

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Supported Employment for People with Disabilities

Consultation Summary Report

Why we consulted?

Over the last nine years we've had to make savings of £60 million as our central government funding, the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), has reduced and the need for social care support has increased. We've done this by becoming more efficient at what we do, by reducing some of our administrative functions and increasing our income. Throughout this period we have done our best to protect your services.

Six years ago, the RSG was worth £24 million to the council and was reduced to just £100,000 last year. In 2019/20 there will be no grant and our costs will exceed our income. As a result, we'll need to find a further £7 million in savings or income generation. Much of this will come from becoming a more efficient council, however, 14 proposals, amounting to approximately £300,000, have been identified from services that will impact the public.

It was these proposals that made up the Budget Proposals 2019/20 consultation.

Approach

We published all the public facing proposals on our website on 12 November 2018 with feedback requested by midnight on 23 December 2018.

Respondents were directed to a central index pageⁱ, which outlined the overall background to the exercise, and provided links to each of the individual proposals on our Consultation Portalⁱⁱ.

Each individual page included further details on the specifics of what the proposal contained and what we thought the impact might be, along with any other elements we'd taken into account. Feedback was then invited through an online form and a dedicated email address. Hard copies of the proposal documents and surveys were also made available on request.

As well as publishing the consultations on our website, we also emailed members of the West Berkshire Community Panel (around 400 people), notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions. The Learning Disability Partnership Board was also approached. Heads of Service also made direct contact with those organisations directly affected prior to them being made publicly available.

Finally, we issued a press release on the 12 November 2018, and further publicised our consultations through our Facebook and Twitter accounts. We also placed posters in our main offices and other council properties e.g. libraries, and made them available to WBC Councillors and Parish and Town Councils to put up in the wards/parishes.

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Proposal Background

The Supported Employment Scheme provides opportunities for people with disabilities to gain employment-related skills in a supported setting. The lead organisation providing this service is the Community Furniture Project.ⁱⁱⁱ

From April 2016 to March 2018, 66 people have been supported through this service.

We currently provide the Supported Employment Scheme with annual funding of £60,000.

Legislation Requirements

The Care Act 2014^{iv} sets out duties relating to people with care and support needs. This includes duties relating to a range of eligible needs and their relationship with individuals' wellbeing. It also sets out duties relating to the prevention of future care and support needs.

There is no specific duty to support people into employment although it is recognised that there are wellbeing benefits which can be derived from access to employment.

Proposal Details

To reduce annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 (a proposed saving of £15,000 or 25%) from 1 April 2019.

We propose to re-tender for a Supported Employment Scheme with this reduced level of funding once the contract has ended on 31 March 2019.

Consultation Response

Number of Responses

In total, 12 responses were received.

One of the respondents identified themselves as a user of the service, eight as residents, one as employed by West Berkshire Council, two as Parish/Town Councillors, one as a service provider, two as partner organisations, and three as other.

We also received one petition from the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

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Summary of Main Points

The majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed (10) with the proposal. The principal objections included:

- The view that it undermines the stated priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- It will negatively impact a vulnerable group
- It is likely to have an impact on other services
- Respondents felt that the service has a preventative value

Summary of Responses by Question

1. Are you...?

(N.B. respondents were able to tick more than one option)

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Or anyone you care for, a user of this service	1	5.9%	8.3%
A resident of West Berkshire	8	47.1%	66.7%
Employed by West Berkshire Council	1	5.9%	8.3%
A Parish/Town Councillor	2	11.8%	16.7%
A District Councillor	0	.0%	.0%
A service provider	1	5.9%	8.3%
A partner organisation	1	5.9%	8.3%
Other	3	17.6%	25.0%

2. How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 from 1 April 2019?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	1	8.3	8.3
Agree	0	.0	.0
Neither agree nor disagree	1	8.3	8.3
Disagree	3	25.0	25.0
Strongly disagree	7	58.3	58.3
Total	12	100.0	100.0
Not answered	0	.0	.0
Total	12	100.0	

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- 3. What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?**

The proposal will affect people with disabilities and their families.

- 4. If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.**

No suggestions were forthcoming.

- 5. Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.**

Suggestions included:

- Run a local lottery
- Switch off the street lights when the Christmas lights are on
- Turn off the lights in the council offices at night
- Lobby the government
- Work with other bodies including health, criminal justice etc, to pool resources and invest in longer term benefit, particularly in prevention.
- Increase Council Tax
- Reduce demand on services through investment in prevention

- 6. If you, your community group, or organisation think you might be able to help reduce the impact of this proposal, if the decision is taken to proceed with it, please provide your name and email address below.**

One respondent provided their contact details.

- 7. Any further comments?**

Strong objections to the proposal were restated with particular reference to the vulnerability of the affected group.

Officer conclusion and recommendation can be found in the associated Overview of Responses and Recommendations document.

Paul Coe
Acting Head of Adult Social Care
Adult Social Care
27/12/2018

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Please note: *In order to allow everyone who wished the opportunity to contribute, feedback was not sampled. Therefore this wasn't a quantitative, statistically valid exercise. It was neither the premise, purpose, nor within the capability of the exercise, to determine the overall community's level of support, or views on the proposals, with any degree of confidence.*

The feedback captured therefore should be seen in the context of 'those who responded', rather than reflective of the wider community.

All the responses have been provided verbatim as an appendix to this report. Whilst this summary seeks to distil the key, substantive points made, it should also be read in conjunction with the more detailed verbatim comments to ensure a full, rounded perspective of the views and comments are considered.

ⁱ <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetproposals>

ⁱⁱ <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/consultations>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://cfpnewbury.org/>

^{iv} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 2019/20: Supported Employment for People with Disabilities		Head of Service: Paul Coe Author: Paul Coe		5 March 2019 Version 1 (Full Council)	
Proposal:	To reduce annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 from 1 April 2019.				
Total budget 2018/19:	£60,000	Initial proposed saving 2019/20	£15,000 (25%)	Recommended saving 2019/20	£0
No. of responses:	<p>In total, 12 responses were received. Of those that responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One identified themselves as users of the service • Eight as residents of West Berkshire • One as a council employee • Two as Parish/Town Councils • 0 as District Councillors • One as a service provider • One as a partner organisation • Three as other <p>We also received one petitions from the Learning Disability Partnership Board – 64 signatures</p>				
Key issues raised:	<p>The majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed (10) with the proposal.</p> <p>The principal objections included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view that it undermines the stated priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board • It will negatively impact a vulnerable group • It is likely to have an impact on other services • Respondents felt that the service has a preventative value 				
Equality issues:	This proposal affects people with disabilities and this is covered in the Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.				

NB: This Overview of Responses and Recommendations paper should be read in conjunction with the Consultation Summary Report and Verbatim Responses received in relation to this proposal. These can be found in the agenda pack or on our [Consultation Portal](#).

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response
	No suggestions were forthcoming.	
Suggestions for saving money or increasing income:	Suggestion	Council response
	Run a local lottery	The council is planning to operate a local lottery, which will be launched shortly.
	Increase Council Tax, holding a referendum if necessary	The raising of Council Tax will be one of the options that Members will consider as part of setting a balanced budget for 2019/20.
	Lobby central government for a fairer, more sustainable and decentralised system for funding local government	Long-term funding for Adult Social Care is being considered by the government in the Green Paper expected in early 2019.
	Reduce demand on services through investment in prevention	The Department for Work and Pensions is developing a new employment support provision called Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES), which will provide the kind of intensive and tailored support required by customers with disabilities facing complex barriers to employment. It is hoped that this will mitigate the impacts of the proposal.
	Turn off the lights in the council offices at night	The lights are turned off at night. Some external footway lights around the building and internal low level emergency lighting may be visible. Once security checks have been completed, automatic sensors turn off any remaining lights.
	Turn off the street lights when the Christmas lights are on	<p>This could leave the council open to a possible claim if an incident were to happen at night and the lighting was switched off. It may also be very unpopular with the majority of town centre users.</p> <p>There would be very little saving in switching a handful of street lights off for a month or so.</p>

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Overview of Responses and Recommendations

	Work with other bodies including health, criminal justice etc., to pool resources and invest in longer term benefit, particularly in prevention.	The council is mindful of its prevention duties and there are a number of forums through which we cooperate with partners including Health services.
Conclusion and recommendation:	Most of the respondents to this consultation are strongly against the cut as there is concern about the effect on this vulnerable group of people. It is recommended that this proposal is not progressed.	

NB: This Overview of Responses and Recommendations paper should be read in conjunction with the Consultation Summary Report and Verbatim Responses received in relation to this proposal. These can be found in the agenda pack or on our [Consultation Portal](#).

Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA 2)

What is the proposed decision?	To reduce the annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 (a proposed saving of £15,000 or 25%)
Summary of relevant legislation	The Care Act 2014 places a range of duties on Local Authorities to support vulnerable people. These include the duties to prevent, reduce or delay the need for care and support.
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the council's key strategic priorities?	No. The Health and Wellbeing Board priorities include the promotion of employment.
Name of budget holder	Paul Coe
Name of assessor	Paul Coe
Name of Service and Directorate	Adult Social Care
Date of assessment	28/12/2018
Version and release date (if applicable)	Version 1.0
Date EqIA 1 completed	18/10/2018

Step One – Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment

1. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this EqIA 2?			
Service targets		Performance targets	
User satisfaction		Service take-up	X
Workforce monitoring		Press coverage	
Complaints & comments		Census data	
Information from Trade Union		Community Intelligence	
Previous EqIA		Staff survey	
Public consultation	X	Other (please specify)	

2. What are the findings from the available evidence for the areas you have ticked above?

In Year 1 of the contract, 26 people used the service. In Year 2, 40 people used the service.

12 responses were received to the public consultation, as well as a petition from the Learning Disability Partnership Board with 64 signatures.

The majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal. The principal objections included the view that it undermines the stated priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board, will negatively impact a vulnerable group and is likely to have an impact on other services. Respondents felt that the service has a preventative value.

3. What additional research or data is required, if any, to fill the gaps identified in question two? Have you considered commissioning new data or research e.g. a needs assessment?

None

Step Two – Involvement and Consultation

4. How do the findings from the evidence summarised in Step One affect people with the nine protected characteristics?

Target Groups	Summary of responses and type of evidence
Age – relates to all ages	There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.
Disability - applies to a range of people that have a condition (physical or mental) which has a significant and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out 'normal' day-to-day activities. This protection also applies to people that have been diagnosed with a progressive illness such as HIV or cancer.	People with physical disabilities, learning disabilities or mental ill-health are more likely to have difficulty accessing employment. Therefore they are more likely to be affected by this proposal. Support will be less readily available to them to access employment.

<p>Gender reassignment - definition has been expanded to include people who chose to live in the opposite gender to the gender assigned to them at birth by removing the previously legal requirement for them to undergo medical supervision.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership –.protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity - protects against discrimination. With regard to employment, the woman is protected during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. It is also unlawful to discriminate against women breastfeeding in a public place</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic or national origin or nationality.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Religion or belief - covers any religion, religious or non-religious beliefs. Also includes philosophical belief or non-belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Sex - applies to male or female.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</p>

5. Who are the main stakeholders (e.g. service users, staff) and what are their requirements?

People of working age with disabilities who wish to move into employment but need support to develop the relevant skills.

6. How will this item affect the stakeholders identified above?

Access to this support will be reduced and as a result fewer people will receive the support to move into employment.

Step Three – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

7. What are the impacts and how will you mitigate them?

Other forms of day activity will continue to be available. The Department of Work and Pensions also plans to develop a new employment support provision called Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES) which it is hoped will mitigate the impacts.

Step Four – Procurement and Partnerships

8. Is this item due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

Yes

This service is provided by a contractor.

Step Five – Making a Decision

9. What are your recommendations as a result of the EqIA 2?

In making your recommendations please summarise your findings.

The decision will have a negative impact on people with disabilities, but can be justified because of the availability of other day activities and plans by the Department of Work and Pensions to develop a new employment support provision called Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES) to be rolled out in England and Wales during 2019. This will provide the kind of intensive and tailored support required by customers with disabilities facing complex barriers to employment.



Step Six – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

10. How will you monitor the impact on the nine protected characteristics once the change has taken place?

Adult Social Care teams carry out care management functions and will share intelligence relating to service user impacts.

Step Seven – Action Plan

Categories	Actions	Target date	Responsible person
Involvement and consultation			
Data collection			
Assessing impact	Discussion with Provider to review impact	1 September 2019	Paul Coe
Procurement and partnership			
Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing			

Step Eight – Sign Off

The policy, strategy or function has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.

Contributors to the EqIA 2

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

Head of Service

Name: Paul Coe

Date: 28/12/2018



Number of responses: 12

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reasons for your response.				
1	Neither agree nor disagree	We acknowledge that the Council is in a challenging financial situation and will therefore need to reduce its expenditure. We do however have some concerns about the areas highlighted below, particularly because prevention is one of the main priorities in the NHS Five Year Forward View and the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Strategy. We would also like to continue to explore how we can work together through the Berkshire West 10 to maximise economics of scale across our area. These are the areas of concern and questions we wanted to highlight: We believe that this is a valuable service to support disabled people into work, and welcome the continued commitment to support this service going forward through a revised tender. We note that this is a Strategic Priority for the Health & Wellbeing Board in 2018/19 which is being delivered by the Skills and Enterprise Partnership (SEP). We would hope that the SEP would continue to work alongside the provider of the Supported Employment Scheme to address the challenges of vulnerable people seeking employment.				
2	Strongly disagree	This is proposal undermines directly one of the two priorities of the Health and Well Being Board to help find gainful work or activity for the vulnerable in West Berkshire.	A group with some of the worst life expectancy outcomes in society should not be having support cut. Gainful employment or activity has shown to improve wellbeing of all including this group	Don't do it		

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reasons for your response.				
3	Strongly disagree	<p>From memory, I believe that supporting people into employment is one of the Health and Wellbeing Board's two priorities. People with disabilities suffer higher rates of unemployment than other groups. My understanding is that the Community Furniture Project is very well regarded locally and does a good job. From the way it works, it sounds to be very cost effective. Cutting this service by a quarter is bound to have a significant impact on its ability to help those in real need. As well as the direct impact on those concerned this is also likely to lead to increased costs on a range of public services, from DWP to health. The argument has not been for how this will save public money in the long term rather than increase costs.</p>	<p>Disabled people and their carers.</p>		<p>I do not have sufficient information about the workings of the rest of the council to be able to suggest any better area for cuts. More general options for increasing income would be to increase council tax, holding a referendum, as required by central government, if necessary. The council might also wish to lobby central government and inform them of the harm being done by their cuts. It could also lobby, directly and through the LGA, for a fairer, more sustainable and more decentralised system for funding local government, which increased the extent of local control. One way of reducing costs longer term would be by reducing demand on services through investment in prevention, which is the opposite of what these cuts are doing. The council should be considered social costs more broadly and working more effectively with other bodies, including health, criminal justice etc. to pool resources and invest for longer term benefit, particularly in prevention.</p>	
4	Disagree	<p>The Community Furniture Project as part of the Supported Employment Scheme would be likely to suffer as a result of this 25% cut. It is important that we keep this organisation going to keep the existing number of people employed.</p>	<p>WBC have already listed the people likely to badly affected by such a proposal.</p>			<p>People with Learning Disabilities or other disabilities often need to be supported in employment. There is no reason that we are aware of as to why WBC want to reduce the amount they support this by except that they face an austere financial situation. However, we are told by the government that austerity is at an end, therefore this cut should not be made. If alternative provision is desired by WBC, they should investigate the potential for that provision but only consider phasing any changes over a number of years. This would enable the current providers to plan things rather than face a cliff edge in April 2019.</p>

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reasons for your response.				
5	Strongly disagree	National Government is encouraging citizens to enter employment, for financial reason. But quality of life and self worth is vastly increased also by being gainfully employed. And Community Furniture Project is a wonderful project, supporting staff and people using the shop. It also allows for recycling of items taken to the 'tip'. I know you are not proposing to completely cut funding, but I imagine they are working on a shoestring already, and a further cut would be devastating.			I imagine that most residents would be prepared to pay a little more council tax in order to cover this very minor item of expenditure but useful helpline for vulnerable adults.	
6	Strongly disagree	We work in partnership with Newbury Community Resource Centre (CFP) to deliver a Supported Employment program funded by West Berkshire Council. We provide six weeks of induction into our work skills project and individuals work towards a qualification on volunteering and employment with LASER awards. Any reduction in funding will reduce the ability to work in partnership to get people back in to the workplace and therefore the number of people who can be helped. Many of the people who we have helped remain in placement with CFP and it will not be sustainable for all these people to continue be supported ifn the funding is reduced. If the retender of the services leads to a different provider then we believe that a significant number of people will need to be moved to a new provider and this will probably impact their progress to date				
7	Strongly disagree	It is very important for all people to have access to work. By reducing this funding you risk alienating people who generally are not able to express their concerns.	Potentially it will effect all people with learning disabilities who are looking for employment.			
8	Strongly disagree	we must not reduce funding for this vulnerable group. There is a cost benefit for supporting disabled people into employment and without support a number of people will cause a later mental health expense.	The later mental health difficulties of this vulnerable group	Run a local lottery Turn off the street lights when the Christmas lights are on Turn off the lights in the council offices at night	Run a local lottery Turn off the street lights when the Christmas lights are on Turn off the lights in the council offices at night	I really don't believe that public views will make any difference to what the council will do. It is time that the members stood up and backed an over budget spend en masse or resign. The Government needs to know how the cuts affect disproportionately vulnerable people.

ID	How far do you agree with the proposal to reduce the annual funding to the Supported Employment Scheme from £60,000 to £45,000 from 1 April 2019?		What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others? Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to see what has already been identified.	If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.	Do you have any suggestions on how we might save money or increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.	Any further comments?
	Response	Please tell us the reasons for your response.				
9	Disagree	A 25% reduction in a provision that supports adults with learning disabilities find work seems to go against the Health and Wellbeing priorities. There is little alternative provision for this.	It will affect individuals as well as their families. If an adult with a learning disability has employment then their mental and physical health and overall wellbeing will be higher than if they did not and were isolated. the feeling of independence and confidence in achieving employment cannot be underplayed. Carers will also benefit from the wellbeing of the cared for and also have some respite themselves.	no	none	
10	Strongly disagree	You have already made huge and sustained cuts to many support services over the last few years which in many cases have hit the needy the hardest. It's time to stop this, and to focus limited funds on those who need them most. I cannot support any of the above cuts and urge you to find savings elsewhere or re-allocate funds from areas that will not impact the disadvantaged.				
11	Disagree	I am most in favour of m any services whereby they assist people who by no fault of their own have a dependency or rely on another service to get through daily life				
12	Strongly agree					