

10th January 2012

Update on day opportunities, Partnership Board and respite for adults with learning disabilities

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor McCracken – Social Care and Inclusion

Executive Summary:

Day opportunities are being developed to enable individuals, either on their own or in partnership with others, to access local services or receive support in their local communities. Along with evening and weekend activities, community and accommodation based respite, this enables family carers to have a break and adults with learning disabilities to become valued members of their local communities.

Partnership Board co-chairs have been elected for the year beginning 1st January 2012. Work has begun on priorities, challenges and concerns, and will be completed in January 2012. The outcomes of the initial work are included in this report and reflect the challenges already highlighted in Valuing People Now.

Reason for scrutiny:

The Panel has requested an update on day opportunities, carers and their respite care, and the views of the Chairs of the Partnership Board regarding challenges, successes and concerns in relation to adults with learning disabilities.

Recommendations:

The panel is recommended

1. To note this report
2. To request Partnership Board representatives to provide an update on priorities and concerns in March 2012

1. Day Opportunities

Services are being developed and will be commissioned to enable people to access and engage with their local communities. Personalisation will lead to people purchasing flexible services for themselves or combining with other likeminded individuals to purchase a local service for a small group of people. Day Opportunities are linked to evening activities, social clubs and weekends. A number of services and clubs are supported in partnership with the third sector and where possible improving access to mainstream activities in local communities



The new structure of day opportunities reflects the Area Management model:

- Brownhills CA and Daw End Lane serve Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall and Sheffield
- Park Farm serves Aldridge, Streetly, Pheasey and Walsall Wood
- Blakenall CA, Stan Ball Centre and Goscote Centre serve Bloxwich, Blakenall, Birchills and Leamore
- Moxley Peoples Centre serves Darlaston and Bentley
- St John's serves St Matthews, Paddock, Palfrey and Pleck
- Links to Work and Willenhall Park serve Willenhall and Short Heath

1.1 Background

Walsall Council traditionally offered buildings-based day care for younger adults, but this became an outdated model which did not deliver self directed support or personalised services. In 2009/10 a community satellite model was developed, using eight sites plus Goscote Centre and Links to Work (Electrium Point).

The role of Opportunities and Employment is to support people to achieve their personal goals and objectives in a person centred way. The service now works within the Area Management model to make them more logically planned, locality based and efficient. This is promoting integration within local communities to facilitate access to learning, leisure activities, social activities, travel training, building and developing social skills and participation in employment opportunities where appropriate.

1.2 Community Satellites

The community model offers choice and inclusion for adults with a Learning Disability by enabling them to access meaningful opportunities in their local communities using a person centred approach. Our sites operate alongside established Community Associations, most sharing facilities to promote community inclusion and cohesion. This approach is informed by the Area Management model which promotes partnerships with Community Associations, thereby allowing a wider variety of experiences for our users.

We no longer see our services as specialised or exclusive, preferring a collaborative approach to all aspects of service delivery with customers so that they can make informed decisions about the type of care they receive and from whom

Pathways have been created developing skills and knowledge, enabling users to access accredited courses. For others opportunities to access leisure activities in safe supportive environments have been developed, with some users wishing to access recreational activities and develop meaningful relationships to reduce social isolation and share similar interests and experiences.

Future goals involve developing services in three distinct areas of need:

- Autism
- Complex needs
- Challenging Behaviour

These will be integral to the outcome focus in our operating model .

1.3 Goscote Centre

Development of the Goscote Centre has been spread over three years.

In 2009/10 and 2010/11 the focus was on the internal refurbishment of the centre to extend the building's life and create additional capacity for existing service users with complex care needs. The refurbishment has been managed to ensure that the building can be used for a broad range of services to meet the needs of our citizens and future proof its potential to meet changing service needs.

The focus in 2011/12 is on developing the grounds of the site, enhancing its capacity for community use and creating learning and employment opportunities.

The community development aspect was initiated by Social Care in partnership with WACC. The Area Partnership Manager has been crucial in developing links to the wider Goscote community.

Facilities delivered to date include:

Internal

- A fully equipped training kitchen (first cohorts of trainees from September 2011) Capacity to deliver training and work placements to promote employment of people with disabilities (60 placements per academic year)
- Craft /training room
- Small health and beauty spa
- Meeting / activity rooms
- Large conservatory to complement the new kitchen and provide opportunity to develop a bistro service to support the community farm, also available for use as a set down site for mobile working in social care, and for community use
- An NVQ academy for social care (12 trainees per year from April 2011)

External

- Landscaping
- Raised beds for growing vegetables, herbs and other plants
- Underground rainwater harvesting for on-site use
- Two commercial Polytunnels
- Perimeter fencing
- Accessible paths laid from building and around perimeter of the site
- Composting bins
- Mains water services

Remaining plans for this year include:

- Wireless network connectivity for the dining and conservatory area
- Completion of the community farm
- Fishing deck (and establishment of a fishing club)
- Planting of fruit orchards and landscaping of remaining areas
- Sensory and herb gardens
- Community garden

Future developments could include:

- Setting up a café bistro enterprise for out of hours weekend service for site and the community farm
- Setting up a hair and beauty enterprise for service users, carers and the community
- Promoting community use of the site in evenings and at weekends
- Setting up an animal husbandry project
- Setting up a bee keeping enterprise
- Joint ventures to source funding to develop the site further

The Community Farm has already developed raised beds for social care therapeutic use, YPSS, @WASP groups, and members of the local community. We are looking to develop these for local schools and education providers and other local community groups or partner organisations.

1.4 Links to Work

The service continues to provide employment opportunities for adults with disabilities including light industrial packing and assembly, supporting local industries such as Squires, Yale, Author Hough's and Icon etc. (in Walsall, Wolverhampton, and Telford).

The service has now consolidated from three sites to a single base at Electrum Point and several work streams are being developed to optimise its use, including:

- Data archiving
- Community food bank
- Old Halls Peoples Partnership
- Integrated Community Equipment Stores (ICES)
- Growing Links - Micro Enterprise
- Development of Recruit-ability Programme
- Minor aids and adaptations

1.5 Respite Care

Individuals and their families will purchase respite care from their individual budgets. This will not always be accommodation based and could include support in the community or at home. There have been some issues with quality of services across all the sectors but these are being addressed. Through their own direct payments family carers can also receive a service direct to themselves to ease the pressures of caring.

1.6 Hollybank House

Hollybank currently operates as a 20 bed facility split into four units. The majority of current users have behavioural and learning disabilities.

The 20 bedrooms include two newly created emergency bedrooms with adjoining lounge and kitchen facilities. These will be used by people in an emergency or for respite provision and will be staffed by Community Reablement if appropriate, or by agency staff through the Individual Budget process that would be in place prior to admission.

Following recent investment in the main building there is now a focus on the design of a respite service to be incorporated into the services currently provided. Four supported living flats could be built within the site. These could offer short term tenancies and generate an income for the Council.

1.7 Fallings Heath House

This facility currently has 13 bedrooms. It is mainly working with and offering services to people with learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

5 rooms are allocated to planned short stay and respite, with a current occupancy level of 89%.

The other 8 rooms are occupied by long term residents who have profound learning disabilities. A re-provision project is under way in consultation with families and carers regarding moving these long term residents to a community supported environment with individual budgets.

Fallings Heath could operate in the future as a 13 bed respite facility open to all users aged over 18 who need such a service.

2. Partnership Board feedback

2 Partnership Board co-chairs have been elected for the year beginning 1st January 2012: Mr Graham Smith and Mr Siraaj Nadat. Both are adults with a learning disability, Mr Nadat also serves on regional and national boards linked to the development and delivery of Valuing People Now outcomes. Work has begun on updating priorities, challenges and concerns and will be completed in January 2012.

The three key areas that have to be addressed and are reported on annually are

- Health
- Employment
- Housing

Other key areas agreed by the board are

- Hate crime/safeguarding/safe communities
- Involving family carers
- Complex needs
- Forensic services
- Access/Changing places
- Transport
- Friends and relationships
- Advocacy
- Community activities/Leisure day services
- Adult Education
- Personalisation/Individual Budgets
- Access to Justice (Human Rights)
- Quality
- Cuts in services/reduced budgets/productivity and efficiency
- Engagement and involvement in decision making for service users and other adults with learning disabilities in Walsall
- Transition – Young people to adulthood / Adulthood to older age
- Workforce development – skills and training (links to quality)
- Making it happen – governance, accountability and better ways of working

The board will be meeting in January 2012 to complete the detail including achievements, challenges, concerns and expected outcomes against these areas. An annual delivery plan including timescales will be developed and will be monitored by the board.

Resource and legal considerations:

Day Opportunities and carers respite are funded for 2011/12. The proposed developments for 2012/13 will be funded from within existing resources and efficiencies released through decommissioning services that are no longer required. There is a need to develop more local solutions that will require local resources to be made available. Savings will be realised through decommissioning high cost out of area services.

Citizen impact:

A person linking into their local communities increases the value and social assets of that community. This is achieved by recognising the strengths and skills of an individual and through the support network of family, friends and other significant community members strengthens the bond of community cohesion. These communities are based upon place, interest, religion and culture. Local services provide local jobs and improve the economic situation.

Environmental impact:

Engaging in services nearer to home utilises existing community resources and removes the reliance on institutional transport resulting in a reduction of Walsall's carbon footprint.

Performance management:

Improved services, customer satisfaction, local services, community partnerships, voluntary sector development and value for money.
Increasing the number of adults in paid employment (NI146), support in settled accommodation and outcomes of carer's assessments.

Equality Implications:

Access to services and communities for all.

Consultation:

Strategic Development, In House Day Opportunities and Respite Provision, Commissioning and Partnership Board members through Board planning meeting on 14 December 2011.

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