

Appendix 1

Closure of Aberwheeler Nurseries April 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

<Title of the proposal being assessed>

Contact: Alaw Pierce, Complex Disabilities

Updated: April 2015

1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A service review or re-organisation proposal

2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

The decision means that Aberwheeler will cease trading as a DCC garden nursery business and work opportunity service. Aberwheeler is not a profitable business and the Council cannot afford to keep running it as a business - The purpose is to modernise services with a view to making them more sustainable. This will mean closing Aberwheeler Nurseries (winding down the business) and relocating the service users to a range of alternative, independent sector and in-house settings.

There will be changes for the non DCC staff working in the service. These staff are employed by an independent agency via a contractual arrangement with DCC. DCC is not responsible for the employment of these staff.

There will be a change for Service Users as they will need to be re-located to another setting, with different support staff. See later for more detail on the impact of the changes for service users

There will be a change for some young people coming up through transition, as until recently Aberwheeler was able to offer work experience for school pupils.

There will be a change for the local community and the garden nursery customers, as they will no longer be able to buy goods from Aberwheeler, but it is important to note that running a garden nurseries business is not part of the council's statutory functions.

3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

Yes	There will be an impact on a number of adults with learning disabilities, (and their Carers) who are part of the Denbighshire community. There will also be an impact on the local community in the Aberwheeler area and on the support staff who have been working there.
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4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)

<p>A consultation event was held on 1 March 2014 for service users of all DCC work opportunity services as part of a review of services – the event was facilitated by Mencap.</p> <p>A desktop analysis of all Aberwheeler service users was carried out in January 2015, with a view to identifying potential suitable alternatives for each individual. This included an analysis of where people live, the kind of activities to which they are best suited and their level of need.</p> <p>More detailed face to face assessments are being carried out by Social Workers. This includes a separate impact assessment of each service user, which records their perspective on the impact of the decision to close Aberwheeler in relation to travel, contact with friends, language, community and physical needs.</p> <p>The findings from these assessments are being collated and will inform the commissioning arrangements for alternative support.</p> <p>Notification of the changes was planned, coordinated and carried out in a sensitive manner so as to minimise the level of distress for service users, their families, and the staff, and also to ensure that people were fully and accurately informed of the changes in a timely manner – this involved synchronised telephone calls and notifications</p>

5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)

Although the decision means that a DCC business/service will close, suitable alternative services are being located for each of the service users, in consultation with them and their families. As such, nobody should face a reduction in service provision.

For some service users the alternative will be closer to home so they will have less of a distance to travel. (For example a site is being sought in the north of the county for the garden control service as most of the garden control service users are based in the north of the county)

For some, the access will be better - this will have a positive impact for people who find access difficult because of a physical or sensory impairment.

The alternative services will offer more interaction with other groups of people and with the public, eg woodland skills

The decision to close Aberwheeler has undoubtedly prompted some people to consider options which will promote their level of independence (eg some are looking for community based jobs via the Jobfinding service, one person has located work at Cefndy enterprises)

6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

Often people with learning disabilities find it more difficult to understand change and to cope with the effects of a change. Changing the service, the location and the staffing arrangements will have a disproportionate negative impact.

Steps are being taken to identify and minimise the impact of the changes on each individual. For example, alternative services are being commissioned which will minimise the confusion and distress - eg by commissioning a service which is close by, which is familiar to the service users, and where they can go with people they already know.

The transport arrangements for some individuals will remain the same - again to keep distress and confusion to a minimum. (For some, we are looking for a base closer to their home addresses)

The impact assessments indicate that the impact of the decision varies - for some people there will be a positive impact, no impact for some and for some it will be negative (and likewise with different aspects - transport, friendships, access etc)

There will be an impact on their family Carers - The individual impact assessments carried out by the Social Workers have highlighted that some carers are anxious about the uncertainty caused by the decision to close Aberwheeler and are sad to see the services based there come to an end. Some of these Carers are elderly and are anxious to ensure that the person they care for will still receive some sort of a service - Carers have been contacted individually and have been reassured that alternative services will be offered

7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.

Yes	<p>The decision to close Aberwheeler has not changed, but the commissioning of alternatives will be informed by service user needs and preferences and by the impact assessment data</p> <p>The decision has been amended in that the closure date has been extended to 30th June 2015 - this will allow sufficient time to wind down the business, and to secure suitable alternative services and will mean that service users are not rushed into a move - given the difficulties that people with learning disabilities sometimes face in coping with change, pacing the transition should help minimize their levels of anxiety</p>
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8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?

Yes	The impact assessments carried out on each person will be monitored and reviewed following their move to a new setting
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Action(s)	Owner	By when?
review of impact assessment following the move	Alaw Pierce	01/10/15
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
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9. Declaration

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	01/10/15
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Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
Alaw Pierce	10/04/15

Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.
