

PROMOTING THE INDEPENDENCE OF ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

Report of the Head of Adult Commissioning and Health

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 Members of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee are asked to note feedback from the listening events that recently took place across the County, focusing on what matters to people with disabilities.
- 1.2 Members are asked to consider the work underway, informed by this feedback, to improve how people in Devon are supported to be as independent as possible and to lead meaningful lives in their communities.
- 1.3 Members are also asked to consider the next steps in taking this work forward.

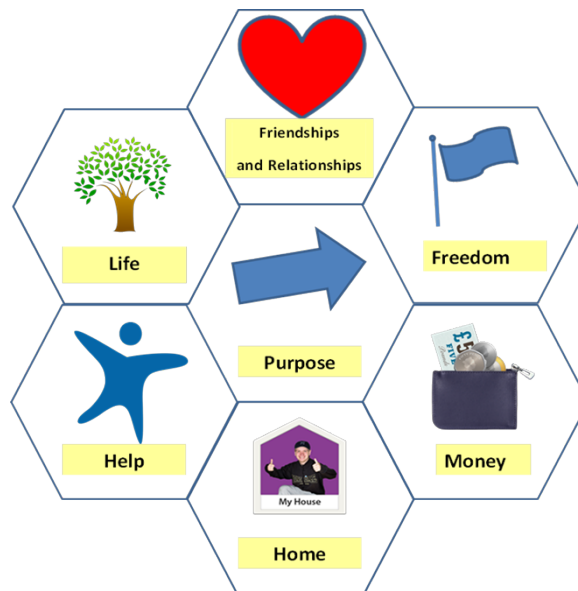
2. Purpose

- 2.1 At the Committee meeting in November, Members discussed our ambition to promote the independence of people with disabilities and to change how we work with people and communities to achieve this. To inform this work, the Committee is aware that we held a number of listening events across the County with people, their families/carers and a range of other partners at the end of last year. This report updates the Committee on what we heard how we plan to respond.
- 2.2 The report also builds on the discussion at the Adults Standing Overview Group last month, where Members highlighted their role and that of the wider Council in helping people to live meaningful lives within their communities. This report considers the sorts of things that we can do across the Council to support with that approach.

3. Background

- 3.1 People with disabilities include those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, autism and/or sensory needs.
 - There are around 15,000 people with a learning disability in Devon. 2,494 of these receive adult social care services.
 - About 1,500 people with physical disabilities and/or sensory needs aged 18-64 years receive social care services in Devon.
 - There are over 7,500 people in Devon with autism. 773 adults with Autism received services at the end of July 2017.
 - 7.5% of adults with a learning disability in Devon were in paid employment in 2016/17.
 - Approximately 25% of young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan transition to adult services each year.
 - Support to adults with disabilities makes up about 45% of the Council's budget for adult social care.

- 3.2 We know that people with disabilities and their carers do not generally want to be dependent on public services or be placed in a care setting if this can possibly be avoided. Instead, they tell us that they want to live with and/or be supported by their family and friends at home in the community, and remain connected to their interests.
- 3.3 We know that in Devon we still have significantly more people using statutory services than other local authorities across England and, the way we support people with disabilities is not always focused on supporting them to live as independently as possible. This is what we must change.
- 3.4 Our recent listening events asked those who use our services and their carers about what matters to them and how we can help them to achieve their aspirations. The method of sharing and listening varied based on the audience and was structured around the seven keys to citizenship, as set out in the image below.



4. Feedback from listening to what matters to people

4.1 At the end of last year, we talked with our partnership boards made up of people with learning disabilities and autism, our staff and a range of other partners. We also held nine events across the County at day and respite centres. The feedback we received from the 120 attendees is summarised below.

4.2 Feedback from people who use our services and their families

- People and their families/carers were very positive about the services they receive.
- People find change difficult and it needs to be taken at the right pace.
- Day centres provide a valuable 'hub' for personalised activities, as well as providing a base for people to access community facilities from.
- People enjoy spending time with friends and socialising with others
- People want purposeful activity and meaningful employment. They want to learn skills that will support them to have a job.

- People want to learn independent living skills, including food purchasing, preparation and eating, alongside personal care, money handling and travel training.
- Day centres provide a valuable break for parents.
- People want to be able to access their local community – people enjoy accessing clubs, travelling on buses, going out for coffee, etc.
- People want choice in undertaking meaningful and purposeful activities.
- Day centres provide a service that is safe, familiar and respected.
- People would like greater flexibility in opening hours.

4.3 Feedback from our staff

- We should review the purpose of day centres to have a greater focus on enablement, strength based goals and support for people to access paid employment and voluntary opportunities. This should include both short term and longer-term interventions and to reduce reliance on day centres long term.
- There is a wealth of resource and expertise that we need to use better to improve outcomes for people.
- People want flexibility in the time when services/activities are offered – including evening and weekend opportunities.
- We should consider closer joint working (co-location) with other teams, including community enabling and community teams.
- We should ensure reviews are timely and involve expertise of staff from day services.
- We should review transport as millage restrictions limit access community facilities particularly for the more rural day centres.
- People want to be able to network with the community in a meaningful way.
- People want opportunities for social interaction and community inclusion that lasts.

4.4 We have shared this feedback with those who participated in the listening events. It is important that we talk to them again about how we are acting on their valuable contributions and to share our ideas for improvement with them. We will do so in the coming months.

5. Our vision and what this means for people and communities

5.1 On the basis of the feedback we have received, we are developing an ambitious vision for people with disabilities in Devon. We want people to have the same opportunities as everyone else and to lead meaningful lives within their communities. What matters to people and how they can achieve their potential will drive all we do.

5.2 We want people with disabilities to have opportunities to meet friends, to join social groups and to benefit from community and leisure facilities. We are working with communities to ensure that there are opportunities for people to live as independently as possible. We also want to build closer links with District and Parish Councils to promote independence and social inclusion for people with disabilities. This includes through ensuring appropriate accommodation and housing supply. We will work with communities to make this happen.

- 5.3 We want people to develop independent life skills and to achieve their potential. We want people to be able to access support when they need it, close to home that will help them achieve their goals. Where possible, people with disabilities will have the appropriate education and training opportunities to support them to have a job.
- 5.4 We recognise that people with disabilities have a range of needs and specialist and intensive support will be in place when people need it. We also want carers to be able to care for the people they look after.

6. Key areas of focus across the health and care system

An assumption of employment for people with disabilities

- 6.1 People with a learning disability tell us that they, like most of the population, want to work. However, many people also tell us that they find it difficult to get a job. Employment is one of the best ways to build on people's strengths and abilities, and to enable them to live independently within their communities.
- 6.2 We want more people with disabilities in Devon to be employed (paid or unpaid) by 2020. We are embedding an assumption of employment into all areas of professional practice, which means that our care will be focused on supporting people to learn the skills they need to have a job.
- 6.3 Alongside this, we are working with a range of partners, including JobCentrePlus, Further Education colleges, Learn Devon, businesses and the University, to address the known barriers to employment and increase opportunities for volunteering, apprenticeships, internships and employment for people with disabilities. This work requires a multi-agency approach with all organisations taking responsibility for this ambition and taking steps to support people with disabilities to have and retain a meaningful job.
- 6.4 Officers recently held a workshop with key partners to consider the actions we can all undertake to support more working age adults into employment. This included learning from other authorities and supported employment providers, and how to engage and support local employers to employ people with disabilities. With our partners, we are promoting the value that people with disabilities can bring to businesses and to the local community as a whole through a focused campaign across the County in April.
- 6.5 Over the past year the Council has supported two employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including a paid permanent role and an internship for a young person through their Further Education college. We can talk to the Committee about the impact of this, on the individuals and on the Council and what more can be done.
- 6.6 The recent Annual General Meeting of the Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB) focused on how we can support more people with disabilities into employment, the Council's senior leadership team was in attendance. A verbal update on the resulting actions from this meeting can be given to the Committee.

Opportunities in communities for people to live as independently as possible

- 6.7 We are creating more opportunities for (unpaid) friendships and peer support in communities for people with disabilities. Friendship groups will include a matching service for people interested in the same type of activities. We are also making greater use of community resources, such as care and support delivered by carers in family homes, to create capacity in communities to support people with disabilities. Focus groups are influencing the development of the Accessible Website for people with disabilities, which aims to better connect people with one another and their communities.
- 6.8 Through discussion with the Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB), leaders across the Council have committed to improving accessibility and support to promote the independence of people and to support integration into community settings. This includes making bus routes more accessible, ensuring bus drivers receive learning disability awareness training and providing people with accessible information to help them understand the different types of road crossings. The impact of the plan is monitored by the Council's Leadership Team and the Chair of the Partnership Board.
- 6.9 We have also talked with the Devon Local Government Steering Group, which includes District Councils, about the need for more changing places(?) in market towns across Devon and for information about recycling and refuse collections to be available in easy read format. Making sure that a wide range of information is accessible to people with disabilities will enable people to access resources and support in their communities as everyone else can. This work requires a whole Council approach and the Chair of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board is taking forward this work.

To reshape our enablement service model to make the best use of capacity, resources and skills of our staff

- 6.10 Traditionally, day services have been offered to people for long periods of time and have been focused on improving social isolation. We want to develop our enablement model, initially focusing on our in-house services to better support people to live more fulfilling and purposeful lives.
- 6.11 We want to re-focus our day centre to support people to gain, retain, regain or improve their skills towards independent living and enable people to progress to employment and/or voluntary work wherever possible. This will include both short term interventions and longer- term support to enable people to progress onto further opportunities.
- 6.12 We want to build on the concept of day centres being a 'hub' to access community facilities and review their opening times to increase the flexibility of access.
- 6.13 We want our teams to work closer and better together and with independent providers so their contribution to people's lives has more impact and we reached more of the right people.t.

To further develop our approach to focus on what matters to people and promote their independence

- 6.14 We will support our workforce to focus on what matters to people and take a strengths based approach to achieve what matters to them. We will undertake

timely reviews of the support that people need to achieve what matters to them and to help them to get a job.

- 6.15 We want to make better use of TECS (Technology Enabled Care and Support) as a way for people to live as independently as possible and to support carers. The 'Smart House' events in Tiverton recently showcased some of the latest personalised technology that is helping people to live in their own homes. The gadgets and equipment ranged from basic kitchen gadgets and aids to help people with limited mobility, through to the latest in hi-technology. TECS may be an alternative to care, but could also complement it. Our refreshed strategy to increase the use of TECS for all adults is supporting our approach.

A whole life approach to how we prepare children and young people for adulthood

- 6.16 Through our partnership group across the health and care system, we are improving how we currently work together to better support young people transitioning from children's services. This includes making sure that support is focused on enabling young people to live as independently as possible and they can access to advice and guidance, to support them to live within their local communities.
- 6.17 Alongside this work, the purposeful systems team are looking at transitions between children and adult services, and how we can focus on what matters to people with disabilities over the course of their lives. A test of change with a small group of young people in a defined area of Devon is being proposed to support a better understanding of the impact of working in this way. Lessons from this test of change will inform how this work is taken forward.

Smarter commissioning

- 6.18 We are improving our understanding of the providers of care and support to people with disabilities in Devon, and also how people are supported to live as independently as possible. This learning is on-going and constantly informing our work.
- 6.19 We want to make sure that appropriate provision is available for people as they develop independent life skills that is close to home. We also want to work with providers to identify and share best practice, and diversify supply of the support people receive at home to promote their independence. This includes working with District Councils to consider how housing supply can support integration in communities and greater independence for people with disabilities.
- 6.20 We are also working as a key part of the health and care system to improve how people with learning disabilities and autism are able to access health and social care support when they need it. Work is underway, as part of the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership for adults with learning disabilities and autism, to refresh our strategic approach and our model of care. This approach is aligned to the work taking place across the Council.

7. Next steps

- 7.1 We are considering what we can do now and over the longer term to focus support on what matters to people and help them to achieve their goals, throughout their lives as adults and as they prepare for adulthood.
- 7.2 We will continue work to refresh our strategic approach for how adults with disabilities are supported across the care and health system in Devon. As part of this, we will talk again with the people and carers who use our services, and test our approach with a broader range of people and partners across Devon.
- 7.3 This work requires a step change in how we work with people and communities. It can only be achieved through the involvement of all parts of the Council and our partners, alongside our social care teams.
- 7.4 We will share our refreshed strategic approach and proposed new model of delivery, alongside what is needed to support our approach, with Cabinet in June.

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Electoral Divisions: All

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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