

# **Proposed Decision to be taken by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care on or after 3 June 2016**

## **Consultation on the Proposal to close Warwickshire Employment Support Team (WEST)**

### **Recommendation**

That the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care approves the commencement of a public consultation on the proposed closure of the service.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has identified the need to make around £92million savings by 2018. This figure has arisen from reductions in the grants we receive from Government, pressures from inflation and additional pressures from our changing population. On 6 February 2014 WCC agreed a medium term financial plan covering the period 2014 – 2018. This medium term financial plan underpins the delivery of our One Organisational Plan.
- 1.2 The One Organisational Plan (OOP) requires savings of £280,000 from Warwickshire Employment Support Team (WEST). The proposal in the OOP is “based on exploring alternative delivery, funding or decommissioning the service”. Alternative funding has not been secured in part due to additional financial strains on public finances. In order to realise the savings, WEST service would need to decommission all council funded operation which would require the full closure of the service. If this decision were taken, attempts would be made to seek opportunities to secure some of the specialist skills held by WEST staff within other services.
- 1.3 Warwickshire Employment Support Team (WEST) is a countywide service for people with a learning disability, Autism or Asperger’s who want to find and sustain paid work. The specialist team help find people full and part-time employment by providing:
  - expertise on disability employment and benefit issues;
  - personal profiling and job matching;
  - developing the skills people need for employment; and
  - on-going support to employees and employers.
- 1.4 WEST customers are considered to be undertaking ‘supported permitted work’ through the support of the service. ‘Supported permitted work’ is work where a person claiming certain benefits is supervised by the local authority or another specified support service which provides or finds work for people with disabilities. Supported permitted work has no restriction on the hours worked and can be for an unlimited period. Individuals cannot earn more than £115.50 a week after tax and national insurance deductions.

- 1.5 The proportion of adults with a learning disability in paid employment is a national measure which forms part of the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF 1E). In Warwickshire, performance has been positive with an increase year on year from 5.8% in 2012/13 to 11.1% in 2014/15, significantly above average. This has been achieved through a range of measures.
- 1.6 WCC has a statutory duty to provide information and advice about the availability of employment support for disabled adults under the Care Act 2014. There is also a duty to provide information and advice about provision for young people aged up to 25 in preparing for adulthood, including finding employment, under the Children and Families Act 2014. These duties do not require the Local Authority to provide the additional support provided by WEST.
- 1.7 The Care Act 2014 *does* require the Local Authority to meet specific individual needs where an adult has been assessed as having a need arising from/relating to a physical or mental impairment or illness, who is unable to achieve at least 2 outcomes (work/employment is listed as an outcome) and this is likely to impact significantly on their wellbeing. This would be considered as part of an assessment for Adult Social Care.
- 1.8 There are approximately 150 WEST customers at any one time supported by the 8 individual (6 FTE) employment support staff, including the manager.

## **2 Proposal for consultation**

- 2.1 Consultation regarding the closure of the WEST service may yield a negative response as experienced by similar recent consultations. However all possible steps will be taken to try to ensure current and future service users receive support by other means.
- 2.2 Alternative avenues of support include:
  - Greater use of the Learning Disability Wellbeing Hubs for North Warwickshire, South Warwickshire and Rugby.
  - Signposting customers to support available through Job Centre Plus such as Disability Employment Advisors and Work Choice.
  - Signposting customers to support available from community and voluntary sector organisations such as Scope, Mencap and Remploy.
  - For customers living in an accommodation with a care setting; ensuring their commissioned support provider enables them to meet their employment outcomes.
- 2.3 The main stakeholders and the nature of the consultation proposed are:
  - Current WEST customers – facilitated face to face group meeting. Individual meetings may be held where customers would find a group situation challenging.
  - Future WEST customers and their families - facilitated face to face group meeting mainly through Special schools.
  - Employers of WEST customers – informed by letter and invited to submit views.

- Other related service providers (eg Learning Disability Hubs, Job Centre Plus, Groundworks) – contact by letter signposting to web based questionnaire.
- Community and voluntary sector organisations - contact by letter signposting to web based questionnaire.

We will vary the consultation methods to ensure equitable involvement and access and to allow diverse voices to be heard. We intend to use an independent organisation/consultant for face to face consultations with WEST customers.

- 2.4 The consultation will run for a period of 8 weeks and consultation results will be summarised in a future report. A preliminary equalities impact assessment has been undertaken to ensure equality of opportunity and participation for customers and their families and so that any negative impacts can be mitigated against. This will be updated in light of the consultation to take account of any further information received.

### 3 Conclusion

- 3.1 WEST must deliver a challenging savings requirement. The only option to achieve the full savings required is to close the service and support customers to source alternative avenues of support, the majority of which are not funded by the Local Authority. The consultation results will inform the next steps.
- 3.2 To advance this, it is recommended for the consultation for closure to be agreed. The indicative timetable is as follows:  
 Consultation start: June 2016  
 Consultation close: August 2016  
 Report to Cabinet: October 2016  
 Implementation of Cabinet decision: November 2016 onwards

### 4 Background papers

None

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Councillors Compton, O'Rourke, Perry, Rolfe



APPENDIX C

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/ ANALYSIS (EqIA)**

**Warwickshire Employment Support Team (WEST)**

**Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis (EqIA)**

<b>Group</b>	People
<b>Business Units/Service Area</b>	Early Help and Targeted Support
<b>Plan/ Strategy/ Policy/ Service being assessed</b>	WEST
<b>Is this is a new or existing policy/service?</b> <b>If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment</b>	New review of existing services (OOP savings)
<b>EqIA Review team – List of members</b>	Elaine Coates, Annette Skermer
<b>Date of this assessment</b>	First assessment – July 15 Updated assessment – March 16 Second update – May 16
<b>Signature of completing officer (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)</b>	
<b>Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users and/ or members of the public?</b> If yes please flag this with your Head of Service and the Customer Relations Team as soon as possible.	Potentially, yes. Removal or reduction in service could trigger complaints
<b>Name and signature of Head of Service (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)</b>	
<b>Signature of GLT Equalities Champion (to be signed after the EqIA is completed and signed by the completing officer)</b>	

**A copy of this form including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Group Equalities Champion and the Corporate Equalities & Diversity Team**



*Working for Warwickshire*

## Form A1

### INITIAL SCREENING FOR STRATEGIES/POLICIES/FUNCTIONS FOR EQUALITIES RELEVANCE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION, PROMOTE EQUALITY AND FOSTER GOOD RELATIONS



High relevance/priority



Medium relevance/priority



Low or no relevance/ priority

**Note:**

1. Tick coloured boxes appropriately, and depending on degree of relevance to each of the equality strands
2. Summaries of the legislation/guidance should be used to assist this screening process

Business Unit/Services:	Relevance/Risk to Equalities																													
	Gender			Race			Disability			Sexual Orientation			Religion/Belief			Age			Gender Reassignment			Pregnancy/ Maternity			Marriage/ Civil Partnership (only for staff)					
State the Function/Policy /Service/Strategy being assessed:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WEST - public	✓					✓	✓					✓			✓	✓					✓			✓			✓			✓
WEST - staff	✓					✓	✓					✓			✓	✓					✓			✓			✓			✓
Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty for example or our most geographically disadvantaged communities? <b>If yes please explain how.</b>																											YES			
All customers are vulnerable (LD and Autism). This group has lower levels of employment than the wider population.																														
Are your proposals likely to impact on a <b>carer</b> who looks after older people or people with disabilities? <b>If yes please explain how.</b>																											YES			
All customers will have a carer who may be negatively affected if the service is removed.																														

**Form A2 – Details of Plan/ Strategy/ Service/ Policy**

<b><u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u></b>	
(1) What are the aims and objectives of Plan/Strategy/Service/Policy?	<p>The purpose of the WEST team is to help find people full and part-time employment by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expertise on disability employment and benefit issues;</li> <li>• personal profiling and job matching;</li> <li>• developing the skills people need for employment; and</li> <li>• on-going support to employees and employers.</li> </ul> <p>The service is required to make substantial savings as part of the medium term financial plan, which includes the full budget for the operation of the service.</p>
(2) How does it fit with Warwickshire County Council’s wider objectives?	<p>Corporate outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our economy is vibrant, residents have access to jobs, training and skills development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Our economy provides quality jobs and unlocks entrepreneurship</li> <li>○ Our young people are supported to meet their needs and aspirations</li> <li>○ Our residents learn throughout their lives, are skilled and ready for employment and fulfil their potential</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The health and wellbeing of all in Warwickshire is protected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Our residents enjoy an enhanced quality of life</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Resources and services are targeted effectively and efficiently whether delivered by the local authority, commissioned or in partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The council’s budget remains balanced and resources are managed effectively</li> <li>○ High quality needs based public services are deployed effectively and efficiently no matter how they are provided</li> <li>○ Risk and change is managed effectively</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



<p>(3) What are the expected outcomes?</p>	<p>The current outcome for the WEST team are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased employment rates among adults with LD and autism</li> <li>• Improved health and wellbeing for customers</li> </ul> <p>The full impact of the proposed decommissioning of the service on service users will be informed by the consultation; however opportunities will be sought to source alternative avenues of support wherever possible.</p> <p>Statutory duties regarding information and advice about the availability of employment support for disabled adults under the Care Act 2014 will be met through alternative delivery.</p>
<p>(4) Which of the groups with protected characteristics is this intended to benefit? (see form A1 for list of protected groups)</p>	<p>Under the Equality Act 'Disability' is a protected characteristic and is defined at s.6 of the Act as a physical or mental impairment that has substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Mental impairments may include mental health conditions ( e.g. depression), learning disability (eg Autism) and learning difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia).</p> <p>Services are targeted and support adults with a learning disability, autism or Asperger's.</p>
<p><b><u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</u></b></p>	
<p>(1) What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the plan/ strategy/ service/ policy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National guidelines, benchmarking (ASCOF), data and research.</li> <li>• British Association for Supported Employment (BASE)</li> <li>• Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)</li> <li>• Countywide data provided by Warwickshire Observatory</li> <li>• Ofsted Inspections</li> <li>• Job centre and DWP information</li> </ul> <p>Local information can be gathered from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service delivery data, both local and county statistics</li> <li>• Customer feedback</li> </ul>
<p>(2) Have you consulted on the plan/ strategy/ service/policy and if so with whom?</p>	<p>Formal local consultation is being undertaken on the proposal to close the service. Specific arrangements are being made to ensure this is accessible to current and potential WEST customers.</p> <p>Information has also been gained from consultations on the learning disability statement of intent and the all age autism strategy, which are both highly relevant.</p>

(3) Which of the groups with protected characteristics have you consulted with?	We will be consulting with service users and potential service users, their parents and carers, employers of current service users and other related services supporting adults with LD, autism or Asperger's on this proposal.		
<b><u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u></b>			
(1) From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group which could amount to discrimination?  If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RACE</b></p> <p>BME communities have lower rates of identification of LD compared with the England average, however rates of identification are higher (especially of severe forms) among people with Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage - however the population is small in Warwickshire.</p> <p>There is no known negative impact from any of the options presented.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DISABILITY</b></p> <p>The current service is exclusively used by adults with LD, autism or Asperger's. We know that employment rates for this group are significantly lower than the general population.</p> <p>8 staff have disabilities</p> <p><b>Closure of the WEST service would adversely affect adults with LD, autism or Asperger's.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GENDER</b></p> <p>Approximately 60% of people with a learning disability in Warwickshire are expected to be male. Autism is also more common among males.</p> <p><b>Closure of the WEST service would adversely affect more male customers.</b></p> <p>The majority of current WEST staff are female (8 out of 10)</p> <p><b>Closure of the WEST service would adversely affect more female staff members.</b></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</b></p> <p>There is no known negative impact from any of the options presented.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AGE</b></p> <p>69.7% of people with a learning disability are estimated to be between 18 and 64 years of age. WEST customers are across this whole age range.</p> <p><b>Closure of the WEST service would adversely affect people of working age.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GENDER REASSIGNMENT</b></p> <p>There is no known negative impact from any of the options presented.</p>

	RELIGION/BELIEF	PREGNANCY MATERNITY	SEXUAL ORIENTATION
(2) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?	There is no known negative impact from any of the options presented.	Research has shown that the number of people with LD who are having children is increasing. No current customers are affected.	There is no known negative impact from any of the options presented.
(3)What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (this should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)	<p>WCC would continue to meet statutory duties relating to information and advice through alternative means, such as the LD hubs. WEST is a non-statutory service.</p> <p>WCC must make savings of around £92million by 2018. In order to realise the necessary savings as part of the One Organisation Plan the WEST team would need to be decommissioned. If the service is not decommissioned and does not make these savings other more essential services would be negatively impacted on.</p>		
(4) How does the plan/strategy/service/policy contribute to promotion of equality? If not what can be done?	<p>As part of the proposed service closure we would seek to ensure employment support is part of all contracts for services supporting adults with LD, autism or Asperger's</p> <p>Current WEST service: This service promotes equality in access to employment and supported employment for adults with a learning disability, Autism or Asperger's. WEST also liaises with Employers to raise awareness of the benefits of employing a learning disabled, Autistic or Asperger's adult both from an equality and business perspective and provides practical support to support WEST customers and Employers to overcome equalities concerns.</p> <p>As part of the proposed service closure we would seek to ensure promotion of equality is part of all contracts for services supporting adults with LD, autism or Asperger's</p>		

<p>(5) How does the plan/strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>Current WEST service: WEST carry out an ongoing range of activities aimed at the promoting good relations between a variety of groups involved in the 'supply chain' of support to vulnerable adults. These include statutory stakeholders, families, educational providers and businesses.</p> <p>As part of the proposed service closure we would seek to ensure promotion of good relations is part of all contracts for services supporting adults with LD, autism or Asperger's</p>
<p>(6) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?</p>	<p>The county of Warwickshire is a mix of rural and urban, which can present transport problems for customers who live in some of the small villages with no public transport. We can use 'access to work' when the customer finds a job but not to access the WEST service in order to support customers to prepare for work. Public transport is used where available.</p> <p>If the proposed closure of WEST goes ahead the remaining employment support available through the LD hubs, job centres and other local voluntary sector organisations would face similar challenges.</p>
<p>(7) What are the likely positive and negative consequences for health and wellbeing as a result of this plan/strategy/service/policy?</p>	<p>Current WEST service: WEST aims to unlock potential and so positively impact on health, wellbeing and economic prospects of its customers. Businesses also thrive having a positive impact on our customers and society.</p> <p>New customers can be very depressed, over/under eating and low self-esteem making them more vulnerable in society. Working gives our customers an extremely positive boost to be an active part of society. The importance of this has been validated through extensive research whereby customers are known to experience key factors associated with health inequalities.</p> <p>The proposed closure of the service and subsequently all activities geared to maintain the education, training and successful employment outcomes would represent a potentially significant and negative consequence for the health and wellbeing of our customers and their families who rely on WEST to provide practical support to improve life chances.</p>

<p>(8) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact on population health? (This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)</p>	<p>Current WEST service: WEST aims to support adults with LD, Autism and Asperger's to overcome disadvantages associated with adverse health, provide specialist support and through positive outcomes (training/employment) improve health and well-being. Health action planning linked to person centred employment support is an important feature of the WEST service.</p> <p>As part of the proposed service closure we would seek to ensure promotion of equality is part of all contracts for services supporting adults with LD, autism or Asperger's.</p>
<p>(9) Will the plan/strategy/service/policy increase the number of people needing to access health services? If so, what steps can be put in place to mitigate this?</p>	<p>Current WEST service: WEST supports adults with LD, Autism and Asperger's to live active lives and therefore reduces the likely need for additional health services. Employment is known to enhance mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Closure of the service would be likely to increase the number of customers seeking to access health services as their health and wellbeing would be adversely affected by the withdrawal of support to gain or sustain employment.</p> <p>As part of the proposed service closure we would seek to ensure promotion of health and wellbeing is part of all contracts for services supporting adults with LD, autism or Asperger's.</p>
<p>(10) Will the plan/strategy/service/policy reduce health inequalities? If so, how, what is the evidence?</p>	<p>Current WEST service: WEST plays a proactive role in liaising with statutory partners and others to manage health inequalities. It is observed that there is a beneficial and tangible link between customers once referred to WEST who enjoy better mental health due to an optimistic life and work outlook. This service therefore makes a positive contribution to reducing health inequalities.</p> <p>Health inequalities are likely to increase between adults with LD, Autism and Asperger's and the wider population due to the loss of support to access employment which will negatively affect health outcomes.</p>

**Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review & Monitoring**

If No Further Action is required then go to – Review & Monitoring

(1) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.

**EqlA Action Plan**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Resource requirements</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Develop consultation plan	Peter Hatcher Elaine Coates	June 16		
Review proposal in the light of the consultation	Peter Hatcher	Sept 16		
Review EQIA after consultation	Elaine Coates	Sept 16		
Review all contracts for adults with LD, Autism and Asperger's to ensure they maximise support.	Becky Hale	Dec 16		

(2) Review and Monitoring  
State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

**‘An Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (date three years from the date it was assessed).**