



**Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny  
Committee**  
5 July 2022

**Report from Strategic Director  
Community Wellbeing**

**Day Opportunities in Brent**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Andrew Davies Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management – Adult Social Care Andrew.Davies@brent.gov.uk

**1. Summary**

1.1 Members of the Community and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested a report on day opportunities in Brent. This report covers –

- A summary of day opportunities provided for residents in Brent
- The commissioning responsibilities of the Council under the Care Act 2014, and the strategies in place to shape the marketplace and commission the right services
- An overview of the financial position of day services in Brent
- How the Council measures and monitors the quality of day services
- The Council’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including the key challenges and support provided
- The post Covid position for day opportunities in Brent, including how the Council will work with providers to make services better and easier to access

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Community and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the report and ask questions to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and officers on the issues raised.

### 3. Background

#### Overview of Day Opportunities in Brent

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 focuses on improving people's independence and well-being. As part of its duties under the Care Act 2014, the Council must meet the assessed needs of residents in the London Borough of Brent to provide or arrange services that help prevent, reduce or delay people from needing care and support. All day opportunities services commissioned by Brent Council are for people eligible for support under the Care Act – day opportunities are not a universal service.
- 3.2 A core aim of day services is providing support that helps people achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their lives, known under the Care Act as the "well-being principle". This is a guiding principle that puts well-being at the heart of care and support. Day opportunities are a valuable provision that enables Brent residents with care and support needs living at home to seek social stimulation, and enjoy the company of others whilst receiving support from trained staff. Day services target different service user groups, for example, people with learning or physical disabilities, mental illness and older people. Day services provisions specialise in specific support needs, enabling access to skilled and tailored support for Brent residents. Day services in Brent are in the main building based varying in size, needs of service users, and the services offered.
- 3.3 Day services play an important role in the delivery of social care support to people in Brent. Brent has thirteen-day centres in the borough employing over 150 people. Five day centres support older people and those with physical disabilities. The remaining eight day centres support adults with Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health, dual diagnosis and complex needs. In total, 314 Brent residents receive support through day services commissioned by Adult Social Care. Of those 314, people 65% of residents attend day opportunities in Brent, and 35% attend day services in other boroughs. People attend day centres based on their assessed needs.

<b>Support Need</b>	<b>Numbers Registered</b>
Learning Disability / Mental Health	199
Physical Disabilities	56
Older People / Dementia	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>314</b>

- 3.4 Of the thirteen Brent day services, eleven are managed by independent organisations. Brent runs two in-house day centres, John Billam Resource Centre and New Millennium Day Centre. Large organisations manage 38% of day provision in Brent and have a number of other commissioned services such as home care and residential care. A further 15% are charity organisations. The remaining 53% are smaller organisations with a single day centre.
- 3.5 The current Brent day services are longstanding organisations providing services for Brent residents and working with Brent Adult Social Care for many years. The longest day care provider established services in Brent over 30 years ago, with the most recent service providing services locally for eight years. Brent day care providers have developed strong relationships with the local community and utilise this to access community resources as part of their day opportunities offer for Brent residents.

- 3.6 Fifteen percent of Brent's day services provide culturally specific services for the Asian and black African-Caribbean community. These day services enable residents to access culturally appropriate services inclusive of religious and cultural needs. Brent residents attending these centres have the option of cultural meals supported by staff who speak the same language. All Brent day providers are aware of their duty and responsibility under The Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and be inclusive of a diverse range of needs regardless of age, race, gender or disability. All building-based day service provisions in Brent have level access for wheelchair users and accessible toilets.

#### **4.0 In House Provision - New Millennium Day Centre**

- 4.1 New Millennium Day Centre is a Brent managed Older People and Learning Disability day opportunities service. The provision also includes a Community Outreach programme that supports our residents to access community activities such as college attendance, work experience, and other person centred related activities.
- 4.2 During the Covid pandemic, the service has adapted a new campus style model to support to more effectively meet the needs of our service users. This model allows us to find creative ways to deliver support.

The service offers three pillars of support:

- Virtual Sessions
- Community Engagement
- Building based Opportunities

- 4.3 The focus of this model is on the strategic and person centred delivery of tailored activities that meet individually assessed needs. As a result, we are now offering a Campus style model approach to service delivery. This means our customers can choose a variety of specific activities delivered across Direct Services, which enable customers to have greater choice and control of their lives. Choosing from a menu of activities that will meet their needs and enhance their skills. Our offer consists of, Educational, Recreational, Sport, Life-skills and wellbeing sessions.
- 4.4 Our Traditional model supports customers Monday-Friday, 9:00-15:30. However, customers can choose to attend half day or full day sessions. In addition to this, customers can also choose virtual sessions only or engage in a mixed menu of activities.
- 4.5 In Direct Services, we promote customer independence and we strive to give opportunities of work experience, where possible. At New Millennium Day Centre, there is a well-equipped café facility and plans are underway to encourage service users from across Direct Services to staff this.
- 4.6 This enterprise project will be offering training opportunities to people with a Learning Disability who have an interest in catering, money management, and customer service and community engagement. As part of our Enablement initiative, this project will also give choices to customers from Adult Social Care and customers moving into adulthood who wish to engage in work experience and learn new skills. The project will start by selling teas and coffees to the day centre customers and wider community. This will be a fantastic training opportunity for customers who would like to work in catering field in the future. This would also help to empower service users and build their confidence when dealing with members of the public.

4.7 There is a significant amount of partnership working at New Millennium, and we are proud to be actively working with other community providers as follows:

- TFL and Met Police (Travel training and Autism training)
- Mencap
- Positive about Autism
- Autism training
- ProAct Training: person first” approach, using proactive strategies to support personal development and minimise crisis intervention.
- National Autistic Society
- Middlesex Cricket association for sports and wellbeing
- Boom-Wow theatre group
- My Health my Choice

4.8 As a service, we are constantly seeking new innovative ways to collaborate with partners and stakeholders. This will enhance the support available for our residents.

4.9 New Millennium Day Centre is in the process of embarking on the new community project and creating a sensory garden. We intend to open it out to all vulnerable adults in need of a safe space who live within the local community. This will include people who are receiving services from the Rehabilitation Team, Older People Service, Integrated Learning Disabilities Service, as well as those who receive a direct payment.

4.10 The proposal is for the garden to be divided into four sections as follows:

**Sensory:** Sensory garden will include features such as, surfaces, objects and plants that stimulate senses through touch, sight, scent, taste and hearing. The aim of that part of the garden is to stimulate senses of service users who will benefit through that therapeutic addition to the service.

**Meditation and relaxation section:** this section of the garden is aimed to provide relaxation and promote wellbeing for calm and relaxed mind aiding mindfulness. That will consist of water feature, wind chimes and ornaments that will help service users to unwind and drown out the outside world and add the peaceful sense of enclosure for those who would benefit from relaxation.

**Performance stage:** this feature will enable talented service user to show case this skills and improve their performance. Many service users have already been involved in art and performance projects and this feature will enable us to provide a stage to offer and promote performance opportunities and enhance cultural diversity. This will also open further opportunities for outdoor activities such as, drama group, dance group, sing along and many more.

**Green house and gardening:** this garden feature will include green house for vegetable plantation, this will give service users a sense of being involved in the process from planting and using the grown produce at the skills kitchen.

4.11 **In House Provision - John Billam Day Centre**

4.12 John Billam Resource Centre is a Specialist Autism service with an Advance Accreditation with the National Autistic Society. The centre offers specialist Autism training to colleagues in Brent and other Stakeholders such as Brent Shared Lives

Carers, London Transport and Local police services our client group have very complex needs and may occasionally display behaviour that can challenge.

- 4.13 Staff are specially trained in positive behaviour management PROACT-SCIPr-UK® (Positive Range of Options to Avoid Crisis and use Therapy – Strategies for Crisis Intervention) in order to ensure our customers can lead positive and fulfilled lifestyles. Staff are also specially trained to support customers with their sensory needs and to understand the function of each client's behaviour and ultimately develop positive, holistic approaches for each individual.
- 4.14 Due to the nature of our customers, the service offers and promotes the following therapeutic sessions:
- Sensory and relaxation session
  - Sensory story telling
  - Dance and Movement
  - Physio on soft mat
  - Intensive Interaction
  - Massage Therapy
- 4.15 Since 2019, John Billam Resource Centre has held an Advanced Accreditation with National Autistic Society. This is the only service in Brent accredited by NAS. The service is currently in the process of renewing the accreditation and due for a review during December 2022.

## **5. Commissioning Approach**

- 5.1 The Adult Social Care Commissioning Service has a Community and Prevention Team responsible for the commissioning and quality assurance of all community contracts, including day opportunities. The team carries out quality assurance checks, responds to complaints and safeguarding enquiries about day services. The Community and Prevention team has oversight of the day services to monitor quality assurance. The Market Oversight manager in the team leads on day provision and is a first point of contact for providers ensuring forums take place once a month, and promoting regular engagement with providers over a range of topics.
- 5.2 The Community and Prevention Team gather intelligence from a range of sources. In addition to information gathered by social workers, taking into account the views of residents, family members, and other professionals to build a picture of the quality of Brent's services. The team utilise the Adult Social Care commissioning dashboard to obtain data on the number of people using day services and the costs of these services. Where day opportunities form part of an individual's care plan, social workers carry out frequent reviews of services monitoring the quality of provision to meet care needs through personalised support. Any concerns/safeguarding issues that arise are raised directly with commissioners to carry out further monitoring based on risk and quality of care.
- 5.3 Having an allocated team as the main source of contact for day service providers is an effective way of working with our local providers, giving them a route to contact the council when seeking support. This has been particularly important over the last couple of years as the council and providers have managed the Covid 19 pandemic. With over 300 Brent residents accessing day services in and out of the borough, having a good oversight of the sector is crucial.

- 5.4 The council and partners are engaged in various work with day providers to improve quality. Brent runs a monthly day opportunities forum, used as a mechanism to communicate and work with providers in line with government changes and good practice developments across the sector. All Brent providers regularly attend the forum. In addition, a number of information events have been held virtually and in-person at the Brent Civic Centre to encourage communication and promote joint working with Adult Social Care staff and providers in a shared approach to meet the needs of Brent residents. These events have been well attended and received positive feedback from providers and adult social care colleagues in a shared approach for Brent residents
- 5.5 Through joint working with London ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services), we have promoted incentives such as the Proud to Care rewards scheme specifically aimed at paid carers in day services and other care sectors. Enabling care staff to access savings through the scheme in a large number of retail shops in addition to providing training opportunities through the care sector for professionally qualified roles such as nursing and social work. These incentives focus on giving back to paid carers and encourage staff recruitment and retention for providers.
- 5.6 The strategic aim for day opportunities is to increase capacity and maintain and improve the day service offer to provide good quality support to people with the most complex needs. For those with lower-level needs who have previously attended day services, the aim would be to offer greater choice in the community that better reflects our population's diverse needs

## **6 Impact of Covid 19**

- 6.1 The Covid 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the day services in Brent and an impact that is still being felt today. Day centres closed for over a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A small number of services remained open to supporting service users in crisis or carers who are at high risk of breaking down. These providers were creative in their approach to providing alternative outreach services in parks and open spaces. Social work teams and commissioners were notified of service users attending these day care provisions.
- 6.2 Brent providers adapted their service to provide different strands of support, including:
- Telephone welfare calls
  - Online Activities – music, drama, arts and crafts, health & wellbeing and more.
  - Practical support for vulnerable residents, picking up medication/food.
  - Delivering activity packs for those unable to participate online.
- 6.3 These different strands of day provision enabled service users to maintain some continuity of care through regular communication with familiar staff. Brent facilitated regular meetings with providers to discuss finances, health and safety issues, and risks of business sustainability caused by the closures. To support local providers, Brent agreed to continue to pay providers the same amount they were paid at the start of the lockdown period until April 2022, to help them through the pandemic. A few Brent providers also commission day services to neighbouring boroughs and lost income from other local authorities due to closures, this has had a significant financial impact on their business.

- 6.4 Service users and their families expressed that due to the covid-19 lockdown period, they missed the social interaction, structure and routine of attending day services. Some service users faced loneliness, boredom, anxiety, social isolation and worried as a direct result of the closure of day centres. In addition, there were significant challenges managing health needs due to missed or cancelled appointments, which saw a decline in health conditions such as dementia and increased care needs of some Brent residents.
- 6.5 In 2020, the impact of the first wave of the pandemic was significant, with Brent being one of the boroughs most impacted by Covid 19 in terms of community cases and deaths. The pandemic presented a considerable challenge to the care sector in Brent, balancing how to support the most vulnerable individuals with essential care needs whilst dealing with an unknown virus. The support that the council and partners provided was comprehensive and delivered early. Working closely with colleagues in Public Health, advice was given around vaccinations, infection control, PPE and testing. In addition to troubleshooting problems and offering guidance. Day providers were proactive through welfare calls and checks to determine how Brent residents who attended their centres were managing and identifying where individuals or carers were found to be struggling. Providers offered support where needed or escalated appropriate concerns to Adult Social Care staff.
- 6.6 Day opportunities providers have fed back to Adult Social care staff that the combined efforts of support from the council and other organisations had a positive impact in supporting them throughout the pandemic. In September 2021, day providers began to open up services with caution. The commissioning teams met with all providers individually to outline the comprehensive plans providers had put in place to re-open safely through a phased reopening.
- 6.7 Commissioners asked providers to put in place contingency plans in the event of an outbreak. Providers developed robust reopening, and recovery plans and Brent residents were invited back to day services through a pilot scheme. Day providers implemented bubble/zone working, and staff were trained to work in a way that would manage the safety of attendees and ensure that the buildings were Covid secure.
- 6.8 Staff continued to test regularly, visitors also tested before entering day services, and good infection control measures (such as wearing PPE and regular handwashing) continued. Managing the impact of the virus has become a regular facet of day provision. The support that the council and partners put in place alongside joint working with Brent organisations has ensured that providers are well equipped to manage and deal with outbreaks in their services. The high vaccination levels amongst residents and staff have also had a positive impact.
- 6.9 The numbers of individuals attending day opportunities has fluctuated because of the pandemic.
- In February 2020, 469 Brent residents were attending day services at the cost of £4,167,844.09 a year
  - In February 2022, this number has decreased to 314 people at the cost of £3,601,965.64 a year.
- 6.10 There are a few reasons for this. Firstly, the reduction due to deaths during the pandemic. However, there are individuals whose physical health and mental and emotional well-being have declined significantly during the pandemic, and day provisions can no longer meet their social care needs. A number of individuals have

also refused to return to services due to concerns around infection of Covid-19 and the risks this may pose to their health.

- 6.11 The commissioning teams are encouraging new referrals from social work teams through a series of promotion events, raising awareness of services available locally. This promotion has been extended to colleagues in children's social care in the Children's with Disabilities Service 0-25, to encourage young people 18 and older leaving education to transition into Adult day services as future customers of Adult Social Care.

## **7. Moving on from Covid 19 – A sessional model of day opportunities**

- 7.1 Commissioners are working with providers to redesign day opportunities in Brent to create a Day Opportunities "sessional model". This model will result in a significant change in approach to Day Opportunities to support adults in need of social care and deliver the optimum level of support that is flexible and responsive to a diverse range of needs. Providers have put in place alternative services based on virtual activities, outreach and community based services; they are however in the main building based services still. Post Covid-19 this offer does not address the full range of complexities faced by Brent residents and focuses on a more traditional care model.
- 7.2 Traditional day care models are an increasingly less attractive option for people coming into adult social care. The historical stigma of day centres portrayed in a traditional building-based model can be a barrier for those who may benefit from a day opportunity provision to maintain their well-being and promote independence. A modernisation of day opportunities will ensure the services we offer in Brent is inclusive of all residents with support needs to lead full and meaningful lives. Importantly, the sessional approach will mean people can take up day opportunities on the days and times that suit them, and not be limited to the opening hours or offer available from traditional day centres.
- 7.3 Post Covid-19, the changes in the way Brent day opportunities continue to provide a hybrid version of day opportunities represent a timely opportunity for innovation, inspiration and positive change to day services. That focuses on best practice in day services, demonstrating different and dynamic ways of commissioning and providing day services to meet the diverse needs of vulnerable people.
- 7.4 There is a need for more universal and community-based services around the borough. The redesign of day opportunities will encourage integration between day centres and community/universal services, focusing on a holistic approach to care. For example, the Gateway Social Isolation Preventative Service (SILP) has established relationships with various community, voluntary and specialist organisations to lead this collaboration.
- 7.5 People lack opportunities to access services in the community or different activities of choice in other locations/day services. The sessional model aims to promote and deliver choice. People can do different activities to help them achieve the outcomes in their care plan, and this can be achieved by commissioning shorter sessions across various day centres.
- 7.6 We are continuously reviewing our testing strategy for adult social care in light of the latest evidence and prevalence. Care Act reviews are taking place in-person through the social work teams, reviewing quality assurance in day centres as part of individual



care plans. This ensures we fulfil our oversight function and have a comprehensive picture of the quality of provision in the borough.

- 7.7 Collaboration with Brent's internal in-house provider, Direct Services, has explored and trialled a sessional approach to day opportunities as a cost-effective option. Engagement and partnership with service users, their carers and providers are crucial to any changes proposed in day services in Brent. Communication and engagement processes with service users and carers are underway and began with a survey to obtain feedback.
- 7.8 The five most important things discovered during the research project were:
- Choice was the main driver of positive feedback for changing the way day opportunities are delivered.
  - Providers want to work with Brent to ensure the new approach to day opportunities is as successful as possible.
  - The most optimistic group of people surveyed were Brent residents service users yet to attend a day centre trialling a sessional model approach.
  - Carers had an ambivalent attitude to the changes with mixed responses to questions about specific areas of concern.
  - Service users already visiting a sessional model centre (Direct Services) were the most apprehensive people surveyed.
- 7.9 In summary, the survey highlighted the optimism of service users attending traditional day centres means commissioners have a green light to move forward with the implementation of the sessional model alongside relevant stakeholders such as providers, carers, service users and others. The popularity of increased choice across all the groups who took part in the research further rubber stamps this. Providing a selection of activities that accurately reflects what the range of Brent residents want and need will be key to successfully implementing the sessional model.
- 7.10 Through the redesign of day opportunities, Brent residents will have the option to select different "sessions" of support from various providers, depending on their needs and interests. At present, it is not possible to do this in Brent because of the current offer of commissioning and providing services. Moving away from the default option for day opportunities being all-day attendance at a day centre to a model where people receive a direct payment to buy support that helps them meet their needs as set out in their care plan.
- 7.11 Some fundamental principles included in the model -
- Each Brent resident through a Care Act assessment will receive an outcome-focused support plan based on eligible care needs. This care plan enables residents to receive support to choose activities that support them to meet their outcomes, ensuring day opportunities tailored to the needs of the individual.
  - Service users can access a 'day centre' when activities they wish to participate in are scheduled - this will reduce the previous traditional / institutionalised building based day centre model, where attendance was required from 10 am – 3 pm.
  - Voluntary or paid employment and work experience will provide real opportunities that promote independence and is a priority in the sessional model to maximise the potential of individuals.

- Based on feedback from service users and carers, there is scope for weekend and evening activities through the sessional model to enable a full and flexible service provision that fully meets the needs of each individual and their carers.
- Service users will receive support in independent travel training skills and maximise accessibility to activities and services in the local community.
- Service users can purchase activities for the sessional model through Direct Payments in line with each individual's assessed personal budget.

7.12 Moving forward with the implementation of the sessional model commissioners have attended day centres in person to meet with service users and staff, sharing information on the sessional model through an easy-read format as an accessible version. Brent providers have started to implement the sessional model since the reopening of services. Feedback from providers is positive and they have expressed a keen desire to work with commissioners on different elements of the redesign. The sessional model is designed in an attempt to attract private customers to day opportunities. Residents who do not have eligible social care needs may wish to attend sessions purchasing this privately and generating business for local day care providers.

7.13 Day care providers are crucial partners in the planned redesign of day care services. The current day care forum complements the partnership work and engagement with providers. A working group will include colleagues across ASC to better connect what social workers require to meet the needs of individuals through the commissioning of day services. Plans are in place to establish a service user led group predominately made up of current users of Brent day services. Investment in communication and engagement is essential to encourage co-production and ensure the successful delivery of the sessional model redesign.

7.14 The commissioning team in partnership working with providers will continue further work, to drive improvement in the day opportunities in the borough. Reflective good practice sessions are planned by the day centre lead in commissioning as part of growth and learning amongst providers to further enhance their skill set and recognise what providers are doing well.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 Included in the main body of the report.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1 Included in the main body of the report.

### **REPORT SIGN-OFF:**

*Claudia Brown*

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