

# Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Welsh Language

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County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
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28 July 2021

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## NOTICE OF INTENDED PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION

The Portfolio Holder has received the following report for a decision to be taken under delegated authority. The decision will be taken on **3 August 2021** (i.e. 3 clear days after the date of this note). The decision will be published on the Council's website but will not be implemented until 5 clear days after the date of publication of the decision) to comply with the call-in process set out in Rule 7.36 of the Constitution.

1.	<b>THE CONTINUED IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PROVISION OF DAYTIME OPPORTUNITIES IN POWYS</b>
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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION**  
**by**  
**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MYFANWY ALEXANDER**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

28<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**REPORT AUTHOR: Michael Gray, Head of Adult Services**

**REPORT TITLE: The continued impact of COVID-19 on Provision of Daytime Opportunities in Powys**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1. This report further considers the impact of COVID-19 upon the provision of day services in Powys.

1.2. An assessment of the viability of opening day centres and day services was undertaken on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020. On 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020, a Portfolio Holder delegated decision concluded that:

*“it **is not** possible to re-open day centres safely in Powys at this time. This outcome will remain the position while the physical/social distancing and PPE/hygiene legislation remain in place.”*

1.3. The decision was that day centres and day services would remain closed for 6 months, e.g. up to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Any decision to re-open day centres and day services following this time period would follow a review of the current risk assessment.

1.4. A further assessment, undertaken in February 2021 provided an updated risk assessment and concluded that it was still not be viable to open day centres and day services after the initial 6-month time period. A decision was made for services to remain closed until 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021. This risk assessment has been reviewed in June 2021 and confirms that is still unsafe to open all of these buildings to previous

capacity levels in the current circumstances. This decision has been informed by the recent increase in COVID variants and increased numbers of reported cases across the County.

- 1.5. With Welsh Government completing the move to alert level 1 from Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2021, and with a completion of the move to Alert Level 0 from Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (if conditions allow), Adult Services continues to provide support as requested through outreach and domiciliary care provision.
- 1.6. The service will continue to review this position and respond accordingly as the Alert levels and pandemic dictates. It is important that we have ongoing “what matters” conversations with those residents that were attending buildings-based day opportunities prior to the pandemic. No assumptions are being made that all people will want to return to buildings-based day provision. We will continue to develop alternative day opportunities alongside residents and colleagues from the third sector. We will also seek to utilise community resources and other models such as Shared Lives to ensure that we respond to the needs of both residents and their carers.
- 1.7. **This report asks for the Portfolio Holder’s agreement to maintain closure of day centres and day services for up to a further 6 months, up to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022. This acknowledges the inability of opening up day settings to previous levels during the pandemic. Considering the context of a possible COVID third wave, alongside uncertainty around changes to COVID restrictions, it is suggested that this position is reviewed on a monthly basis.**

## 2. **Background**

- 2.1. In March 2020, 154 people attended Powys Day Centres for Older People, with 33 staff working across this provision. 124 people attended Powys Day Services for people with disabilities with 70 staff working across this provision.

- 2.2. Due to staffing vacancies, deployment of staff to business-critical roles, staff ill health and staff shielding, it is not possible to safely resource (both in terms of premises and transport) these settings at pre-pandemic capacity levels. As of June 2021, the services can support 114 people in addition to the current provision of weekly outreach and domiciliary care support.
- 2.3. In assessing the feasibility of staff returning to their substantive roles, we have followed the guidelines as set out in the Welsh Government Workforce Risk Assessment. The total number of staff hours unavailable to the service totals 527 hours or 14.25 WTE across Powys. There is recurrent work ongoing to revisit assessments, occupational health referrals and medical evidence to establish if staff can return to supporting people working under 2 metres.
- 2.4. Since the last report, further Coronavirus strains have been detected, some of which have been described as more transmissible than the 1<sup>st</sup> variant. This has contributed to an increase in infection rates. From 17<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the Welsh Government has been completing the move to Alert Level 1. Under this alert level, organised activities indoors are permissible.
- 2.5. Attendance at day centres and day services could be classified as an organised activity. For such an activity to be permissible, the organiser of the activity must complete a risk assessment and take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus. Welsh Government guidance acknowledges that scope for physical distancing is to an extent constrained by the size of premises; however, the starting point is that consideration should be given to how people could be kept physically apart and how close face to face interaction could be prevented or minimised. Such restrictions, even if staffing capacity allowed for it, would make for a very different day centre/service experience compared to a pre-pandemic set-up.

### 3. **Advice**

- 3.1. Action cards have been designed by Welsh Government to support and guide staff in respect of day service settings. These reflect current Welsh Government advice on managing the COVID-19 outbreak which will be updated and re-issued as Welsh Government guidance is revised. Worcestershire Council have formulated guidance and a checklist for day care providers to implement when considering the potential for re-opening their day care facilities. This guidance is noted by the Social Care Institute for Excellence as an example of good practice.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2. The checklist provided by Worcestershire Council was used in July 2020 by Adult Services when assessing the viability of re-opening day centres and day services. This assessment has been reviewed in November 2020 and subsequently June 2021 to review this decision. The detailed assessment can be found in appendix A.
- 3.3. The most recent risk assessment concludes that it remains unfeasible to re-open the day centres and day services following 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021.
- 3.4. Re-opening these settings relies, amongst other things, on sufficient staff availability. This is not currently possible. As of June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, there are 32 staff in substantive day centre/service posts who remain redeployed to business-critical activities. A number of these staff are not currently able to deliver care within 2 metres.
  - 3.4.1. 4 staff have been redeployed to our domiciliary care team
  - 3.4.2. 3 staff have been redeployed to the Council's PPE stations
  - 3.4.3. 1 staff member has been redeployed to the Council's track and trace team
  - 3.4.4. 2 staff have been redeployed to provide support in our supported living tenancies

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/day-care/safe-delivery/assessment>

- 3.4.5. 1 member of staff has been redeployed to business-critical business support work
  - 3.4.6. 1 member of staff has been redeployed to support with the increase in referrals being received at the Adult Services Front Door.
  - 3.4.7. 3 staff have been redeployed to provide support to a commissioned support provider
- 3.5. The conclusion reached results in further work for social workers to engage with all individuals who made use of the day services and day centres previously to explore alternative meaningful day opportunities.

#### **4. Resource Implications**

- 4.1. The service is currently fully funded, even though it is not open. The different options available to the service area will have different resource implications. Closing day services permanently would make financial savings within that service area but could create further service demand and costs to provide support to individuals within the community or in their own homes. Any further investigation would require a full evaluation of costs.
- 4.2. The Deputy Section 151 Officer on behalf of the Section 151 Officer supports the approach to review the current and future arrangements of day centres with regard to continuing with the closures, with regard given to affordability of the potential alternative options and the need to remain within the current budget levels.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1. There are no legal requirements to provide day services, as such. The needs of individuals can be met in different ways according to what matters to those individuals.
- 5.2. There are a number of legislation and guidance that are relevant to the physical distancing and PPE use in Wales and the UK. These include the:

5.2.1. Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020

5.2.2. The Welsh Government's Unlocking Our Society and Economy

5.2.3. The Welsh Government's guidance on PPE and working within closed settings

5.2.4. Health and Safety guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

5.3. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: *"I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report"*.

## **6. Data Protection**

6.1. The proposal does not involve the processing of personal data.

## **7. Comment from Local Members**

7.1. Not applicable, as this service is across the county.

## **8. Integrated Impact Assessment**

8.1. The impact upon individual service users will be considered and mitigated through individual assessments with social work staff.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1. For the Portfolio Holder to agree:

9.1.1. For day services and day centres to remain closed for a further 6 months.

9.1.2. For social workers/reviewing officers to work with individuals and their carers to support them to utilise different methods of achieving what matters to them while the day centres/services recover.

9.1.3. For Adult Services to undertake an evaluation of the implications of maintaining closed day centres/services in the longer term



(recognising that physical distancing will be required for some time), including a potential consultation with staff on alternative roles that promote day opportunities.

9.1.4. To continue to work alongside providers of externally commissioned services to provide home based support on a long-term basis, whilst supporting residents to engage in day opportunities.

9.1.5. To return to Health and Care Scrutiny Committee/ Cabinet with the findings in order to enable informed decision making about the future of day services across the County.

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# Appendix A

## Risk Assessment of Opening Day Centres and Day Services to Service Users During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Title	PCC Day Services – Assessment of Opening to Service Users During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Date	June 2021
Version	1.0	Status	Draft
Distribution	Confidential – for Joint Adult Services Management Team	Authors	ASC Joint-SMT

### Introduction

On 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020, the Adult Services Joint Senior Management Team undertook a risk assessment that concluded that it was not safe nor feasible to re-open day centres and services. It was subsequently agreed on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020 that these settings should be closed for a period of 6 months. The risk assessment has been revisited again in June 2021.

This risk assessment review considers whether, under the current guidelines for physical distancing ('social distancing'), it is possible to re-open day centres, in the manner undertaken pre business continuity. It also considers the viability of opening these settings on a reduced level considering current Welsh Government guidelines

### Methodology

The previous risk assessment checklist template has been used again to provide a means of recording the rationale and to facilitate logical and consistent decision making.<sup>2</sup> A revised and completed checklist can be seen below.

### Results and Recommendations

We recommend that these settings continue to remain closed for a further 6 months, e.g., up to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The rationale for maintaining closure for this period is below:

1. The assessment has shown that it is still not possible to re-open day centres and day services in Powys at this this time due to the practicalities of maintaining safe physical distancing.

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<sup>2</sup> Risk assessment template can be found on the Social Care Institute for Excellence website: <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/day-care/safe-delivery/assessment>

2. There is insufficient staff to safely manage the re-opening and running of these settings. Our day centre and service staff are either unable to work within 2 metres of others due to underlying health conditions or have been redeployed to statutory business critical activities within the service. This will continue to be the case for as long as Welsh Government infection control and physical distancing guidance remains in place.
3. The current situation has brought uncertainty to both citizens who attended these settings and staff. Feedback from what matters conversations has shown that people who use these services are unable to make informed decisions around alternative day opportunities without clarity on longer term plans for these settings.

The decision will be reviewed on a monthly basis so that the service can respond to any significant changes to Welsh Government guidance.

It is recommended that this decision is considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee's Working Groups.

## **Actions**

Further actions required because of the outcome of the assessment are:

1. For the appropriate social work teams to continue to undertake 'What Matters Conversations' with citizens and their carers to enable those individuals to make informed decisions about how to achieve what matters to them. Carer's assessments should be undertaken separately if appropriate.
2. For this paper to be considered by the ASC Scrutiny Committee Working Group.
3. For the Head of Service to advise the Council's Senior Leadership Team.
4. For the Head of Service to advise Cabinet on the decision and possible implications and to request their ratification.
5. For the Provider Services managers to consider the staffing implications of the decision in the short, medium, and long term (assuming ongoing physical distancing measures remain in place) and to work with the trade unions and Human Resources to support staff in re-aligning their work where possible.
6. For the Health and Care Change Managers (Live Well and Age Well) to liaise with external day care providers to support an informed decision on their services and realigning support, as appropriate.
7. Ongoing communications to ensure that all service users and staff understand the situation fully.
8. For the existing Impact Assessment to be reviewed to ensure that all potential implications have been considered and mitigated fully.

## Risk assessment

Below are areas which day services need to consider as the risk assessment for re-opening of services. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list, and that this checklist is for guidance only. Decisions around re-opening and appropriate risk assessments remain the responsibility of providers and will also need to consider the most up to date government guidance and rules around physical distancing (please see links at the end of the document).

This service-wide risk assessment may also be accompanied by appropriate risk assessments on an individual basis for those adults who may be considering returning to day services, in discussion with social work teams where appropriate.

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Area	Factors to consider	Yes/No (Based on full capacity attendance)	Yes/No (based on existing COVID-19 legislation)	Potential mitigations
<b>Outdoor and community-based day services</b>	Can the service ensure social distancing rules are met, including legal requirement for 2 metre distancing?	No	Yes	Insufficient / reduced staff due to redeployment to other business critical activities and full furlough  Day opportunities provide reduced capacity and outreach support
	If yes, will this require changes in the way people attend e.g., reduced days/ reduced hours?	N/A	Yes	

	If yes, will there be a need for increased staffing/changing patterns of staffing /consistency of staffing?	N/A	Yes	Some services could be opened, but with significantly reduced capacity. This would be subject to all necessary transport and premise risk assessments.
	Would the service be able to ensure social distancing rules are met, including legal requirement for 2 metre distancing in bad weather?	No	Yes	Only on the basis of significantly reduced capacity levels
<b>Day Centre environment without personal care</b>	Is it possible to provide a service in a different way which doesn't involve individuals coming to the centre?	Yes	Yes	Ongoing "what matters" conversations are taking place to identify alternative day opportunities. Third sector support cannot take place in peoples' homes at this point in time.
	Are there other ways to meet individual need without attending the centre?	Yes	Yes	See above
	If government guidance confirms that centred-based services can re-open are the centres big enough to zone and allocate a space dedicated to small number of individuals compliant with social distancing guidelines to remain two metres apart?	In part	In part	3 out of 12 settings will not be big enough for zoning but can provide sessional support such as sensory rooms. The extent of this offer will be constrained by staffing capacity.
	Is it possible to minimise the time individuals spend indoors?	No	No	Cold weather does not make this feasible.
	Will this require changes in the way people attend e.g., reduced days/ reduced hours/ extended opening times but staggered hours?	Yes	Yes	Extended hours not an option due to terms and conditions  Staggered hours will be dependent on transport and capacity

	Will there be a need for increased staffing/ changing patterns of staffing?	Yes	Yes	We cannot compel staff to change their working patterns.
	Can indoor places be kept well ventilated?	In part	In part	This is dependent on the people being supported and their health and social care needs
	Is it possible to operate a one-way system for entering and leaving the buildings?	In part	In part	4 out of 12 settings will not be able to operate a one-way system.
	Can the service implement policies for administering first aid or non-expected personal care and ensure appropriate PPE is available?	Yes	Yes	This would only be possible if there were reduced numbers of people attending the settings.
<b>More specialised day centre environments e.g., with personal care or for people behaviours which may challenge services</b>	Are service users vulnerable and at high risk of increased impact from COVID-19?	Yes	Yes	Vaccination programme commenced, Lat flow testing for staff to access voluntarily.  Welsh Government Alert levels reduced from 4 to level 2 however increased likelihood of third wave as a result of recent Delta Variant.
	Is it possible to provide a safer service of reduced hours in or from the individual's home?	In part	In part	Insufficient staff available due to COVID-19 guidance and inflexibility around working alternative contracted hours.  Outreach support has been successful working with some people in their own homes and using community facilities.
	Is it possible to adhere to PPE and relevant guidance specifically for personal care?	Yes	Yes	
	Does the service have access to a robust supply of PPE?	Yes	Yes	

	Are there measures in place to manage people with behaviours which challenge services such as spitting, biting, hitting, or kicking or people who may not be able to observe social distancing rules?	No	No	Insufficient staff available due to COVID-19 guidance and inflexibility around working alternative contracted hours.  Support to be determined on an individual basis and capacity available This remains an issue potentially with PBS plans or with PPE risks could be mitigated.
<b>Safe Travel – how will people get to your service?</b>	Can individuals travel safely to use services? (including physical distancing)	No	No	See above.  Dependent on capacity and means of transport available.
	Can individuals avoid public transport? (including all shared transport)	No	No	
	If not, is it possible to ensure any shared transport provided meets physical distancing guidelines?	In part	In part	There would be reduced numbers and masks would need to be worn if appropriate to do so. This may be difficult to manage. Also relies on sufficient staffing.
	Is third party transport available if required?		Unknown	Would need to assess availability
	Can the service ensure the use of face coverings if using public or shared transport? Can the service support service users, where possible, to adhere to this?	No	No	
<b>Meals</b>	Will the service be preparing meals for attendees	Varies	Varies	Meals are not provided in younger adult day centres. Meals are provided in older adult day centres.


	If preparing food, are any additional precautions needed (such as use of PPE)?	Yes	Yes	Meal preparation guidance required
	If providing drinks, is it possible to do so and to wash up without breaching distancing requirements?	Yes	Yes	
<b>Good hygiene</b>	Are there sufficient and appropriate handwashing facilities?	No	Yes	
	Are tissues and lidded bins available in all appropriate areas?	No	Yes	
	Is it possible to teach use of arm not hand to catch cough/sneeze if no tissue available?	No	No	This would depend on the person and support available
	Can hand washing be repeated at every possible opportunity?	No	Yes	
	Can attendees wash their clothes each day and wear fresh ones the next day?	No	No	
	Is it possible to provide appropriate signage and easy read materials?	Yes	Yes	
<b>Use of shared areas e.g., toilets and kitchens</b>	Is it possible to ensure social distancing when using these facilities?	No	In part	<p>Dependent on layout of buildings and relies on sufficient staffing which cannot be guaranteed for as long as staff are redeployed to other business critical activities.</p> <p>Premises risk assessments have been undertaken which identifies max numbers for spaces.</p>



	Is it possible to provide signage relevant to service user group?	Yes	Yes	
	Is it possible to ensure areas are kept clean during the day?	No	No	Would require additional cleaning staff and associated additional budgetary costs.  Additional cleaner hours and new regime required to ensure standards are maintained.
<b>Maintaining clean environments as evidence suggests that the virus can exist for up to 72 hours on surfaces</b>	Are there plans for a daily deep clean/increased frequency of cleaning? (Frequent cleaning is particularly important for communal surfaces like door handles or lift buttons and communal areas like bathrooms, kitchens, and tea points)	Yes	Yes	This would require additional staffing resource which cannot be relied upon at the moment considering cleaning resource being diverted to other business critical settings.
	Is it feasible to clean communal resources or learning aids (remove items that cannot be effectively cleaned) regularly?	Yes	In part	See above
	Can room layouts be changed to facilitate cleaning and/or social distancing (e.g., reduce clutter, remove unnecessary furniture/resources etc.)?	No	Yes	This would only be possible if numbers of attendees reduced from pre-COVID levels
	Are there sufficient supplies of PPE for cleaning use and cleaning products, sanitisers etc. to cope with the increased cleaning demands that will be required?	Yes	Yes	
	Can cleaning be supervised and checked?	Yes	Yes	This would require additional staffing resource which cannot be relied upon at the moment considering cleaning resource being diverted to other business critical settings.

<b>Checks and testing (staff and service users)</b>	Is it possible to identify individuals who are infectious?	No	No	This would rely on regular testing capacity with quick result timeframes and the consent from all parties involved.
	Are there policies for managing symptomatic attendees/ staff?	Yes	Yes	
	Can all potential contacts with COVID-19 be reviewed prior to every visit to the service?	No	No	
	Are there systems in place to ensure someone attending doesn't have COVID-19? • Pre-arrival checks? • Temperature checks?	No	No	This could be implemented.
	Are there measures in place if someone starts to exhibit Covid-19 symptoms whilst in the service and are there agreed steps to be taken to ensure they are isolated from other people until they can be collected from the service?	Yes	Yes	Powys County Council office guidance would be adapted accordingly.  This could be implemented as per SCIE guidance.
<b>PPE for all settings?</b>	Is there sufficient PPE in line with guidance?	Yes	Yes	
	Is there a robust supply chain for any PPE the centre will require?	Yes	Yes	
	Is there adequate PPE before re-opening?	Yes	Yes	
<b>Staffing safety and staffing levels</b>	Note that as an employer, you also have a legal responsibility to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety. This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them (recognising you cannot eliminate the risk of COVID-19).	N/A Guidance only		

More guidance at: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19</a>			
Have you conducted a risk assessment for your staff?	Yes	Yes	Welsh Government Workforce Assessment undertaken for all and reviewed regularly.
Are there sufficient staffing levels?	No	No	For reduced support and capacity, staffing available
If staff need to be moved from other services to support re-opening of settings, will this impact on our ability to deliver business critical services?	Yes	Yes	Exit strategies for agreed exit to ensure services are delivered
Are there staff who are shielding or isolating?	Yes	Yes	Shielding ended / staff remain unable to work in substantive posts under 2 metres
Will there be a requirement for return-to-work discussions with any staff advised to self-isolate?	Yes	Yes	As above
Are there clear reporting systems for staff with symptoms / positive test results?	Yes	Yes	
Can staff get to work?	Yes	Yes	
Are there issues re childcare for some staff?	Yes	Yes	Schools and pre-school settings are open now.
Are there specific staff training required?	Yes	Yes	Induction and COVID premises training.
Can information be cascaded effectively from management?	Yes	Yes	Staff handbooks and service risk assessments

				Staff have mobile phones and access to teams/etc.