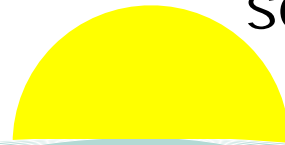




Review of the Attendance and Incentive Payments made to people with a Learning Disability in Conwy day and work opportunities services



Consultation Report
November 2011



Conwy Connect
for Learning Disabilities



Review of Attendance and Incentive Payments (Wages)

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The review of Attendance and Incentive payments is part of a larger programme of work to modernise Conwy Learning Disability Services.

Throughout this report we will refer to the Attendance and Incentive payments as 'wages'. This is because 'wages' is what service users call the money they get every week. However the definition of a wage is a contractual obligation from an employer to an employee which imposes conditions on both parties as per the minimum wage. In this context no service user attending Conwy day or work opportunities is in receipt of a 'wage'.

The need for modernisation

There are a number of reasons why we need to modernise Conwy Learning Disability Services.

- The number of people with a Learning Disability who need a service from Conwy is increasing every year.
- Over the next 12 months we have 37 children turning 18. These young people will need support from Conwy Learning Disability Services.
- Because of improved health care there are more and more people with a Learning Disability who are living longer and who are now in their 70's, 80's and even 90's.
- What young people with a Learning Disability want and what middle-aged and older people with a Learning Disability want is very different.
- Some older people have told us they want to 'retire' from services.
- Younger people want to work, live independently and have a good social life.
- Conwy need to make sure that carers have the help they need.
- Because of better awareness there are more people with Autism and high functioning Aspergers coming to Social Services for help and support. In Conwy it is the Learning Disability Service that gives this help.
- Social Services have a 'statutory duty' or a legal duty to do certain things. People who might need our help have a legal right to ask us for an assessment of their need. If we assess that somebody has an 'eligible' need then we have to do something to help.
- The money that Conwy Learning Disability Services has to spend this year is the same as we had last year. So we have more people to help with the same amount of money.
- To make sure that we can carry on meeting people's 'eligible' needs we must to make sure that we use the money we have in our budget very carefully.
- We are not allowed to spend more money than we have in our budget.
- The Welsh Government has told all Social Services across Wales that they need to modernise so that the services we have are 'fit' for the future and are what people need.

What is an Attendance Allowance?

This is 80p a day that all people who attend Conwy day and work opportunities services get for each day that they are at their service. This includes when they are on holiday or unable to attend due to sickness. Conwy, like most other Local Authorities have been paying this money for 30 years or more.

- The amount of money paid has always been 80p.
- This money is paid to service users whether they are doing leisure activities or work-based activities.
- The amount paid in Attendance Allowance in 2010/11 was £17,840

What is an Incentive Payment?

This is the extra money that people who attend Conwy work opportunities services get for each day that they are at their service. Conwy have been paying this money for about 20 years. The amount of money paid is different depending on where people go. People get their 80p Attendance Allowance plus;

- Pinewood £2.00
- Abergele Graphics £3.00
- Bryn Euryn Gardens £4.00
- CWAK £2.00
- Gardens Etc £4.00
- Llanrwst Project £2.20

The amount paid in Incentive Payments in 2010/11 was £26,536

What it costs to run Conwy day and work opportunities services

Conwy day and work opportunities services costs £1,040,630 a year to run. This does not include New Work Connections as this is a project funded by the European Convergence Fund.

Income (that's the money earned from selling goods like plants or providing a service like gardening) from the work opportunities projects in 2010/11 was £94,202.

The total paid in Attendance and Incentive Payments in 2010/11 was £44,376.

This means that taking account of the 'income' from selling goods and services, the cost of providing day and work opportunities services in Conwy in 2010/11 was £946,428.

Other important reasons to review the Attendance and Incentive Payments

- Attendance and Incentive Payments or 'wages' have been paid for many years. A lot has changed in services since these payments started.
- 20 years ago we didn't have Prospects, Acorn, Ashley, CREST, Llandrillo college courses, Direct Payments and lots of other things.
- Attendance and Incentive payments are not paid to people who go to Prospects, Acorn and Ashley so the system is not equal.
- Some people who go to Prospects deliver the Pioneer and are paid properly to do this by the Pioneer.
- A lot has also changed in Conwy day and work opportunities, Canolfan yr Orsedd and CBS have closed, we have a modern service at Canolfan Riviere, we have the New Work Connections project in Llandudno helping people with employment and we have Green Horizons, re-cycling project.
- People get different amounts of money depending on where they go for a service. It can range from 80p a day to £4.80 a day.
- Creative Crafts and Green Horizons have an income but service users are only paid 80p a day unlike other projects with an income.
- The system of payments is discriminatory and do not fit with an equalities approach. For example Gardens Etc and Bryn Euryn are male dominated environments and receive the maximum £4.80 a day. A larger percentage of females attend the day services and receive the lowest amount paid.
- We feel that the Conwy Attendance and Incentive Payments 'wages' is very confusing and 'old fashioned'.
- Conwy Learning Disability Services think that we should be concentrating on helping people to train for work and find jobs where they will be paid a real wage for a day's work.



Service areas - Conwy Day Services

Abergele Graphics in Abergele

At Abergele Graphics you can learn printing skills and work as part of a team that prints brochures, leaflets and flyers for local businesses and the local community. Abergele graphics is open from Monday to Wednesday.



Bryn Euryn Nurseries in Bron y Nant, Mochdre

At Bryn Euryn Nurseries you can learn how to grow and look after plants, make-up hanging baskets and planters to sell in the community and for 'Wales in Bloom' displays.

Communication Suite

At the Communication Suite you can learn new computer skills, learn to use the Conwy & Denbighshire People website, use a digital camera to take photos, a video camera & make DVDs. The Communication Suite is open Thursday & Friday.



Conwy Woodcraft in Mochdre

At Conwy Woodcraft you can learn woodwork skills by making small wood products, be part of a team that recycles wood into firewood which goes to local shops.

Service areas - Conwy Day Services



Gardens Etc in Colwyn Bay and the Tuesday Gardening Team in Llandudno

In these 2 projects you can be part of a team that travels around the local area gardening, learn how to use a lawnmower, strimmer, and other gardening tools.

Gerddi'r Dyffryn at Rhyd y Creuau near Betws y Coed

At Gerddi'r Dyffryn you can collect and recycle garden waste, be part of a team that travels around the local area gardening, recycle pallets into firewood for the local shops to sell.



Green Horizons

At Green Horizons you can learn why recycling is important. At Horizons you can work as part of a team that recycles products. If you are part of the Green Horizons team, you will have the chance to collect and recycle products from Conwy Council buildings.

Pinewood Products in Glan Conwy

At Pinewood Products you can make wooden garden furniture, make bird-tables, benches and picnic tables, and learn how to use woodwork tools like saws, hammers, electric drills and screwdrivers. The furniture is then sold to pubs, hotels and the public.



Service areas - Conwy Day Services

Bron Haul Services in Penmaenmawr

At Creations you can enjoy different types of creative activities, such as sewing, artwork, photography, and making seasonal crafts..



Creative Crafts in Bron y Nant, Mochdre

At Creative Crafts you can make, cushions and bags, rugs, garden ornaments and door-stops, and pet-bedding.

LLe Ni at Canolfan Riviere in Llandudno

A purposely designed project room to allow adults with autism to access a day service in an environment they are comfortable with. LLe Ni offers various activities across the week both in the project room and in the local community.



Basic Skills

Basic Skills can help you with things like, reading, writing, learning about money and cooking.

You can do basic skills either at home, in a library or somewhere else where you feel comfortable

Service areas - Conwy Day Services

Canolfan Riviere Day Services at Craig y Don in Llandudno

Offering various activities either in one of the 3 project rooms or out in the Community. Some of the activities you could take part in at Canolfan Riviere are:



Projects

- music and drama.
- soundbeam
- cookery
- walking
- relaxation and snoezelen
- healthy eating
- Wii fit
- womens health group
- seasonal crafts

Community based

- swimming
- walking
- horseriding
- croquet
- selling crafts in the community at local coffee mornings



New Work Connections

New Work Connections can help you to get a job by:



- improving your confidence and social skills
- arranging training and helping you to get qualifications
- teaching you to fill in your application forms
- helping you to find a job when you are ready
- helping you to get to and from your job
- giving you support in your job if you need it

What has already been said about attendance and incentive payments?

On the 15th June 2010, 60 Service users with A Learning Disability were invited to share their experiences of being on the receiving end of Social and Health Services in North Wales. The day was run by the Learning Disability Partnership regional Manager, Cathy Roberts along with representatives from the North Wales Advocacy organisations. The North Wales Partnership is made up of people who manage Learning Disability Services in Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd and Yns Mon.

They are working together with Cathy Roberts and Health service managers to look at how we can improve services across North Wales and how we can work together to develop better services in the future. Members who attend advocacy forums in their local areas were involved in setting the agenda for the day. The agenda for this meeting included issues around employment.

Extract from the North Wales Regional Learning Disability Forum report, "Have Your Say", June 15th 2010

Employment	
 What works well?	 What is not Good?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport is reliable • Helps to make friends • When you can get there independently with bus pass • When it's full time • When you get a wage • If you have good voluntary placement in the community such as charity shops • Working in cafés 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough choice of work opportunities • No where to move onto when skills have been learnt • Not enough money received for the work we do • Having to share transport which makes us late or too early • Stigma in the work place • Not the same chances as everyone else
Questions to be considered by the Partnership	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do we go to for change in Employment? • Why does each county not pay the same rate? • Could all counties share good practice and positive outcomes for individuals? • Why are there no support services to help move on? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do people with a learning disability always miss out on work related opportunities • More needs to be done to protect people's rights in the work place. • How would the Partnership go about doing this?

What happens in the other Welsh authorities?

North Wales

- Denbighshire has 4 work projects as well as a job finding support and training team. People attending receive £3 per day or £1.50 for half a day. Denbighshire do not pay attendance allowance.
- In Flintshire people receive £3 per day if they are receiving training or work in the sheltered workshops. Those receiving supported work placements are paid £4 per day. People who attend traditional day services do not receive any payments.
- Wrexham work opportunities pay a bonus payment on a 4-weekly basis to people who work in small businesses Mona needs to find out how much. I still need to get this info!
- In Gwynedd, Manton workshop and Glynllifon unit pay £15 a week to service users. They are looking at how this is funded at the moment. Antur Waunfawr do not make any payments to service users.
- All service users attending Ynys Mon day services receive 80p a day whether the activity they are doing is social, training or work related.

Other Welsh Authorities

- Camarthen - stopped paying people who attend day services 3 years ago. People who attend work opportunities services get 50p a day
 - Pembroke - stopped making payments 4 years ago other than for long standing service users who still get 80p a day.
 - Ceredigion - stopped making payments 4 years ago
 - Swansea - people going to traditional day services don't receive anything. Service users attending certain projects get a training allowance of 20.50 a week.
 - Powys - people attending day services do not receive payments. People who attend a small holding project receive £6 a week. This is classed as an out of pocket expense for personal protective clothing.
 - Monmouth - do not make payments to people who attend their day services. They have set up 3 new Social Enterprises. The aim in the future is to pay service users up to the benefit disregard level (£20). At the moment therefore no payments are made.
 - Bridgend - stopped making payments to service users attending day services some years ago. Payments to people who attend work or training projects stopped 2 years ago.
 - Neath - do not make payments to people attending day services. They are considering the future of their incentive payments to people who attend work projects.
 - Rhondda Cynnon Taff - pay 80p a day to all service users attending day and work opportunities services.
- (reference - A review of the policy on incentive payments paid to service users of learning Disability Day services on Ynys Mon 2010 - Rhys Astley)

Approach to the consultation

A report was taken to Customer Scrutiny Committee on the 1st March to request support from Council Members to review the Attendance and Incentive payments made to service users.

It was agreed by Customer Scrutiny Committee that a consultation would take place on the future of incentive bonuses and attendance allowances paid to service users. At Customer Scrutiny Committee on the 17th May it was further agreed;

- (a) That a Learning Disability Task and Finish Group be established, based on political representation, to support Learning Disability Services to shape the future strategic direction of services to this vulnerable group.
- (b) That the Learning Disability Task and Finish Group should be delegated to consider the future of incentive bonuses and attendance allowances along with other service areas.

(taken from Customer Scrutiny Minutes 17th may 2011)

Customer Scrutiny Committee's job is to make sure that the council is providing a quality service, that we are talking to service users, that we take notice of what they say and that we involve our customers/service users in the development of services.

The role of the Task & Finish Group is to provide support to the officers working to modernise Learning Disability Services. They will question and challenge officers to ensure that they have a good understanding of the issues and as such have a quality assurance role. Via the consultation report they will receive direct feedback from service users, parents and carers.

Conwy Learning Disability Services want to make sure that people with a learning disability are able to have their say about things that might affect their lives. To help people with a learning disability have their say we want to make sure that they have enough information, have help to understand things being talked about and are given enough time to think about how they feel, what they want to say and time to say it. Some people will need more help than others and therefore Advocates are on hand to help.

With this in mind Conwy Social Services joined with Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities to consult with service users, parents, carers and staff about attendance and incentive payments. Advocates from WIRED were at some of the meetings to help people understand and have their say if needed. Conwy Connect used person-centred approaches to help people say what they thought.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The new Equalities Act has introduced a duty on Local Authorities to assess the impact on certain groups of people when they change the way they do things or introduce new policies. Because the review of Attendance and Incentive Payments could result in a change that will have an effect on people with learning disabilities an Equalities Impact Assessment has to be completed.

Letters¹ were sent out to service users, parents and carers week beginning the 12th September inviting people to consultation meetings week beginning the 3rd October.

An information sheet² was sent with the letter giving some background information about why we wanted to review the attendance and incentive payments.

We asked people to think about the payments and this information before coming to their consultation meetings

14 group consultation sessions³ at day or work opportunities services were held week beginning 3rd October until the 10th October

1:1 sessions for people who needed more help to understand and have their say.

1 group session with parents and carers on the 3rd October

Those unable to come to the meetings were offered the opportunity to make their views known by either, writing, e-mailing or telephoning

We met with staff for feedback on the 6th October. The session was well attended. (a summary is included after the parent/carer feedback)

The consultation sessions were facilitated by a person centred planning process facilitator and graphic facilitator who recorded everybody's views..

At the beginning of the session it was explained why we wanted to review the Attendance and Incentive Payments. Service users were told that as a result of the review one of three things might happen;

- No change
- Payments would be stopped
- The way payments were made would change

Service user, parents/carers were then asked the following questions;

- How you feel about the money you get? What does the money mean to you - for example, what's important about it? Or what do you do with it?
- What's important to you about the service you go to?
- What are your ideas about changes we could make and if we change how could we make it easier for you?

To help people understand and have their say the facilitators had to change the way questions were asked and at times had to help by prompting or giving ideas.

The question about 'Ideas' was quite hard for people to think about. Most people find it hard to think about ideas that are not part of their life experience. As a result we offered some suggestions and options to help people think about what might be possible.

- Appendix 1. Letters from Conwy County Borough Council to service users.
- Appendix 2. An information sheet.
- Appendix 3. Extract from Consultation session plan.

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

In the group consultation sessions held between the 3/10 and 10/10 we met with 98 service users. We also received 24 feedback sheets⁴ from service users who were unable to take part in the group sessions. They were supported to make their views known.

How do you feel about the money you get?

Initial Reactions and Feelings about what people heard.

<p>Angry.</p> <p>Cross.</p> <p>Upsetting but I'll live with it.</p> <p>Sad and awful.</p> <p>Money is important to me I would be unhappy if I didn't get it.</p> <p>It's not fair.</p> <p>I work hard and I deserve to have it.</p> <p>I feel that my career is under threat.</p> <p>I am afraid that the service might be under threat if people don't get paid.</p> <p>I don't feel that we should work for nothing.</p> <p>Working for nothing feels like slavery.</p> <p>I am not going to come to work if my money stops.</p> <p>I'm upset we work really hard, and we come to work in all weathers, some of us have more than one job, we give our</p>	<p>best.</p> <p>I feel that we are a good team.</p> <p>Annoyed if it stops.</p> <p>I put a lot in to the work.</p> <p>I'd stay at home.</p> <p>I would walk out if there was no pay.</p> <p>I would protest.</p> <p>It's not worth working hard if I'm not paid.</p> <p>If no one gets paid might as well close the place down.</p> <p>Shocked.</p> <p>I wouldn't like it.</p> <p>It would be a bit naughty.</p> <p>It's not f....g fair</p> <p>Angry, I wish I could get more money, but that's life</p> <p>We should get paid, I'm worried</p> <p>We should still have our money</p>	<p>I would be very unhappy indeed; I wouldn't be able to pay my rent</p> <p>Staff get paid and we should get paid too</p> <p>Bit nervous</p> <p>I could do more hours in the Spar.</p> <p>I just want to stay here, that's all.</p> <p>A bunch of losers (the Government).</p> <p>Its diabolical and its not on that they are thinking of stopping my wages</p> <p>I would be depressed if I didn't get my wages</p> <p>I am not sure how I am going to feel.</p> <p>I feel terrible if it would stop.</p> <p>I think it's disgusting.</p> <p>I am ok with it.</p> <p>Terrible - we've always had them.</p> <p>It's routine. We'd be bunking off.</p>	<p>I felt terrible when my money went down.</p> <p>If the money stops I will stop coming altogether</p> <p>There will be no point coming here and will walk out of the job</p> <p>I wouldn't be happy about a change but maybe something good might happen, I'd still come and I'd still enjoy the work, I don't care if I don't get the money.</p> <p>Ill just work harder and if I need to buy a treat for myself I'll have to ask my parents for the money</p> <p>I know I have problems but I think that maybe the other people who come here have got more problems and they deserve the money more than I do.</p> <p>If you don't think I should have the money I don't mind but Im sad for the other people here</p> <p>I don't like changes</p>
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• Appendix 4. Feedback sheet.

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

How do you feel about the money you get?

What it means to me

I feel good when I get my money.

It makes me feel like a human being.

I feel proud that I have achieved something.

It's important to have my wage packet.

I look forward to my wages.

It's the first thing I think about on Friday - wages.

If you work - you get money.

I wouldn't be able to see my friends or go out; I would miss out on my leisure activities.

When I go out to work I feel happy and proud.

Getting the money is really good.

I feel proud that I have earned the money.

The money I get is very important to me.

I get more choice by having the money; it

is my money and I can choose what I spend it on.

I have earned this money; it is mine.

I rely on it.

I would be in trouble with 'the Law' if I didn't have my job.

Customers appreciate us and they recommend us to others because we do a good job.

That's how we make our name and good reputation; we work for it.

I would miss the money if I didn't come here.

The money gives me independence

This is the first time I've got money for doing a job

Where I keep my money.

I like having my money in my purse.

I save my wages and put it in my money tin for Gateway.

I save it in the bank.

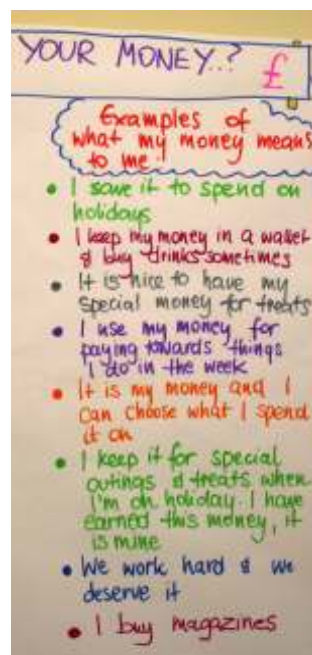
I spend mine on books; I keep it in my purse and go shopping.

I choose a special place to keep my money in.

I keep my money in my purse and buy water with it.

I keep it in a money-box.

I keep it in my wallet; I keep it to myself.



Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

How do you feel about the money you get?
What I use my money for

<p>I like shopping for books and DVDs.</p> <p>For music and tapes.</p> <p>Mars bars and a Twix.</p> <p>I like going to the pictures, I buy crisps & popcorn. If I don't get it (the money) that will stop - not fair.</p> <p>For Christmas presents as a surprise.</p> <p>I spend it on my nieces.</p> <p>When I go out with friends or support workers I go to the shop and buy something for my mum.</p> <p>I give it to my mum. She's in charge of that.</p> <p>I save it up for going on holiday.</p> <p>I get £11.40 per week; I won't be able to buy my newspaper.</p> <p>I buy clothes.</p> <p>I like going to car-boot sales.</p> <p>I buy something for the baby; I am a great-aunt.</p> <p>A soap magazine.</p> <p>Bingo.</p> <p>I spend my money on drinks.</p> <p>I save my money to spend later on jig-saws and other things.</p>	<p>It's nice to have my special money for treats.</p> <p>I use my money towards paying for things I do in the week.</p> <p>I keep it for special outings and treats when I am on holiday.</p> <p>I save my money and it helps me to get by; pay my phone bill etc. it would be hard for me without the money. My phone helps me to keep in touch with people and not feel lonely.</p> <p>I save my money for collection at church.</p> <p>I love my magazine on Wednesday; when I get my wages I go straight to the shop.</p> <p>I go to pubs and clubs.</p> <p>My wages add to my benefits; it means I have enough money to keep well.</p> <p>I spend my money on horse books.</p> <p>To use at Molverley.</p> <p>Things for my camera.</p> <p>Cwrw i.e. beer</p> <p>I buy figures for my hobby to add to my collection from saving my pay.</p> <p>I spend my money on doughnuts.</p> <p>I save the money towards buying a new bed.</p>	<p>I keep my money to buy cake from the local shop.</p> <p>I spend it on the disco (Washington, Buzz Club etc.)</p> <p>I buy pop and sandwiches when I go out with staff.</p> <p>I spend money at the weekend; I go for a coffee, I save some money for a holiday.</p> <p>Taxis.</p> <p>Food out in the leisure centre after going to the gym (Cheesy-Chips).</p> <p>Computer games.</p> <p>Towards rent.</p> <p>Phone top-up; keep in touch with friends and family.</p> <p>I save my money for a mountain bike.</p> <p>Activities like fishing. I hope still to be able to do things like this.</p> <p>Things for my room.</p> <p>Activities like football.</p> <p>I save it to go on holidays or lady's stuff.</p>
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Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

What is important to you about the services you go to?

The people I see

Friends/People	I sit with friends to do my work. I wouldn't want to be on my own.
See my mates.	Team work.
See my friends.	Gives me a bit of a break. See other people. Don't live in each other's pockets.
Companionship.	Listening to other people and seeing what they do.
Making drinks.	I like helping people and learning about the plants and I enjoy peoples company.
Helping each other and keeping an eye on each other.	Meeting my friends here is the most important thing - more than the money
Seeing people I like.	I think its work when I do plants, the other is more leisurely, so-so, like the cooking.
Seeing the same people when I come; and chatting.	
Morning cup of tea with my friends, a chat with everybody.	
Friends are important to me at work.	
Everyone is nice here.	

The Environment.

Nice and relaxing here.	The banter, the teasing and the chatting.
I just like working here.	Better to get out and about. I'd argue if I stayed at home all day. I feel nervous when I go to a new place but it builds your confidence after a while.
The atmosphere is brilliant here.	Taking it in turns to bring in nice things to eat for tea-break.
The equipment.	Easy access and location.
I like going here.	Having a chat about my health and being weighed.
Having a laugh and a joke.	To be able to continue to do the things at my pace and within my ability.
My own space when I choose to be on my own.	
We have a choice of who we want to work with.	
Having a laugh makes the day go quickly.	
Work and banter.	
I feel great about the work I do. You go out of your own house and I get to see all my friends - change of scene.	

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

What is important to you about the services you go to?

The Work I Do

<p>I like going on the computer.</p> <p>I haven't got a computer at home.</p> <p>I help Barry out; I am very good on computers.</p> <p>I like doing different things.</p> <p>Doing 'chopping'; I miss it as I can't do it anymore due to my heart condition.</p> <p>I feel strongly about the environment and I have opportunities here to do re-cycling; it's important to me.</p> <p>Going out and about; I enjoy re-cycling.</p> <p>I love crushing cans.</p> <p>Having rewarding work.</p> <p>Having a sense of responsibility in my work.</p> <p>Work here is more interesting.</p> <p>Having a valued contribution to society through my re-cycling work.</p> <p>A sense of achievement.</p> <p>It takes years to develop skills to a good level.</p> <p>At the end of the day I get a sense that we have achieved what we set out to achieve.</p> <p>Meeting customers and moving about; going to different places.</p> <p>Customers appreciate us because we do a good job.</p> <p>The workplace has become a big and important part of my life.</p>	<p>A job well done.</p> <p>Skills I've learned - using the equipment. I.T, camera.</p> <p>Built up confidence using skills already learnt.</p> <p>I like coming to work.</p> <p>I like working outside.</p> <p>Being part of the project since the start.</p> <p>Doing the work I like links to what I've learnt in college.</p> <p>The routine.</p> <p>Using tools, e.g. drilling and working with the tools.</p> <p>I feel pleased to be part of the set-up here.</p> <p>Get's me out of bed in the morning. I love working in the gardens. It's important to help the customers.</p> <p>The variety of work is important.</p> <p>I like working with plants, brushing up and moving the plants.</p> <p>It gives me confidence to do the work I do here and go out and about.</p> <p>I enjoy going out in the van and the re-cycling work.</p>	<p>Doing the re-cycling - goes to the horses' beds - it's a valuable job.</p> <p>Going out on deliveries with the van.</p> <p>Working in people's gardens.</p> <p>We are gaining experience and have plenty of talent and more chance of getting another job after this work.</p> <p>The type of work I do I like, lopping, weeding, raking and mowing the lawn. I am very good at that.</p> <p>Going somewhere different every day, the variety, the travel. I have all my mates at work.</p> <p>We work as a group, in a team. We help each other, that's very important. I like the different things I do like making benches.</p> <p>I hope to get a career from this work.</p> <p>Work is important so I'm not slobbing and bone-idle.</p> <p>I like coming to BEN because I like gardening and working with other people because they're funny and I can talk to them.</p> <p>I like typing & using the computers here & collating.</p>
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Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

What is important to you about the services you go to?

The Activities I Do

Opportunities to do the activities I enjoy; especially cooking, that's why I love coming here.

Having a variety of activities.

Meeting people and seeing friends.

I enjoy the staff taking us out into town.

I like going to play on the Wii.

I like going swimming.

I like seeing my friends here.

Fabulous, brilliant - that's how I feel when I've made things.

Going shopping and going to the beach.

I don't do any work; I can't do any work,

I'm disabled. People are very good helping me here.

I love it all.

Having a cup of tea with the staff and seeing friends on the bus and at lunch breaks.

I have a break from my family. I have a chat with other people, it's a change.

The Communication Suite is fun.

Nice friendly people who will help you out. I would like to learn more about the computer menu; that's why I came here.

Going for walks.

Doing creative activities.

The Staff

Seeing Barry. I would do anything Barry asked me to.

Dave

Lucinda

Phil

I like the staff; I have fun and am happy here.

Phil & Dave and the rest of the lads.

I like working with staff.

Staff are easy to talk to.

Id still come to see Pat and all my friends



Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

What are your ideas

I am happy with it (the money I get).

We don't want the money to stop. Don't change things!

Leave our wages alone.

I get £1.20, I'd like a bit more

We are happy with how things are; we don't want any changes.

People should be treated as individuals; everyone goes to a different place and does different jobs.

I want to have the opportunity to retire.

Getting help to find another job.

Getting a certificate or a badge.

A big photograph of everybody. See what you do in the year. Pictures on the wall. Brighten place up a bit. Pictures of who goes there.

If the money stops do something else with the money like a new computer. Take the Apple Macs away and upgrade them. We need a new CD player.

Computers crashing all the time. I am not happy. I can't concentrate and I lose my work. A bigger kitchen so people could sit down together.

All at once would be too much - not fair.

Cut a little bit down.

More opportunities for activities outside the centre.

We asked a question about what people get paid depending on which projects they go to. Some people said;

The system needs to show a difference between leisure and work activities.

Things are not equal or fair across services.

Not fair - people get different monies. It's not equal and needs to be.

Day centres not to get pay, work to get pay.

Not a fair process at the moment, everyone should be paid the same whatever they do.

We asked a question about discounts in shops instead of wages (payments). We compared this to students' cards that some people get when attending Llandrillo College.

Most responses were that people didn't really use the shops that offered the discounts.

We asked a question about whether people should be paid if they go to day services where they join in leisure type activities e.g. going swimming, cooking, walking and shopping.

I can't say as I don't go to day services so I don't know what they do.

People should be paid more if they work hard but not if they just do things for fun and not so much hard work.

People that work to make things to sell should be paid more than those who don't.

Day centres not get paid - work should get paid.

We asked a question about whether we should not pay new people coming into the services. People said;

I feel a bit uncomfortable and guilty if I was paid and they weren't.

Should pay them too.

Would be horrified if they didn't.

Get more money.

Why couldn't people who don't make things now change by making things to sell (in the same way we do? - nurseries)

I don't want to change anything because I like what you do here and you make the system fun and you keep everyone busy doing things, it doesn't need to change.

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Service Users

Additional comments

We get wages but we do have to pay some back for services.

The amount of money I earn has gone down.

I earn only £9.50 per week. I get £90 dole, so I don't get very much. I treat myself to a drink in the pub and save for holidays. How would I be able to afford to do anything? Things are being run poorly. We lads are not working for nothing.

We asked the question, "If the money stopped would you still come here?" There was a mixture of responses from "Yes" to "No". This seemed to depend on the project. E.g. Gardens Etc. said "no" but Abergele Graphics said "yes", and in Pinewood the response was mixed.

I like it here, I would continue coming even if I didn't get paid.

I work a lot harder than people going swimming or cooking.

Services may be empty if people didn't get paid. It would threaten the service and people's gardens wouldn't get done.

The Council say they don't have enough money to pay my wages, You can spend money on making Colwyn Bay prom look good - would you work for nothing?

I love the Co-op - stacking shelves on Saturday.

I would still come in but maybe do half a day in the Spar.

Getting the money at the end of the week.

Three service users wrote letters⁵ as that can be found in the appendix.



• Appendix 5. Personal letters from service users.

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Parents & Carers

This was held on Monday 3 October, at 7pm with 14 parents & carers and 5 voluntary/statutory organisations attending.

How do you feel about the money your son or daughter gets?

The vulnerable individuals should not be the target for making efficiency savings.

I feel my daughter should be getting the minimum wage as they work very hard.

Some families will be affected as the wages contribute to the amount of spending money available to their son or daughter.

What is important to an individual should be taken into account with regards to paid work.

It's the client's perception of their valued social role, not so much ours.

It is a visual, tangible form of being paid and valued.

The money people get is theirs. Some haven't got capacity to express how they feel. Taking their wage away means something very important in their life has been taken away and they can't understand whether it is their fault.

This might not impact on every individual in the same way. But on the whole it will impact on many.

We must see any money going into providing services to our children as an investment.

What do you think it means you son or daughter?

People who attend work opportunities and do a meaningful job should be paid but it is very individual.

My daughter would be very upset if she did not get her wage. It is important to her.

My daughter does not care about the amount it is the concept of receiving a wage that counts to her.

Getting a wage is part of their routine, why break it?

Choices taken away.

For some it may become an incentive to look for paid work elsewhere.

The wage packet is what matters but it does not mean that amount inside is not important and can be reduced.

Signing for and keeping the money they

have earned is what matters.

Sense of value and self-worth and self-esteem. A sense of pride is what it means. Wages more than money.

Receiving a wage is a psychological benefit more than monetary.

Will people still want to attend the services if they get told there will be no more money.

The impact of the service user is going to be huge.

If it is taken away it will have a profound effect. It doesn't matter to the person about the amount inside.

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Parents & Carers

What is important to you and your son/daughter about the service they go to?

The work

They enjoy working there
Training and learning opportunities
Working as a team
They feel strongly about their place of work – my daughter is even prepared to go on strike
Its not just about receiving the wage
Work ethic – going to work every day

Day opportunities

Opportunities to be stimulated which adds to his overall well being
Opportunities for physical activity and space
Some places are for work and some are for fun and pleasure
Continued existence of services essential to peoples overall well being

Routine

Learning new things
The people
They're amongst equals
Being with friends

The staff

They like the instructors

The environment

Safe and friendly environment to work in, they are not singled out
Continuity and consistency. Frequent staff changes have an adverse effect
Psychological benefit



Feedback from the consultation sessions • Parents & Carers

What are your ideas?

Keep some form of wage packet

An adjustment to the amount

The amounts should not be reduced

Something needs to replace it if it ends

An equivalent of wage packet – a voucher
or a discount that would benefit them

Long term – social enterprise – channelling
money in to wage packets

So nothing now – develop a long term
strategy / vision of how attendance and
incentive payments might fit in to the
bigger picture around the future of day and
work opportunities services generally.

Feedback⁶ received from parents and carers unable to attend the consultation meeting on the 3rd October. See this appendix for more comments and feedback received from parents & carers unable to attend on that day.



- Appendix 6. Feedback from parents & carers unable to attend.

Feedback from the consultation sessions • Parents & Carers

Conwy Provider Unit staff feedback

The main issues identified by staff members were as follows;

They felt that some service users did not understand what was being explained

That there was a level of anxiety amongst service users about the possibility that payments would stop or change

That service users did not comprehend the difference between therapeutic work and work skills / training

That some service users might not attend if wages stopped, that this may have a detrimental affect on their health and well being and on the health and well being of their carer

Service users might not have a choice but to continue to attend but this may result in difficulties at their placement

There are limitations on real work placements for people due to the current climate

There would be an impact on staff in trying to manage the implementation of a decision to stop or change payments to service users

Motivating service users to work when there is no pay could be difficult and consequently some contracts could be lost

The knock on effect could cost the department more

Next Steps Explained

Ramona and Sue explained at the end of each session the next steps⁷ that would be taken as follows.

The Consultation report will go to a 'Project team'. The Project team will look at what people said and come up with a list of recommendations (some things they think should happen to modernise).

These recommendations will go to a 'Programme Board' - members include senior managers in Social Services, a service user and carer representative.

The Programme Board will make sure everything has been thought about and agree the recommendation that will be put forward to Councillors sitting on the Learning Disability Task & Finish Group.

The Consultation Report and recommendations will then go to the Task and Finish Group. This is made up of Elected Members. They will ask questions to ensure that the recommendations that will be put forward to formal Council via Customer Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings in December are reasonable and have taken in to account what people think and feel.

After this the report will go to Customer Scrutiny who will ask more questions to make sure that people have been properly consulted and that what we plan to do is in the account of what people said.

Finally the report will go to Cabinet for agreement on the future of Attendance and incentive Payments.

Service users, parents and carers will be informed in early January about the decision.

No changes will take place before 1st April 2012.









- Appendix 7. Next Steps.

Appendix 1. Letter from Conwy County Borough Council to service users.



Dear Service User

Attendance and Incentive Payments

	<p>I would like to invite you to a meeting on the ??? at ?? to talk about the future of 'attendance and incentive payments.</p>
	<p>Conwy would like to hear your ideas about what should happen to Attendance and Incentive allowances in the future.</p>
	<p>We have put some information and questions on the next sheet and would like you to have a think about these things before you come to the meeting.</p>
  	<p>If you can't come to the meeting, we would still like to hear from you. You can phone, e-mail or send a letter to Ramona Murray.</p> <p>Address Government Buildings, Dinerth Road, Rhos on Sea.</p> <p>e-mail Ramona.murray@conwy.gov.uk</p> <p>Phone 01492 575374</p>

Yours sincerely

Ramona Murray
Project Manager

Appendices

Appendix 2. Information sheet.

Information and Questions

- CCBC would like to review the payment of **attendance allowance** to service users who go to our day or work opportunities services.
Attendance allowance is the 80p a day you get for going to day or work opportunities
- CCBC would like to review **incentive payments** to service users who attend our day or work opportunities.
Incentive allowance is the money you get if you go to one of the work opportunities projects like Pinewood or Abergele Graphics
- CCBC day and work opportunities services costs £1,040,630 a year to run
- In 2010/11 CCBC paid £44,376 in attendance and incentive payments.
- Income (that's the money earned from selling things like plants, or providing a service like gardening) from the work opportunities projects in 2010/11 was £94,202
- Social Services has to make savings every year to make sure we can carry on meeting peoples need, without spending more than we have in the budget
- Service users attending Acorn, Ashley, Prospects, CREST etc do not get any payment
- What do you think about the payments that you get?
- Do you think there is a better way of using the money?
- If it is decided that Conwy's Attendance and Incentive payments scheme has to change, how do you think this should be done?

* CCBC – Conwy County Borough Council

Appendix 3. Extract from Consultation session plan.



Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities






Facilitators	Sue, Mona, Clara, Laura and Jennie. Members of Social Services named for the sessions	Date	Monday 3 October to Monday 10 October 2011 - 15 sessions	Room	Day opportunity projects and Canolfan Riviere
Theme	Consultation Session on incentive payments and Attendance Allowance	Time	Various times starting 10.00am through to 3.30pm	Duration	1.5 hours 90 mins
Aim	Actively involve those Service users, parent and carers it concerns, listen to experiences, record members views. Identify recommendations/action to take forward and produce a report in relation to Incentive payments and Attendance Allowance				

Timings/Who	What are we doing?	Resources/things we need	Notes/things to remember
Allocated facilitators 5mins	Welcome Check who's there Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance list – sign in sheet Pens White paper/Flipchart/box/tape Printed date time to stick on Refreshments for Parent/carers session 	Record of who attended from list provided
Mona 15 mins	Welcome introductions Explain why we are Here? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give background as to how it came about and the reasons why Why change things now? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session plan Prompts - Why are we here? Prepared graphic of the letter Prompts – Why change things now? 	Inform group of housekeeping and Background for the session.
Facilitators - one questioning and one recording 15 mins	Asking - How do you feel about the money you get? What will this mean to you?		Remember we have to produce a report so a consistent approach as we work through the questions in order Start to record examples of the impact on individuals and on daily life

Appendices

Appendix 4. Feedback sheet

<h3>Comments following the session</h3>		<p>Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities </p>
<p>1. How do you feel about the money you get?</p> <p>What will this mean to you?</p> 	<p>2. What's important to you about the services you get?</p> <p>Now</p> <p>In the future</p>	
<p>3. What are your ideas about changes we could make?</p> <p>How could we make it easier for you?</p> 	<p>4. Are there any other actions you want from the session That has not been said?</p>	

Appendix 5. Personal letters from service users

Letter 1.

I earn for my wages only £9.60 a week for my part time job gardening and only work two days a week, Monday and Friday and collect dole of £90 plus I pay rent two hundred pounds in the group home I live. So I don't get very much. I have treats out of it like a trip on a motor coach to Blackpool for holidays. I also treat myself to a drink in the pub. If they stop my wages I wouldn't be able to go out at all. Without wages how could I pay my rent? Good question. The answer is I don't know. At the moment the position is about as bad and hard as it can be, what's best to do or be done I'm just blessed if I know cos its just being poorly run. We must get this business sorted out today and I mean it. We lads are not working for nothing.

Letter 2.

This letter over the wages to the county, these are just some questions I would like you to answer for me. You say you do not have enough money to pay my wages how come you can spend money on making colwyn bay promenade look good, would you do your job for free. When I come to work and I go out to do a job when the job is done I know I have done it and make myself happy and proud. I think you are making a big mistake trying to save money. When I am doing the job that I am doing in the future I hope to get a career out of what I have got from doing this job.

Letter 3.

My name is ... and I have found out that the service is doing us lads out of being paid for the hard work that we do throughout the year. The council charges most of our customers for our services so we are helping to make the council money. I work for 5 days each week from 9.30am to 3.30pm and think that the tiny amount of

money that I get at the end of each week I have worked hard to earn and deserve.

I have learning disabilities so I am not able to get a normal job but still want to work for my money and hold down a proper paid job. I don't think you should treat me like I am not as good as 'normal people' just because I have learning difficulties. You wouldn't ask someone in a 'normal job' to work without money and take away all of their wages but you think its ok to take away mine.

I don't get much money and wont be able to manage without my £20 a week wages. I would not be able to go to places to keep in touch with my friends and would not be able to save up to visit my sister who lives in St Helens in Merseyside, England and I hardly ever see her as it is.

I'm sure if you think hard enough you can find the money from somewhere else, maybe from people who do not have learning disabilities and have a better chance to do more with their lives, than people like me do If you were in my position and you were trying to make something of yourself, would you be happy if someone told you that you're not good enough or important enough to be paid anymore, What would you do?

Please think about what I have said and how it would affect me and people like me - who don't have the same chances of getting jobs like people without learning disabilities do.

Appendices

Appendix 6. Feedback from parents & carers unable to attend

This is the local authority cutting service to people with a learning disability again just like they did last year

My daughter knows what day she gets her money, she puts it in a money box or in her purse. She likes going to day services anyway and would go even if she wasn't paid. Its important though because it gives her a bit of independence. She thinks she is going to work and is getting a wage. She likes a lot of coins, she wouldn't miss the amount.

I think that the attendance allowances should be scrapped and the money used in a different way

I know that there is less money for services. My brother wont attend his service if he doesn't get his wage packet. Id have to send money in for staff to give it to him and would be happy to do this if it stops.

My daughter gets 10.20 a week. If it stops it wont bother her because she has other money. I think it would be slave labour to stop paying them. The government always seem to hit the handicapped. I think Conwy County Borough Council should use Abergele Graphics for all of its printing needs which might help and save money as well as people can still get paid.

For him its about being a normal person. He wont understand why its been taken away. You wouldn't do it to 'normal' people. This little bit of payment is about normality and I don't agree with it being taken away. There is a lot of wastage in other places.

The changes in Attendance Allowance etc might mean that our people are less inclined to attend their place of work and so projects could be affected in loss of production and inability to do as much work. I feel it could affect Bron Y Nant, Gardens etc and Pinewood.

I think that reviewing the attendance and incentive payments is scandalous. Your letter indicates that the say and work opps cost 31 million odd to run – do you expect to run a service for nothing? You also say that it cost £44 thousand odd in payments for the kast year, but you also recouped £94 thousand odd from the sale of goods, which make £50 thousand you can knock off the million. Are we not trying to integrate people with a learning difficulty to become more accepted members of society. The amount of £4 has never been increased in over 30 years, most clients are charged for attending, how many people would continue working if told they would get no wages, surely there is a need for incentives, which add to self esteem.

The payments/wages for what the council all a service user (but these people are actual workers) is 80 pence a day – these people work very hard in their roles and there are days when my sister comes home exhausted.... Although my sister does not understand money she prides herself in going to work everyday and looks forward to pay day – there is a panic on when she forgets to bring her pay home and she becomes quite upset Cut down on other costs that large organisations use such as paper / postage – a lot of people now use internet and have email and a lot of details received could be sent via e-mail.

The job itself serves many purposes

- A reason to get up in the morning
- Gives him structure and meaning to his day
- Gets him motivated
- Increases his self worth and confidence

Appendix 6. Feedback from parents & carers unable to attend

Pride and normality in the world, its so much more that just a job

The wage packet, the little brown envelope at the end of the week is the icing on the cake, something to look forward to. It may only seem a pittance to you or I but to him it signifies normality in the real world... it the money stopped there would be no incentive to go to work

That little wage packet means the difference to being a happy, motivated, feeling he's worthwhile human being to feeling unwanted and back to square one, isolated and alone.

Ein teimlad ni fel teulu yw ir lwfans presenoldeb 80c aros yr un fath. Mae pobl wedi colli ACE yn barod, mae hyn yn edrych yn debyg for pobl gyda anhenion afbenning yn hawdd I targedu pan for angen gwenudd torriadau. Mae llawer yn dibynny ar yr ychydig arian yma I cael cymdeithasu rydym yn meddwl fod hyn hollo anheg, siwr fod Ffordd tecach na hyn I arbed arian

[Translation]

Our feeling as a family is that the attendance allowance of 80p should stay the same. People have lost ACE already and this looks like people who have special needs are easy targets when cuts are needed. A lot depend on the small amount of money to socialise and we think that this it totally unfair. There must be a fairer way of saving money.

My son has never received incentive payments. However I am sure that those in receipt of them will have difficulty understanding why they will not longer be given and why they should bother going.

People deserve to be treated the some dignity and pride and at the same time should be thanked for what they bring to their communities .These people deserve more than 80 pence but are more than happy to go home with a 'wage' of however much. Maybe the council/social services should be looking at reducing costs in departments, photocopying, postal.....These workers have great characters and enthusiasm and might not have a lot in life but they work hard and deserve a wage at the end of a hard week, don't take the pride and self respect away for the sake of 4 pounds a week.

Whilst I am sure that for certain clients, wages are an important aspect in their lives, and that for such people withdrawal of this "reward" may be difficult, in my daughters case, her disability is such that, frankly, the attendance allowance is totally meaningless. Therefore, in the context of having to make savings, (and thereby hopefully protecting other more vital services) we would be happy to see this payment end.

I would like to highlight the fact that the day/work opportunities services are indeed supposed to be services provided to people with LD. If this is the case then the purpose should not simply be to make a profit, but to provide a much needed service to promote the well being of people who might otherwise be very isolated. I know that people in the community welcome the service and certainly my son is known by many, especially in Betws Y Coed where he loves being involved in the re-cycling service.

Appendices

Appendix 6. Feedback from parents & carers unable to attend

I know that for 4 of the people attending Llanrwst (Rhyd Y Creuau) that even as early as Tuesdays they begin to express excitement about what they see as a wage, which they receive on Thursdays. The wage really seems to give them a sense of purpose and value in terms of what they offer in the community. It is clear that there will be great disappointment if the payments are stopped.

I cannot see that any of us would be willing to work if we were told we would not be paid anymore!! The people I know who are involved with the day/work opps. see it as employment and therefore expect to be paid.

Finally, do we as a County want to be seen to be axing services for those vulnerable people who should be treated and respected in the way that we all expect to be. I am concerned about the way the County is considering how to make the savings they need to make. In the bigger scheme of things, the incentive payments and the amount of saving if stopped is quite small. Surely, there must be an alternative to this. I am most concerned about the impact on some of the people this suggestion may affect in terms of their willingness to continue offering the service and therefore the possible secondary impact on their well-being.

Appendix 7. Next Steps.

NEXT STEPS



Consultation Report

Sue Davies & Ramona Murray Meeting on the 11/10/11 to write the Consultation Report to include;

- How people feel
- What is important to them
- Their ideas



Project Team Meeting

Gail Selley, Kelly Bee, Colin Ellis, Ramona Murray, Sue Davies, Mark Rowley

Meeting on the 18/10/11 to look at the Consultation Report, to take account of what people said and to make recommendations for the future of Attendance and Incentive Payments



Gail



Kelly



Colin



Ramona



Sue

Programme Board

Janet Morgan, Claire Lister,
Chris Griffiths, Ramona Murray,
Sue Davies, Rev Ginny Burton,
Judith Henderson,
Helen Jones



Janet



Claire



Chris

Task & Finish Group

Cllr Andrew Hinchcliffe (Chair)
Cllr Roger Parry (Vice Chair),
Cllr Liz Roberts (Cabinet Member),
Cllr Brenda Taylor, Cllr Peter Lewis,
Cllr Tony Tobin



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