#### Cabinet - 15 December 2021

# Review of internal and external day opportunities

**Portfolio:** Councillor Keir Pedley

Related portfolios: All

**Service:** Adult Social Care

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

#### 1. Aim

- 1.1. To update Cabinet on the progress of ongoing staff consultation and the continued development and reshaping of the in-house resource at Goscote, as part of an all-age agenda, concept, and evolving strength-based model.
- 1.2. Cabinet to consider the findings from the recent consultation "Meaningful Day opportunities" and give approval to engage with customers and stakeholders to develop and implement a model of strength based meaningful day opportunities across Walsall.

### 2. Summary

- 2.1. Consultation opened on the 25 October and after an extension, will end on the 22 November. Invitations to be part of the consultation have spanned across Children and Adult Directorates, in addition to internal and external stakeholders with an interest in Day opportunities in its widest sense.
- 2.2. Consultation has sought to seek views from a wide range of stakeholders across Walsall that either use community resource, directly provide, or directly assess people for a range of day opportunities; this was not restricted to traditional building-based day care. The views of current service users and potential future users (young people SEND aged 16+) as well as their parents/carers have been sought.
- 2.3. Supporting people with communication needs to have their say was important. As well as providing easy read versions, an accessible subtitled BSL video for the Deaf community was commissioned. Work with the local third sector partner

for the visually impaired was also pursued, to ensure they were also aware of the consultation and those they work with were encouraged and supported to respond.

- 2.4. A range of consultation methods were used to engage with a diverse audience. Methods included paper and online questionnaires (including easy read), face to face meetings at various locations and at different times of the day, meetings over Microsoft Teams and external market- place forums.
- 2.5. Whilst it is recognised that some people will continue to rely on building based centres to receive their care and support during the day, it is also acknowledged that some people do not wish, nor need, to access a building-based day care setting.
- 2.6. Providing inclusive, accessible opportunities for those residents with increased needs is not the sole responsibility of Social Care and we recognise the significant role others must play, e.g., resilient communities, leisure, community services; housing and supported living providers, transport providers and education and employment support.
- 2.7. Adult Social Care will share the findings of the consultation with key internal and external partners as part of the ongoing dialogue about services, local and national initiatives and to focus far more on the new ways of delivering outcomes, promoting a strength-based approach. National guidance from Skills for Care, the National Development Team for Inclusion (NTDI) and others emphasise the need to identify a wide range of opportunities within communities and to build upon their strengths and make better use of their resources.
- 2.8. Social Care in both Children and Adult Directorates are developing strength-based practice when delivering statutory functions as part of the Children and Families Act 2014 and Care Act, 2014, assessing people's strengths and wherever possible to meet their outcomes and aspirations more holistically by using their personal strengths and assets and those available in their community. Cabinet have received portfolio reports on strength-based practice across Adult Social Care in 2019 and it is with this in mind the agenda for meaningful day opportunities must continue to promote the objectives of a strength-based approach and maximise ordinary opportunities to maximise a person's sense of self-worth and place within their local community.
- 2.9. The intention has been to provide information that can assist all portfolios, not exclusively Adult Social Care, to be able to focus on meeting outcomes and goals through a mixed menu of options that are not necessarily delivered by Social Care, the Council or other statutory agencies.
- 2.10. Walsall has a plethora of active community and voluntary organisations who already deliver many forms of meaningful day activities and the recommendation is that they should be encouraged and supported to enhance their offer to local people.

- 2.11. COVID19 has provided us with an opportunity to see how the market can respond to changing demands. Our customers and carers have had to adapt and change during this period. We have witnessed some people wanting to try something new but for others this change has been difficult, and they want to return to their pre COVID-19 support.
- 2.12. Carers were also invited to contribute to the consultation as we recognise the importance of family, and none paid carers when considering the future. The questionnaires and opportunities for carers to contribute, focussed on their needs as carers.
- 2.13. The evolving model should be wider than traditional day services and should focus on meeting outcomes and delivering meaningful day activities building on people's strengths and community-based assets including green space, developing independent living skills, involvement in their local communities, volunteering, training, and employment opportunities linked to our PROUD Resilient Community priority.
- 2.14. Our aim is to ensure a menu of options are available which empower people to feel safe, fulfilled, and active members of the community. It is recognised that day care will still be needed by some people with an assessed Social Care need, but this may not necessarily be provided by Adult Social Care. The Council must support the market and stakeholders to further develop community-based options for the wider population as part of co-design.

#### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet to note the continued progress of the development of the All Age hub at Goscote and the recent consultation of internal council staff as part of that development.
- 3.2. Cabinet to consider the findings from the recent consultation "Meaningful Day opportunities" and give approval to engage with customers and stakeholders to develop and implement a model of strength based meaningful day opportunities across Walsall.

## 4. Report Detail – Know – The Consultation

#### Context

- 4.1. The consultation went live on the 25<sup>th</sup> October and ended on the 22nd November.
- 4.2. The consultation was delivered using a range of methods to reach a wide variety of people. These included paper and online questionnaires which were adapted to suit the audience e.g., current customers and their families and carers, potential customers of the future, specifically young people from our SEND population and their parent/carers. We also developed a questionnaire

for the wider public and stakeholders, our intention was to reach interested members of the public, providers, and colleagues from Health and the Council, community, and voluntary organisations.

- 4.3. Consultation needed to be accessible to those with complex needs including learning disabilities and dementia. We produced easy read documents which were welcomed by our customers, their carers and providers. The providers including private organisations and community/voluntary organisations facilitated discussions and supported people on a 1 to 1 basis to have their say. Members of the Deaf community who use BSL were able to contribute; we commissioned a BSL video with captions about the consultation and asked networks to share this with the community.
- 4.4. In addition, views of current providers of building based day services and community support such as supported living, extra care schemes were sought.
- 4.5. The consultation was publicised through the Council's communication channels including a media release, on our dedicated webpage (www.walsall.gov.uk/meaningful\_day\_opportunities) and using social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.
- 4.6. The Adult Social Care transformation programme recognises the need to consult with local people who use services and support, inclusive of young people preparing for adulthood; potentially living, working, and participating in community life and leisure as a young adult in Walsall.

#### Consultation findings

4.7. A detailed summary of findings (including figures) from the consultation with current adult service users, their parents/carers and key stakeholders is included in Appendix 2 and 3 and should be read in conjunction with the following key highlights. Consultation closed on 22 November (hence findings are subject to change).

#### Feedback from current service users (adults)

- 4.8. Results show that activities that encourage and support independence is important to people, as is learning new skills/improving existing skills. Making and keeping friendships and enabling parents/carers to have respite also scored high in importance.
- 4.9. Overall feedback from current customers (adults) demonstrates that people have a wide range of interests and enjoy many different activities. Whilst hobbies are important, being with family and socialising is a strong theme throughout.
- 4.10. In person/face to face was by far the most popular way to take part in activities, and public settings (indoor or outdoor) were the most popular places to do this. People suggested activities could take place in a variety of local venues and locations including parks, church halls and community function rooms. These

- broad findings support a community-based approach, however barriers to accessing community activities existed.
- 4.11. For many their physical health is the main barrier to taking part in community activities. Others highlight a lack of transport, mental health issues, communication difficulties and the need for support from another person. Some just did not know what was on offer.
- 4.12. Over half of all respondents were current users of day services and the vast majority said attending was very important to them. In particular, the social aspect of attending day services was the main reason given for day services being important. Work will continue as part of any forward planning, with the key provider market to help to reassure customers and their families and continue to work together to reshape the future.
- 4.13. Notably, views on doing more community-based activities rather than attending day services were divided. There was interest in community based activities as opposed to specifically attending traditional day opportunities, some of the uncertainty was inclusive of not feeling safe in the wider community, trusting new people and situations, therefore, as part of continuing to develop, facilitate and considering community inclusive opportunities, it if felt really important to involve and include end customers in taster sessions and support to access new things across the community, this is a positive way to introduce new concepts and real activities. A person-centred approach will be promoted and the introductions to community outcomes will be introduced sensitively for the confidence and trust to be built.
- 4.14. Some people could not see any benefit community-based activities might offer; however, others highlighted a range of benefits including improved mental health and well-being, having greater integration in the community where they could meet new people and make friends as such activities would benefit their self-esteem. Although barriers also exist, such as mental health issues, transport and the need for support were the most mentioned barriers to being more involved in community-based activities. Additionally, communication issues, health and mobility also featured.

#### Feedback from parents / carers of current service users

- 4.15. Feedback from the parents and carers of current service users mirrors the views of service users themselves. Providing a range of meaningful activities that encourage and support independence scored highest in terms of importance. Ensuring they had respite/free time was paramount in terms of enabling parents/carers to continue their caring role. The provision of good quality services and knowing the person they care for is in a safe place were often mentioned as things they need as carers.
- 4.16. Most parents/carers supported a more community-based approach to activities, many however did not. Activities that build confidence, integrate individuals in the community, build independence and offer opportunities to make new friends would be welcomed.

- 4.17. Comments from parents/carers who do not support a community-based approach show a lack of confidence in a community-based model and that such an approach does not suit everyone. Mirroring comments from service users, some say there are no benefits to the proposed approach, however many comments highlight benefits associated with providing respite and family /friendships.
- 4.18. Difficulties or challenges community-based activities might pose to the person they care for included the reliance on support workers, mental health issues and physical disabilities.

<u>Feedback from key stakeholders eg community and voluntary organisations, providers, health professionals, council employees</u>

- 4.19. Encouraging and supporting independence, teaching new/improving skills, helping prepare for adulthood, making and keeping friendships and enabling respite for carers were all seen as important by respondents. Most supported the move towards a more community- based approach.
- 4.20. Again, the main benefit a community-based model would bring is integration in the community and independence. Stakeholders highlight similar barriers mentioned by parents/carers (not knowing what is on offer, physical barriers that prevent access, transport issues and lack of confidence).
- 4.21. Overall feedback shows there is appetite for more community-based activities, however a range of barriers that may put off or prevent some people taking part exist. For some service users and their parent/carers, day services remain the preferred approach, something they feel comfortable partaking in a safe setting that supports their needs and surrounded by understanding staff and friends.
- 4.22. Stakeholders support the model but also identify barriers that need addressing. Across the board there is strong consensus that activities should encourage and support independence.

#### Internal provision at Goscote Hub

- 4.23. The consultation process for the staff based at the All Age Hub, employed to deliver the front facing provider outcomes, are currently in their formal consultation process that will enable the workforce to be closely aligned and streamlined to deliver a more seamless service offer inclusive of outcomes for Shared Lives; employment; day care for complex needs; enablement functions and crisis intervention calls under the domiciliary care regulation, thus developing a Provider of last resort option for the Council.
- 4.24. The process also forms part of the ongoing developments of the in-house resource since the introduction of an all-age approach in 2019.
- 4.25. All staff affected as part of the internal reshaping of the council's adult provider resource, are in the process of receiving their 1:1 consultation meeting and a robust process, inclusive of HR: Unions and the workforce, is in place.

- 4.26. Families who currently use the in-house services have received engagement events and communication with regards to the continued development and the reshaping of the All-age resource as part of the ongoing dialogue prior to and post COVID.
- 4.27. All relevant stakeholders of people who currently use the day care element of this in house resource, are continually supported as part of the ongoing dialogue and opportunities to help shape things for the future, whilst also being part of their own family members reviews and preparation for their future. It is important that we continue to encourage the inclusive approach to the whole persons needs and wishes, not just focussing on day care alone.
- 4.28. There are further opportunities to work more collaboratively across Adults and Childrens services. Working collaboratively helps to achieve greater efficiencies in time, effort, and a shared approach to future planning. Most importantly, it will result in an improved experience and outcome for our customers with a more seamless transition between Children's and Adults services as they prepare for adulthood, or as they move through different milestones that from time to time may benefit from the coordinated approach that all age Hub could and does bring.

# The External Market

- 4.29. The consultation to date has been inclusive of the following range of stakeholders: existing day opportunity and social club providers, direct payments recipients and their support services, supported living providers, community outreach/domiciliary care providers and other organisations from the community and voluntary sector. Stakeholders were made aware of the consultation and were given opportunities to contribute to the consultation and to support their customers and their family/carers to be involved
- 4.30. Adult Social Care commission a building-based dementia day service at The Watermill and a small number of community support packages which include building-based day support and outreach. Most day services and social groups are purchased with a direct payment. These services are chosen by the individual to meet their assessed needs and support them to reach their agreed outcomes whilst offering choice and control to individuals and their carers.
- 4.31. People are purchasing a selection of outcomes via their Direct Payments. The type of things people are accessing vary from small social groups in their local communities to larger community-based organisations.
- 4.32. There is a diverse market across voluntary and community organisations, private companies, and community interest companies. Walsall residents currently use their Direct Payment across 27 independent providers, who have an element of building based support as part of their offer. However, many of them offer this alongside outreach, digital activities, outdoor leisure activities, telephone contact and befriending.

- 4.33. During the pandemic we have seen providers respond positively to the need to adapt their offer and deliver a more diverse range of services and support. The offer during the pandemic has broadened with some providers offering alternatives to building based services for the first time. Many providers have chosen to continue some if not all these different methods of support which has been received positively by customers and their carers.
- 4.34. In addition to building based day services, we know that people are also accessing community activities and support through other means; Personal Assistants (PAs), outreach, supported living, community-based support /domiciliary care and using their Direct Payments to purchase alternative personalised options of support.
- 4.35. Further to the support accessed via Adult Social Care, there are community groups and local clubs that are part of the Council's Resilient Communities offer which Social Care do not assess for or fund but form part of many individual's support networks and contribute to meaningful activities.
- 4.36. We are also aware that there are numerous faith groups within the borough that provide day activities and invaluable support to their community; this includes activities during the day.
- 4.37. An active and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Walsall is also supporting people across the Borough in a plethora of ways. For some adults and young people, they are choosing to access this support independently without involvement from statutory services. Services from this sector are commissioned by both Adult and Children's Social Care and the wider Council to deliver this support to their communities.
- 4.38. The Council's Children's Directorate also commission day opportunity activities and short breaks from the external market and this is an opportunity to collaborate with Children's Services to ensure consistency in commissioning.
- 4.39. The external providers, especially those currently providing building-based day services as part of their offer, were very keen to be engaged in the consultation and contribute to future planning and influencing the model. Their contribution is summarised in **Appendix 3**.
- 4.40. Overall responses from the current external day opportunity providers demonstrates a commitment to continuing to offer a range of support both building based and accessing the wider community. The pandemic led to them delivering support in different ways to a purely building based offer and this was welcomed by many of their customers and carers. However, it is noted that for some customers and their carers there is an ongoing wish to access building-based services, Providers have been responsive to offering a menu of different options as customer and carers have benefited from a more varied choice of how to access their support.
- 4.41. Providers have plans for developing their services further post Covid and have highlighted ideas about expanding their offer to be more community based and

- to offer more digital solutions for those expressing this as a preferred option. It is evident that they recognise that "one size" does not fit all and they need to be responsive to their customers and carers aspirations.
- 4.42. More collaborative relationships between these organisations have been evident in the provider forums hosted by Adult Social Care Commissioners and this has been welcomed. Providers have expressed wanting to continue with this more collaborative approach sharing resources and partnering with community organisations and Council services to make better use of resources.
- 4.43. Providers supported the move towards community-based activities alongside building based day opportunities but recognised there were barriers for people accessing more meaningful activities including transport links, the availability of ring and ride, accessibility in community buildings particularly the lack of personal care suites. The need for the development of a wider range of sporting activities that were accessible was needed e.g., football, fishing, bowling, and swimming. Similarly, leisure activities including arts, crafts, cookery, health and wellbeing sessions were identified as a need, but they must be accessible and welcoming for those with LD, Autism, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, and dementia.
- 4.44. The overall response was a willingness to explore opportunities for greater partnership and collaboration and a desire to adapt their services as people expressed the outcomes they wanted to achieve and their aspirations.

### **Drivers for Change**

- 4.45. Since 2019 the internal service at Goscote has been utilised to provide support for customers in all age groups, in a model that focusses on time limited, strength-based approaches and local opportunities to maximise an individual's independence. The model complements the statutory responsibilities of both Children and Adult Services and for young people accessing the service, the model can aid a smooth transition from Children's to Adult services. The model is in line with both the Children's and Adult Directorate aim of offering a proportionate response to need and utilising people's strengths.
- 4.46. COVID-19 has inevitably led to changes in the delivery of day opportunities internally and within the external market. Services have had to respond to changes resulting from Government guidance, particularly during periods of lockdown and with the most vulnerable members of our society having to shield. Day services have been more innovative and delivered their support differently as they have only been able to deliver face to face services at limited periods during the pandemic and to smaller numbers of people. The market has shown itself to be resilient and open to delivering different models of support. Feedback from customers and carers during the pandemic has ranged from accepting and liking the alternative models to those wanting to return to business as usual. There have been positive examples of using digital media and technology to support people that we would not want to lose as we transition out of the pandemic.

- 4.47. Walsall Council is actively involved in an Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) task and finish group which is scoping current day opportunities across the region and exploring innovative models of delivery. Our regional neighbours are aiming for more consistency across the area for day opportunities and meaningful day activities; there are a range of models and significant differences in the area. Most Local Authorities are in the process of or considering reshaping the day opportunities agenda. A report to ADASS (Association for Directors of Adult Social care) was submitted in June and was accepted.
- 4.48. During Covid there was an ADASS survey and rapid learning review into the impact on support and services for people with learning disabilities and or/autism. The survey found that due to Covid restrictions there had been a 47% reduction in day centre capacity and Local Authorities had taken the opportunity to re-assess rather than simply re-open services, ADASS approved a document in October 2021 to support Directors and Commissioners to review the role of building-based provision following the lifting of most Covid restrictions. It also highlighted the principles and practices associated with successful transition to more diverse offers.
- 4.49. Similar themes can be found in the National Disability Strategy which was published in June 2021. A paragraph in the strategy reflects what Walsall is striving to achieve for its citizens "Disabled people's aspirations for their lives are no different from non-disabled people's aspirations.
- 4.50. We all want to live fulfilled lives. We want to be safe and healthy. We want autonomy about where we live, how we live, and with whom we live. We want to go outside, meet other people, and go places. We want to easily access the support we need to live an independent life and to feel confident that we won't lose it. We want to be able to participate in society, to be valued, to go to work. "(National Disability Strategy, 2021, Executive Summary)
- 4.51. The National strategy for autistic children, young people, and adults: 2021 to 2026 published in July 2021 mirrors many of the ambitions and prioritises outlined in the other national guidance that are relevant to the re-shaping of our meaningful day activities offer within Walsall. Walsall Adults and Children's Services are undertaking programmes to improve the offer to autistic people.
- 4.52. Members are asked to approve the recommendations for the service to explore opportunities for attracting new interest from local community groups and the voluntary sector to develop activities locally for people to tap into and enjoy time doing things that are meaningful and important to them e.g. swimming, fishing, art and crafts, football, learning more about nutrition, cookery and learning new skills.
- 4.53. Find ways to improve some of the things that could prevent people from living confidently, safely and accessing resources in their local communities. For example, we were told that transport links across Walsall are preventing people from accessing local activities Many people responding to the consultation raised this a challenge for them. Also, to discuss and explore with stakeholders'

- improvements that can be made to improve transport provision e.g., bus routes and Ring and Ride operating times.
- 4.54. Explore with resilient communities the opportunities to utilise existing community resources more fully by improve accessibility e.g., personal care suite and improving accessibility within their facilities.
- 4.55. Working more closely across Adults and Childrens Services to respond to the changes and developments identified and future need. These transformations will be captured in the revised Transition arrangements, Preparation for Adulthood policies and practices and the All-Age Disability model that is currently being developed.
- 4.56. As part of a person's Statutory review, assessment and care management teams will ensure that the review focusses on an individual's strengths and consider many of the ways in which a person could engage in meaningful day time activities as part of that. This will in turn encourage and promote social inclusion, independence, and accessibility to a range of universal as well as community-based resource.
- 4.57. Continue to engage with external providers to further develop the market and explore what options they could develop and offer to meet the outcomes and gaps people have identified during the consultation.
- 4.58. To discuss the opportunities for people with a wide range of needs to access well-being and healthy living programmes commissioned by Public Health.

#### **Council Corporate Plan Priorities**

4.59. The services and potential changes arising from the consultation will have a positive impact on the Council's abilities to deliver its priorities:

**People:** Have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities.

**Economic Growth**: Economic growth for all people, communities and businesses

**Internal Focus**: Internal services deliver quality and adapt to meet the needs of customer facing services.

Communities: Communities are prospering and resilient

#### Risk management

- 4.60. Risk of the adopted model not being embraced by individuals and their carers will be mitigated by a consistent offer of support, information and guidance and regular engagement and co-production in the future model.
- 4.61. Where our external market is reluctant to embrace change, they will continue to receive support to mitigate against provider failure as this remains our responsibility under the Care Act.

#### Financial implications

- 4.62. Adult Social Care will meet all costs associated with this process from within existing resource.
- 4.63. The findings of this consultation will be used to inform the development of detailed proposals to deliver the budget saving target of £500,000 included within the council's Corporate Budget Plan within 2022/23.
- 4.64. Proposals will provide new opportunities for collaboration across the Walsall Borough which will include new ways of supporting people, that may also realise longer term benefits.

## Legal Implications

- 4.65. The Care Act 2014 and the Children & Families Act, 2014, places a duty on the Council to promote the efficient and effective operation of the care market to meet care and support needs. The transformation of internal and external day opportunities is in line with this duty.
- 4.66. The strength-based model across children and adults' agendas will continue to be delivered and supported alongside the agendas to promote resilient communities. This continues to be delivered in line with legislation and national, regional, and local drivers for change.
- 4.67. Legal, procurement, HR and finance services will be consulted and engaged as required to progress this work safely and compliantly.

### Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.68. Procurement services will be engaged to ensure that any contractual changes or further commissioning activity is in line with the relevant legislation.
- 4.69. Walsall Council's Social Value Charter sets out clear principles for how the Council will work with Partners to improve economic, social, and environmental wellbeing and maximise social value benefits for people and communities in Walsall. One of the recommendations in this report is for Council officers to seek to take greater advantage of the Social Value offers being made to the Council, to help benefit vulnerable people living in Walsall.

#### **Property implications**

- 4.70. Goscote is the only internal property included as part of the meaningful day opportunities considerations.
- 4.71. There may be an opportunity to consider the community venues and assets across Walsall, to support the agendas linked to meaningful day opportunities. It is important to share the findings and suggestions for more collaboration across internal partners to help to improve and embed the transformation agendas re property and assets more widely. Any property issues will fall within

the remit of Corporate Landlord, so their involvement around any new initiatives need to form part of the recommendations

# Health and wellbeing implications

4.72. Transforming the services and developing the market enables the Council to promote independence, health and wellbeing and choice for customers and their carers. Significantly, choice, and meaningful activities and inclusion in community outcomes does impact positively on individuals who require support to manage their own expectations.

# Staffing implications

4.73. All staff working across ASC will continue to support local people to maximise their opportunities by focussing on the persons strengths as an individual and how those strengths play out alongside the strengths available within the local community resources.

# Reducing Inequalities

- 4.74. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is being reviewed and amended during the period of consultation and developing new ways of supporting the agenda for local citizens of Walsall.
- 4.75. The proposals works towards offering all people the opportunity of a fulfilled lifestyle using local initiatives and the wishes, needs and aspirations of the individual/s.

#### Climate Change

4.76. There are no issues within this report that will impact adversely on Climate Change.

#### Consultation

4.77. A diverse range of consultation tools and forums have been developed and delivered to seek the views of as many people as possible throughout the period of consultation.

### 5. Decide

Cabinet is requested to consider the content of this report and to agree the recommendations as outlined in section 3.

#### 6. Respond

Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations, Adult Social Care will work with internal and external partners to develop new ways of facilitating change and delivering community-based activities that assist people to continue to live safe and well in their local community. These will not be

restricted to traditional building-based activities, as suggested by participants of the recent consultation.

#### 7. Review

Monitoring, review, and reporting progress of the transforming day opportunities work stream along with the All-Age model will be undertaken through existing Directorate monitoring.

Appendix 1 – EQIA – Amended Nov 2021

Appendix 2 – Meaningful Day Opportunities consultation

Appendix 3 – Consultation feedback from external building-based day opportunity providers

#### Author (s)

Jeanette Knapper

**Group Manager Adult Resource** □ 07500028637

Jeanette.Knapper@walsall.gov.uk

Natalie Borman Commissioning Manager 01922 65 5426

Natalie.Borman@walsall.gov.uk

Anna King

**Corporate Consultation Officer** 

01922 652508

Anna.King@walsall.gov.uk

Signed:

Kerrie Allward **Executive Director** 

**Adults Public Health and Hub** 

Signed:

Councillor Keir Pedley

**ASC Portfolio holder** 

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