

**Portfolio Brief – Adult Social Care
Councillor Rose Martin**

1. Complex Needs and Mental Health (18-24 year olds)

We have worked strategically for a number of years to reshape the Care Market for adults with a learning disability and/or Autism. Our key aim is to support people at home in their own tenancy or with family. This has resulted in 82% of people who receive a care package funded by Walsall being supported in this way as opposed to being placed within Residential or Nursing Care Homes.

We are working in partnership with Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS England to transform services for Adults with learning disabilities who have needed high levels of support in either In-patient beds, Assessment and Treatment beds, Locked Rehabilitation or specialist In-Patient beds to ensure they only access a bed when they need to. There has been a history (nationally) of those people spending far too long in such placements, resulting in poor outcomes.

We have focused hard on achieving the savings required in the services we externally commission; and we have developed a number of prevention services in partnership with the voluntary and independent sector to build upon our resilient communities aim.

We are now in the process of tendering a new Supported Living Framework and Registered and Nursing Framework to ensure an appropriate range of high quality providers in Walsall.

2. Proud

We have commissioned an Autism Befriending Service and Housing Support Service which were shortlisted for the National LD and Autism Awards.

In 2017/18 we have secured some external funding to work with community associations to develop new sustainable services at that level, which in due course can become sustainable due to self-funding.

We have worked closely with our NHS partners to ensure we are on target for our Transforming Care Partnership trajectory for adults with complex disabilities moving out of In Patient care to more independent settings.

We have commissioned a Mental Health Support and Prevention Service through Rethink in partnership with Public Health and Walsall CCG.

We have decommissioned a number of services which are no longer fit for purpose or good value for money. These have been delivered in partnership with staff and Unions and carried out in a sensitive and professional manner. This has seen the closure of Broadway North, Fallings Heath Residential and Fallings Heath Day Care in December 2017, the closure of Hollybank Bed Based Services and the remodelling of the Community Integrated Team in June 2018. The Joint Trades Unions commended us on our approach.

3. **Frontline Teams**

The Access, Assessment and Care Management Service was recently reorganised to integrate with the locality model. This means we now co-work cases with GP's, nurses, mental health staff and other community health services. Our locality model consists of a single Access Team working alongside the newly established North, South, East and West Locality teams.

The main function of the Access team is to take all initial (new) contacts for Adult Social Care and to provide a range of services such as providing advice and information and undertaking first assessments. Tier 2 of the team undertakes all the screening of safeguarding concerns and responds to urgent requests which need an immediate response.

The locality teams then continue to undertake duties within the Care Act such as completing assessments and determining eligibility, case management including reviews and undertaking in depth/ongoing safeguarding enquires. Each team consists of a team manager, two Advanced Practitioners, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Social Care Facilitators and Occupational Therapy assistants. These staff work alongside the GP's and other community health teams.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to establish strong collaborative working with our health partners. Both North (Pinfold Health Centre) and West (Darlaston Health Centre) Locality teams are now based with the community health nurses. Estates concerns have stopped us finding suitable accommodation so far within the South and East Localities; however, in spite of this, there is an integrated presence across all locality teams.

Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings are taking place on a weekly basis (some are more frequent) to manage out citizens' requirements across health and care. Additionally, there are now 12 GP led MDT's taking place on either on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. With a further three planned to start within the next couple of months. All professionals are beginning to see the benefits of these meetings, and work is on-going to look specifically at the benefits for service users/patients. This is the first time that all professionals have discussed individual cases together and the ability to then offer better coordinated care and responses is significant.

The Group Manager for Locality Social Work and two locality team managers are currently taking part in the Vanguard project, and are reviewing the end-to-end flows of work coming into Access and then the Locality teams. This will look at the individuals' journey, with a view to improve workflow, productivity and outcomes for the individual. This will also support the transformation programme in better meeting the needs of individuals.

4. **Resources which support Mental Health and Complex Needs**

In addition to the locality and access teams, we have established two specialist teams to work with those affected by Learning Disability or Mental Health issues. A recently appointed Group Manager oversees the teams and is currently working to develop the model further.

Both the Learning Disability Team (Complex Needs team) and our newly established Mental Health Team comprise of a Team Manager, a number of Social workers, Occupational Therapists and non-Social Work qualified assessors. These teams focus on the needs of any adult who presents to them and who may have social care needs because of their Learning Disability: Mental Health and/or ASD (Autism/Asperger's). The needs of young people preparing for adulthood are also supported through the Learning Disability team.

The Mental Health team was established following the termination of the section 75 partnership arrangement with the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust. This has enabled us to focus our resources more appropriately and in line with legislation.

There are a small number of internal resources that have been retained across Adult Social Care. These resources are now being managed and developed by a recently appointed Group Manager – Adult Social Care – Resources (ASCR).

These are:-

Shared Lives: offering replacement care, bed based placements and community activities from Shared Lives carers' home. This service is regulated by the CQC. To date we have recruited 50 shared lives carers, offering support to 58 people with a range of Disabilities, Mental Health deterioration and needs around preparing for adulthood. This service and our offer are being developed to increase the placement support it can offer.

Goscote Centre: is a traditional day opportunities base for 90 people with a range of disabilities. There is work ongoing to reconfigure the service offer in order to reduce dependency on long-term placement, to focus on time-limited support that enables people to experience an ordinary life with support only when needed.

The Greenacres Community Garden project is also sharing the site and will become a separate entity from the council in the next three months. This follows successful bids for lottery funding for the next five years, which will see the community offer expand and develop within a voluntary service provision.

Employment service: This offers opportunities to engage with people who require support to prepare for work. The service is currently supporting over 50 people with Disabilities. Many individuals who access the service are under 29 years of age. The service provides an introduction to employment programme. The Employment Service is keen to expand its offer and engage with Carers who wish to return to employment and to work with over 29 year olds with Learning Disabilities /ASD (Autism/Aspergers) or deteriorating mental health. Staff are currently working to develop their offer of support to homelessness people and others who are harder to reach because of social exclusion.

In addition to the existing services outlined above, we are developing an All Age Disability model. The Group Manager is currently running a series of workshops to capture the range of activity across children and adults whilst considering a model for a seamless service delivery for the future. The development of this offer involves a wide number of partners, and focuses on improving the journey, offer and independence for young people.

6. **Finances**

The well documented national pressures on Adult Social care services are consistent with those experienced here in Walsall. The Council has continued to invest significant funding into those services to support projected demand and pressures whilst at the same time looking to implement efficiency plans and controls in a bid to maintain the directorate's finances in as stable a position as possible.

Nevertheless, the directorate continues to experience pressures with a current estimated gross variance of **£2m** and for 2018/19. This includes demand led service increases, reductions in income from our partners such as the CCG, our demand management savings targets and the impact on continuing the Community Alarm Service in its current delivery model whilst decisions about future service provision are considered. This is currently at the consultation stage to inform the future of the service delivery.

Further work is underway across the Council and with partners (CCG) in a bid to reduce these pressures and mitigate them where appropriate; with the directorate implementing an action plan of **£1.2m** across its services following a review of last year's outturn position and a focus on ceasing areas of non-essential spend to help tackle these pressures where possible. This still leaves the directorate however with a net overspend of **£2.1m** and highlights the significant financial constraints both ASC and the Council are under at a time when demand for our services is high. As a result, difficult decisions need to be considered for services where there is not a statutory need to continue or where there is an alternative and more cost effective approach in order to maintain long term stability.

7. **Workforce**

We have undertaken work in relation to workforce development and staff recruitment. We have developed the career progression pathway, which now sees two routes into career development for front line workers (either through a practice development or management skill development route).

We have revised the job descriptions for all our Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and Team Managers ensuring a strong focus on professional accountability and leadership. Moreover, we have invested significantly in professional practice development, which has seen an increase in the number of staff applying for advanced professional training, either as Approved Mental Health Practitioners, Best interest Assessors or Practice Educators (a shortage of these had been a problem within the service for many years).

The workforce has viewed the changes in terms of the offer to staff as positive, and we have now moved to a point where any advert for vacant posts receives significant interest from other geographical areas. Our most recent recruitment exercise across the Social Worker and Occupational Therapy staff group saw offers of employment going to candidates to fill all our vacant posts. Over the last few weeks, we have employed over 50 new frontline staff, most of who have now taken up their posts. We are delighted to be an employer that prospective applicants from other places want to join.

Two new Group Managers for Social Work and internal service delivery across Adult Social Care are recently appointed and are beginning to engage in wider relationships with both internal and external stakeholders as we look to work more effectively with partners and develop an improved offer for service users. We also have apprentices, management graduates and newly qualified workers who have joined the Directorate.

We have also said goodbye to about 100 staff who worked in Hollybank and Reablement Services. This is to reflect the new joint model of health and care for people leaving hospital. We thank them for all their hard work and dedicated commitment to Walsall people, and wish them well in their new roles.

In late 2015, the Adult Social Care Peer Review showed low morale and a lack of investment in our workforce. So we are most proud of the recent feedback from new staff that “Walsall is the place to come and work.” We believe this signifies a positive experience for our workforce and we are delighted to have such a dedicated team of staff.

8. Summary

I wish to thank all the staff for their dedication and commitment to the people of Walsall and for all they have done and will continue to do. The teams are working very effectively and managing to deal with increased demand within reducing resources, by continuously reviewing and improving the delivery.

I have seen this first hand in the large number of teams and services I have been to visit. I have queried the number of agency staff we have employed recently, and this is now reducing as we bring in the new staff which have been recruited (as referenced above in item 7).

Councillor Rose Martin
Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care