

**EIT Review of Learning Disability Services  
Approach to Public Consultation**

**Summary**

1. A thorough consultation exercise is essential to support the EIT review of Learning Disability Services. The proposals for potential service changes have been carefully developed to ensure the consultation approach is capable of standing up to challenge in terms of content and process.
2. It is a statutory requirement that the public consultation on the proposed service changes is conducted over 12 weeks. The phase II public consultation is planned to begin on 11 June and end on 31 August.
3. The consultation approach has been developed collaboratively using all the available expertise within Stockton Borough Council and by commissioning specialist independent advocacy support. We have considered carefully the different requirements of the various audiences we are endeavouring to reach and are developing appropriate resources. This appendix outlines the current proposals and the Adult Services and Health Select Committee will consider this plan in further detail at its meeting of 21 May before finalisation.
4. A consultation document is being prepared in order to support the consultation process. It is currently planned to provide this as outlined in paragraph 10.

**The Consultation Approach**

5. Our approach to consultation for this review builds upon the experience from last summer when we sought opinion on Learning Disability Services as they are delivered now. Every effort has been made to address all the issues raised during the summer 2012 consultation exercise and this is reflected in the consultation document that has been prepared for phase II.
6. As became practice during the Phase I consultation a communications/consultation sub-group has met and will continue to meet to oversee a consistent and robust approach which will stand up to scrutiny and challenge. The communication/consultation sub-group includes cross service representatives including Policy, Improvement and Engagement (PIE), Communications, Diversity, Legal and, Stockton Helps all.
7. Stockton Helps All are the local independent advocacy service whose daily business it is to engage with service users and help them to effectively communicate their point.
8. The audience we want to reach with this phase of consultation includes:
  - Service users both within and out of Borough
  - Young people in transition from children's to adult services
  - Carers
  - SBC Staff

- The staff of Commissioned Providers
- SBC Councillors
- Renaissance
- Specific Interest Groups
- Stockton LINK

9. Our methods for communication and consultation include the following:-

- A Consultation Document which will include a survey
- An accessible version of this document and survey for service users
- Mailing of this document to carers, service users and other interested parties
- A specific web page, including an online survey, and email address
- Awareness raising through Stockton News
- Awareness raising through the Local Media
- Awareness raising through Forums and Interest Groups
- Awareness raising through Facilitated Groups/Events

10. Written communication in relation to service users and carers will be targeted as follows:-

- **All Service Users** will receive a personal letter outlining the background to the review, written in accessible language.
- **Service Users Resident in Borough** will receive:-
  - the accessible version of the letter described above;
  - an accessible version of the consultation document/questionnaire;
  - a promotional flyer advertising the facilitated sessions being hosted by Stockton Helps All.
- **Service Users Resident out of Borough** will receive:-
  - an accessible version of the introduction to the review letter;
  - an accessible version of the consultation document/questionnaire;
  - an offer of independent advocacy support.

[Please note: precise nature of support for out of Borough clients to enable them to fully participate in consultation to be determined]

- **All Family and Carers of clients in service** will receive:-
  - an introduction to the review letter;
  - a copy of the consultation document/questionnaire;
  - an invitation to any of the 9 facilitated sessions being hosted by Stockton Council;
  - if their family member/person they care for is resident out of Borough, an offer of independent advocacy support for that individual.
- **All Providers of residential care** will receive:-
  - an introduction to the review letter;
  - a copy of the consultation document/questionnaire;
  - a request to support all Stockton Residents in their understanding of the review;
  - confirmation of the offer of independent advocacy support for out of borough residents;

- a promotional flyer advertising the facilitated sessions being hosted by Stockton Helps All for those in borough or the Tees Valley.

### **Review of Transport Services**

11. This summer, the Council also plans to review its transport services, including community transport provision for people with learning disabilities. There will need to be close links between both reviews and consultations. The consultation document associated with the learning disability review makes clear that this review is not considering transport issues directly (aside from skills to enable greater independence and related travel training).
12. The cumulative impact of both reviews will also need to be considered.

### **Consultation with service users residing within the Borough**

13. In addition to the mail out outlined above, Stockton Helps All (SHA) has been commissioned specifically to deliver the consultation with service users resident in the Borough. The SHA staff are organising a co-ordinated approach which includes group sessions in day services venues throughout the Borough and residential homes.
14. Day Service venues hosting service user consultations will include Abbey Hill (to involve those in transition), Allensway, Brighter Futures, Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre and Rievaulx. These sessions will be themed to cover the following topics:
  - Choice and Independence
  - Independent Living
  - Social Activities
  - Employment and Training
15. Two themed sessions will be conducted at each of the above venues; Session 1 dealing with Choice and Independent Living; Session II concentrating on Social Activities and Employment/Training. These will be preceded by 'information days' held at each of the venues in order to thank people for participating in phase 1 and raise awareness of the upcoming consultation. An easy read questionnaire is being devised to help capture service users' comments in a consistent manner and to help structure the workshop sessions. The workshops will be advertised widely in an easy read version throughout day service venues and residential settings. The event will also be publicised in 'Out and About' the Stockton Learning Disability Newsletter.
16. The feedback from these sessions will be co-ordinated by the SHA staff into a written report to inform the broader consultation feedback.
17. To complement the above SHA Staff will be visiting clients in their residential homes as of course not all clients take part in Day Services. Again all the materials used such as the questionnaire will be an easy read accessible version and some clients will take part in one to one sessions being mindful of their particular needs.

18. SHA Staff will be visiting the Stockton Borough service users who are attend out of borough day services at TASC in Middlesbrough. These clients primarily have both complex learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

### **Consultation with service users resident out of Borough**

19. Clients out of Borough will be sent copies of the information as outlined above. Where clients are resident of out of borough their family and or carer will receive a specific letter outlining the LD Review, a copy of the consultation document and an offer of independent advocacy support for their family member/ward. For individuals in out of borough residential placements who don't have any family or a carer, a view needs to be taken on the appropriate form of communication from their social worker which may include an offer of independent advocacy support.

[Please note: precise nature of support offered to out of Borough clients to enable participation in consultation is to be determined]

### **Consultation with carers**

20. Our approach to communication with carers includes distributing a consultation document which has been compiled to communicate the key proposals for service changes.
21. The consultation document has been through several iterations to make it as user friendly as possible. The consultation document includes as questionnaire of 21 questions related to specific proposed service changes – each question has a reply tick box which includes a strongly agree to strongly disagree scale and space for comments.
22. The consultation questionnaire will be mailed directly to carers along with an invitation to attend one of nine facilitated sessions that have been planned across the Borough. The eight sessions will be led by the Independent Review Officer, Julie Nixon and the Head of Adult Operations, Sean McEneaney supported by other Council staff.

### **Public events, online presence and consultation points**

23. The eight planned sessions will be facilitated to answer specific questions on the review posed by the audience and to elicit opinion on the key themes of the review. The aim with the public sessions is to provide further context for the review and gather feedback which will complement the findings from the questionnaire. Therefore, a consistent approach will be taken at all public meetings to ensure that:

- each question within the questionnaire is discussed with participants as appropriate to maximise their understanding of the questions and allow them to query them if they wish;
- all participants are given the opportunity to express their views on the proposals in the same way as they could via the questionnaires (i.e. allowing participants to identify if they strongly agree, agree, etc. with the proposals);
- the most appropriate and accessible method will be used for the size of the audience (i.e. if there is a large number of participants attending, a small

group based approach would be used; and, if there is a small number of participants attending (e.g. fewer than 10), a more direct approach would be taken to discuss each question with those attending) and the type of audience (i.e. taking account of any disabilities or mobility problems);

- all findings from the public meetings will be recorded at the meeting and included in the final report on the findings of the consultation.
24. A specific SBC webpage; [stockton.gov.uk/learningdisabilityservicesreview](http://stockton.gov.uk/learningdisabilityservicesreview) will contain a background and context to the review, a downloadable copy of the consultation document, and an online version of the consultation questionnaire (via Survey Monkey). There will be a link from the Council's Home Page directing visitors to the learning disabilities review page.
25. The results from the returned paper questionnaire will be input into Survey Monkey and collated along with those completed online. All the consultation documents posted to carers will include a free post return envelope and collections points will be arranged in Stockton, Billingham and Thornaby Libraries. The consultation sessions and the questionnaires will be publicised via Stockton News and press release leading up to and during the 12 week consultation period.

### **Brighter Futures**

26. The parents and carers of clients involved in the SBC run Brighter Futures service will be invited to a service specific consultation session (to be arranged). This approach takes account of this group's influence in the public consultation sessions delivered during phase 1 when a specific consultation session was requested with issues raised unique to this service.

### **South Asian community**

27. The current version of the Equality Impact Assessment has identified that the prevalence of learning disabilities is higher in the south Asian community (using national figures). The consultation will need to undertake specific work with this community to raise awareness and ensure inclusion.
28. Further work is needed to develop this approach, however the LINK has offered to assist with this aspect of the consultation.

### **Accessibility of the consultation**

29. In addition to producing an accessible/easy read version of the documentation, and commissioning support from SHA to deliver the service user consultation, documentation will need to be made available for clients with service users with sensory loss.

### **Consultation with SBC Staff**

30. SBC Staff within the scope of this review have to date received updates via regular newsletters which have been circulated by their managers, been party to discussions at team meetings and have seen the articles featured in Keeping You in Touch. Staff briefings were conducted during the phase I consultation and are being repeated during phase II. Four briefings sessions are underway

detailing the proposed service changes, the timing and venues for which have been influenced by Team Leaders and Service Managers.

31. At the briefing sessions staff are being encouraged to share their views on the proposed changes and two feedback sessions are planned on the 25<sup>th</sup> June and 3<sup>rd</sup> July to capture all their suggestions. Should staff choose to complete an online questionnaire they can tick a box to demonstrate that their point of view is as a member of staff.
32. Staff will continue to receive update newsletters through the review period.
33. Representatives of the three key Unions have received a letter inviting them to attend a briefing session concerning the proposed service changes.

### **Consultation with the staff of commissioned providers**

34. The Independent Review Officer is planning to attend a meeting of The Providers Forum as part of the consultation campaign to outline the process for the public consultation and to reinforce the need for providers' co-operation in assisting both day service users and residential clients to attend the Stockton Helps All events.
35. SBC commissioning staff alongside our Stockton Helps All colleagues are organising a specific providers session at Rievaulx during the 12 week consultation period to review participation and the proper representation of clients.

### **Consultation with SBC Councillors and MPs**

36. A Member Briefing was distributed to all Members on 4 April. As the formal 12 week consultation period begins all Councillors will receive a copy of the Consultation Document. In addition the Learning Disability Review is an agenda item for the Members Policy Seminar on the 21<sup>st</sup> June. Briefings for the local MPs will be produced.

### **Consultation with Renaissance**

37. The Learning Disability Review is an agenda item for discussion at Renaissance on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Consultation with Boards, Forums and Interest Groups**

38. As part of the preparation for the formal consultation period **Stockton Link** have received a letter asking how they would prefer to take part in the consultation on this review.
39. The LD Review is to be an agenda item for discussion at the Clinical Commissioning Group likely to be discussed on the 24<sup>th</sup> May and it is confirmed for discussion at the Learning Disability Partnership Board on July 23<sup>rd</sup>.
40. It has been suggested that invitations be sent to the representatives of a wide range of consultees for a specific event in June/July including:-

- Representatives from the various area Partnerships
- Representatives from Stockton Link
- Representatives from the BME Network
- Representatives from the Faith Network
- Representatives from the Parish and Town Council's
- Representatives from Stockton United for Change
- Representatives from Catalyst
- Representatives from the Health & Well Being Partnership
- Representatives from the Over 50s Assembly

41. As an additional quality check staff within the PIE Team and the wider consultation sub-group have been asked to comment on the specific list of potential consultees to ensure thoroughness and inclusion.

42. Set out below is the timetable of planned events:

**Planned Events:-**

Staff Awareness

26 <sup>th</sup> April	Staff Briefing - CCDS at Elmwood
4 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff Briefing – Ops Staff at Stockton Library
8 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff Briefing - Lanark Close Staff
9 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff Briefing – Allensway

Public Consultation Period

21 <sup>st</sup> May	Provider's Forum at Tithebarn
24 <sup>th</sup> May	Clinical Commissioning Group
21 <sup>st</sup> June	Members Policy Seminar
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Staff Feedback Session
26 <sup>th</sup> June	1 <sup>st</sup> Public Session – Eaglescliffe Village Hall
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	2 <sup>nd</sup> Public Session - Billingham Community Centre
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Staff Feedback Session
5 July	All Welcome Event*
5 <sup>th</sup> July	3 <sup>rd</sup> Public Session - South Thornaby Community Centre
10 <sup>th</sup> July	Renaissance, The Education Centre
11 <sup>th</sup> July	4 <sup>th</sup> Public Session - The Education Centre, Norton
18 July	5 <sup>th</sup> Public Session – All Saints School, Ingleby Barwick
23 <sup>rd</sup> July	LD Partnership Board – Stockton Library
30 <sup>th</sup> July	6 <sup>th</sup> Public Session – George Hardwick Foundation

31<sup>st</sup> July      7<sup>th</sup> Public Session - Billingham Forum  
6<sup>th</sup> August      8<sup>th</sup> Public Session - South Thornaby Community Centre  
14<sup>th</sup> August    9<sup>th</sup> Public Session - The George Hardwick Foundation