

**Somerset Council MTFP 2024/25 - 2028/29  
Savings Proposal**



Title of savings proposal	Floating Dementia Support Services
Reference Number	ADS006

Executive Directorate	Adult Services
Service Directorate	ASC Commissioning
Service	

Lead member	Cllr Bill Revans - Adult Social Care
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Cost centre name	
Cost centre code	

**Overview of proposal**

Description of savings proposal (alt+return for new line)

We have proposed the de-commissioning of the Reconnect Service for Housing Related Support and Dementia Floating Support delivered by our Strategic Voluntary Sector Partner, Rethink Mental Illness.

This service is a non-statutory contract within the Dementia Portfolio, costing the Local Authority £140,000 a year and supporting 60 people a year at a cost of approximately £49 per week per person.

The service provides outreach support to people living with moderate dementia. Key activities include linking with statutory services, supporting with getting to appointments, providing support with errands, day to day shopping, facilitating wellbeing activities including day opportunities, coffee mornings, social and community activities, supporting with cooking and preparing meals. These are all aspects which prevent people from needing to go into more restrictive care models like residential homes.

De-commissioning the Reconnect Service will come with an initial £117,000 a year saving to the local authority. With £140,000 each subsequent year.

However, depending on the assessed need of the individual, each of the 60 people being supported will need an onward intervention which is likely to include statutory contributions. Our existing market costs in this space include:

- Respite – Average market spot fee £1100 /Block cost is £800.
- Homecare - £25 an hour.
- Direct Payment - £18 an hour.
- Day service – between £50 to £70 a day.
- Specialist Residential Care Placement - £800.

This is consistently higher than the approximately £40 per person per week delivered by the Reconnect Service.

What will the saving achieve? (alt+return for new line)

An initial saving of £117,000 per year followed by £140,000 each subsequent year.

Type of saving	
Which of the 17 key areas does the saving cover?	Adult Services
Is this saving once-off or ongoing?	Ongoing
Does this impact on either the Council's priorities or another service?	Yes
Are there any policy change requirements? If yes, please provide further information below.	

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**Benefits of the proposal**

Tangible Benefits - savings/income £ (pro-rata for part year)		Intangible benefits (e.g. cost avoidance)
2023/24 (in-year)	0	None
2024/25	£117,000	None
2025/26	£23,000	None

**Delivering the proposal**

Describe the high level milestones for delivery, including timescales and target delivery date for the saving.

We have to provide six months notice to terminate this contract.

**Initiation Phase: November 2023**

Internal stakeholder meetings to confirm the decision for full decommissioning.

Notify and consult with relevant authorities regarding the decision.

**Assessment and Planning: December 2023 - January 2024**

Assess the impact of the decommissioning on service users, staff, and other stakeholders.

Develop a comprehensive plan to support 60 service users in accessing alternative services.

**Communication Plan Development: February 2024**

Develop a detailed communication plan for all stakeholders.

Notify service users, staff, and relevant parties about the decommissioning decision and the support available for transitioning to alternative services.

**Support and Transition Assistance: March 2024**

Provide personalised support for each service user to transition to alternative services.

Collaborate with existing service providers to ensure a smooth transition for the affected individuals.

**Staff Redundancy and Transition: April 2024**

Address staff redundancies or transfers based on the decommissioning decision. TUPE will not apply if the service is decommissioned. There are 7 members of staff working on this one Contract for Rethink Mental Illness.

**Data Management and Closure: May 2024**

Plan and execute the closure of the Reconnect service, including the appropriate management of client data.

Complete any contractual or legal obligations with the current service provider.

**Service Cut-off: June 1st, 2024**

Officially cut the Reconnect service, ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of the cessation.

Redirect inquiries from service users to alternative services.

**Monitoring and Evaluation: June 2024 onwards**

What activity is needed to achieve the saving?

De-commissioning the Reconnect Service by June 2024.

What are the financial resources required?

Social Care operational staffing resource to facilitate assessments where needed.

Legal council.

Commissioning and contract staff to oversee this.

Are there any limitations or constraints?

Working to a limited timeframe.  
 Budgetary constraints could limit ability to employ Adult Social Care staff to manage assessments if needed.  
 Budgetary constraints may limit the available resources for supporting the transition and ensuring uninterrupted care for service users.  
 Existing legal and contractual obligations with Reconnect, including staff contracts and data management, may pose constraints on the decommissioning process.

What is the anticipated impact on service delivery to residents or business?

We would need to support the successful transition to new services for 60 people. This would increase demand on existing alternative services, potentially leading to further stretched resources in our limited market and longer waiting times for assessments for people requiring Adult Social Care.  
 Our existing market costs in this space include:  
 Respite – Average market spot fee £1100 /Block cost is £800.  
 Homecare - £25 an hour.  
 Direct Payment - £18 an hour.  
 Day service – between £50 to £70 a day.  
 Specialist Residential Care Placement - £800  
 This is consistently higher than the approximately £49 per person per week delivered by the Reconnect Service.  
 The decommissioning may result in negative sentiments within the community, expressing concerns about the well-being of affected people.  
 Employees of Reconnect may face redundancy, impacting their livelihoods and causing distress.  
 Gaps in service provision may occur during the transition, affecting the continuity of care for people we support.  
 Service users may face increased financial burdens if alternative services have higher fee structures.

Please note that an equalities impact assessment is required for all proposals.

Other implications	
Impact	Number or description
Staffing impact (#s)	
Redundancy or vacancy?	Redundancy
Legal impact	We will need to take advice. Ensure compliance with any contractual obligations with Rethink Mental Illness. Review the terms and conditions to identify any clauses related to termination or transition processes. If staff are transferring to alternative services, comply with Transfer of Undertakings
Insurance or other impact	No
Equalities impact	Yes (Please see EIA attached.)

Please ensure that you have consulted HR and your Finance Business Partner regarding any staffing savings.

Risks	
What is the risk status of the proposal?	Medium
What are the risks associated with this proposal?	

There are significant risks associated with this decommissioning activity. Somerset Council has statutory obligations in developing a local approach to preventative support. As quoted in the Care Act 2014 "A local authority must provide or arrange for services, facilities or resources which would prevent, delay, or reduce individuals' needs for care and support, or the needs for support of carers. Local authorities should develop a clear, local approach to prevention which sets out how they plan to fulfil this responsibility, considering the different types and focus of preventative support. The Reconnect service is helping the local authority to deliver on this and is helping us to support our aging population. Terminating this contract will impact on our ability to deliver these statutory requirements.

The following risks are associated with this decommissioning activity:

**Increased Financial Expenditure:**

Depending on the assessed need of the individual, each of the 60 people being supported will need an onward intervention which is likely to include statutory contributions. Our existing market costs in this space include:

Respite – Average market spot fee £1100 /Block cost is £800.

Homecare - £25 an hour.

Direct Payment - £18 an hour.

Day service – between £50 to £70 a day.

Specialist Residential Care Placement - £800

This is consistently higher than the approximately £40 per person per week delivered by the Reconnect Service.

**Impact on Adult Social Care Assessments:**

The decommissioning may result in an influx of people requiring adult social care assessments and impact on existing waiting lists and capacity.

This surge could contribute to the existing backlog, potentially delaying assessments for those in need of support.

**Reputation Risk:**

Decommissioning a service that supports vulnerable people, especially those with dementia, may pose a significant reputation risk for the council which will be subject to CQC assessment relating to the delivery of Care Act duties.

Community members, service users, and their families may perceive the move negatively, impacting the council's standing and trust.

Limited Market for Alternative Providers will bring transition challenges:

The provider market for community based dementia providers is very limited, making it challenging to secure suitable and accessible services for all 60 affected persons.

Limited options may result in difficulties finding appropriate support tailored to the specific needs of people and this could result in hospital admissions.

**Community Impact:**

The discontinuation of the Reconnect service may have broader community impacts, affecting the social fabric and support networks within Somerset. Community engagement and relationships may be negatively influenced.

**Redundancy Risks:**

There is significant risk that seven full time members of Rethink Mental Illness staff will be made redundant if this service is de-commissioned.

Are there mitigations or actions that if implemented can reduce those risks?

**Increased Financial Expenditure:**

Mitigation: There is no mitigation for this.

**Impact on Adult Social Care Assessments:**

Mitigation: Allocate additional resources and staff to expedite assessments, prioritising those affected by the decommissioning to prevent delays.

**Reputation Risk:**

Mitigation: Implement a robust communication strategy to transparently convey the reasons behind the decommissioning, emphasising the commitment to ensuring continued quality care for affected people.

**Limited Market for Alternative Providers:**

Mitigation: We have limited influence here due to our financial position.

**Transition Challenges:**

Mitigation: Invite provider to deliver on a personalised transition plan for each affected person, considering their needs, preferences, and maintaining open communication channels to address concerns.

**Employee Redundancy Impact:**

Mitigation: Consult with legal and procurement team surrounding legalities.

**Community Impact:**

Mitigation: Engage in community outreach initiatives to gather feedback, address concerns, and involve local stakeholders in the transition process, ensuring a collaborative approach.

**Potential Legal and Contractual Implications:**

Mitigation: Again, consult with legal to navigate the contractual and legal aspects of decommissioning.

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Please send your completed form to your Finance Business Partner for sign-off and submission of request.