

## Councillors' Briefing Note No. 167

**Service :** Adult Care Operations

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**Title** **Ashton Street Day Centre**

In 2001 Central Government issued a White Paper called Valuing People – this paper related to the Health and Social Care approach, support and services offered to Adults with a learning disability and their family carers.

This document made clear recommendations to move away from day service buildings used only for and by people with a learning disability, the emphasis being to support people to access and be part of their local towns and communities.

Wiltshire Council undertook a Best Value Review of Learning Disability Services in 2001-2 which recommended a 9 staged approach to the modernisation of all its in house provision.

For Day Services this meant updating the approach offered by staff, providing a more flexible approach (move away from traditional Monday to Friday 9am-4pm Service) and the move out of old large institutional style buildings into those that continue to offer a base for people, for some activities to take place but the bigger emphasis was put of supporting people to access community facilities near to where they live and alongside other members of the public.

Ashton Street is the last of the original 9 day services in Wiltshire to move or be modernised in the way explained above.

The building was built in the 1950's and was originally a school, later moving to the traditional day service model which at the time would have supported around 100 people on a daily basis to take part in activities in the building.

The building now supports around 25-30 people per day (total on the books around 60). People use the building for around 20% of the activity program - crafts, music, cooking and the other 80% happens in the community – using leisure centres, library, meeting friends for social activities, drama, dance, rambling to name but a few.

Over the last 2 years the service with the support of the transformation team has been searching for suitable alternate properties in Trowbridge for the service to move to. When the developments within County Hall were coming to fruition with the support of Jane Scott it was suggested that the service move in to part of County Hall.

The plans were approved in late October and the service began contacting and talking to Customers, families and staff on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November.

To date the management team have met all staff working at Ashton Street, around 25 of the Customers and around 15 family and paid carers. People had lots of questions that related to staffing numbers, activities, the name of the space, how people will be supported to understand the changes, but to date no one who attended the meetings have said that it was not a good suggestion or they did not want the move to happen, in fact all have been supportive of the proposal, albeit some worries.

The team will continue to meet with individuals and families over the next few months to discuss any concerns or issues, they are compiling a frequently asked questions sheet and will arrange frequent coffee mornings and newsletters keeping people informed of progress.

The move is expected to take place in September 2014, there are no plans to change or reduce the staff or activities happening prior to the move offering a level of consistency to those who find change most difficult.

If you have further queries or questions please contact Rhonda Ward on 07990508507 or [Rhonda.ward@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Rhonda.ward@wiltshire.gov.uk)