

Frequently Asked Questions – Better Lives in our Communities

Version 2 – 18 December 2024

Since the launch of the consultation on 15 October 2024 we have received some questions and requests for further information. This document makes available responses to common questions asked. We will continue to update this document as needed if new common questions emerge.

Update 1 – Date of publication: 2 December 2024

Consultation Process Questions

1. Is it a forgone conclusion? Has the decision already been made?

No decision has been made. We genuinely want all views and are consulting at a formative stage. A preferred option is identified based on initial consideration of options. However, we welcome views on all options and suggestions. We will carefully be considering consultation responses. This will inform a subsequent decision planned by elected members planned in summer 2025.

2. Will there be an Equality Impact Assessment, and will it include the impact on carers?

Yes. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be published as part of the information made available to the Council's Cabinet to inform a decision, which is anticipated in summer 2025.

3. Will you publish the consultation findings?

Yes. A consultation findings report will be produced which will include a summary of all feedback including key themes from consultation events held, email submissions, and online survey submissions. There will also be analysis of the survey results.

4. What are the timescales for any service changes?

The public consultation will run from Tuesday 15 October 2024 for 12 weeks ending on Friday 31 January 2025. There are no immediate changes to service delivery and the Council's Cabinet is anticipated to make a decision following the consultation, in summer 2025.

If a decision is taken to proceed with the preferred option in summer 2025, any changes to services provided would be phased, and a high-level timeline for implementation published as part of the Cabinet papers.

Updated 18 December 2024 – consultation end date extended to Friday 31 January 2025

Service Model

5. If you reduce the number of council-run centres what are the alternatives for care and support for adults at those centres affected?

The Council is committed to ensuring continuing care and support for all adults who have been assessed as needing support under the Care Act 2014.

The location of where services are delivered from may change for some adults supported if the Council's current preferred option, as set out in the consultation documents, is adopted.

If a decision is taken to proceed with the preferred option, then the adult social care social worker teams would work on an individual basis with carers/families to determine the best suitable care and support services to meet needs for their loved one.

Care might be provided at an alternative council or external run day centre, shared lives or through a direct payment offer, based on the care plan for each person.

6. How would people travel to their new service, how long would it take and what happens if the new journey isn't suitable for them?

At this stage no decision has been made. If a decision is taken to proceed with changes then there would be a detailed implementation plan to ensure the transition of any moves is managed well. Travel would be discussed as part of individual review process with the social work teams and reflected in a care and support plan. We will ensure that travel time is considered as part of this assessment to ensure it is suitable to meet each person's needs.

7. Will you have enough services to meet the needs of adults in the future and how have you taken this into account in the proposals for change?

It is important that we ensure that we are forward planning in adult social care to meet the needs of young people with special educational needs and disabilities so that we have the right provision in place to meet needs now and for the future within the county. A consultation is currently underway on the Council's [SEND Sufficiency Strategy](#). There is close

working between adults and children's services within the Council to ensure that there are effective pathways and support for young people transitioning to adulthood.

Planning in adult social care is informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and other information such as operational data from children's services on children identified as requiring support in the future from adult social care. Adult social care will look to ensure sufficient provision is in place through utilising a wide range of provision to meet needs.

8. How have you taken transport costs into account in your proposal?

The costs for transport are variable and therefore high-level modelling assumptions have been made at this stage. Further modelling will take place next year prior to a decision. The assessment of individual transport arrangements and thereby sourcing of transport to alternative venues will be undertaken following a Cabinet decision on the model, and confirmation of suitable alternative care settings in relation to each individual's needs.

9. With longer journeys meaning there would be additional transport costs, how are you making a saving?

The likely additional costs for transport have been factored into the savings estimated to be achieved from the preferred option. We wouldn't know the precise costs until we know which alternative services people were attending based on their individual reviews and what that meant for their journey.

Buildings

10. What are the plans for the sites you are proposing to no longer use by adult social care?

Under the preferred option identified in the consultation, there are four sites proposed as no longer needed by Adult Social Care:

- Buckingham Day Centre
- Hillcrest Day Centre
- Burnham Day Centre
- Seeleys House

Buckingham Day Centre is proposed to be repurposed as a Special Educational Needs College, alongside continuing to use the building for Furze Down School Sixth Form.

The other sites are proposed for sale or other alternative use if those are decided to be no longer required by Adult Social Care.

External Provision

11. Who are day and overnight respite providers mentioned as having been used by the Council in the consultation documentation?

Day Opportunities providers

Please see list below of the twenty seven day opportunity providers who were providing support to adults with care and support needs (as at 15 October 2024).

Provider	Address
Princes Centre	Clifford Road, Princes Risborough, HP27 0DP Wakeman Road, Wooburn Green, Bourne End, SL8 5SX
Bucks Mind Southern Day Services	Nancy Hall Court, The Homestead, High Wycombe, HP12 4NZ
Bucks Mind Day Service	Desborough Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2QR Granville Street, Aylesbury, HP20 2JR Church Street, Chesham, HP5 1HU Gravel Hill, Chalfont St Peter, SL9 9QX
Ravenswood Foundation Day Care	Nine Mile Ride, Crowthorne, RG45 6BQ
Wycombe Mind	Easton Street, High Wycombe, HP11 1NT
Talkback	Chiltern Avenue, Amersham, HP6 5AH
Headway (South Bucks)	Wakeman Road, Wooburn Green, Bourne End, SL8 5SX
Macintyre (42a Haddon)	Haddon, Milton Keynes, MK8 9HP
Social Link	Desborough Street, High Wycombe, HP11 2LY
Missenden Walled Garden	London Road, Great Missenden, HP16 0BD

Virtus Care Services Ltd	Buckingham Street, Aylesbury, HP20 2NQ
LD Outreach Rehabilitation	Borehamwood, WD6 1JN
Innovation	Cowley Business Park, Uxbridge, UB8 2AD
Thrift Activity Farm	Buckingham Road, Whaddon, MK17 0EQ
Caribbean Elderly Day Centre	Lady Verney Close, High Wycombe, HP13 6TB
Step In Cafe	Desborough Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2QA
Step In Arts	Desborough Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2QA
Onward Enterprise Cic	The Broadway, Amersham, HP7 0UT
Nightingale House Day Service	College Road, Hitchin, SG5 1SD
Aylesbury Youth Motor Project	Edison Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8TE
Source Group (Oak Lodge)	Frogmoor, High Wycombe, HP13 5ES
Snap	Bourton Low, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, MK7 7DE
Camphill MK Communities	Japonica Lane, Willen Park, Milton Keynes, MK15 9JY
The Chiltern Centre	Chilterns End Close, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1SQ
Communikate	Castle End Business Park, Ruscombe, Reading, RG10 9XQ
Nancie Ross Day Centre	Common Road, Flackwell Heath, HP10 9NS
Pennefather Court Day Centre	Croft Road, Aylesbury, HP21 7RA

The list of providers used changes depending on the needs of individuals who require day opportunities and since we have published the consultation documents Pennefather Court has now closed and we are also currently using a new provider Macintyre Kennington (OX1 5PG). Providers in neighbouring council areas are used where this will best meet an individual's needs and where this might be nearer depending upon the home address of the resident.

Overnight Respite providers

The table below details the six providers who have provided overnight respite for adults 18-64 in the last year. There is a huge range and type of need in the 18-64 age group including complex disabilities, conditions such as early onset dementia and neurodegenerative conditions such as Parkinson's or Huntington's disease. Providers for respite are used based on evidenced ability to meet the specific needs of the individual. Provision in other local authorities, particularly neighbouring councils are used where this is within reasonable travel distance from home to setting and where specialist needs can best be met.

Provider	Address
Jigsaw	77 Russell Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7XG
Whincup Close	6 Whincup Close, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1TD
White Lodge	Bisham Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 1RP
Hampden Hall	Tamarisk Way, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP22 5ZB
Farnham Common House	Beaconsfield Road, Farnham Common, Buckinghamshire, SL2 3HU
Chiltern Centre	Greys Road, Henley on Thames, RG9 1QR

We recognise that current overnight respite market for 18-64 is limited within the county. We are working to increase specialist respite provision in Buckinghamshire with providers to ensure there is more available to meet needs.

Update 2 – Date of publication: 18 December 2024

Data

12. How many people access day opportunities and overnight respite?

In March 2020 there were 330 adults accessing the council-run short breaks service (day and overnight) and now there are 128. This is a 61% decline in attendance.

The below tables show the number of adults with care and support needs, supported by adult social care at Buckinghamshire Council to access day opportunities and overnight respite in recent years.

Day Opportunities

	Internal	External	Total
2020/21	231	115	346
2021/22	140	164	304
2022/23	112	268	380
2023/24	110	347	457

Overnight Respite

	Internal	External	Total
2020/21	21	154	175
2021/22	19	193	212
2022/23	18	194	212
2023/24	18	174	192

Building improvements and investments

13. What are the key property improvement works required at each centre?

In the supporting documentation for the consultation, it is explained that some of our buildings are in poor condition and that if retained by the Council they would require significant investment of approximately £1.75 million.

The below table sets out a breakdown of the general areas of property and improvement works required at each of the centres, split out into essential works required and service facility improvements required over the next five years.

Essential works are defined as maintenance and repairs necessary for the safe and compliant day to day running of the centres. Service facility improvements are defined as improvements made that would create a high-quality centre environment for adults supported.

These are indicative figures and likely to change based upon further assessments and through further feedback that is received during the consultation process. These costs do not include non-essential property works, and therefore the figures below are lower than would otherwise be the case if all property works were considered.

Centre	Areas of Property Improvements		Initial Estimated Cost
Aylesbury Opportunity Centre	Essential	Essential works include kitchen upgrades, lighting and outdoor repairs.	£90,000
	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, furniture, garden environment and staff facilities.	£18,500
Buckingham Day Centre	Essential	Essential works include flat roof replacement and lighting.	£60,000
	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, furniture, garden environment and staff facilities.	£23,500
Burnham Day Centre	Essential	Essential works include roof repairs, lighting, asbestos survey and kitchen upgrades.	£175,000
	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, furniture, garden environment and staff facilities.	£26,000
Chesham Short Breaks Centre	Essential	Essential works include a lift replacement.	£95,000
	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, hoists and specialist equipment and garden environment.	£6,100
Hillcrest Day Centre	Essential	Essential works include structural works, a lift replacement, windows, doors, flooring, lighting, toilet refurbishments, outdoor repairs, kitchen upgrades and an asbestos survey.	£550,000
	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, furniture, garden environment and staff facilities.	£50,000
Seeleys House	Essential	Essential works include structural works, lighting, boiler replacement, windows, toilet refurbishments, outdoor repairs and kitchen upgrades.	£340,900

	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, hoists and specialist equipment and garden environment.	£23,000
Spring Valley Day Centre (High Wycombe area)	Essential	Essential works include structural works, toilet refurbishments, lighting, windows, doors and outdoor repairs.	£250,000
	Service Facilities	Desirable upgrades include sensory equipment, furniture, garden environment and staff facilities.	£37,000
Total			£1,750,000

14. What property works have been carried out in the past five years at the adult social care council-run centres?

Significant property works carried out between 1 April 2019 to 28 November 2024 can be found in the table below. This table includes some works which were in progress as of 28 November 2024.

Centre	Significant Works	Total Cost
Aylesbury Opportunity Centre	Works included upgrading fire alarms, installing new boiler parts, roofing works, replacing windows, improving emergency lighting, drainage works and installing new fire doors.	£50,000
Buckingham Day Centre	Works included roofing, water system upgrades, wall installation, external repairs and decoration, roof tile replacement, and entrance door installation.	£72,000
Burnham Day Centre	Works included roofing, fencing and heating.	£30,000
Chesham Short Breaks Centre	Works included roofing, window replacements, door installations and fencing.	£96,000
Hillcrest Day Centre	Worked included roofing, water system upgrades, door installations, lift repairs, fire safety works, toilet repairs and garden works.	£240,000

Seeleys House	Works included roofing, fire safety works, electrical works, installation of a new boiler, fencing, door installations, outdoor and garden repairs, lighting, water system upgrades, ceiling works and redecoration.	£199,000
Spring Valley Day Centre (High Wycombe area)	Works included gas works, door installations and heating replacements.	£16,000
Total		£703,000

Finance and savings

15. In the consultation information it is stated that currently the costs of the in-house services are higher than paying external providers. Can you provide further details on this?

In the Cabinet report (para 1.11), it is explained that “the cost of running council-run day centres and overnight respite is higher than externally run comparable services. An analysis of spend per person based on needs was completed. The Council-run service has additional overheads from running seven sites with a low number of people supported at each centre with higher staffing costs.”

In the initial revenue savings modelling that has taken place the external market costs for clients with similar levels of needs that the Council commissions were used as a comparison.

There are several factors that contribute to the council-run day centre costs being high in addition to the under-utilisation. Employee costs within the Council would include a 23.6% employee contribution towards the staff in the Local Government Pension Scheme, which is not a cost borne by providers in the external market, as well as wage costs. The Council is also responsible for building overheads of the seven sites as well as the staff costs.

16. What are the financial savings from this proposal?

The potential estimated revenue saving for adult social care is in the region of £740k from option 2 (the current preferred option). This is an estimate based upon considering the following factors such as staffing costs; the costs of transport for adults with care needs; and the costs of external market provision.

The table below provides a breakdown of the areas of potential savings identified in the initial analysis to date:

Savings Description	Estimated Annual saving	Comment
Total Day Savings	-£178k	This figure is based on calculating the staffing numbers and costs required to run the in-house service in the future model; as well as considering the latest external market costs to meet needs. This is a net saving position after taking into account a provision for potential increased transport costs.
Total Overnight Savings	-£294k	This figure is based on considering the cost of external market provision to meet needs for comparable care.
Total savings from Buckingham site alternative SEND college use	-£268k	This figure is based on considering repurposing the use of the Buckingham site as a SEND Independent College. Currently there is a need for increased educational facilities for in county provision for 18-25 year olds with SEND. Where there is insufficient in-county provision to meet needs, consideration is given to alternatives such as residential educational specialist facilities. Residential provision is significantly more costly than providing in-county day educational facilities. Where residential educational provision is required for 18-25 year olds the costs are normally split between children's and adults services. This figure is based upon the potential saving for adult social care.
Total	-£740k	

This analysis is estimates only and there are several variables (staffing costs, market costs, transport costs). Following the consultation process, the estimated savings will be updated based upon the latest financial information available. It is anticipated that these initial estimates will change and that updated information will be presented to the Council's Cabinet to support an informed decision.

17. If you are proposing to move people to another day service, they will need the same level of staffing, so how would you make a saving?

The revenue savings for the Council estimated from the preferred change option open to consultation is achievable through a range of factors: reduced management overheads and building running costs from operating from a smaller number of sites; reduced costs from utilising external provision; and through one centre being repurposed to support young

adults with SEND who would otherwise require more costly residential out of county provision.