

**CABINET MEETING: 15 JULY 2021**

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**RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNITY AND ADULT SERVICES  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT ENTITLED 'CLOSER TO HOME  
PROJECT: OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS FOR ADULTS WITH  
A LEARNING DISABILITY'.**

**SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING (COUNCILLOR  
SUSAN ELSMORE)**

**AGENDA ITEM: 10**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. To approve the response to report of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee entitled 'Closer to Home Project: Out of County Placements for Adults with a Learning Disability'.

**Background**

2. At a meeting of the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee on the 7th November 2018, Members agreed to undertake an Inquiry on the decision-making process for supported living arrangements for adults with a learning disability. This focused on the current pathways in place for transitioning identified individuals back into county.
3. The task group reviewed a draft scope for the Inquiry at its first meeting and agreed for the terms of reference to be:
  - a. To review current pathways (with a particular focus on the decision-making process) in relation to supported living arrangements for adults with a learning disability;
  - b. To review residential College placements and how decisions are made in terms of continuation;
  - c. To identify best practice in relation to transitioning individuals from an out-of-county placement back into Cardiff;
  - d. To engage with service users and their families in relation to the above whilst also understanding their level of involvement – placing them at the centre of any recommendations going forward;
  - e. To identify current funding arrangements, consider whether this is being used effectively and make recommendations accordingly;
  - f. To identify and recommend a range of options and provision (based on best practice) that could be developed and implemented in Cardiff

4. The Cabinet Member and officers were very pleased to be able to share the spectrum of service provision that the Council commissions and to show members the wide range of opportunities that have been developed locally.
5. During the Inquiry members gained an understanding of the current projects, plans, proposals and assessment process around out of county placement for adults with a learning disability. Members received evidence from the Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Well-being, senior officers within the Social Services directorate and external witnesses from both out of county and local providers during their visits including: Bridgend College, Coleg Elidyr, Glasallt Fawr, Values in Care, Vision 21, Dimensions Cymru, Innovate Trust and Mirus. Members also commissioned independent research to identify the information and support requirements of the service users and families of those who are due to, or have undergone, transition from an out of county provider.
6. Officers were also able to share with the Inquiry the recent Opportunity Assessment of the Learning Disability Service undertaken by Alder Advice, an independent consultancy group with significant experience of analysing quality and effectiveness of health and social care services. Alder evidenced that the service has a good record of making service improvements, that a clear vision is embedded throughout the service - to ensure sustainable support is offered to people that ensures independence, choice and control and helps them lead the lives they want to lead. Alder found that the service is performing well and noted that there is low expenditure on learning disability services per head of population and good levels of satisfaction with the support. An action plan has been developed from the findings of the Alder review and the CASSC recommendations will be used to enhance this plan.
7. The Inquiry report was presented to Cabinet in February 2021 and is attached at appendix 1.

## **Issues**

### **Cardiff Services for People with Learning Disabilities**

8. The Community Learning Disability Team currently work with 1180 individuals. 84 Cardiff residents live outside of the city due lack of appropriate local accommodation options. A number of this cohort require a rural lifestyle or have made a choice to live near family. There are 13 people placed in NHS or private hospitals. There are also up to 20 students a year attending a residential college. Within the city, there are 313 people living in supported accommodation and 54 in local residential care

### **Development of local supported living**

9. The Ely hospital closure programme, (subsequent to the All Wales Strategy 1983), successfully resettled its residents (adults with learning disabilities) into community domiciliary settings in Cardiff. The Learning

Disability service has developed a wide range of accommodation options based on feedback from those receiving the service and their families. These are mainly managed under block contracts with third sector providers commissioned via a competitive tender. This outcome focused contract has been assessed as national good practice by independent auditors. The Learning Disability Service has a Supported Living Team which monitors the contracts, maintaining close relationships with the providers, overseeing all moves within the service and any concerns. The staff identify whether services provided are meeting the needs and outcomes of tenants, they assess the quality of the service provided, sharing good practice and negotiating service improvements and identifying issues at an early stage. The staff also oversee vacancy management including nominations for vacancies and whether service user's needs are compatible.

10. The CASSC Closer to Home Inquiry considered the processes that the service uses to identify appropriate vacancies for individuals with a Learning Disability and how it considers issues such as compatibility.

### **Use of Residential Care and the Closer to Home Project within Adult Services**

11. The majority of residents living outside Cardiff are in long term residential placements. Following the initial resettlement programme in Cardiff, the development of supported living reduced. This led to a growth in out of area placements due to increasing need, emergency placements and lack of local schemes to meet individual needs deemed too complex for local supported living.
12. For many years, numerous government and professional reviews reporting on the care agenda have highlighted that people with learning disabilities and challenging behaviours are vulnerable to abuse, and are more likely to be placed in private residential and/or hospital settings which often generates concerns around quality and safeguarding.
13. Ensuring appropriate local accommodation opportunities are available is a key priority that has been identified by local people as part of the service's stakeholder led commissioning strategy.
14. The Cardiff and Vale Closer to Home project was developed to enable those individuals placed away from home to return where appropriate and to offer people improved local options when considering where to live. This explores ways in which the Health, Social Care and Housing sectors can collaborate to deliver appropriate accommodation and support services to those with Learning Disabilities. The Project aims to deliver local, affordable, high quality housing accommodation and support solutions, shape services around the needs and choices of individuals, evidence value for money and develop a shared planned programme of work and move away from one off projects.
15. A 5 year accommodation plan has been developed setting out the needs of adults with learning disabilities in Cardiff. The service has already

developed two bespoke properties and support using the specifications developed as part of the Closer to Home project with good success. The addition of a business analyst to the Learning Disability Service, integration of Adult Social Services with the Housing and Communities into one directorate and the recent approval of capital monies for new accommodation will assist in ensuring the project is driven forward.

### **Transitioning people from out of county**

16. The CASSC Inquiry considered the work that the Learning Disability Services carries out when considering how best to support individuals to transition from out of county placements back to Cardiff. The Inquiry reviewed the process of assessment and transition planning with all involved. In light of the Inquiry's recommendations a policy will be developed to ensure this process is clear and transparent and this will be made available via a new website.

### **Further Education Opportunities**

17. The Inquiry also focused on those young people who attend residential further education colleges out of county. The report reviewed the work that the Learning Disability Service does to support individuals to return to Cardiff after the completion of their two or three year course.
18. Currently, the responsibility for directing and funding further education opportunities lies with the Welsh Government. This role will move to Local Authorities under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. The act is being implemented over several years and the date for the transfer of this responsibility is not yet known.
19. There is significant work underway by Education and Social Services to review at the local pathway from school to college and other development opportunities that young people need, The CASSC report was well timed to feed into this work.

### **Funding arrangements:**

20. The Inquiry also reviewed current funding arrangements for the service.
21. In Cardiff, the number of people with a learning disability is increasing. People with a learning disability are living longer and an increase in the number of individuals with complex needs transitioning from Children Services into Adult Services is expected over forthcoming years. It has been estimated that a further 125 individuals with Learning Disability will require services over the next 10 years. (This figure is under review due to the impact of covid). This will result in additional pressures on accommodation provision, education and occupation opportunities and necessary professional inputs.
22. The financial climate facing the public sector is difficult and unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future. In all commissioning arrangements quality, sustainability and value for money will be taken into account. Local

stakeholders have clearly identified what their priorities are through consultation and this is laid out in our Cardiff and Vale Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy 2018 - 2023. The CASSC Inquiry recommendations align with the service priorities and will be a helpful addition to the service action plans.

### **Findings and Response to the Recommendations**

23. It is pleasing to note that the forward to the report recognises the work that is already underway within the service, it states that 'it is clear that work within this field is continually progressing and is led by a clear drive within the service area to ensure Cardiff provides an excellent service for adults with a learning disability It is hoped that this report will support the service area in overcoming both current and future challenges; supplementing the service area's drive for continuous improvement'.
24. The report sets out 65 key findings and makes 30 recommendations. The recommendations were considered by officers from both Adult Services and Education and a detailed response to the recommendations is set out at Appendix 2. Of the 30 recommendations, 20 have been fully agreed, 9 have been partially agreed and one recommendation will not be possible due to statutory guidance.
25. The findings of the report have been welcomed by the service and its recommendations will supplement the existing service action plans.

### **Reason for Recommendations**

26. To respond to the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee report entitled 'Closer to Home Project: Out of County Placements for Adults with a Learning Disability'.

### **Financial Implications**

27. It is anticipated that the agreed recommendations are deliverable within existing resources. Some pieces of review and analytical work have been agreed, and the financial implications of any findings will need to be assessed once the planned work has been concluded. The report and recommendations reference potential areas of financial pressure over the medium to long term. These include changes associated with the ALNET (W) Act, as well as anticipated increases in the number of individuals with Learning Disabilities who may require services over the next ten years. It will be important to keep these areas under close review, in order to inform future financial planning.

### **Legal Implications**

28. The development and implementation of the recommendations of the report of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee entitled 'Closer to Home Project: Out of County Placements for Adults with a Learning Disability will assist the Council meet its duties under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. This includes the duties on local

authorities to assess people’s needs for social care support, and if they are eligible, to develop a care plan and provision to meet those needs. In the development and implementation of the recommendations the Council will need to ensure that it continues to meet its duties and responsibility.

29. Whilst not a legal implication arising at the present time as a direct result of the report, any future recommendations relating to the provision of services for a person will also need to be considered in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005. This provides a statutory framework for acting and making decisions on behalf of individuals who lack the mental capacity to do so themselves.

### **HR Implications**

29. There are no HR implications relating to this report.

### **Property Implications**

30. There are no property implications relating to this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to approve the response to the recommendations of the report of Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee entitled ‘Closer to Home Project: Out of County Placements for Adults with a Learning Disability’, as set out in appendix 2.

<b>SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<b>Jane Thomas Director of Adults, Housing &amp; Communities</b>
	<b>9 July 2021</b>

*The following appendices are attached:*

**Appendix 1** Community and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Committee Report ‘Closer to Home Project: Out of County Placements for Adults with a Learning Disability’.

**Appendix 2** - Response to Recommendations – CASSC report ‘Closer to Home Project: Out of County Placements for Adults with a Learning Disability’.