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Engagement Feedback Summary – ALD 2022 Community Offer

The following information is compiled from the most common feedback received during the various Community Offer Engagement conversations.

Feedback has been received from people who use services, their carers / relatives, staff who work in the services, Adult Learning Disability Team members and other professionals.

Where people have raised specific concerns and complaints, these have been directly addressed with the service in question.

Please note, engagement feedback about our Complex Needs Day Services are included in the relevant previous Cabinet papers.

Respite (Replacement Care)

What's working?

Building Based:

- Most people told us most staff were appropriately trained with the right skills, ethos, value and approach.
- Most people told us Building Based respite offers 'peace of mind', consistency, continuity and familiarity.
- Most people told us the services were clean and tidy – noting Woodland View and Silverbirch are purpose built.
- Some people told us the services were flexible and always tried to help and support in an emergency.
- Most people told us they feel safe when using the service.
- Some people told us the services were able to support with complex needs – including Autism, Dementia and Epilepsy.
- Some people told us they liked the current booking systems (noting each service is a little different) and typically managed to get their preferred dates.
- Some people told us they like to spend time with their friends.
- Some people told us they like the activities on offer.
- Some people told us they "like to chill out" when in Respite.
- Most people told us Douglas Road had good staff retention – meaning familiarity.
- Some people told us they like the Carers Meetings at Douglas Road.
- Some people told us services had improved at Woodland View and Silverbirch – predominantly attributing this to the current management.
- Some people told us they like the new '24hr booking system' implemented by Woodland View.

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Direct Payments:

- Most people told us they liked the flexibility and choice this option offered.
- Some people told us they liked they could choose services closer to home.
- Some people told us the transition to pre-paid cards had worked well.

What's Not Working?

Building Based:

- Some people told us the services don't offer enough variety / activities (including having knowledge of and accessing local opportunities) – some people went on to note this could be due to finances, staff and transport.
- Some people told us the communication from the service, including details about what people have done and on-occasions sharing 'health' updates.
- Some people told us the services not having their own transport is 'not working well'.
- Some people told us they did not like the current booking system and felt it was 'unfair' / 'not meeting needs' – including not being able to get preferred dates.
- Some people told us they didn't like specific 'drop off' and 'pick up' times – lack of flexibility and using additional nights.
- Some people told us it was "wasteful" that the buildings are not fully utilised – particularly during the day.
- Some people told us being the only person / one of a small number in the service (particularly during the day) was not always positive.
- Some people told us they were unhappy their allocation had been reduced.
- Some people told us that 'last minute' cancellations and no-shows were a problem.
- Some people told us they weren't 'confident' about raising complaints or concerns – as they were not clear on how to or were worried it would negatively impact on future access.
- Some people told us that 'emergency' stays i.e. in a time of crisis could negatively impact on the service provided to other people – including people who may need to stay for a long period of time.
- Some people told us the services are 'weekend heavy' – making it difficult to plan and deliver services.
- A few people told us they would like greater choice 'closer to home' – areas noted included south Staffordshire, Tamworth and Stafford.
- Some people told us the accommodation at Douglas Rd was not suitable to meet all needs – with demand for the downstairs bedroom increasing, making getting preferred dates difficult.
- Some people told us at Silverbirch and Woodland View recruitment of staff was slow and retention had been problematic.
- Some people told us Silverbirch and Woodland View can be reluctant / not able to support people with complex needs.
- Some people told us at Woodland View the referral, assessment and transition processes were too lengthy.

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Direct Payments:

- Some people told us they don't receive the annual payment in a timely way – causing “anxiety”.
- Some people told us they are not clear about how the ‘budget’ is calculated – this amount can be insufficient.
- Some people told us providers changing their rates was causing anxiety and the process around this was not clear.

Information advice and guidance:

- Some people told us our offer isn't very clear or helpful:
 - The information given by ALDT isn't always consistent;
 - Having to apply each year;
 - How the number of nights is allocated and why it may change;
 - How much people have to contribute to the service, as part of their ‘assessed charges’;
 - What are the choices / options – including in what circumstance people can have a Direct Payment.

The future....

Respite is provided by a single provider – the council (directly or indirectly)

- Most people told us the council should continue to be the direct provider of care and support at Douglas Rd.
- Some people told us they would like to have one provider over all services – for consistency and continuity.
- Some people told us it would be useful for the council to retain a position in the market.
- Some people told us regardless of there being 1 provider, they would prefer to only access their ‘known service’.
- Some people told us they were worried about a two-tier workforce in certain circumstances (including through an LATC).

Respite is provided by a single provider – the independent market

- Most people told us the council should continue to be the direct provider of care and support at Douglas Rd, as opposed to the independent market.
- Most people told us ‘quality’ should be the primary consideration when selecting a future provider for Woodland View and Silverbirch – there was no specific majority preference in terms of who the provider is for these services.
- Some people told us they would like to have one provider over all services – for consistency and continuity.
- Some people told us they thought the independent market was able to provide quality support – including complex care.
- Some people told us they were worried about the skills of staff in the independent market and ability to meet complex needs.
- Some people told us regardless of there being 1 provider, they would prefer to only access their ‘known service’.

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Respite is provided 'As is' – by the council and the independent market

- Some people told us this could be an option if there was 'true' partnership working across the providers with the same expectations and requirements – for continuity and consistency of offer.
- Some people told us it would be useful for the council to retain a position in the market.
- Some people told us they were worried this would not provide consistency and continuity.

Other ideas / things to think about...

- Most people told us they would like to know 'the offer' – consistency and transparency across the county.
- Most people told us they wanted to continue accessing Building Based Respite.
- Most people told us they wanted to continue to access the services in their current locations: Newcastle, Lichfield, Cannock and East Staffordshire – with carers noting they would be reluctant to travel to different services.
- Some people told us there needs to be equity and consistency of offer (including the ability to meet complex needs) across all three services.
- Most people told us they would like more activities and opportunities offered in these services.
- Most people told us a 'hotel model' of accommodation could work well in future – meaning people can continue to access Day Opportunities or they have the choice to stay at the service.
- Some people told us we should think about paying based on needs – as opposed to one price for all.
- Some people told us we should think about 'where' and 'how' we provide support in case of an emergency – especially for people who may need support for a 'longer' period of time.
- Some people told us we should consider alternative accommodation for Douglas Rd.
- Some people told us they would like a single / alternative booking system.
- A few people told us they would like to think about something different, including Direct Payments, Shared Lives support and Home Based Respite.

Why is Respite important?

- Most people told us that Respite is 'critical' to sustaining the caring role – without this break carers may not be able to continue providing support; "a well-earned break...recharge our batteries".
- Most people told us Respite is important because it means carers "can be themselves" either as an 'individual' or as a 'couple'- including relaxing, having a "lie in", watching a film / TV of their choice, going for a meal / activity when they want too.
- Some people told us Respite becomes increasingly important the person they care for gets older and their needs increase.
- Some people told us Respite becomes increasingly important as carers get older and experience their own health issues.

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- Some people told us Respite helps to sustain the carer's paid employment.
- Some people told us Respite is important because it allows carers to spend time with other family members (who may also need help and support) and friends.
- Some people told us it is important for the relationship between the carer and the person they care for.
- Some people told us it is important for the person they care for to 'have a break' from them and / or the 'family home'.
- Some people told us it is important for the person they care for to build relationships with other people – both staff and friends.
- A few people told us it is important for the person they care for to build on their skills / independence

When are these services used the most?

- Most people told us these services are important when booking a holiday.
- Most people told us they need flexibility – a mix of both planned in advance and 'last minute' i.e. invite at late notice.
- Some people told us weekends as the most important – typically because they are in employment, so this is the only chance to 'have a break'. Also, this allows them to spend time with other family members and friends.
- Some people told us they prefer weekdays – typically because they have appointments and daily tasks / chores to do, 'weekends' are time for the whole family or because they are retired / not employment.
- Some people told us they would like a few hours support in an evening (not always an overnight) – to spend time with other family members and friends.
- Some people told us breaks are planned so groups of friends can stay at Respite together.
- Some people told us carers need to carefully plan breaks at specific times because of the support they receive from other services and family members i.e. Bank Holidays / service closures.
- Some people told us these services are critical when there is an emergency i.e. hospital admission and subsequent recovery.

Accessing Day Opportunities and Respite

- All people who access Day Opportunities and Respite, and their carers, told us they wish to keep attending Day Opportunities when in Respite, because:
 - Routine, structure and continuity is important;
 - Spending time with friends;
 - Enjoy the activities offered in Day Opportunities;
 - Respite doesn't always offer a lot of activities – people using the services can become "bored" and "frustrated".
- A few people told us that because of where the Respite service is located they cannot access their Day Opportunity.
- Some people told us 'pick up' and 'drop off' times by Day Opportunities can vary and this can be 'problematic' for the

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providers of respite.

- Most Day Opportunities providers told us they need to keep charging for the service, regardless of planned or unplanned absences, to sustain their business.

Hawthorn House

The future...

Service continues 'As Is' – Residential Care provided by the council (directly or indirectly)

- All people told us that Residential Care was the best option for the majority of current residents.
- Most people told us the council should remain the direct provider of care and support at Hawthorn House.
- Some people told us they were worried the service would be 'reviewed' again in the future, causing further anxiety and worry – subject to the level of change pursued and if any future referrals were taken.
- Some people told us this option would be positive in retaining a skilled and knowledgeable workforce (consistency and continuity).
- Some people told us there is a need for Residential Care – both within Lichfield and potentially to meet the needs of county wide, as opposed to being solely reliant on the independent market, which can be costly.
- Some people told us the current issues around staffing levels, HR Policy and Process does not work well.
- Some people told us an LATC may not work because /. they were concerned about:
 - A two-tier workforce;
 - Perceiving this to be 'outsourcing by another name' and financially driven;
 - Not seeing the overall benefits and questioning why the council cannot continue to deliver quality support;
 - Worried about retention of quality staff.

Service continues as Residential Care – provided by the independent market

- All people told us that Residential Care was the best option for the current residents.
- Some people told us they feel the independent market could provide the required support.
- Some people told us they were worried about the skills of staff employed in the independent market – as they were not sure about the training provided; noting personal experience and press coverage on quality of support.
- Most people told us they were worried about the retention of quality, trained staff in the independent market.

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- Some people told us they were worried the council would select 'the cheapest' provider which would impact on quality of care.
- Some people told us they were worried that the council may not be able to provide support to others in a time of crisis if they did not provide the services directly.

Other ideas / things to think about

- Most people told us a decision and action is needed – as the on-going situation was causing anxiety and worry to all.
- Most people told us there is a need to build on / expand the Learning Disability offer / market in Lichfield, as it is limited at present.
- Most people told us consistency, continuity and skilled staff – able to meet a range of needs – is critical.
- Most people told us it is important for the residents to stay living together in the Lichfield area (ideally as close to the possible location as possible).
- Some people told us we need to consider the suitability and lifespan of the current accommodation at Hawthorn House – noting CQC requirements and overall state, maintenance and repair requirements. In addition, most people noted the need to ensure accommodation is accessible and suitable to meet individual needs i.e. aids and equipment.
- Some people told us we need to consider the impact on the residents (including if they can remain in situ) if the current accommodation / land is developed / expanded on.
- A few people queried if an independent provider could 'take over' the building and continue to deliver residential care – concerns about the building and CQC requirements were noted.