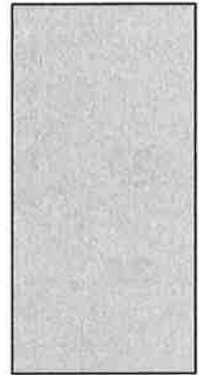


# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of the Corporate Director for People

to  
Cabinet

on  
18<sup>th</sup> June 2013



---

**Outcome of the Independent Evaluation of the Learning Disabilities Pilot Hub and Spoke Model**  
**People Scrutiny Committee**  
**Executive Councillor: Councillor L Salter**

---

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report advises Cabinet of the outcome of the independent evaluation of the „hub“ pilot completed by Alder, a specialist consultancy agency for Adults with Learning Disabilities.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the findings of the evaluation and agrees that these findings should be the subject of formal consultation with all of the existing service users and their families.
- 2.2 That a further report is brought forward following the consultations on potential options for Day Services for people with Learning Disabilities.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 On 14 June 2011, the Council agreed to pilot a new model of day care based on a „hub and satellite“ model. The „hub“ being the focal point for all community activities and support for Adults with Learning Disabilities. In April 2012, the Community Services and Culture Scrutiny Committee received a report on progress in implementing this new model.
- 3.2 In April 2012, 49 Alexander Street officially opened as the Hub. During the summer of 2012, a satellite facility (mainly a quieter place for older service users) was commissioned in Leigh; and in the autumn of 2012, the Council expanded its existing use of the Community College in Ambleside Drive.
- 3.3 As part of the development of the hub pilot, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee agreed to evaluate people’s experience of day services at the commencement of the pilot and approximately 12 months after the pilot had commenced.

3.4 An independent organisation, Alder, was appointed to undertake the evaluation. The evaluation consisted of individual interviews with users and carers; questionnaires; stakeholder interviews; an „open space“ event; data analysis; and an assessment of knowledge and best practice from elsewhere in the UK.

3.5 A summary of the evaluation and subsequent recommendations is attached as **Appendix 1**. Copies of the full evaluation report are available upon request.

3.6 The findings of the evaluation are that the hub has led to genuine positive outcomes for the vast majority of Avro users and therefore the main recommendations arising from the evaluation are:-

Full consultation should be carried out, along similar lines to that undertaken to date, on any proposed changes to the existing configuration of services.

Within the context of this consultation a decision on the future use of the Avro building should be taken as quickly as possible.

All current users of Viking, and those Avro users who do not wish to use any other services, should be offered a full reassessment of their needs.

Any move of the St James service needs to be carefully considered and properly consulted upon.

The achievement of improved community presence and independence should be „trumpeted“ as appropriate.

The „reach“ of the hub should be extended to include all providers and adults with learning disabilities living in the town.

3.7 Cabinet is asked to note the outcome of the evaluation and agree these findings should be the subject of formal consultation with all existing service users and their families.

3.8 It is important for Members to note that should the outcome of the consultation result in the permanent adoption of the hub and satellite model of support this will naturally result in the Avro building no longer being used as a day care facility for people with low to moderate needs. Any decommissioning or alternative use of the Avro building will inevitably impact upon the Viking service and therefore Officers recommend that full consultation should take place with both Avro and Viking service users and their families.

#### **4. Corporate Implications**

##### **4.1 Contribution to Council’s Vision & Corporate Priorities**

This proposal contributes towards the Council’s priorities to maintain improved outcomes for vulnerable adults and older people, and to increase the life chances of people living in Southend.

##### **4.2 Financial Implications**

For 2012/13 the Council identified additional temporary monies to support the development of the pilot and the associated transition costs. These monies are not available beyond 2013/14 and therefore the outcome of the evaluation has to be sustainable for the Council in the mid and long term. From the outset, it

has been clear that the Council could not financially sustain both the hub and spoke model and the continued operation of the Avro service, and given the financial position facing the council efficiencies on the region of 10% should be achieved.

#### 4.3 Legal Implications

The Council has a legal duty to provide day care to people with disabilities under provisions contained in the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970) and the NHS and Community Care act (1990).

#### 4.4 People Implications

The initial assessment is that most staff currently in the service will be unaffected by the changes, apart from the requirement for their working base to become more flexible.

However, the current catering team will be affected by these proposals if the new model is adopted on a permanent basis, as fewer catering staff will be required. Four staff would be affected by these proposals.

#### 4.5 Property Implications

49 Alexander Street, a Council owned building, was previously used by South Essex Homes as a housing office. The building was accessible to disabled people but adaptations were required to ensure the premises were suitable for use by adults with learning disabilities.

The ground floor has been adapted to provide appropriate bathing and toilet facilities for people with both learning and physical disabilities.

There have been problems with damp in the basement and that part of the building has not been useable since late 2012. Quotes have been obtained to repair damp damage and to tank the basement to prevent future water damage. These works will commence shortly.

#### 4.6 Consultation

Significant consultation has taken place with users, their families and staff throughout the process. The independent evaluation praises the Council for the way it has managed the process of change.

A Pre Cabinet scrutiny briefing session was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The group received a presentation from Dan Short from Alders, who completed the independent evaluation of the hub pilot. 19 Councillors in all attended the briefing session, including the Executive Councillor, Corporate Director and Project Lead. A number of questions were asked and there was general consensus & support on the way forward, from the evaluation.

These included;

Reassess the support needs of Viking service users and those who use Avro only.

Map all existing services for people with learning difficulties regardless of provider, including universal services and services currently for children only, where appropriate.

Hold a provider event to discuss the future role of the hub and how other agencies could be involved.

Develop the information service and explore how it could best be delivered, maintained and publicised.

Explore a membership scheme open to all members with a learning disability in the Borough that would entitle the member to access the hub information services and the Hub café service.

Hold a stakeholder event on “How can the hub be developed” along the lines proposed above.

Develop a more detailed design and business case with costs and benefits for the new improved model that emerges.

With a further report back to cabinet with the final options later in the year.

#### 4.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Adults with Learning Disabilities are among the most vulnerable people in our community and consequently are at a greater risk of hate crime, poor health, social exclusion and lower life expectancy. The focus of the hub has been to increase community inclusion and to enable more independence when this safe and appropriate.

#### 4.8 Risk Assessment

Service users using the pilot services are among the most vulnerable people in our community. The Council’s reputation would be at risk if we did not employ appropriate safeguards to protect vulnerable adults and robust risk assessments were completed on all service users prior to the hub and satellite services commencing. Risk assessments are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

#### 4.9 Value for Money

The pilot service has delivered within the budget and resources available. Increasingly, adults with learning disabilities will purchase their own care through direct payments or individual budgets and there are an increasing number of providers in Southend who offer an alternative to the Council service. Many people using Avro also receive support from other providers in the town.

#### 4.10 Community Safety Implications

Adults with Learning Disabilities are vulnerable but this should not exclude them from taking a full and active role in the local community. The Council has taken great care to ensure the individual risk assessments protect the safety of service users both inside and outside of the hub and satellite premises.

#### 4.11 Environmental Impact

There are no direct environmental impacts arising from this report.

### 5. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Presentation on Independent Evaluation of the Hub Pilot by Alder

