

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER, 2013 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT:
Councillors

Freeman, Miss. M. (Chairman)

Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Jones, R.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Rowley, J.
Gamble, B.	

17. Apologies

None were received

18. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made.

19. Learning Disability Day Opportunities for Staffordshire – Consultation

The District Commissioning Lead to provide further information in respect of the Consultation, as requested at the meeting held on 07 October 2013 (Item 3.1 – 3.14)

A presentation was made by the Service Delivery Lead to on the Learning Disability Day Opportunities for Staffordshire with Cannock as the main focal point. As part of the background a brief explanation was given regarding the changes in circumstances between 2010-2013 where there has been a decrease in people with learning disabilities using day services; this has had a knock on effect on the numbers of staff which have decreased; the number of buildings has been reduced; the budget has been reduced.

Option 3 incorporates working with all concerned parents, carers and key workers to ensure a service that meets their needs. Each person would have an individual assessment. There were concerns regarding the personal budget as feedback was suggesting that there was nothing in the market place that would suit their needs. In addition if they received the money would they then be forgotten about and lose the support that they had received.

The commissioning would investigate what partnerships are available and how they could be supported. Match funding could be made available through the small capital fund for such schemes for example for appropriate facilities.

Within Cannock there are 475 people who have learning disabilities of these 30% would not meet the eligibility criteria if were applied in the strictest sense.

Members commented that the eligibility criteria were constantly changing which would mean that different people at different times would not meet the criteria or have access to the service.

The Service Delivery Lead officer reported that in years gone by the eligibility criteria had not been adhered to strictly. Other Local Authorities had acted similarly, however, many of them had now brought their services in line with the eligibility criteria. The Service Delivery Lead Officer assured Members that the eligibility criteria was not being changed at the moment but Members needed to understand that some users may have been put in the day service as a default many years ago when there was not the choice available to them that there is now. Ideally what the service should be providing is choice for the service user allowing them the capacity to decide on the services that best suit them. In order for this to work the balance must be right between responsibility, choice and independence.

It was reported that Chase Day Service currently provides care for 87 people. These 87 can be split into different learning categories.

- Complex needs – these people would need support to work towards an in-house opportunity for a different type of building/model and would remain with our service.
- Moderate need – these would remain with the service but there overall needs may be met differently
- Low need – these are the ones that strictly do not meet eligibility criteria but because they have used the service for a number of years they would still receive some support
- However some are in private residential homes and as such are paying twice for a service
- A small number are in Brunswick House and have longer term needs and do not go to a day centre but still need the support of their family and friends.

The Consultation started in August and did not go as well as anticipated as some of the people thought that there would be more definitive work already undertaken. The consultation meetings lasted between 1-2 hours to give people the chance to view their concerns and allow for people to vent their anger and frustration. They were then given the chance to feed into what they wanted for a service.

Some family carers kept their children away from the meetings as they were worried that it would upset them due to the uncertainty of the way the service was being modernised. They were worried that their children would be

confused.

The Community Connecting Post was deemed as very important as these are support workers that liaise with the people who have stopped going to the day service. These support workers know the families and continue to keep the contact with the family. In Cannock there are two community connect workers who are very proactive.

Within the consultation groups discussions took place as to how a market place could be created that suited the needs of the community and met the safeguarding guidelines. If people were in poor accommodation which in turn was run by staff that were not trained to a high standard then the people using the accommodation would have a poor experience and low expectations. These wider consultations were aimed at trying to find ways to deliver alternative options and invited outside influencers; families; wider stakeholders to be part of the discussion. If these events were successful then they could be run on an annual basis to support people coming through the transition.

Where people wanted to do things differently they would be supported.

Approximately 25-30 formal consultations took place. This meant that these were conducted on a one to one basis with families where they did not want to interact with a large group. Through this people who were heading to crisis were able to be identified and helped through support plans if it meant that they could no longer care anymore.

Where people were in day services if assessed and reviewed they could be helped to develop opportunities around employment. If people were in work placements or paid employment then it would be necessary to interact with job coaches with the potential to support people out of the day service.

With the introduction of the personal budget many people had not understood what this meant to them. Some of the people could still receive a mixed package, others may access other opportunities and some may be able to live independently.

Over the years times and trends had changed with new opportunities being developed. If the service was left as it was then there would be a risk that people would miss out on opportunities that may help them.

It was acknowledged that there had been poor practice with some the services and it must be remembered that these people are vulnerable adults and need safeguarding. The commissioner's role would be to ensure that the right balance was being struck. Providers should be spot checked and assessed. Key workers should be able to check that the money was being used correctly. People using the service should have proper information and advice which should be given in a timely manner to help them make any decisions needed. Having access to education, training and a social life should be seen as important influencers on what service is required.

Looking at the data that is being brought forward it shows that additional capacity had to be built in as it showed a trend of more people with complex needs coming through the system eg Aspergers and Autism.

A market place could not be created over night and that at the moment there is not a market place that would enable proper learning based facilities for people with complex learning disabilities.

Some people through independent living would have greater choice and would be more in control of their own destiny.

Members questioned whether during the consultation the Officers had encountered difficulties in other localities. The officer responded that they had not encountered these kinds of difficulties in other localities. The Members understood that something needed doing but questioned how the service had been allowed to get to this stage. The Officer replied that Staffordshire was the seventh largest Shire County and that it was one of the few remaining ones that still provided an in-house service. Many of the other Shires had moved their services on through personalisation.

Members queried the new market place whereby private companies would come in and take on the service and how they would be regulated. The Officer explained that a framework was needed to work with the providers which would enable them to be regulated.

Members discussed the issue of the Chase Day Centre and what it would mean for the service users. The Officer explained that some of the buildings that were in use were not practicable as they were big and old; the needs of the service users had changed over the last thirty or so years; direct payments were now available with some service users not using the money at all; Commissioners would be able to spot check the services and ensure value for money and safeguarding criteria were being met. The Officer assured the Members that the service users with the most complex needs would remain under the Local Authority who would provide the service that they required.

Members commented that at one event in Hednesford services users were not accessing the services provided as they were too costly. Members enquired whether any service provider had come forward following the events in the Cannock area. The Officer replied that there were 3 service providers already operation in the Cannock area within the current pricing system. Another provider had subsequently made contact regarding setting up a service. They acknowledged that people had been concerned about the affordability of the services that the private sector would provide. However, no private sector services would be involved with the 13 complex needs service users as these would all be looked after in-house.

Examples were given of other areas where large old buildings had been used and the services had now moved to smaller buildings that were either purpose built and could easily be adapted.

A Member queried the cost of the Management structure to provide this service. The Officer agreed to find out the cost and report back. The Members questioned whether these options had been brought forward and the consultation on the premise of saving money. The Officer explained that it was not just about saving money but being more cost effective; to provide better outcomes for people; sharing the accountability and valuing people.

The Officers were excused from the meeting and thanked for their time.

The Members discussed the relative merits of the consultation and the three options that had been presented. The Members agreed to Option three being the preferred option with a caveat that the service should be reviewed after six months and reported back regularly there after.

RESOLVED

That Option 3 was the preferred option with the caveat that the service should be reviewed after six months and reported back to the Committee regularly there after.

20. Date of Next Meeting

Members noted the date of the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 17 December 2013.

The meeting closed at 6pm

CHAIRMAN