
To: Petitions Board

On: 25 March 2024

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Petition – Milldale Day Opportunities Services

1. Summary

1.1 The Council has agreed procedures in relation to the submission of petitions including parameters for determining valid petitions and those areas where petitions would not be valid.

1.2 All valid petitions are to be submitted to the Board for consideration and a summary report is to be prepared on any petitions which are not considered to be valid in terms of the procedures. It is for the Board to determine the validity of such petitions.

1.3 A petition containing 3,798 signatures has been received from Ms S McGrattan in the following terms: -

“This petition is in regards to the merger and closure of Milldale Day Opportunities Services. We as a family (parents, carers and service users) feel that this service is vital to the well being of the vulnerable adults that attend this centre.

I remember very well being at the proposal of the closure of Greensyde to form the Milldale and was reassured that this would be a long lasting service building. 10 years later this is being taken away from our families. We urge the decision making team to reconsider this decision.

A large majority of adults that attend the centre are autistic. This means the need a very structured life that is dependent on routines and all aspects of life remaining the same. Something as small as a staff member being off sick is enough to distress these vulnerable adults. We have concerns regarding the building of the Mirin that some of our service users would move to. And feel the most able bodied service users will be placed in the community to find activities to take up their day.

This caused a deep distress to me as my daughter Jemma may not be physically disadvantaged. I fear she will be walking around Paisley going to places that will not interest her. Taken away from the friends she calls family and won't have the social element in her life that Milldale have vitally provide for her. I know her and many others will recoil and their quality of life will diminish.

I have fought all my life for inclusion and feel that this decision to close and merge the Milldale centre is the opposite of what I believe all these adults have the right to have. I believe that there has been a £14 million overspend that the council needs to claw back on. However, I also believe that this overspend was not the fault of the older adults with disabilities group. Which further more seems increasingly unfair for them to be targeted and effected.

I also have autistic nephews that attend Riverbrae School. This is a huge worry as to where will be available for them in the future."

- 1.4 The Head of Corporate Governance, Renfrewshire Council considers that the petition is valid and notes that at the meeting of Council held on 29 February 2024 a recommendation to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership on this matter was agreed in the following terms:-

"Renfrewshire Council calls on Renfrewshire HSCP to stop its current review and proposals for Adult Day and Flexi-care Services and to prioritise work on other areas of its budget options. The Fraser of Allander Report into disability services makes it clear that individuals with vulnerabilities were impacted significantly by Covid. This requires time and consideration to be taken, on how these services are shaped for the future and to place the service users at the heart of these discussions."

- 1.5 The Head of Strategic Planning and Health Improvement, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership has provided a response to the concerns raised in the petition and where appropriate suggested actions to resolve them as outlined below: -

"As part of Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) Sustainable Futures Programme, Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board (IJB) considered a number of savings proposals at its meeting on 24 November 2023. This included a proposal to merge the Mirin and Milldale Day Services for people with learning disabilities. This proposal is amongst the first in a rolling programme which will be presented to the IJB aimed at addressing its significant budget gap over the coming financial years.

This proposal was considered as a way not only to achieve financial efficiency, but to modernise the service provision and protect key services to people with learning disabilities and unpaid carers in Renfrewshire. The IJB agreed that further work should be undertaken to engage with key stakeholders, develop an Options Appraisal, and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) which would inform a decision by the IJB at its meeting on 22 March 2024.

Overall, the proposal seeks to merge two large Day Services, Mirin and Milldale, whose buildings are based within The Lagoon Centre, Paisley and The On-X Centre in Linwood respectively, to:

- Support the modernisation of Renfrewshire Learning Disability Services to ensure that provision aligns with long-standing Scottish Government policy, good practice, and with the commitments agreed by the IJB within its Strategic Plan for 2022-25, and the Developing Models of Care paper agreed by the IJB in June 2021.
- Focus on eligibility only for people who have family-based support, with a flexible, personalised approach for people who have Supported Living care packages.
- Maintain service priority for people with family-based care, which will offer:
 1. Continued building-based provision in a single location, for those who need to be supported within a building base some or most of the time
 2. No change to each individual's current service allocation
 3. No change to current transport levels
 4. A focus on continuity to support as service users adjust to the transition to the new model
 5. Enhancement of the existing community outreach model, through increased staffing capacity, to offer increased flexibility and personalisation.
- Identify the most appropriate base for the new merged day service, taking into account: proximity and accessibility; future opportunities; access to community activities and support; and the analysis of views and rationale from stakeholder feedback.
- Offer a personalised approach to assess alternative supports which may be required for those in Supported Living. This would include consideration of where there would be opportunities to link in with HSCP community outreach activities.

A key factor in considering this proposal is the reduction in service demand across both Mirin and Milldale, and the opportunity to provide support within a single service base and to reduce associated costs from delivering with two bases and two staffing establishments, making the most efficient use of resources.

Service registers have reduced by 27% in recent years from a peak of 190 to the current position of 139. This reduction began in 2019 and continued in 2020 when services closed due to the pandemic. As services reopened, some individuals did not want to return to their day services, as they were being supported in an alternative way that better suited their needs.

As noted, the proposal supports the modernisation of Renfrewshire Learning Disability Services to ensure that provision aligns with long-standing Scottish Government policy. Increased staffing capacity within new service model will support increased personalisation, flexibility, and community outreach opportunities (building on those already provided from the two bases), whilst retaining a building-based strand of provision.

Throughout December 23 - February 24, as agreed by the IJB, a series of planned engagement sessions have taken place, both in person and online. This has included five in person and two online sessions with unpaid carers and Welfare Guardians. This gave the opportunity for people to share their views and ask questions related to the proposal. A wide range of feedback has been recorded and has informed the completion of the Equality Impact Assessment. The invitation for HSCP Officers to attend a public meeting arranged by an Elected Member was declined as the IJB approved engagement process was underway.

Should the IJB approve the proposal, the HSCP provides assurance that there would be appropriate planning time with service users, families/teams/stakeholders to plan and support transition; and that staff will work with people in supported living to ensure their care plan continues to meet their needs/identify new opportunities.

The HSCP acknowledges and is sensitive to the needs and views of the people and families affected and will continue to engage and strive to work collaboratively.

Of particular note to the Board is that a petition for a Judicial Review of the IJB's decision in November 2023 was recently lodged with the Court of Session, on 4 March 2024. As such, at its meeting on 22 March 2024 it will be proposed that further consideration of this option will be paused as the IJB will require legal advice on the content of the Judicial Review."

- 1.6 The role of the Board is to consider the petition and take the appropriate action in respect of the petition which will be one of the following:
- (a) that no action is taken, in which case the reasons will be specified and intimated to the petitioner;
 - (b) that the petition be referred to the relevant director/and or policy board for further investigation, with or without any specific recommendation; or
 - (c) refer the petition to another organisation if the petition relates to that organisation.
- 1.7 The principal petitioner, together with one supporter has been invited to attend the meeting.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Board considers the petition.
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3. Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** - none
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** - none.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - none

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** - none
10. **Risk** - none.
11. **Privacy Impact** - none
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – not applicable

List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper - 1 Petition

Author: Euan Gray, Senior Committee Services Officer
Tel: 0141 487 1099 Email: ewan.gray@renfrewshire.gov.uk