

	Questions / Feedback	Our Response
1.	<p>What are the plans for the current building / land?</p>	<p>There are no plans at this point in time. In the event that it is not required as a base for people with learning disabilities, the Council would consider whether there is any other operational use for the building.</p> <p>If there is nothing suitable, we are likely to retain the building due to the adjoining land and would be looking to let it for a use compatible in town and planning terms. Any other use would require planning consent so planners would have a say over appropriate use.</p>
2.	<p>What would a typical day look like?</p> <p>It would be helpful to have a comparison of a typical week during Jan/Feb and July/Aug based on the service provided currently and the new model.</p>	<p>Please see the attached sample activity planner from mcch. This reflects examples of activities from real life (anonymised) cases.</p> <p>The list of activities is not exhaustive and every effort will be made to tailor activities to an individual's needs.</p>
3.	<p>100% of those present want a consistent base which meets the needs of their children including space and equipment for personal care</p>	<p>We absolutely agree that there need to be accessible places across the borough where personal care can be properly provided and funding has been allocated to develop these places and also ensure that they are available outside of office hours.</p> <p>We suggest that community bases, accessible resources that are shared with the community, should be our aspiration but it is right to also consider whether a consistent base as part of a shared community resource could be provided. We consider it important that support should be about being able to do as much for yourself as possible, maximising opportunities to progress through life and achieve outcomes. It should also be about using venues that already exist in local communities and supporting people to achieve outcomes within these places and spaces.</p>

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		<p>We recognise that people may need to access more formal support services at certain points in their lives than others. It is our intention to facilitate a market where a range of day opportunities are available to support this.</p> <p>We recognise that there are some people with high and complex needs who may need access to building based services. However, at this stage, we want to keep an open mind about the potential to meet everyone’s needs within the community. For example, through investment in Changing Places.</p>
4.	<p>Where will the 3 changing places facilities be set up?</p> <p>Will this necessitate people travelling to get to them?</p> <p>Concerns were expressed about the availability of appropriate bathroom facilities in the community.</p>	<p>This is currently being explored. We have been successful in securing funding from the Council’s Capital Programme. Property Services have been asked to investigate potential locations for Changing Places in the Borough.</p> <p>Ideally, the facilities need to be in the North, Middle and South of the Borough and could be installed in existing community facilities. They would have extensive hours of operation so that they can be used in the evenings and at weekends. Of course any shared base would also have facilities to manage personal care.</p>
5.	<p>How much flexibility will there be for last minute changes, e.g., if people change their mind about what they want to do on the day?</p>	<p>This will be a more personalised service with flexibility for people to change their minds.</p> <p>People with a learning disability should be able to change their mind about what they want to do, in much the same way as we all do. However, as we experience in our own lives, if you change your mind at the last minute, it can be difficult to re-arrange things at short notice. Much will depend on the relationship with Providers and how flexible they are in accommodating these changes.</p>

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6.	<p>Can there be an emergency / fall back base?</p> <p>What happens if people “Kick off” in the community – where do they go?</p>	<p>Contingency plans will be put in place for every individual. The providers will ensure that management plans are in place</p> <p>Within the community, there are safe havens and other places of safety that can be used in an emergency. A good example of this is the Safe Havens scheme, developed with the Police by Bexley Mencap to provide safe havens at over 150 shops and businesses across the borough for people with learning disabilities. But a shared community base is also a possibility.</p>
7.	<p>What are the contingencies for ‘bad days’ when people are not co-operative?</p> <p>What contingency plans will be in place for parent’s emergencies?</p> <p>How will unplanned events be managed?</p> <p>What if activities can’t take place due to weather conditions or if the activities are otherwise not available?</p> <p>How will last minute staffing illness / change be managed safely and smoothly?</p>	<p>This will be further explored with providers. We want to ensure that providers can offer good support in spite of the challenges people present.</p> <p>Contingency planning will be explored with providers and in dialogue with family carers and individual service users. This comes down to ensuring there is good one-to-one support, with contingency plans and effective risk management. We will aim to build contingency arrangements into a person's daytime plan and agree this with their family.</p> <p>With regard to staff illness, systems already exist to manage this kind of workforce challenge, for instance homecare services already deal with this on a daily basis.</p>
8.	<p>How will risks be managed?</p> <p>Has a comprehensive risk plan been developed, including covering named individuals and staff?</p> <p>What staffing levels are proposed to keep people safe?</p>	<p>Safeguarding and risk management is a fundamental duty of the Council, its partners and those who provide services. So a comprehensive risk management plan will have to be developed for the strategy as a whole and for individuals specifically. Risk management will inform our plans (we can’t have unsafe services) but using a ‘making safeguarding personal’ approach. It is worth reiterating that this has been done very successfully in many other locations.</p>

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9.	<p>What support will be available with transition? It will take some time if done properly. We need a transition plan / timetable.</p> <p>Routine – the majority of our children need routine to function. This is going to mean a significant time of transition – over which anxieties need to be managed and it will result in ongoing complex and changing arrangements that they will struggle to deal with.</p> <p>People with a learning disability can experience significant anxiety around new people and new places – these proposals sound like it will be a consistently changing timetable. Timings, places, who they are with, etc.</p>	<p>Our aim is to work with service users, parents/carers, mcch, and other providers to manage the transition carefully and sensitively. We recognise that parent / carers and service users themselves may be anxious about potential changes to their routines and we will work with you and via providers to gradually introduce service users to any new settings. Once service users have had time to adjust, we hope that their experience of community-based day opportunities will be positive with improved outcomes for them.</p> <p>We must offer more choice and control to people with a learning disability. They should be able to choose what they want to do to achieve their outcomes, where and when they want to go, and who they want to go with. This isn't about forcing them to do anything that they don't want to do.</p> <p>We want to work with a wide range of providers to develop a concrete offer that better meets the aspirations of people with a learning disability both now and into the future.</p>
10.	<p>How will brokerage work? What will mcch's role be?</p>	<p>If you have eligible needs, you may be entitled to funding from the Council to help you meet the cost of some or all of your care and support. This will depend on the outcome of a financial assessment. If the Council agrees to pay for some or all of your care and support costs, you will be offered a personal budget. Receiving a personal budget, including direct payments, enables you to choose the services which you want to buy and use. You can get help with managing your personal budget and access relevant information through brokerage. This includes helping you source the best support options available to achieve agreed outcomes and helping you to resolve problems that may occur with service providers.</p> <p>Mcch are one of a range of local providers. The challenge to day opportunity providers will be to make sure the services they provide are the type of services people with a learning disability and families will want to purchase.</p>

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11.	How will medication be handled?	<p>This depends on the particular needs of the individual service user and will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis as part of support-planning.</p> <p>Most clients are likely to be responsible for their own medication administration but may need some assistance, such as a reminder.</p> <p>If a client needs support to take a medicine from support staff, then the arrangements for this will need to be made absolutely clear prior to the commencement of any service.</p> <p>Providers will need to make sure that support staff are suitably trained in the administration of medicines (e.g., staff will need to know what the medicine is for, when it should be taken and what dosage should be given, how it should be stored and how to record the administration of the medication).</p> <p>Again, there are already procedures and safeguards for people who access community resources right now, but we recognise that this is on a different scale so we'll need to plan accordingly.</p>
12.	<p>How will transport work at this multi-base proposal?</p> <p>The KBC bus is a source of security and safety rather than exposure on public transport.</p>	<p>This can't work without the right transport solutions. Where it is safe to do so we should support people to use public transport but it is inevitable that some bespoke transport solutions will be required.</p>
13.	What is being done to make the public more understanding of people with a learning disability?	<p>We need to raise awareness about the needs of people with a learning disability within the community to prevent them from being treated badly. For example, this might include organisations providing training to their staff, making reasonable adjustments to services, or working in partnership with the police to tackle hate crime. This is a key theme in our Draft Learning Disability Strategy. This strategy aims to build on the things we are already doing.</p>

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		<p>Separating people with learning disabilities from their communities does not help the public to be more understanding and tolerant, so being seen as active participants, using the same services as everyone else, will help. Through our Learning Disability Partnership Board, we are committed to working together to make the lives of people with a learning disability in Bexley better.</p> <p>Each year, we hold a Big Health Day with NHS Bexley CCG, which is attended by people with a learning disability, their carers and health and social care professionals. The event is designed to encourage people who use health and social services to give their views on the services and to find out more about what is available to them.</p> <p>Through organisations, such as Bexley Twofold, we engage with employers to offer supported employment opportunities to people with a learning disability. As a result, Bexley has one of the highest levels of employment in the country for adults with a learning disability, known to the Council. Through Local College First, we are helping to support more young adults close to home, while continuing to develop their skills and abilities up to age 25. And we are increasingly supporting less people in residential care, enabling and empowering them to live with more independence.</p> <p>There are also a range of national and local organisations that campaign independently to raise awareness of learning disability and help to tackle the issues people with learning disability face (e.g., such as hate and mate crime).</p> <p>By continuing to do these things and building on them, we can make the public more understanding of people with a learning disability and break down barriers to inclusion.</p>

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14.	<p>Experience of the attitudes of others in the community, including public transport can be horrid. Whilst we have to venture out and deal with it at times, there needs to be somewhere safe to go for some of the day. Concern that the public are often not nice and they need to be able to get away from them some of the time.</p>	<p>Nationally (e.g., ‘Having a Good Day’ by Social Care Institute for Excellence), it is recognised that the traditional model of day provision, which has typically involved having a building exclusively used by people with a learning disability is no longer considered the best model because it leads to segregation based on disability and can increase misunderstanding and intolerance. Much in the way that society has adapted to be more inclusive for physically disabled people, so it needs to do the same for people with learning disabilities. That must include attitudes, which need to be challenged through both engagement and awareness raising and a robust response to discrimination and hate crime. Having a ‘base’ is also an option to consider.</p>
15.	<p>Community activities are not always available at peak times (or there is a decision not to go to them when they are busy in the holidays, etc). How would this be dealt with if no base to stay at?</p> <p>Crowds worry and upset people with a learning disability – it has implications for any timetable in the school holidays when activities usually accessed are too busy.</p> <p>There needs to be provision for people to eat their own food – not always allowed in cafes, etc.</p>	<p>It is important that local businesses and community facilities hear about the barriers they present, and what they can do to better serve people with a learning disability.</p> <p>With a bit of planning and engagement, it should be possible for reasonable adjustments to be made to these services. And of course having a base is one of the options that will have to be considered.</p> <p><i>‘Crowds worry and upset people with a learning disability’</i> is a sweeping generalisation but clearly some people (with or without a disability) can be nervous in a crowded space. Community support plans will need to reflect the individual’s personal needs including anxieties.</p> <p>Healthy eating will be encouraged – it is not sustainable for people to eat at a café every day and that wouldn’t be a common feature of support plans. There are many venues that can offer the opportunity for people to eat their own food and of course healthy meal preparation can be offered as an option.</p>

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16.	<p>What about those young people coming through the system from Local College First, Marlborough School, Bexley College, etc? Are they being included in consultation/plans?</p>	<p>Yes. The consultation on the Draft Learning Disability Strategy, which has a much broader focus than just day opportunities, was open to people with a learning disability, their parents/carers and people from other organisations who support them. We invited people with a learning disability aged 15 and over known to the Disabled Children’s Service or on our transition caseload to participate in the consultation. We also held consultation events with pupils/students at Marlborough and Woodside Schools, and the Learning Centre Bexley.</p>
17.	<p>How will friendships be maintained if no common base to meet up? How will friendships be made and maintained away from the larger group? A base provides a place (sometimes the only place) for people to meet each other and socialise (and be supported to do so). It’s a safe and supported start to independence.</p>	<p>People with a learning disability will be encouraged to maintain their existing friendships and develop new ones. By accessing a range of day opportunities, people with a learning disability will be able to take part in various interests and activities, learn new skills, meet friends, develop relationships and socialise. The evidence shows that this is more likely to be successful through an inclusive approach, rather than through a traditional building-based day service. For example, a lot of socialising usually takes place in the evenings and at weekends. We need to ensure people have the opportunity to develop friendships (not just with other learning disabled people) and can benefit from a wider support network so that they are not socially isolated and are valued as equal members of the community.</p> <p>One option is for groups of service users to come together and jointly undertake activities, if they want to. Service users with personal budgets may wish to pool money together in a group to fund activities that meet the needs outlined in their support plans.</p>

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18.	<p>What impact on additional costs for people of increased community activity? What will the potential cost be to people with increased community-based activities? Lunch and drinks (where not allowed to eat own food), dietary requirements. Moving things to the community will increase costs for mcch and these will need to be passed on to the people using the service.</p>	<p>Mcch are one of our current local providers. We hope that personal budgets will help to stimulate the day opportunities market to create a more diverse and creative range of opportunities based on people’s needs.</p> <p>The challenge to day opportunity providers will be to make sure the services they provide are the type of services people with a learning disability and families will want to purchase. The day opportunities market will also need to ensure the services on offer represent good value for money. Our aim is that people with a learning disability will have more choice and control over what they want to do and when they want to do it. This includes choosing how much they want to spend. This might not necessarily incur additional costs, depending on what activities they want to do and what the market has to offer. The bottom line is we have to live within our means so it can’t cost more – but there is plenty of evidence that it doesn’t.</p> <p>There are no plans currently to change the Council’s charging policy.</p>
19.	<p>Is this a move towards parents needing to employ PAs (with all the work and worry that entails) and lose the support of mcch?</p>	<p>No. Employing PAs is already an option but there is no pressure on anyone to make that choice. Service users can choose to employ PAs, if they <u>want</u> to. Self-directed support allows them to employ their own staff <u>or</u> choose to use other organisations to meet their needs.</p> <p>The Council now have a number of providers who are able to support and enable people who have social care needs to identify, recruit and employ personal assistant(s) in accordance with their individual needs.</p>

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20.	<p>Planning and certainty are very important.</p> <p>Parents will have to deal with the behavioural issues resulting from change and uncertainty.</p> <p>Parents face uncertainty over what will happen day-to-day and last minute cancellations and the security of knowing their son or daughter is going to KBC will be lost.</p>	<p>Our aim is to work with service users, parents/carers, mcch, and other providers to manage the transition carefully and sensitively. We recognise that parent / carers and service users themselves may be anxious about potential changes to their routines and we will work with you and via providers to gradually introduce service users to any new settings. Once service users have had time to adjust, we hope that their experience of community-based day opportunities will be positive with improved outcomes for them.</p>
21.	<p>Parents lives will become more complicated and this will add to the daily worries parents face – well-being issues.</p> <p>This will mean more things to manage/more work for parents/carers.</p> <p>Peace of mind has been lost – parents are now worried about potential change.</p> <p>It will impact on their non-caring time (social, employment, health, other caring responsibilities, housework).</p>	<p>We recognise the pressures and particular responsibilities of caring. If you feel you need help, there is a range of support that you can access, including information and advice, support groups and carers breaks. The Council and NHS Bexley CCG have commissioned the Bexley Carers’ Hub, which coordinates support for carers across a range of voluntary organisations. Carers are entitled to a separate assessment of their needs and, if eligible, may be entitled to a Direct Payment.</p> <p>If you wish, you can complete a self-assessment on-line at the Bexley Care Hub and access a range of information and advice, tailored to your needs: https://carehub.bexley.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home</p> <p>In other parts of the country where community-based models of day opportunities have been implemented, carers have expressed similar anxieties at first but have then come to appreciate the benefits. If the transition is handled carefully and sensitively with good planning and engagement, we are confident that day opportunities will help both service users and their carers to lead fulfilling lives. And for carers this includes being able to have a life outside their caring role.</p>