

## Appendix 1.1 Additional Comments on the Questionnaire

<b>Proposal 1: Q5.1: If you have ticked 'other', please specify in the comment box below</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 2 respondents.</b>
another carer
I rang it for a carer who needed help
<b>Proposal 1: Q10: Anything else you feel is important?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 3 respondents.</b>
anyone running the service needs to have a comprehensive knowledge of all types of needs/services across adult social care
As well as on-line access it is important to have people to speak to in person & on the phone as many disabled & older people do not want on-line access. The service needs to be staffed by trained staff who are qualified to carry out assessments of need & have the knowledge to signpost people to the right services. People do not fit into neat boxes of either having learning disabilities, being physically disabled or having a sensory impairment. We need staff who are aware of holistic needs, not just one set of needs
Autism
<b>Proposal 1: Q11: Can IAS be improved in any way?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 3 respondents.</b>
For people like me it does not exist - and ignores our substantial - severe needs.
I don't think it will be improved by farming it out to the voluntary sector. Most voluntary sector organisations in Merton are focused on one "client group" or another. they do not have the expertise or knowledge to address a range of complex needs & signpost effectively. this will lead to people not having needs met or being shunted round from one organisation to another.
There is always room for improvement
<b>Proposal 1: Q13: Any further comments on IAS proposals?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 15 respondents.</b>
As a pensioner I am very concerned about the possibility that educational offers may be reduced/stopped. This is not how a 'civilised' society should support its elderly
Assessment of need is a statutory duty for the local authority. By closing the service and sending it out to the voluntary sector with no extra funding is a total devaluation of the assessment process. It shows no understanding of the complex needs people have. they don't fit into neat boxes. With no extra funding the voluntary sector will be using resources that would otherwise have been used for different purposes. What will be the processes for ensuring staff are qualified and trained and that a consistency is provided across organisations. This quality assurance monitoring will have a cost.
Closing team will have detrimental & knock on impact on the lives of those needing assessment/support.
Do not understand what Initial Access Service is
Don't know enough to make a valid comment
Emergency access must be protected
I am a vulnerable disabled adult (Autistic) By law you have to support me. I am totally isolated, I barely function. This is no life, I wish I could die. There is no care - there are no services!

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I am appalled that the jobs of a highly professional team are likely to be replaced by volunteers across a variety of settings who will not provide the consistency of approach and support that comes from this dedicated team. Merton Link is not a solution. That team is under a lot of pressure anyway and my experience of them is they do possess the level of empathy required to support people enquiring about access services and providing advice on care issues.
I don't know what that is, I wasn't aware it existed so have never used it.
If this is to work it's crucial that information on who to contact and how is made widely available particularly for people moving into the area, those for whom English is a second language etc. This needs to be via the Merton website and community information boards (eg libraries, doctors' surgeries). It's not clear how people with complex needs that span many parts of the voluntary sector will be catered for.
It's crucial that information on who to contact is widely available across the borough - eg via doctors, libraries, schools etc. Voluntary sector bodies will need to have excellent communication with each other and the council if this is to work.
Many free hours are given by volunteers in organisations helping people to remain INDEPENDENT. But we have to have trained staff to oversee the activities, food, etc. They need very little funding and it would be a false economy for council to stop funding these lifelines for many vulnerable older people. If they remain indoors on their own, it will be a drain on other services. False economy because they would deteriorate mentally, All surveys show that Loneliness leads to depression, depression to bad diet and bad diet to dementia in older people.
Never heard of it.
Proposal OK provided the service is monitored
There is no access now - how can you cut nothing?
<b>Proposal 2: Q14.1: If 'other', please specify</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 4 respondents.</b>
I attend All Saints for a physical not mental disability
I support people who do.
I was unaware of them. They had never been mentioned by any social worker
There are no services, for autistic adults.
<b>Proposal 2: Q15.1: If 'other' please specify</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 11 respondents.</b>
As a widow I am the sole carer for my daughters and this is the opportunity to get away from me. When she's at the centre she can make choices without me having to make them for her
Development/confidence building
Go out to do essential exercise, and receive help with physio exercises
My daughter is at All Saints to do the above plus I work full time and need her to go to the centre to be looked after as she can't be left alone
Sports, computer skills, general knowledge
Therapy
This will depend on what is identified in people's care plans
To enable my son to take part in exercise that is essential for his physical health
<b>Proposal 2: Q21: Any else of importance to you or service user?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 11 respondents.</b>
Anything would be a start.
Community Centres will be able to assist with active learning, fun activities for people with learning disabilities.
Due to heart and back conditions my son needs to take part in regular exercise, and also do formal exercises set by the physiotherapist - these take place during day centre hours.
Opportunity to attend appropriate community activities in my local area where my mother

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works and pays tax
Services should be designed to meet the needs identified in peoples care plans. These services should recognise that many people who need these services need a consistent approach. They want familiar staff who understand their needs. Using volunteers to provide day centre activities will result in inconsistencies & high turnover. it is not acceptable to assume that volunteers have the skills to offer these activities. The activities at day centres are just there as nice things to do. They are there to meet people's needs. Saying that day centres will still be there but with fewer activities means that people's needs may not be met and volunteers may not have the skills to provide activities in a way that meet the needs of people with complex needs.
Sorry but we have completed this as far as we are able
staff who have known my son for many years a familiar and safe environment that I trust brilliant communication between centre and home place where specialists (eg physios, psychologists, OTs) can observe/help people
Support...
The day learning centres provide a necessary framework to Kent's week. He is a regular attendee at All Saints. He uses Highpath frequently when other activities are not functioning
Would like a hot meal
Because it helps them to freedom and also learn new skills
Care should be a priority.
day centres already run with too few staff - reducing numbers even further will result in less activities, larger groups, less chance to access community activities, and a less safe environment - emergencies which occur quite often (eg sudden illness of client) will prove challenging to cope with. Clients will become bored, and this may affect their behaviour. Any reductions in hours at day centres will have a severe impact on family carers' lives as it will mean even more time spent at home - centres only run for about 5 hours a day now.'Independence' is not possible for the vast majority who need support with travel and taking part in activities - and this means more, not less, staff. Overall this will have a very negative impact on the quality of life of both clients and carers.
Doesn't need respite
Don't understand it.
I am a learning disability person. Both my parents are disabled and can not look after me nor guide me on the correct path. I highly rely on my care worker Nick Carpenter and others at Highpath Centre. At least I get to meet my friends and learn a few things which would not be possible if the Highpath centre was not there. I look forward to going there every day.
I do not believe cuts should be made to the most vulnerable in our community, other cuts should be considered for example the proposal to introduce wheelie bins for waste disposal. I feel insulted. The council puts waste before our disabled people and elderly in the borough.
I don't feel it should just be a baby-sitting service. I believe it should be fun, a place to learn, to access community to meet peers. The JMC has been the above. I believe it should continue in the same way
I have no idea what is being proposed to replace what I access now
I strongly disagree because I don't think you can provide this service in a way that meets people's needs by using volunteers and I find it insulting to disabled people that you imply that activities at day centres are merely there to give people something nice to do while they are there. Albeit that disabled people like 'something nice to do'
It is accessible with a lot of fun
It is fundamental for the care of clients with a learning disability to know they have a plan for each day - this answers all manner of other problems, like loneliness, boredom, lack of exercise, company etc.

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Losing qualified staff will lead to problems with regard to safeguarding. Volunteers however well-meaning cannot replace those with the expertise needed to run day centres and understand those attending the day centres who they may have worked with for years.
Merton already provides a skeletal LD service. People with LD that requires a one-to-one are stuck within the confines of a Day Centre all day. They have little or no interaction in the community. I don't understand why this service is being rationed yet again.
No proper impact assessment done on what cuts would mean on the lives of people. No alternatives and choices tested and put in place FIRST.
Not being aware of them makes it difficult or impossible to comment
Removing staff from the centres (which have seen a steep reduction in staff numbers over the last five years anyway) will inevitably mean a decline in both the quality of activities, the overall safety level, and the ability to take groups out of the centres - all of which are crucial. Clients will become bored, carers will worry about their enjoyment/safety, and centres will become holding bays rather than places people really enjoy going to. Centres often have to deal with crises - in particular sudden illness - and there won't be sufficient staff to cope. Centres provide a good quality service at a very low cost, and this is a false economy that will result in more behavioural problems amongst bored clients, a decline in fitness with less outings, and stressed and over stretched staff. And it has the potential to increase the chances of a major incident affecting the safety of clients. Volunteers can't replace experienced staff.
The centre is a place for learning and having fun.
The proposals would make life difficult and in no way help to my son to lead a fulfilling life.If you want to save money how about cutting Jed Currans salary?
There are already times when clients are put all day in front of a TV watching a video - I think with the cuts proposed these days will become even more frequent. This is not what my daughter needs - she needs and requires structure -
Unless the afternoon times are extended it is pointless putting afternoons!! And if you extend afternoons you are adding to your costs!!
Want to support people with learning disabilities to live full and active lives but unsure which option provides best value for money in such difficult times.
We would find it very hard to keep our son motivated without day service
Whilst we agree to the proposal, there is already a shortage of staff in the special care unit of JMC which affects the visits to the Diamond Riding establishment at Oaks Park for which we pay. This is one of the few activities in which our son can participate. If the session is cancelled by JMC due to lack of staff, we lose the money we have paid.
Why do the most vulnerable most in need pay the highest price?
You talk about volunteers stepping in, but in my experience, this doesn't happen
<b>Proposal 2: Q24: How can the Learning Disabilities Day Services be improved?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 20 respondents.</b>
Again, the lack of shortage of "hands on" staff is detrimental for the clients.
Be any good
By having more staff
By not cutting the services available now as this would be detrimental to the service my daughter receives
I have no knowledge of it,I doubt it is very good but you want to make it worse.
I think it is doing a marvellous job at present and all the staff at Highpath are very dedicated and kind towards me
I think they are fine how they are
I think using community centres more is worth trying.

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I think you need to talk to people and their families and those who have needs but find alternative ways to meet those needs, about what they want and how they want those needs to be met and I think you should do this in a meaningful way, not by asking a series of closed questions.
If there are more cuts I see no way of improving services
Instead of cutting staff I think you should increase them
It is valuable for our clients to learn skills they can perform on their own especially when aging parents cannot fill the gap - like computer literacy, hobbies etc Perhaps more attention can be given to this aspect
Merton has only a very small percentage of people with LD who access it's services compared to other Boroughs (wish I could remember what the % was) but I do know it's not a lot! Therefore, why is it struggling to provide quality LD Day Services? LD Services can be improved if Merton re-allocated its priorities 1. Reduce the number of external consultants of 5 & 6 figure salaries by 15% A lot of them are a waste of my tax contributions. Their "expertise" are not needed but they are on tight contracts that are expensive to dissolve. Sort it out. 2. Reduce the number of Council Meetings where there is a lot of talking and NO Actions. Why are local Councillors turning up to meetings unprepared? 3. Sort out the Transport System - this is messy, uncoordinated and a real pain. This is one area where I feel a subject matter expert should be roped in. There are far too many unnecessary journeys/empty coaches driving around in the Borough.
More access to cheap/reliable transport. Sufficient staff to enable more small group trips into the community, maybe using public transport
More access to the community using either minibuses or public transport - and with sufficient staff Similarly, more use of community facilities eg YMCA,leisure centres, park activities Options for extended days.
More activities ... IT program
They should include walkabouts or outdoor activities
What Merton is proposing is entirely the opposite to what the SCIE is proposing! Why is Merton one of the Lowest Spending London Boroughs? Merton should be Increasing its Budget NOT Decreasing
Yes it will help a lot
Yes through proper consultation and review involving users of service. Their voice must be more than heard but truly acted upon.
<b>Proposal 2: Q25: Any further comments on the Learning Disabilities Day Services proposals?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 13 respondents.</b>
Any cuts that will have a big effect on the service users as most of the service users including my daughter suffer with Autism and I believe they need their routine and daily activity timetable to remain the same
Continuity of staff is of the essence for these vulnerable clients and is good economics in the long run. If we lost the respite care provided by JMC during the day, very quickly we would be unable to care for him at home and he would have to go into residential care which would mean deprivation to him of a great deal of what social life he has ie., family and friends interaction and outings also a large increase in costs to the tax payers.
Cutting what has been proved to be one of the most cost effective services is the wrong way to go! LD day centres take up very little of the total budget. Concentrate on ways to reduce the vast sums spent on residential care/support - why not take more of it in-house? If day centres are allowed to decline, as they will under these proposals, a vital local resource will disappear to the detriment of clients and carers alike.
I am worried that the day services may not continue in the future
I feel this day service centre should continue to help people like myself. I can't imagine what I would do without it.

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Merton's day centres are substantially cheaper to run than those in comparable boroughs, and are a cost effective way of providing daytime activities for large numbers of people. But if the quality of this service is allowed to deteriorate, as it would under these proposals, there is a danger that a very valuable resource will be eventually lost as excellent staff will leave. Recent trends show many boroughs reintroducing community hubs on economic and social grounds. Volunteers should always be used as an addition to trained, experienced staff, not a substitute.
Same as for the
Talk to & consult with disabled people, their families and organisations representing them about what people want.
Volunteers are most valuable - their help is best if they can be consistent in attendance
What choices exist? How have these questions been asked of users, have they been told what if this service didn't exist, have other options been tried and tested to generate real choices?
Yes, leave it alone. It is rationed enough already. Would the Chief Executive consider a cut in his salary? No, I didn't think so!
Yet again services are being withdrawn - entirely the reverse of the SCIE proposals
You cut because you don't care
<b>Proposal 3: Q26.1: If 'other' please specify</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 3 respondents.</b>
At home, independently with support from family
Kent is grateful to be in a self-contained flat under social services in Venus Mews. Carers visit him on 4 days per week and stay for 3 hours to oversee his meals, his money, his chores, his cleaning. An essential service, which makes it possible to have an independent life
My son lives in shared living Mon - Sat morning then is home for the weekend and goes to JMC from home - then taken to shared living for the rest of the week. If he is ill he comes home
<b>Proposal 3: Q31: Are there any ways your needs reviews could be improved?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 18 respondents.</b>
By and large my son's reviews have worked well - the right people have been present, he is well known at his centre, and anyway communication between them and us is good so any problems tend to be ironed out quickly, rather than waiting for reviews.
By really considering holistically what I need to live independently, not functionality but having real choice and being given real control over my own life.
I am happy with the way my reviews have been conducted - at home with others to assist - I have never had any difficulties so far.
I am happy with the way my reviews were conducted at home with assistance.
I didn't feel that the starting point for the review was my daughter's needs but rather the budget. It was clear that the priority was to make savings
I have very substantial needs - yet you continue to ignore - the fact that Autistic adults exist at all.
I would like to be assessed for independent living in shared accommodation
It needs to be every year because situations and needs change
It was well done - and a good summary report It was helpful as the following were present: key worker from All Saints, social worker, Kent's parents
My daughter last had a review 2 YEARS ago
My last review was very good. No problems.
My son would want all those involved in the everyday life to attend reviews
Reviews generally useful round-up and time to discuss possible changes in my son's activities. Excellent communication with day centre means problems tend to be dealt with as they arise rather than waiting for reviews.
The increased cost of living should be taken into account. I haven't had an increase in my care package in 5 years despite asking for one. I am struggling to cope financially. I do hope that you WILL LEAVE MY ILF FUNDING ALONE when it's transferred to you in the Summer.

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There were already not enough resources to provide the services we needed and now the Council wants to make more cuts, more people are going to be affected by inadequate services.
They did not listen to me or value me they judged, blamed me - and did not have a clue about autism.
To have more people that are important to me and care for me at my annual review
Yes. More chairs maybe.
<b>Proposal 3: Q33: How can the reviews of care packages be improved?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 17 respondents.</b>
No comment
A constructive review more often than every 2 years would be helpful as would a carers review
Because these reviews are in the context of savings & cuts and not reviewing what people really need It is simply disgraceful.
Crucial that there is input (either in person or writing) from everyone concerned. Discussions on possible changes in routine/activities should take place before the actual review to allow time for clients (and carers) to understand/consider them. Written records of reviews should be available much more quickly.
Don't know the details about the reviews of the care packages
Genuine reviews that look at a client's needs and work out the best way to meet them are crucial. Needs change over time, as do local services on offer. But this proposal, under the cloak of increasing independence, seems to be geared to reducing peoples' use of day centres, which is why I disagree with it as it stands.
I believe there should not be any cuts
I do not feel the reviews need to be improved in the way thy have been managed - at home with an experienced social worker who understands my needs.
I do not receive services & these questions are totally geared towards those that do, but I work with & have many friends that do. Independence is NOT about doing things for yourself physically. It is about choice about how these things are done for you, by whom and when. Everyone will be different about where they want reviews to take place and those choices should be recognised. Similarly everyone will have a different view about who they want to be with them when the review is carried out. Reviews should focus on needs & not on resources & people should be given information and choice
It is necessary to ensure that all the hours of the carer are usefully employed. In Kent's case, this happens
Maybe
Once every 12 months is fine
People want supported independence with continuity and familiar people around them. I have worked within Social Services and there are a lot of vulnerable people out there that need support and if this service is cut too much, people are going to be put at risk, services need to be provided to those that need them. There are good Voluntary Service out there but they need financial support to provide the services
Review = cut
see above
There is no care!
There should be a fixed annual review with the possibility of easily and conveniently arranging an interim review if circumstances change. At the moment, it is uncertain when reviews take place although lip service is paid to the idea that they should be annual. In addition, information and views should be sought from all interested parties, but too often the process is vague and uncertain, some information is in writing and other is not and it is hard to pin things down. Follow up is patch and inconsistent. The draft review conclusions should be circulated for comment quickly with a view to agreement or disagreement being



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recorded whilst people can still remember the discussion. Implementation or other next steps can then follow promptly.
<b>Proposal 3: Q34: Any further comments on the review of care packages proposals?</b>
<b>This open response (Free text) question was answered by 10 respondents.</b>
A genuine review needs to look carefully at the client's needs and how they can be met. It should never be used as a means to impose cuts. As adults with LD live much longer and develop many health problems their support needs go up - if carried out properly, reviews would identify the need for considerably more resources rather than less!
I am cynical about the motives underpinning the proposal for the review of care packages and fear it is a covert attempt to diminish the services offered and the quality and cost of the care packages that will be offered in the future.
I am cynical over the motives underpinning the proposal for the review of care packages and fear it is a covert attempt to diminish the services offered and the quality and cost of the care packages that will be offered in the future.
I am frightened that I will become lost in the system. As my parents get older I worry about what will happen to me when they are not around
Is it lawful?
Overall levels of service must be based on the needs of individual customers and carers
Some residents fall upon hard times, both financially and health wise. This has to become someone's responsibility but support has to be provided economically. It is a fine line to get this managed correctly. If cuts are made, please continue to monitor and review as not all changes are good and standards quickly drop and as a result people suffer. Please be careful how these cuts are made to the detriment of the local resident's health and well-being.
The needs of many people using day centres are going up, due to adults with LD living longer and having more health problems as they age. Genuine reviews would probably indicate more support was needed in the majority of cases. Increasing peoples' independence often requires more resources (eg for travel training, one-to-one support while out in the community, support for volunteering etc) rather than less.
We know cuts need to be made, but there has been no consultation about why this level of cuts has to come from social care. There is no indication that an impact assessment has been done on the cumulative effect of cuts over the last few years or of the impact of these proposals together with other currently proposed cuts such as adult education. Disabled people want to be involved in the decisions the council make, not just an afterthought with a series of meaningless questions to answer. Please STOP, THINK and CONSULT
You do not care!