maximise the opportunity to use budgets or direct payments to access support or activities of the citizen's choice.**

  The committee **agrees** with this statement subject to the qualification that the appropriateness of this will strongly depend on the circumstances of the users and/or family and carers. Again, there is a need to ensure this part of the model does not distort the emphasis of the service unfairly away from those for whom direct payments is not appropriate.

- **Make the most of a vibrant and developing city; ensuring access to the wide range of activities Birmingham has to offer.**

  The committee **strongly agrees** with this statement especially on integration of day opportunities with the wider everyday world of Birmingham ensuring users are seen as, and live life as, integral and equal participants in City life and the wider community.

  While integration of day opportunities into the wider community is a worthy goal, it is vitally important that existing day opportunities remain while the wider community assets actually become available.

Views on the Day Service Model 'pyramid' diagram

The committee agrees the proposed overall emphasis and focus of the service, recognising that long term high dependency users could face more limited prospects for enablement and personalised support and, therefore, making sure the model does not work to their disadvantage.

Councillor Rob Pocock
Chair, Health & Social Care O&S Committee
26th July 2019

Appendix 3

It was suggested that a response received from the Conservative Group was not included in the published document set but, whilst not included as a stand-alone response, the comments submitted were included in the Themed Comments document at 3187,3188, 199, 1134, 3541. They appear in the revised document at 4353, 4354, 242, 1572, 4854. The response as received can be found below.

Adult Social Care Draft Day Opportunities Strategy and Proposed Draft Day Service Model

Consultation Response from Birmingham Conservative Group

The Conservative Group recognises the importance of day opportunities as a way of combatting social isolation and maintaining and improving physical and mental health. We welcome proposals in the draft strategy to broaden the breadth and quality of day opportunities available and to provide users with more choice and control. However, we believe that day centres should remain an important part of this mix and –whilst the proposals do not specifically include closures of any centres, we remain concerned that the current council policy is to run these centres down through fewer referrals and a lack of capital investment to artificially create the conditions for them to close.

Day Centres are focal points within a community that can and do deliver valued outcomes that meet the needs and aims of the overall health and social care policy aspirations within Birmingham, such as promoting wellbeing; preventing/delaying deterioration; supporting people to retain independence; supporting carers; providing information, and ensuring people in receipt of care and support have a positive experience. There is also significant potential to develop their role to offer the choice and control that users and carers want. The experience of users at Birmingham run day centres tell us that they gain something that they would not have experience if they hadn't been involved in the day centre, they are well used and well liked.

The strength of feeling shown by campaigners against the closure of the Fairways Day Centre shows just how valued these places are and whilst this closure was rightly halted under threat of court action and substantial community and political pressure, the council is not making an investment in the building and as of February this year, no new referrals had been made since the court action, indicating that the council intends to run it down to the point where there is no one left to object to its closure. The current draft strategy, with its emphasis on providing alternatives to day centres, rather than looking at how day centres can be modernised to meet future need, looks set to compound this and apply the same approach across the rest of the council owned day centre estate. The shift in commissioning will also see the future viability of a number of VCS run day centres threatened meaning that day centre closure will become the de facto preferred policy option within the city.

 Studies such as that by Kings College London (2018) show that, day centres are a life-enriching gateway:

· 	to companionship, activities, the outside world
 · 	to practical support, information, other services
 · 	to the community and to enjoyment
 · 	for socially isolated people unable to go out without support.

And that they offer added value beyond the purposes for which they are commissioned or funded and beyond the expectations of those who attend, given their original reasons for attending. The Conservative Group therefore believe that day centres should not be dismissed as outdated or too expensive; they need care and investment to continue to meet the needs of their users but the value of doing this, and of getting it right can have much wider benefits for the council and the whole health and social care economy, including benefits to the budget bottom line as well as the more important benefit to peoples' wellbeing. We believe that the Day Opportunities Strategy should be redrafted to show a clear commitment to the future of day centres and a plan to invest in and modernise these centres to enable wider community benefits and efficiencies, including maximising the use of the buildings to make them more visible within the community.

Councillor Matt Bennett
Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care
On behalf of the Conservative Group
July 2019

Appendix 5

An e-mail sent by an Independent Advocate which included a number of comments was previously omitted. The comments have now been included in the revised Themed Comments document at 2487, 367, 2219 and 4785 (Appendix 6 revised). The e-mail can be found below.

Email Incoming

Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 11:50 AM
To: Day Opportunities Consultation 2019 <DayOpportunitiesConsultation2019@birmingham.gov.uk>
Subject: Consultations

Good morning,

I am an independent advocate who works for X. I attended your consultation on behalf of the carers, at Harborne Day Centre on 15/05/19. Following this, I wanted to provide you with some feedback, and also clarify questions that we would like considered in the consultation.

I have attached a list of questions that I helped the carers compile. These questions address their concerns surrounding the possible closure of the day centres, and the impact that it will have on both the person that they care for and themselves.

I felt that the consultation yesterday by far surpassed the service users capabilities. Many of the service users appeared bewildered by the presentation, and only demonstrated understanding when they heard words they recognised, for example, when discussing activities that they enjoy, and the initial discussion about football. I feel that if the intention is to eventually close day centres (which I know you will not categorically provide an answer to) then you need to be transparent with the service users and their carers. If, as you say, you are doing these consultations without the preconceived idea that the day centres will close, service users need to be informed of the bigger picture. It is not enough to ask service users what they enjoy doing. Day centre staff will agree that their service users love doing activities (football, swimming etc…) as part of their everyday life at the day centre. What I have not heard anyone explain to the service users is that they will be doing these activities without the safety net of their day centre. For the service users who are able to verbally communicate their feelings, you will get a different response, one that describes the importance of

the day centre to them. It was evident to those who were actually watching the service users yesterday that they interact much differently with their peers than they do with their PA's. It would be detrimental to their wellbeing to remove this opportunity of interacting with peers.

I was very pleased to hear of your intentions to get adults with learning disabilities into employment. I feel that this is a very positive move. Whilst I am sure that you would agree that the working environment is unsuitable for most, if not all of the service users at Harborne, I do have service users who we support who would love the opportunity to gain work experience – which can be very difficult for them to find. These service users have much greater capabilities than the service users at Harborne, and are actively seeking employment, both paid and voluntary. If you would consider offering some of our service users voluntary work within your commissioning department it would be a great opportunity for you to demonstrate inclusion and your commitment to helping service users reconnect with their skills. It also allows you to gain the service users knowledge. If this is something you would consider doing, please contact me.

Kind regards,