

HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25TH JUNE 2013

**SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES IMPROVEMENT AGENCY AND ALDERS
CONSULTANCY OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT**

REPORT BY: ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information regarding the Opportunity Assessment undertaken in Caerphilly County Borough Council Adult Services Learning Disability department.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) commissioned Alders Consultants to work with Local Authorities to examine the current practice in relation to efficiency and service improvement strategies in Learning Disability Services. Together they devised a national programme for Wales to support transformation.
- 2.2 Caerphilly County Borough Council Adult Services Division engaged in the programme of comprehensive analysis of strategic and operational practice. Whilst we had already commenced a cost saving review and linked to the Gwent Strategy for People with a Learning Disability, we welcomed the external scrutiny. The evaluation of our practice was very positive and noted the significant progress that our strategies had facilitated. Nevertheless, a series of recommendations were provided to assist us to balance cost review with change of models and practice. An action plan has been prepared to ensure continuous improvement and dovetail with the Directorate's Service Improvement and Medium Term Financial Plan.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- Participating in Opportunity Assessment and the exploration of our financial efficiency links to the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- The progression of practice to increase greater value for quality for service users links to the Gwent Learning Disability Strategy.
- Sharing the learning across the region through the Gwent Learning Disability Delivery Group and nationally through the SSIA Improvement Workshops links to Welsh Government collaboration agenda set out in numerous government and key partner agency documents.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Background

- 4.2 Local Authorities continue to be challenged in making the best use of diminishing resources, balancing user expectations and delivering quality outcomes within the priorities of wider

Local Authority services, whilst also meeting the Welsh Government requirements. The SSIA reviewed evidence from across the United Kingdom and noted that spend on Learning Disability Services grows more rapidly than that for Adult Social Care generally, that high cost packages of care are typical and that costs are high where investment has not been made in a wide range of housing and support options.

- 4.3 The SSIA commissioned Alder Consultants to develop a national programme for Wales to support transformation in Learning Disability Services, building upon the methodology that they had developed for the Department of Health's Care Service Efficiency Delivery Programme utilised at the Department of Health in England. Participation was offered to one pilot site for each region.
- 4.4 Learning Disability Services with the support of finance colleagues had commenced its own cost review project in relation to supported living care providers in 2008. Assessment of shared living arrangements and cost matrix documentation had been developed, revised and implemented across all supported living care providers to ensure packages of care were 'right sized' and correctly costed with a standardised hourly rate. The cost review project had expanded to consider the costs of residential care placements. In addition the South East Wales Investment Consortium brokerage service (SEWIC hub) was under development at the point at which the Opportunity Assessment commenced.
- 4.5 Despite these activities already underway, Adult Services recognised the demand pressure on the budget and valued the chance to receive external scrutiny of its own cost savings project. We welcomed the provision of any additional ideas to ensure service users received an assessed, quality, cost effective service that contributed to their personal development and safety and, where relevant, assisted family carers to continue to provide care.
- 4.6 Caerphilly County Borough Council took up the 'opportunity' and agreed to be the 'demonstrator' for the Gwent region. The site visit took place in the Autumn 2011.

4.7 The Opportunity Assessment

- 4.8 The aim was to identify opportunities for improving: the cost effectiveness of the current pattern of service provision; the use of housing and assistive technology based alternatives to residential care and the use of early intervention and preventative approaches. The assessment was intensive in terms of extensive preparation of information and documentation. It included: -
- Examination of national data in relation to service user need and cost and benchmarking the Authority against it
 - Examination of local data provided by learning disability and finance staff
 - Review of strategic documents and plans in use by the Authority
 - Field work Interviews: individuals learning disability assessment care management, cost savings project and provider staff, commissioning, supporting people and finance managers
 - Field work reviews of individual case files.

4.9 The findings

- 4.10 Very positive feedback was received in Spring 2012. Alder consultants noted the significant work that had already been undertaken in Caerphilly and commented that we had posed additional challenges to the project to 'find' suggestions for further service improvement.
- 4.11 Caerphilly has good strategies, "some of the best we have seen, they are based on sound analysis, give a clear direction of travel, state how achievements will be made and progress monitored and they are strategies that are delivering". "The best thing about Caerphilly's strategies is that it is actively delivering them and the results are paying off. For example, new admissions to residential care are rare i.e. most service users are supported in either supported living or supported accommodation, the cost savings project has delivered

significant savings in supported living services and the high cost package analysis has already commenced". Alder consultants noted effective and strategic and operational leadership of learning disability services, resulting in good containment of costs, despite relatively low expenditure on assessment and care management. The Council's approach to improving the cost effectiveness of services incorporates many of the good practice models that Alder consultants recommend to other Authorities

- 4.12 The Authority is a low user of residential care with high numbers of people living in 24/7 supported living models of care. It was suggested that there was scope to consider high cost packages, low level packages, and in particular an independent living pathway creating opportunities for people to acquire independent living skills and thus reduce costs of support.
- 4.13 It was noted that Caerphilly receives relatively low amounts of income compared to other Councils.
- 4.14 Alder consultants proposed that, rather than a do nothing budget or a cuts budget that pushes demand away in the short term for it to return in force in the future, we adopt an invest to constrain efficiency budget. This would involve investing in the exploration of alternative models of service delivery. Such exploration would include consideration of current methods of assessment and reviews, mapping data and targeted planning and responses, the challenge of needs/desire to progressing to independence.

4.15 The recommendations or 'opportunities' highlighted

- 4.16 Brief information follows to indicate how the 'Opportunities' were considered.

Local activity - the findings were discussed with the Learning Disability Team Manager and implementation commenced. Alders facilitated a feedback workshop for the Learning Disability Team in August 2012 to discuss the findings and implications for practice in progressing services to aid independence. Opportunities were reviewed during the Team Development day in March 2013 and again incorporated into the Team plan for 2013/14.

The opportunities are set out below with brief progress comments:

- a) *Access more Continuing Healthcare (CHC) income* - social workers reviewed caseloads to identify cases for discussion at new weekly CHC surgery or the new revised Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings for consideration of joint funding or CHC. There are examples of service users who are now being supported by CHC funding rather than CCBC funding.
- b) *Better manage mid-life transition* – mapping and targeting activities have taken place – for example mapping ages of ageing carers and users / interdependent relationships, reviewing the offer/uptake/outcome of carer assessments leading to targeting repeated offers of carers assessments for specific carers.
- c) *Better manage child to adult transition* – Gwent multi agency transition protocol has been implemented with targeting of engagement at the Transition Operational Group where planning takes place for children moving towards adulthood, greater links with education services including creating a data base to aid analysing data, to prepare for ongoing costs and the need for early CHC transfer or assessment, and creating transition leads and links in the in LD team.
- d) *Plan transitions better to reduce 'over servicing' at start of service* - exploration has taken place at team meetings, team development day and a CCBC Provider and Assessment & Care Management (ACM) internal workshop held in March 2013. Future review of quality of contingency planning.
- e) *Relocate some people from 24/7 support models to more appropriate less intensive support settings and achieve net cost saving* – stronger planning for reviews including cost

matrix consultation, progression theme is applied in the team via supervision discussion, challenges made through the weekly budget meeting and shorter time periods between initial agreements and first review.

- f) *Lower support costs in some cases where they are unnecessarily high at present where the costs exceed £1500 – cost savings review project already underway, staff are involved in evaluating the SEWIC hub, staff received matrix training to ensure all are cost aware, spring budget workshop with finance colleagues agreed further review of specific care packages.*
- g) *Create vulnerable adults team – exploring at present via identifying number of vulnerable adults, time sampling engagement with complex demanding clients, benchmarking against other teams and models in use in the region with a view to developing allocation criteria and a pathway.*
- h) *Use the review process to enable individual to “progress” over time to better fulfil their aspirations and potential with a subsequent reduction in support levels and costs as appropriate – LD team now undertake all their own reviews rather than use the generic review team in order that the progression theme is open to all service users. Changes to care packages will be monitored to aid evaluation.*
- i) *Deploy assistive technology (AT) much more widely – mapped current use of AT and will be securing Supporting People and Occupational Therapy expertise to be shared via team meeting.*
- j) *Minimise duplication between support provided by 24/7 models of support and by community base support – limited opportunity here as staff aware when commissioning packages of care.*
- k) *Subject to adequate risk assessment, risk management and monitoring, cease or further reduce some lower levels of support where it is not justified by need, so creating capacity for others to step down to – audited low level packages, reviewed want and eligible need, discussed greater use of universal services and sign posting. Work plan in place following internal workshop held between CCBC LD Provider and ACM Teams.*
- l) *Linking practice and strategic commissioning activity dynamically so that the market for support continues to develop matching the demand for support and successfully delivering progression, where possible - LD team commenced attendance at the Learning Disability Care Home Providers and Caerphilly Supported Living Network. Team also attend the monthly quality assurance meeting. A specific planning meeting to be convened with commissioning staff. There are strong links with the LD Gwent Strategy and its work streams.*

4.17 **Regional activity** - Alders and SSIA representatives presented the Caerphilly assessment to the Gwent Learning Disability Strategy Delivery Group in Summer 2012. The Delivery Group consists of the five Local Authorities and the Aneurin Bevan Health Board. Discussion identified that although the findings were specific to Caerphilly, these opportunities were relevant across the region. In the same way that the issues were not ‘new’ when presented to Caerphilly and work had already commenced on the recommendations made, the other organisations identified the issues were similarly relevant to them.

4.18 A regional workshop was facilitated by Alders in Spring 2013 to explore in more depth the three key themes of vulnerable adults, the progression model and outcome based commissioning. The workshop enabled practitioners to share good practice and projects already underway and consider future collaboration. A range of possible regional actions were identified to move practice forward and improve consistency however, the Delivery Group decided in April 2013 that whilst these actions compliment the Learning Disability Strategy work streams they will not be taken forward by the group. The actions will now be considered by the Caerphilly Learning Disability Team in its next development session with

the Service Manager in order that the work is not wasted. Development work will be incorporated into the Learning Disability Team Plan and make use of task and finish group and local collaboration with the Gwent organisations.

4.19 Next steps

- 4.20 Progress is reviewed at the regular Team Meetings and in the development sessions held between the Service Manager, Team Manager and senior staff.
- 4.21 SSIA and Alders plan to hold a national learning event later this year when all the demonstrator sites across Wales work concludes. It is likely that Caerphilly will be asked to speak about their experiences and progress with taking up the opportunities and implementing the recommendations. Therefore there may be further opportunity to stimulate national interest in working on some of the issues for example a pathway for vulnerable adults who do not have a learning disability.

4.22 Conclusions

- 4.23 Whilst considerable progress was recognised by the Alders external review, demand continues to increase creating pressure on diminishing budgets. The team faces a challenge to balance the need to be vigilant in assessing and reviewing need and to be cost aware in all that they do whilst working within the ethos of safe and quality service delivery. It is hoped that the framework of Service Improvement, Team Plans and the specific actions identified as a result of participating in the Alder Opportunity Assessment will assist the Team to keep a heightened awareness of the need to progress and transform Learning Disability Services.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report is for information purposes, so the Council Equalities Impact Assessment does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As set out throughout the report there is considerable pressure on Learning Disability budgets and significant work has been undertaken through a range of initiatives to contain costs and make the best use of the resources available. However, whilst these initiatives have delivered significant financial efficiencies the increasing pressure on budgets has required new funding to be targeted at Learning Disability services with budgets in this area being increased by £456k for the 2013/14 financial year.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All comments received have been reflected in the body of the report

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that members note the information regarding the activity and progress made in relation to Learning Disability services.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The recommendation is made in order that elected members are informed of the activity within the Caerphilly County Borough Learning Disability Service.

Author: Andrea Giordano, Service Manager
Consultees: Social Services Senior Management Team
Cllr Robin Woodyatt
Adult Services Divisional Management Team
Greg Bromley, Learning Disability Team Manager