

**EIT Review of  
Learning Disability Services**

**Adult Services and Health  
Select Committee**

**Final Report**

**December 2012**

Adult Services and Health Select Committee  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
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### **Acknowledgements**

The Committee would like to thank:

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Paul Willows, Philip Worn, Christopher Boddy - Service users who attended a  
Committee meeting

Staff and service users from Oak Road, Allensway, Doncaster Crescent, Rievaulx Resource Centre, Central Stockton Day Services, and Lorne House, who welcomed the Committee on its site visits.

The Committee would particularly like to thank all service users, carers and interested parties who responded to the consultations held to inform the review.

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## Foreword

On behalf of the Adult Services and Health Select Committee, we are pleased to present the final report following the EIT review of Learning Disability services.

The Committee has undertaken an in-depth review of all aspects of learning disability services and this has led to a comprehensive set of recommendations for Cabinet's consideration.

The process has involved widespread consultation with service users, carers and families, and interested parties. Members were particularly pleased to welcome service users to a Committee meeting to present their views on current services. The Committee is grateful to all those who took the time to respond to the consultation process, and welcomed the broadly positive response to the proposals.

The Committee is very conscious that any changes to services can lead to a time of uncertainty, however Members believe that the review proposals will lead to more personalised, flexible and modernised services for people with learning disabilities in Stockton Borough.

We would like to thank the hard work of the review project team that has supported the Committee, in particular the lead officer Julie Nixon, and we commend this report to you.



Councillor Mohammed Javed  
Chair



Councillor Kevin Faulks  
Vice-Chair

## Original Brief

1. What services are included?

The review incorporates the Learning Disability Independent Living Project and will include learning disability adult social care resources. The following services are included:

Learning Disability Services: All services including - In-house and commissioned residential care/respite care, in-house and commissioned day care, in-house and commissioned community support, supported and independent living services, STEPs.

The review will include evaluation of the key functions within Learning Disability Services including:

- Needs assessment and case management;
- Commissioning and service development.

2. The Thematic Select Committee's / EIT Project Team overall aim / objectives in doing this work is:

To identify options for future strategy, policy and service provision that will deliver efficiency savings and sustain / improve high quality outcomes for SBC residents, whilst ensuring maximum inclusion in line with the Personalisation agenda.

3. Please give an initial indication how transformation will enable efficiencies and improvements to be delivered by this EIT review?

Identification of good practice and development of non-traditional services that are appropriate to the needs of clients within the Borough, to ensure that clients receive services that enable them to reach their full potential.

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the results of an in-depth review of the learning disability services provided by Stockton Council. The Committee examined current services before recommending options for changes to how services are provided, and also identified a number of improvements to the way in which the Council plans and commissions services ie. its ways of working. This review has included an in-depth examination of the commissioning, care planning, and provision of adult social care services for people with learning disabilities.
- 1.2 The Council has a statutory obligation to meet identified need for those clients assessed as being eligible for services in line with the Council's eligibility criteria for adult social care. Services provided must meet identified need, however the Council must also ensure that they are providing value for money. The Committee has found that there is scope to both improve the services that the Council provides or commissions at the same time as achieving better value for money. There would be no changes to individual client circumstances without appropriate re-assessment and care planning.
- 1.3 The Committee found that overall there was a need to produce and implement a refreshed strategy for the provision and development of learning disability services, and the remaining recommendations should be seen in that context. The Committee recommend that:
- 1. a new Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy be developed, and this should include the proposals outlined in recommendations 2-18.**
- 1.4 Learning disability services need to support the national agenda, which is set out in Valuing People Now, the national strategy for people with a learning disability. The Committee's recommendations are made in order to ensure the Council's services develop in line with the strategy, which promotes inclusion and independence where appropriate. Improved choice and flexibility of local services should increase the usage of personal budgets leading to more personalised care packages.
- 1.5 The Committee found that a key area for the review is the provision of day time activities. Circa 260 service users receive day services of some form. Clients with assessed needs for day time activities are able to either take up an in-house or commissioned service, or use a personal budget to find their own provision.
- 1.6 The national agenda outlined in 'Valuing People Now', is to move away from building based day service provision. Stockton Council's in-Borough day care is a mixture of more traditional style building based day services (Allensway and Rievaulx) with community based activities in local neighbourhoods (Central Stockton Day Services), and Brighter Futures which currently provides community based activities for young adults up to 25 years.
- 1.7 The Committee proposed that there should be one building based service in the future in order for it to focus on clients with complex needs, and that in line with the national agenda the majority of services should be provided in community settings. This would be both cost effective for the Council and more appropriate for clients. Allensway is the proposed base for the complex needs day service as it is purpose built. Service users from the Billingham and north Stockton area would be offered a new community based service in Billingham, except for those with complex needs who would transfer to Allensway.

1.8 The Committee recognise the concerns of the parents and carers of those who currently attend the Rievaulx Centre. It is clear that to many people the services there are highly valued and are the result of longstanding relationships. It was not possible to provide comprehensive detail on the model for the new community service in Billingham as this has to be developed with the provider subject to Cabinet approval to the recommendations. However, if approval is granted the new service will be designed with the input of service users and carers to ensure a successful transition. There are examples of successful community based models already operating in the Borough outside of Billingham. Some users, carers and also the providers at Rievaulx, recognise that the service requires modernisation and further personalisation, especially in relation to meeting the aspirations of younger clients.

1.9 The Committee recommend that:

- 2. there should be only one building based day service in the Borough, that this should focus on providing services for people with complex needs, and should be based at the Allensway building. Service users with complex needs currently receiving services at other locations in and out of the Borough (including Rievaulx Resource Centre) should be supported to move to Allensway;**

and

- 3. service users who do not have complex needs should be supported to access services in community settings for example the existing models of Central Stockton Day Services, and Brighter Futures, and new provision in Billingham. This will include those currently accessing services in Allensway and Rievaulx.**

1.10 The provision of meals has been examined in order to ensure that all available funds are directed towards the necessary care and the support of service users. The provision of meals varies across the in-house services; clients at Allensway are provided with a two course lunch, whilst clients attending community venues make their own provision.

1.11 With the strong belief that all available funds should be directed towards the necessary care and support of service users, the Committee proposed that meals should no longer be subsidised across day services. Where appropriate, service users could either bring a packed lunch or access the new café facilities.

1.12 The consultation demonstrated that many clients already used a packed lunch or café, and some thought it unfair that others received a sit-down meal as part of their care. In order to ensure that available funds are focussed on providing care and support, the Committee recommend that:

- 4. the subsidy for meals in day services, where currently provided, should be discontinued, and that alternative cafe style/packed lunch options be further developed.**

1.13 The Brighter Futures day service currently provides services for a small group of younger clients. The original aim of this service was to cater for younger clients in more community based venues as an alternative to more traditional approaches and also as an alternative to college. The proposal was to review it in order to ensure that the service had clearer access criteria, regular outcome



based reviews of client progress, and that more support was provided to enable clients to move on to other community services. This was supported by consultation feedback and the Committee recommend that:

**5. Brighter Futures be reviewed in order to ensure that service users move on from the service into other services where appropriate, and the aim of this service is to enable young adults (up to 25 years old) to access community based services.**

1.14 Some people receive day services out of borough (currently around 40 people) either because they have been placed in residential provision outside of the Borough and access provision there, or because they live in Borough but services are not available locally. These placements can be very costly and can result in significant transport costs and much time spent by service users travelling to the placement.

1.15 Throughout the consultation responses there was support when it was proposed to provide more services on a local basis. It was also recognised that placements out of Borough are sometimes necessary to meet individual need and that whatever is provided locally must be of a good quality when compared to what is provided elsewhere. The Committee recommend that:

**6. Out of Borough day care provision should not be commissioned unless the Council is satisfied that assessed needs cannot be met in the Borough.**

and

**7. service users who live in Borough but currently attend out of Borough day services, should be encouraged and supported to receive services in Borough, subject to assessed needs being met, and commissioners should determine any requirement for additional provision in Borough.**

1.16 The Committee found that often clients are currently supported through day services to produce craft work and other art, for example, which is then either exhibited or sold to raise funds. As there is a clear appetite from the consultation exercises, especially from younger clients to undertake paid work where appropriate, the Committee were keen to ensure that such opportunities were explored further, including social enterprise approaches. The Committee recommend that:

**8. the Council should encourage the development of community business opportunities for service users.**

1.17 As part of the review the Committee explored the concept of Community Bridge Building (CBB). The aim of this type of service is to support individuals with learning disabilities to access mainstream services. A service user who is referred to Bridge Building will instead of being assessed for traditional day services be supported to access work, volunteering, and/or mainstream social activities, and be trained to travel independently where appropriate, therefore leading to a significant increase in independence. In order to inform decisions related to this review the STEPs service has been delivering a one year pilot scheme from April 2012.

1.18 The consultation revealed high levels of support for a service that would increase the choice in day time activities, particularly for younger clients and the opportunity to experience volunteering and work, and gain new skills. Some

carers were keen to ensure that clients would receive appropriate support, and that it may not be suitable for all. Young people coming into services are particularly keen to be fully integrated into society and this service will be of particular relevance to them. By providing Bridge Building at the transitions stage, young people can be signposted to more innovative community services, as an alternative to entering traditional adult care, so encouraging independence and preventing dependency.

1.19 The results of the pilot scheme will still need to be evaluated in full, but as there is support for the principle, the Committee recommend that:

**9. subject to a successful outcome of the pilot, the Community Bridge Building scheme be rolled out on a permanent basis, in order to support individuals to achieve greater independence and integration into local communities, and that consideration be given to funding a transitions Bridge Building worker.**

1.20 The Committee found that a key issue for the review was the provision of residential care, independent living opportunities, and improving the range of housing options for people with learning disabilities. Over half of the net budget for learning disability services (c.£6m) is spent on providing residential care through a range of contracts with providers. Reviewing this area was therefore important, and involved examining the approach to individual care management assessments, reviews, commissioning and an overview of contracts, terms and conditions.

1.21 Much of the out of Borough provision has been commissioned due to the lack of in-borough provision. This can lead to people accessing provision out of borough when this may not necessarily be required; this can be very expensive, can lead to clients being considerable distances from family members, and care managers also having to undertake significant travel.

1.22 The Committee were keen to ensure that annual reviews of clients placed out of the Borough should robustly assess whether a placement is still suitable to meet the needs of the service user, and whether a more suitable placement is required in or out of the Borough. Some clients may continue to be placed outside the area if their needs were best met through very specialist services which would not be appropriate to commission locally, or if their needs were best met in their current placement for other reasons.

1.23 Some clients clearly require residential provision but for others alternative provision such as living more independently, including supported housing, may be an appropriate option. There is a trend to move more people into independent living in line with the national agenda, and there are a number of supported living schemes in the Borough. The Committee also found that, as with residential care, the Council must be mindful of costs as the percentage of the population requiring care increases whilst resources shrink.

1.24 The consultation revealed support for the principles of more independent living, increasing the amount of locally available residential care for those who require it, and enabling service users to move to the Borough where this is appropriate. The Committee welcome the support for the proposals and recommend that:

**10. as a general principle the Council should enable more people with learning disabilities to have access to more independent living opportunities, and reduce the use of residential care. Residential care**

**should be recommended when independent living would not meet assessed need or does not provide value for money;**

- 11. for those whose assessed needs would still be best met through residential care, the Council should aim to increase the range of in-Borough placements to reduce the use of out of Borough placements;**
- 12. where appropriate and following review, service users in out of Borough residential care should be encouraged and supported to use in-Borough residential care.**

1.25 In support of the recommendations to increase the opportunities for independent living, the Committee found that there needed to be a wider range of housing options available for clients, their carers, and care managers to choose from.

1.26 There is a lot of pressure on the housing market currently and supply of affordable housing is limited. The review has identified a requirement for a housing investment strategy to ensure that appropriate options for supported housing are available, and a strategic approach is taken to planning and providing future housing need. Improved use of information on the housing needs of people with learning disabilities should lead to a more focussed and strategic approach, ensuring a better supply of affordable housing.

1.27 The consultation supported this approach, and greater support to those in residential care who are ready to move into more independent living, subject to appropriate systems in place to ensure the quality of independent living schemes. The Committee recommend that:

- 13. the Council should seek to increase the choice and range of affordable homes for independent living with appropriate care and support.**

and

- 14. the Council should encourage and support those in residential care who are ready to move into independent living.**

1.28 Respite care/short breaks enable clients who live with family and carers to have some overnight time away from carers in an alternative environment, whilst providing much needed support for carers themselves. It is clear from consultation that the respite services at the Council's Lanark Close are greatly valued and that access should be improved. By making efficiencies within the running of the unit the Committee is able to recommend an increase in beds from 6 to 9 beds. The Committee recommend that:

- 15. capacity in respite care at Lanark Close be increased whilst still making efficiency savings, increasing the number of beds from 6 to 9.**

1.29 Other models of respite exist, including short breaks, and a small number of people use direct payments to source and pay for their own provision. There appears to be a limited range of options locally, and this should be addressed in order to provide a more person centred approach to the benefit of both service users and carers. There was a very positive response to the proposal to develop a greater range of short break options.

1.30 Tees, Esk, and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust also provide respite care at the Aysgarth unit for those with higher level needs. The SBC service at Lanark is for those with lower level needs however it may be appropriate to provide a joint service for those with higher level needs in future. In order to seek to expand the range of respite care provided locally, the Committee recommend that:

**16. a menu of options for short break services be developed; these should be either commissioned by the Council or be accessible via personal budgets;**

and

**17. the Council works closely with the NHS including the Clinical Commissioning Group, to explore the provision of a joint respite facility for service users with more complex needs.**

1.31 Many people with autism have a learning disability, although estimates vary, and services for people with autism have been examined as part of this review. The autistic spectrum is wide; some individuals function independently and only access universal services whilst, at the other end of the spectrum, there are those with profound needs that require very specialist services.

1.32 The Committee has identified the lack of in Borough services for people with Autism; a number of clients with autism access services out of Borough, often at significant expense, and this includes both day and residential services. Analysis of clients in Stockton-based services has shown that a number of people would benefit from autism specific care, and future needs have also been mapped out.

1.33 As out of Borough residential and specialist day services are expensive, the Committee recommend developing local residential and day service provision where this represents value for money. The Committee recommend that:

**18. the Council should explore the commissioning of new autism provision in the Borough.**

1.34 The Committee has identified a range of improvements to working practices that will improve service delivery and support the successful implementation of the review recommendations. These include: more effective use of data on the current and future client group, greater clarity of roles between care managers and commissioners, refreshed approach to contracting, introduction of Service Level Agreements for in-house services, and more focus on maximising the opportunities for independence during the client assessment and review process. There should also be continuing focus on securing value for money of the costs of client placements, in particular for residential care. The Committee recommend that:

**19. the improvements to care management and commissioning as outlined in the report, and included in the Working Practices Handbook, be implemented to ensure a successful implementation of the Committee's recommendations and the proposed commissioning strategy.**

## 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Learning Disability Services undertaken by the Committee during the municipal years 2011-12 and 2012-13.
- 2.2 The review formed part of a three year programme of EIT reviews covering all services provided by the Council. The programme aims to ensure that all services are reviewed in a systematic way to ensure that they are provided in the most efficient manner, provide value for money and identify opportunities for service improvements and transformation.
- 2.3 The topic was identified for review as part of the EIT programme and was included in the Select Committee work programme by Executive Scrutiny Committee on 8 February 2011.
- 2.4 This review has included an in-depth examination of the commissioning, care planning, and provision of adult social care services for people with learning disabilities.
- 2.5 The Learning Disability care management and assessment function is provided by the Learning Disability Team of social workers within Adult Services. In-house services (including daytime activities, Brighter Futures, respite, residential, and community support) are provided by Stockton Council employees but are line-managed by Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) via a partnership arrangement. Some clients access the STEPs service which is based within the Reablement section of the Council's Adult Services.
- 2.6 Externally provided services (including homecare, community support, day services, residential care, and supported living services) are commissioned via the Adult Strategy Team. In addition, some service users (or 'clients') choose to opt for direct payments as part of their care package and these can be used to fund a range of activities including short breaks and day time activities.
- 2.7 There are a range of independent sector providers. For example, the Rievaulx Resource Centre day service in Billingham is provided by CIC, and almost all residential care is provided by private and charitable providers. Residential placements are spread across the Borough and a number are located across the UK.
- 2.8 The Committee has been supported by a Project Team and Board, chaired by the lead officer Julie Nixon, and that included officers from relevant services, TEWV, and NHS Tees. SBC staff affected by the review, and the providers of commissioned services, have been kept informed throughout the process.
- 2.9 The Committee has received detailed evidence from a number of sources. The Committee has considered baseline information on Stockton's current services, examples of service provision from other local authorities, a presentation from Durham County Council in order to examine its commissioning approach, detailed benchmarking information and comparisons with regional and comparator authorities, and the feedback from an initial phase of consultation which was conducted to gather views in relation to current services.
- 2.10 The Committee has also visited services within the Borough, and this enabled Members to see independent (Lorne House) and in-house (Oak Road) residential

care, respite care at Lanark Close, a supported living scheme at Doncaster Crescent, Allensway day services, Stockton Central Day Services at Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre, and Rievaulx Resource Centre.

- 2.11 The proposals for change outlined in the Committee's recommendations have been subject to full 12-week public consultation. These proposals were agreed in principle at Cabinet on 17 May 2012, and this report contains the consultation results together with an account of the review as a whole.
- 2.12 This report contains key messages from the consultation results, including the summary report at Appendix 1.
- 2.13 The Committee considered the results in full (including a breakdown of all comments received from the surveys) when considering its final recommendations, and they are available online at:

[www.stockton.gov.uk/learningdisabilityservicesreview](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/learningdisabilityservicesreview)

- 2.14 Any changes to a particular service user's care package as a result of the review would only take place following a re-assessment of their needs, and dialogue with client, carer, family, and current provider as appropriate.
- 2.15 Further staff consultation will be necessary once the details of individual changes to services is undertaken, if approved. The Council will follow its Management of Organisational Change Policy in relation to the consultation on any employee implications in respect of change in organisational structures.
- 2.16 The review is taking place within the context of a number of service reviews across the Council. During the phase 2 public consultation, comments were sought on the Community Transport service as it affected service users with learning disabilities, and these were collated and forwarded for inclusion in the separate, wider review of Transport provision. The review has also been linked to the implementation of the EIT Review of Independent Living and Commissioned Carers services.

### 3.0 Background

- 3.1 Stockton Council provides services to circa 560 working age people with a learning disability (this number can change as people enter and leave services). The over 18 learning disability population in Stockton is projected to grow by 11% by 2030 and as a result of improvements in healthcare and lifestyle the numbers of older people with a learning disability are increasing.
- 3.2 There are various definitions of a learning disability but the term broadly covers a situation where a person has difficulty learning in a typical manner. This means they may have difficulty understanding new or complex information, learning new skills, and/or coping independently. In addition a person with a learning disability may have other conditions including autism. People with learning disabilities have a wide range of capabilities. A person may have a mild learning disability and be able to live independently, and there are also people who have multiple and profound needs who need a high level of care.
- 3.3 People with a learning disability may or may not be eligible for community care services. This will depend on their level of need following an assessment process.
- 3.4 Service users may enter services through a number of routes, for example after having been in receipt of children's services and continuing to be eligible for adult services, or sometimes in crisis when family members are no longer able to cope with providing care. A person may enter services at a relatively old age having had no previous contact with Council services. Potential service users are assessed by the Learning Disability Team in Adult Services, or by a combination of teams in complex cases.
- 3.5 Under the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 and associated guidance, Councils are able to set their own level of eligibility criteria for access to adult care services; in Stockton clients who are assessed as having Substantial or Critical needs will be eligible for community care services. However, the guidance makes clear that appropriate signposting and information services, universal community services that are open to all, and targeted community services, should be in place for those not eligible for social care, but who will need some form of access to support and activities to prevent them from deteriorating to the point at which they will become eligible.
- 3.6 If a client is assessed as having eligible needs, a care package would be put in place tailored to an individual's needs. This may consist of residential care, or a mixture of day services and home care for example. Clients receive an initial 6-week review of the care package, followed by an annual review of their care or more often if needs change frequently.
- 3.7 Services for people with learning disabilities should be provided within the context of the 'Valuing People Now' framework. This is the national strategy for learning disability services and makes clear that those with learning disabilities are people first, and should therefore have the same opportunities and responsibilities as anyone else, and be treated with dignity and respect. The strategy has the following priorities:
- including everyone;
  - personalisation;
  - having a life;
  - people as citizens;
  - and making it happen.

'Valuing People Now' built upon the original Valuing People strategy announced in 2001.

3.8 Many people with autism have a learning disability although estimates vary. Services for people with autism have been examined as part of this review. The duty to assess someone who may have needs under the NHS and Community Care Act applies to people with autism. In addition, the Autism Act 2009 required the Government to produce an autism strategy and also statutory guidance for local authorities. This is detailed under 'Legal Implications'. The review is aimed at improving the information held on the needs of residents with autism, and the development of local services for them.

3.9 The services provided and commissioned by the Council are briefly described in the Introduction and considered in more detail in section 4. Overall, the Council currently spends circa £14.6 million gross and £11.5 million net on Learning Disability Services for working age adults. The 2011/12 budget for the expenditure within the scope of this review is set out in the following tables.

	<b>Total budget</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Net LA Cost</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Operational services</b>			
In-house residential services	865	(316)	549
In-house day care services	2,076	(136)	1,940
In-house comm. supp. services	296	(108)	188
Client Transport Costs	111	0	111
Other services	18	(0)	18
<b>Total operational services</b>	<b>3,396</b>	<b>(590)</b>	<b>2,806</b>
<b>Commissioned Services</b>			
Commissioned residential services	7,858	(2,447)	5,411
Commissioned day care services	1,102	(55)	1,047
Commissioned comm. supp. services	761	(4)	757
Supported Tenancy	1,467	(9)	1,459
<b>Commissioned services total</b>	<b>11,188</b>	<b>(2,515)</b>	<b>8,673</b>
<b>Total budget within scope</b>	<b>14,554</b>	<b>(3,705)</b>	<b>11,479</b>

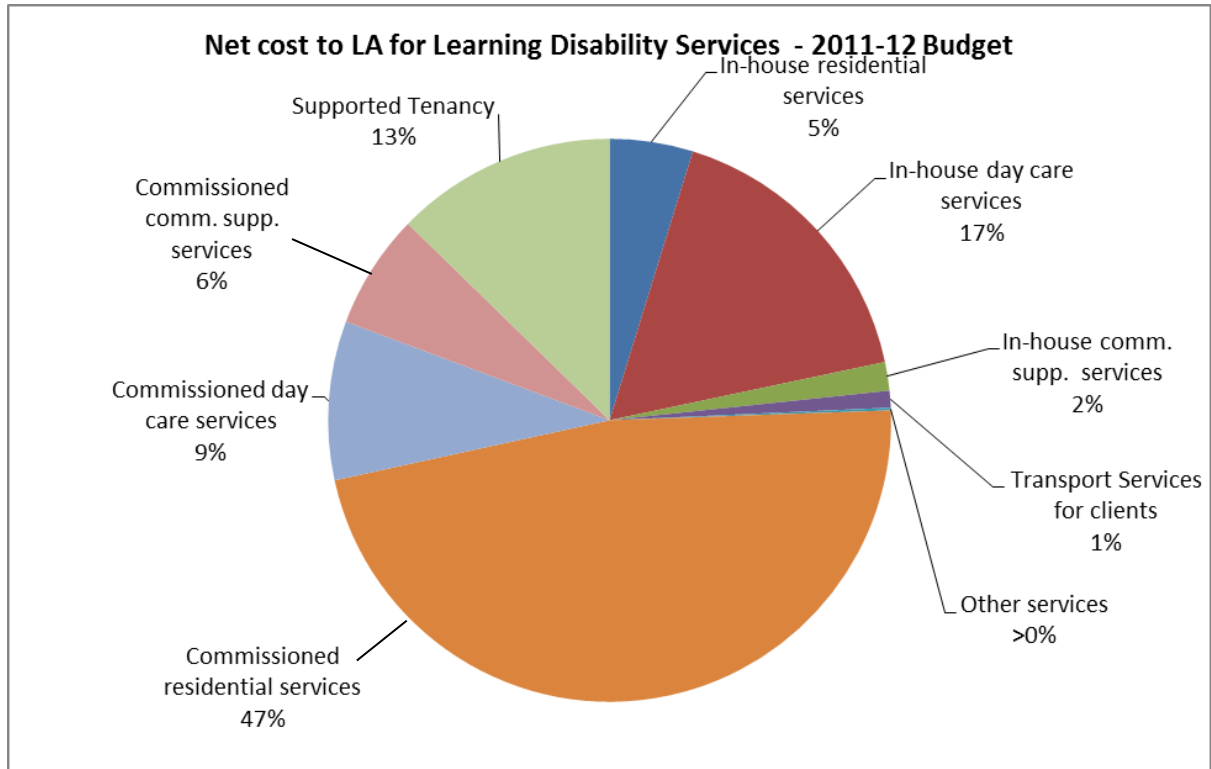
#### Analysis by expenditure/income

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Employee direct costs	2,691	Government Grants	540
Employee indirect costs	65	Client contributions	445
Premises	120	Health Income	2,025
Transport	254	Other income	65
Supplies & services	308	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,075</b>
Third party	11,116		
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>£14,554</b>	<b>Net budget</b>	<b>11,479</b>



3.10 Over the last five years, expenditure has increased by £2.3m, and if this trend were to continue for the next five years, the Council would need an additional £2.9m to fund the services covered by the review.

3.11 The chart below illustrates the proportion of expenditure by type of LD services both in-house and commissioned:



3.12 During 2010, CSED (previously a section of the Department of Health) undertook a review of Stockton's learning disability provision. CSED found that:

- residential numbers were high, but switching to independent living was constrained by the availability of local and cost effective support services;
- a high proportion of new entrants were being placed into residential rather than independent living;
- there were a lack of suitable housing options;
- there were significant opportunities for financial savings.

3.13 CSED recommended that the Council needed to reduce the flow into residential care and over time transfer, where appropriate, people from existing residential placements to appropriately supported community settings, ensure community support is value for money so that people directed away from residential care can be supported at lower cost, and review high cost cases to ensure appropriateness of care provision and value for money.

3.14 The Committee have considered the results of the CSED review in full as part of the baseline report, and the EIT review has subsequently confirmed the original findings.

## 4.0 Evidence

- 4.1 This report outlines the results of an in-depth review of the learning disability services provided by Stockton Council. The Committee examined current services before developing options for changes to how services are provided, and also identified a number of improvements to the way in which the Council plans and commissions services i.e. its ways of working. The Council has a statutory obligation to meet identified need for those clients assessed as being eligible for services in line with the Council's eligibility criteria for adult social care. Services provided must meet identified need, however the Council must also ensure that they are providing value for money.
- 4.2 An initial consultation with service users and carers took place in summer 2011 to gather views on how services were currently provided. This included a carer survey, and consultation sessions were held with service users, carer and families, and those in transition from children's services.
- 4.3 All consultees were asked what is good about current services, what was not working so well and what services may need to be developed. The key messages received in feedback were as follows:
- There was a lot of support for building based day services as people felt safe but some felt they were too big and noisy and not enough space for quiet time;
  - Some concerns about day services closing in the summer;
  - Too much repetition in day care activities;
  - Some people felt that in day services people with more complex needs got all the attention of staff and they weren't given as much attention as a result.
  - Some limitations on choice in day time activity, little choice of alternatives and confusion over direct payments and personal budgets;
  - Too much time spent travelling on buses and inflexible transport;
  - There was a lot of support for doing more things in the community and some wanted to volunteer or get work. Things to do on a weekend and evening were also mentioned (current day services operate on a day time 5 days a week basis);
  - Young People in transitions were asked what they wanted to do with their life and many aspired to have a job and to travel independently but acknowledged they may sometimes need help to achieve these things and needed support to achieve things at a pace they were comfortable with;
  - A significant number of people especially young people said they wanted to live independently from their families perhaps with friends, accepting they might need help to do this;
  - Independent travel training was seen as very important to some and a lack of this was a barrier to achieving increased independence;
  - Money was seen as a big problem as many people had no experience of dealing with money, budgeting or paying bills;
  - Too much protection from family/carers was a barrier for some;
  - Concerns about the transition from children's to adult services and sometimes confusion over the services that can be expected;
  - Concern over lack of service provision locally, specifically autism services including local college provision and day time activities;
  - Perceived lack of input from carers and support for carers, including not enough respite, although the current respite at Lanark received lots of positive feedback;
  - A high level of satisfaction with the Brighter Futures service;

- There was support for more community enterprises and business development.

4.4 The Committee has used this feedback when developing its proposals for changes to services, together with assessing good practice, financial data and an in depth review of current practice. These proposals were then subject to the second phase of 12-week consultation between 11 June and 31 August 2012. The following section outlines this process and outlines the final recommendations for changes to services.

#### **Development of proposals to improve services**

4.5 The Committee found that overall there was a need to produce and implement a refreshed strategy for the provision and development of learning disability services and recommendations 2-19 should be seen in that context. The Committee recommend that:

- 1. a new Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy be developed, and this should include the proposals outlined in recommendations 2 to 18.**

#### **Day Time Activities**

4.6 The Committee found that a key area for the review is the provision of day time activities. Circa 260 service users receive day services of some form. Clients with assessed needs for day time activities are able to either take up an in-house or commissioned service, or use a personal budget to find their own provision. The take up of personal budgets is limited and this review has identified the need to develop a menu of alternative options that clients can take up. This will need to be incorporated in the new commissioning strategy.

4.7 However a service user chooses to have their needs met, a budget is allocated to achieve this therefore cost reductions in day service provision can only come from greater take up of universal services (for example, the support provided by Community Bridge Building is designed to achieve this – see below) or from unit cost reductions on commissioned and/or in house services. The Committee believe that costs for in-house services need to be brought in line with benchmarked similar day provision.

4.8 Currently most of SBC's day service provision is provided in borough at Allensway in Thornaby and Rievaulx Resource Centre in Billingham, in Brighter Futures and through Central Stockton Day services. In addition some people receive day services out of borough (currently around 40 people) either because they have been placed in residential provision outside of the Borough and access provision there, or because they live in Borough but services are not available locally. Out of Borough placements can be very costly and can result in significant transport costs and much time spent by service users on travelling to the placement.

4.9 The national agenda outlined in 'Valuing People Now', is to move away from providing or commissioning building based day service provision. Stockton's day care is a mixture of more traditional style building-based day services (Allensway and Rievaulx) with community based activities in local neighbourhoods (Central Stockton Day Services), and Brighter Futures which currently provides community based activities for young adults up to 25 years. Out of Borough placements include TASC and Upsall Hall in Middlesbrough, and Catcote Specialist College in Hartlepool. As part of the process a review of case files has taken place and this

identified that some clients could benefit from, for example, greater opportunities to be in the community.

- 4.10 The in-house building based service has 100 places and is based at Allensway in Thornaby. This is a purpose built facility, and the unit costs are £44.73 per day per client. The commissioned service at Rievaulx is based in a former school. This building is no longer fit for purpose as it has some large spaces which do not lend themselves to quiet activities and some service users have complained about the level of noise. The unit costs for running Rievaulx are £33.98 plus a separate charge of £11.63 per day for each client receiving additional one to one support.
- 4.11 Both Rievaulx and Allensway currently cater for clients with a range of abilities, and some require additional support. The Committee found that there needs to be greater specification within day services so that services provide a clearly defined 'offer' to assist both care managers and service users in identifying the most appropriate service. An important part of this is about ensuring that services are more individualised.
- 4.12 The Committee proposed that there should be one building based service in the future in order for it to focus on clients with complex needs, and that in line with the national agenda the majority of services should be provided in community settings (based on the Central Stockton Day Services and Brighter Futures model).
- 4.13 The Allensway Centre was identified as the recommended location for the complex needs service, as this is a fit for purpose building. More able clients currently in receipt of services would be supported to move into other community services best suited to their needs.
- 4.14 As part of this proposal, no new high level needs clients would be referred to Rievaulx. The current providers at Rievaulx, CIC, have also identified the desire to move away from the building based service and describe a model of day time activity similar to that provided by Stockton Central Day services. In addition, CIC provide day time activities in other locations in the UK and Rievaulx is their only type of 'traditional' building based day care. The intention would be to work with CIC to develop a new model. Service users from the Billingham and north Stockton area would be offered the new service in Billingham, except for those with complex needs who would transfer to Allensway.
- 4.15 Appendix 1 which summarises the phase 2 consultation results in detail. It is clear that although overall there is support for the proposals in relation to the Allensway and Rievaulx centres, there were concerns in relation to the proposals, and these were raised primarily via feedback from carers linked to Rievaulx attending consultation events (including the additional sessions organised by CIC on request of carers and attended by CIC), together with comments in the surveys.
- 4.16 Those concerned about Rievaulx were keen to emphasise the positive aspects of the services provided there, the sense of community felt by many, that some service users would not be able to access community based care, and the perceived need to retain a building base in Billingham. These views are summarised in Appendix 1 and the CIC produced report is included in full at Appendix 2.

- 4.17 Those in support, or who supported the principle but required more detail, outlined a number of issues that they would want to see addressed. These included: suitability of travel arrangements, quality of staff, and the suitability of community venues. The use of a purpose built building for those with complex needs was welcomed by some, and the different aspirations of younger clients in relation to having more choice in activities was noted.
- 4.18 The Committee recognise the concerns of the parents and carers of those who currently attend the Rievaulx Centre. It is clear that to many people the services there are highly valued and are the result of longstanding relationships. There is clearly some concern about the exact nature of future provision; it was not possible to provide comprehensive detail on the model for the new community service in Billingham as this has to be developed with the provider subject to Cabinet approval to the recommendations. However if approval is granted the new service will be designed with the input of service users and carers to ensure a successful transition. The Committee also note that there are examples of successful community based models already operating in the Borough outside of Billingham. Some users, carers and also the providers at Rievaulx recognise that the services require modernisation and further personalisation, especially in relation to meeting the aspirations of younger clients.
- 4.19 There would be no changes to individual client circumstances without the appropriate care planning. The Committee recommend that:

2. **there should be only one building based day service in the Borough, that this should focus on providing services for people with complex needs, and should be based at the Allensway building. Service users with complex needs currently receiving services at other locations in and out of the Borough (including Rievaulx Resource Centre) should be supported to move to Allensway.**

and

3. **service users who do not have complex needs should be supported to access services in community settings for example the existing models of Central Stockton Day Services, and Brighter Futures, and new provision in Billingham. This should include those currently accessing services in Allensway and Rievaulx.**
- 4.20 The staffing of in-house day services would need to be reviewed in order to fulfil the needs of the new service model, and to contribute towards ensuring value for money of the in-house services. This would include management arrangements ensuring they are fit for purpose, and that unit costs should compare favourably with similar benchmarked provision.

### **Grangefield Service**

- 4.21 The Grangefield project is a day service provided in the Borough by the Shaw Trust under a service level agreement, for a smaller number of clients (28 attend). The service provides a range of activities such as gardening, crafts, customer service, and administration, and there are good links with the Council's STEPs into Employment scheme. The service is cost effective but the review has identified a need for commissioners to review the arrangements to agree a more detailed specification and funding agreement.

## Provision of meals in day services

- 4.22 The provision of meals has been examined in order to ensure that all available funds are directed towards the necessary care and the support of service users. The provision of meals varies across the in-house services; clients at Allensway are provided with a two course lunch provided by a large kitchen (staff also receive lunch as they sit with clients and assist where appropriate), whilst clients attending community venues make their own provision. A small charge is made however this does not cover the cost. Meals are popular with clients, although some prefer to bring a packed lunch or use the café that is also available (including to the public).
- 4.23 With the strong belief that all available funds should be directed towards the necessary care and support of service users, the Committee proposed that meals should no longer be subsidised across all day services. Where appropriate service users could either bring a packed lunch or access the new café facilities. In the immediate future clients who live in residential provision and also access these services would not have to pay for lunch in the café as this would be funded as part of their care plan - residential providers would be expected to pay for this in future to prevent any double funding and this would be built into new contracts with residential providers.
- 4.24 The consultation demonstrated that many clients already used a packed lunch or café, and some thought it unfair that others received a sit-down meal as part of their care. Concerns centred around the practicalities of clients' ability to handle money, to make healthy choices, and in particular the concern that some with complex needs needed support to eat their food.
- 4.25 The Committee recommend that advice from the Council's Catering Service which has experience of providing for clients with a range of needs be sought. To ensure the smooth running of any new arrangements, nutritional advice would still be provided by staff, and that a cash-less payment system would be introduced, similar to that used in schools, to reduce the need for staff and clients to handle money. In order to ensure that available funds are focussed on providing care and support, the Committee recommend that:

- 4. the subsidy for meals in day services, where currently provided, should be discontinued, and that alternative cafe style/packed lunch options be further developed.**

## Brighter Futures

- 4.26 The Brighter Futures day service currently provides services for a small group of younger clients. The original aim of this service was to cater for younger clients in more community based venues as an alternative to more traditional approaches and also as an alternative to college. The proposal was to review it in order to ensure that the service had clearer access criteria, regular outcome based reviews of client progress, and that more support was provided to enable clients to move on to other community services. The overall aim for the service would be to provide a transitional arrangement for clients up to the age of 25 as an alternative to attending college.
- 4.27 Many people who responded to the consultation did not use or were not aware of the service (although some welcomed the idea of the service); however of those that did it was apparent that there is a perceived need to identify services for

clients to move on to. There was also a desire for more involvement from carers in further developing the service.

- 4.28 Service users in consultation discussion groups suggested that a buddy system should be introduced for new entrants to this service in order to enable clients to settle in, and this was also repeated for a number of other proposals, for example, when people move from out- of-Borough to in-Borough services.
- 4.29 In line with the approach for other in-house day services, it is proposed that Brighter Futures should have an agreed service specification with commissioners, including performance measures, to ensure the service remains fit for purpose and value for money. It is recommended that:

**5. Brighter Futures be reviewed in order to ensure that service users move on from the service into other services where appropriate, and the aim of this service is to enable young adults (up to 25 years old) to access community based services.**

#### **Day service closure periods and further developments**

- 4.30 During the consultation views were sought on whether day services should close during the main holiday periods of Easter, Summer and Christmas. The results were divided, with service users in the main preferring to see day services open throughout holiday periods as this would give consistency, although some felt it was good to have a break from the service. Carers responding to the survey were almost evenly split with a narrow majority preferring to retain the set closures. As day services will be subject to significant change, the Committee does not feel able to make recommendations on this issue at this time but this will be subject to ongoing review as services develop and change.
- 4.31 The Committee note that current day services have a traditional approach and provide services on a Monday to Friday basis. Consideration should be given to more flexible timing and activities so that service users have a greater choice. Commissioners may need to be proactive in stimulating the market to bring forward different services for people to access using personal budgets, or ensure in house and commissioned services remain fit for purpose. This will need to be reflected in the new strategy.

#### **Out of Borough day service placements**

- 4.32 In addition to the in-Borough provision, there are a number of placements outside of the Borough which clients travel to from Stockton. This can be on a relatively small scale such as the four clients who attend Upsall Hall, and often clients have accessed these services for a considerable period of time. However individual placements will need to be continually reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate in line with care planning.
- 4.33 The Committee found that often clients are being placed out of Borough because the required service was not available locally (sometimes clients are best placed out of the area due to individual situations), and that this also involved substantial spending on transport for relatively few numbers of clients. For instance there are a number of clients attending ESPA specialist autism services in Sunderland (see also the section on autism below), and also some with physical disabilities who attend the TASC service in Middlesbrough. Improvements in commissioning and improved clarity on role of commissioning and operational staff should

improve this situation. The 'netting up' and analysis of need will assist decisions around the commissioning of local services.

4.34 As a general principle the Committee proposed that no new day care provision will be commissioned out of borough unless the Council is satisfied it cannot currently meet the need locally. For those people already receiving day services out of borough and who live in Borough it was proposed that commissioners determine whether enough need exists to commission services locally thereby enabling people to move to more local provision (subject to their needs being met).

4.35 Throughout the consultation responses there was support when it was proposed to provide more services on a local basis. It was also recognised that placements out of Borough are sometimes necessary to meet individual need and that whatever is provided locally must be of a good quality when compared to what is provided elsewhere. The Committee therefore recommend that:

**6. out of Borough day care provision should not be commissioned unless the Council is satisfied that assessed needs cannot be met in the Borough;**

and;

**7. service users who live in Borough but currently attend out of Borough day services, should be encouraged and supported to receive services in Borough, subject to assessed needs being met, and commissioners should determine any requirement for additional provision in Borough.**

### **Opportunities for enterprise**

4.36 The Committee found that often clients are currently supported through day services to produce craft work and other art, for example, which is then either exhibited or sold to raise funds. The Committee were keen to ensure that such opportunities were explored further, including social enterprise approaches, as there is a clear appetite from the consultation exercises, especially from younger clients to undertake paid work where appropriate. The consultation included proposals for the Council to work closely with partners to develop community business schemes when the opportunity arises. Feedback received outlined a range of suggestions as to how this could take place, including involvement in Stockton Market, craft fairs and exhibitions, and also suggestions as to how this could be taken forward through for example awareness raising, and inclusion in training programmes. The Committee recommend that:

**8. the Council should encourage the development of community business opportunities for service users.**

### **Community Bridge Building**

4.37 As part of the review the Committee explored the concept of Community Bridge Building (CBB). The aim of this type of service is to support individuals with learning disabilities to access mainstream services. In order to inform decisions related to this review the STEPs service has been delivering a one year pilot scheme from April 2012. CBB is designed to help people to make choices in what activities they take part in and not be restricted by the services provided in day service locations, whilst building on an individual's own choices and preferences.



- 4.38 The service will encompass a wide range of initial support, enabling and empowering clients to have a more fulfilling life with choice and control. The pilot aims to support individuals into the following six 'domains' of their lives:-
- Arts & Culture;
  - Sport & Leisure;
  - Faith;
  - Education;
  - Volunteering;
  - Employment.
- 4.39 Therefore the pilot is seeking to support individuals to increase their independence, including travel training where appropriate, further integrate into local communities and where appropriate access volunteering opportunities and paid employment. A group of individuals who are suitable for bridge building will be identified by care managers in consultation with service users and carers. Depending on the successful outcomes of the pilot the intention is to roll this service out.
- 4.40 In order to standardise the approach to assessment; individuals have been assessed against an eligibility criteria that will identify those who are ready and willing to be involved in community activity. The assessment will allow for the service to gauge the individual's level of understanding around the practical aspects of community participation; to identify any potential barriers and the level and type of support required to successfully sustain them in their chosen community activity. CBB ensures a strong person-centred value base and in an innovative way supports individuals and families to build their life and to strengthen the capacity of communities to welcome and include disabled people. It is anticipated that Bridge Building would ensure much greater use of personal budgets in the future.
- 4.41 The consultation revealed high levels of support for a service that would increase the choice in day time activities, particularly for younger clients and the opportunity to experience volunteering and work, and gain new skills. Some carers were keen to ensure that clients would receive appropriate support, and that it may not be suitable for all.
- 4.42 Young people coming into services are particularly keen to be fully integrated into society and this service will be of particular relevance to them. Without a CBB-type service, the concern is that young people would continue to move from children's services into traditional adult services that encourage dependency rather than independence. Bridge Building does quite the opposite but there are concerns that previous funding for transitional Community Bridge Building may not be available in future and therefore resources should be made available for a transitional worker for young people. As well as improved outcomes for young people this should reap financial cost benefits as it diverts young people away from services into mainstream universal services significantly improving social inclusion. To illustrate a service user who is referred to Bridge Building will instead of being assessed for traditional day services be supported to access work, volunteering, mainstream social activities etc and be trained to travel independently where appropriate thus leading to a significant increase in independence.
- 4.43 In the pilot scheme to date 40 clients have entered the scheme. Thirteen are aged between 18-21, four are between 22-25, and eleven are aged between 26 and 35. Outcomes for clients so far include four work placements, eleven starts

in voluntary service, fifteen people have received travel training, and five have received job coaching.

4.44 The results of the pilot scheme will still need to be evaluated in full, but as there is support for the principle, the Committee recommend that:

**9. subject to a successful outcome of the pilot, the Community Bridge Building scheme be rolled out on a permanent basis, in order to support individuals to achieve greater independence and integration into local communities, and that consideration be given to funding a transitions Bridge Building worker.**

### **Residential care and independent living**

4.45 The Committee found that a key issue for the review was the provision of residential care, independent living opportunities, and improving the range of housing options for people with learning disabilities.

4.46 Over half of the net budget for learning disability services (c.£6m) is spent on providing residential care through a range of contracts with providers. The Committee found that there is frequently pressure on the residential care budget. Reviewing this area is therefore important, and involved examining the approach to individual care management assessments, reviews, commissioning and an overview of contracts, terms and conditions. The majority of residential provision is commissioned through 54 external providers, and there is only one in-house six-bed unit at Oak Road.

4.47 Around 150 people live in residential provision. CSED during their review commented on the high number of people living in residential provision many of whom were out of borough (circa 70 people). Much of the out of borough provision has been commissioned due to the lack of in-borough provision. This can lead to people accessing provision out of borough; this can be very expensive, can lead to clients being considerable distances from family members, and care managers also having to undertake significant travel. The Committee recognises that some clients may continue to be placed outside the area if their needs were best met through very specialist services which would not be appropriate to commission in the Borough or if their needs were best met in their current placement for other reasons.

4.48 The Committee were keen to ensure that annual reviews of clients placed out of the Borough should robustly assess whether a placement is still suitable to meet the needs of the service user (as with all clients), and whether a more suitable placement is required in or out of Borough. When making decisions about individual placements, service users would be at the heart of any decisions taken. Their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights will be respected and the National Assistance Act 1948 (Choice of Accommodation) Directions 1992 will be applied (the Directions relate only to residential care).

4.49 CSED concluded that historically there had been a somewhat risk averse approach to care planning which did not sit well with the national Valuing People Now policy. This situation was changing but needed to be further embedded in working practices. Good practice was sought out and consideration was given to the '6 Point Plan to Independence', a good practice guide which ensures care planning and reviews are undertaken in the context of maximising client independence. This approach has now been adopted by care managers.

- 4.50 Some clients clearly require residential provision but for others alternative provision such as living more independently, including supported housing, may be an appropriate option. There is a more recent trend locally to move more people into independent living in line with the national agenda, and there are a number of supported living schemes in the Borough, although CSED found that this was an area for further ongoing development.
- 4.51 Supported living schemes come in a variety of forms and clients can receive housing benefit where appropriate to assist with the cost of housing whilst also receiving support to ensure independent living. Supported People funding (now un-ring fenced) has been used to provide local schemes such as Doncaster Crescent and Chestnut House. Supported living schemes have been reviewed to ensure they are value for money as part of the EIT review of Independent Living services, and some have been re-tendered during the course of the Committee's work. Members visited the Doncaster Crescent scheme as part of the review and saw how changes to carer hours could lead to greater value for money, whilst still providing the ability to live in the community.
- 4.52 A renewed approach to supported living would also enable the Council to better meet the needs of those who have entered residential care in crisis when carers are no longer able to provide support. Sometimes this may be appropriate to meet short term needs, but in the longer term such clients may be able to be supported in the community.
- 4.53 However the Committee also found that, as with residential care, the Council must be mindful of costs as the percentage of the population requiring care increases whilst resources shrink. The Council needs to challenge independent living if need can be met through residential provision and independent living is significantly more expensive.
- 4.54 In order to increase the amount of local residential services, and promote more independent living where appropriate, the Committee made the following proposals for consultation:
- as a principle residential provision would be recommended if independent living would not meet assessed need or if the independent living scheme would not provide value for money. Independent living should be promoted and supported but it must be affordable;
  - to increase the range of in borough residential provision to prevent people being placed out of borough;
  - to work with those in residential care who are ready to move into independent living, and as part of this developing a range of affordable housing choices with appropriate care and support.
- 4.55 The consultation revealed support for the principle of more independent living, and younger service users in particular were keen to emphasise that for many it would feel like a natural progression. This was also reflected in the first phase of consultation in 2011. Supported living was thought to enable increased opportunities for independence and choice; however respondents also highlighted the need to ensure clients remain safe in the community, and the individual needs and abilities were taken into account with appropriate support.

- 4.56 There was support for the proposal to increase the amount of residential care locally available, particularly as this would benefit clients through easier access to friends and family. There was support for the proposal to encourage where appropriate people who have been receiving care outside the Borough to return to the Borough, providing this was with their agreement, and that the quality and appropriateness of care needed to be matched locally compared to elsewhere.
- 4.57 Suggestions were made as to how clients who had been away from the Borough for many years could be helped to settle in through a 'buddy system' made up of clients who knew the area well.
- 4.58 The Committee welcome the support for the proposals and recommend that:
- 10. as a general principle the Council should enable more people with learning disabilities to have access to more independent living opportunities, and reduce the use of residential care. Residential care should be recommended when independent living would not meet assessed need or does not provide value for money;**
  - 11. for those whose assessed needs would still be best met through residential care, the Council should aim to increase the range of in-Borough placements to reduce the use of out of Borough placements;**
  - 12. where appropriate and following review, service users in out of Borough residential care should be encouraged and supported to use in-Borough residential care.**
- 4.59 It is important to identify suitable and cost effective residential placements to meet assessed needs. At the same time, it is clear that many people could live in the community with support. Many people with learning disabilities and in receipt of services live more independently. As noted many service users welcome the prospect of having greater choice in their living
- 4.60 In order to achieve the aims and aspirations of increasing such opportunities, and in support of the above recommendations, the Committee found that there needed to be a wider range of options available for clients, their carers, and care managers to choose from. The review has identified a requirement for a housing investment strategy to ensure that appropriate options for supported housing are available, and a strategic approach is taken to planning and providing future housing need.
- 4.61 There is limited choice in the Borough for clients who can live independently and for whom it is cost effective to do so. There is a lot of pressure on the housing market currently and supply of affordable housing is limited. The netting up information on the housing needs of people with learning disabilities should lead to a more focussed and strategic approach, ensuring a better supply of affordable housing.
- 4.62 A substantial amount of work has now been undertaken on housing need by care managers, commissioners and housing services, and is resulting in new models of housing being developed. This close working relationship on housing need has been described as part of the working arrangements handbook which all staff are now working to. A funding bid is being submitted to the Department of Health for grant funding in association with a registered provider for extra care housing for LD clients, a proportion of affordable housing from section 106 agreements is being directed to learning disability clients, and new housing provision in the

Council's own housing regeneration area is also being earmarked. Shared housing for a number of clients is a popular model as clients get peer support and care costs can be shared. The cost of care in independent living will be a significant factor and models such as extra care, and core and cluster housing, provide an affordable means of people sometimes with complex needs being able to live more independently instead of in residential care.

- 4.63 CSED recognised the lack of suitable housing options and the proposal to increase the choice and range of affordable homes received high levels of support across the second phase consultation. Suggestions were made as to how this may be achieved, including closer working with Registered Providers of social housing. Respondents stressed the need to ensure there were systems in place to ensure that community placements were of a good quality and subject to appropriate oversight. The Committee recommend that:

**13. the Council should seek to increase the choice and range of affordable homes for independent living with appropriate care and support.**

- 4.64 Following a more consistent application of the review process by care managers, it should be possible to ensure that those living in residential care but who may be ready for more independent living are identified and receive the necessary support to do this. In order to support this approach, there needs to be a more consistent approach to the provision of independent living skills training. This is addressed at 4.86.

- 4.65 The Committee recognise that independent living is not suitable for all clients, and this was reflected in the consultation. The Committee recommend that:

**14. the Council should encourage and support those in residential care who are ready to move into independent living.**

**In-house residential care**

- 4.66 The Council provides a small in-house residential unit at Oak Road. As part of the work to secure greater access to more independent living where appropriate, it is proposed to review Oak Road to see if it is suitable for conversion to a supported living scheme. This will involve consultation with the service users concerned.

**Respite and short breaks**

- 4.67 The Committee found that an area of concern was access to respite care and short breaks provision. Respite care/short breaks enable clients who live with family and carers to have some overnight time away from carers in an alternative environment, whilst providing much needed support for carers themselves.

- 4.68 Technically respite care is the provision of any service (including day care) that 'enables a person to take a break from the responsibility of caring for somebody else (Dept. of Health). In relation to the traditional residential style of respite care, when attending the respite service clients usually follow their normal daytime routine, for example attending day services. In-house SBC respite services are provided at Lanark Close on a 'traditional' basis, and the unit currently provides care using 6 beds.

- 4.69 The first phase of consultation and further analysis has made clear that this existing level of provision was not meeting assessed need. It is clear that the services at Lanark are greatly valued and that access should be improved.

Lanark Close as a building can host 9 beds, and through making efficiencies within the running of the unit, the Committee is able to recommend an increase in beds from 6 to 9 beds. The Committee recommend that:

**15. capacity in respite care at Lanark Close be increased whilst still making efficiency savings, increasing the number of beds from 6 to 9.**

4.70 For a few people responding to the consultation, Lanark was felt to be not meeting their particular needs, including the inflexibility of booking arrangements and the impact on a service user's care.

4.71 Other models of respite exist, including short breaks, and a small number of people use direct payments to source and pay for their own provision. Short breaks allow carers to receive respite, but differ in that they should provide a positive opportunity for the service user to have a break from their daily routine. There appears to be a limited range of options locally, and this should be addressed in order to provide a more person centred approach to the benefit of both service users and carers.

4.72 The Committee found that options that could be developed for Stockton could include:

- residential breaks;
- family based breaks (e.g. Shared Lives Schemes);
- home based breaks, including increased care packages into the person's own home so that the carer can go away, and overnight support to enable families to get sleep;
- community, social and leisure breaks;
- holiday breaks;
- self directed breaks;
- emergency back up breaks.

4.73 The Committee made a proposal to develop such options for short breaks, and this received the highest levels of net agreement in the second round of consultation surveys, and was well supported during discussion. Comments received welcomed the prospect of more choice, and suggested different types of care would be needed for different needs, for example, autism or older clients. The Council's commissioners would need to develop a range of provision that could be either commissioned direct, or accessed via personal budgets.

4.74 Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) also provide respite care at the Aysgarth unit for those with higher level needs. The SBC service at Lanark is for those with lower level needs however it may be appropriate to provide a joint service for those with higher level needs in future.

4.75 Respondents to the consultation welcomed the potential for increased joint working, as long as it there was close co-operation and it did not duplicate existing services. Respondents stressed the levels of pressure that carers of clients with complex needs were under. The council would need to work with TEWV in order to develop this proposal, and seek the support of NHS commissioners.

4.76 In order to seek to expand the range of 'respite' care provided locally, the Committee therefore recommend that:

- 16. a menu of options for short break services be developed; these should be either commissioned by the Council or be accessible via personal budget;**

and

- 17. the Council works closely with the NHS including the Clinical Commissioning Group, to explore the provision of a joint respite facility for service users with more complex needs.**

## **Autism**

- 4.77 As noted in the interim report, the Committee has identified the lack of in borough services for people with Autism. Prevalence rates of those with an autism spectrum disorder in adults are estimates and can differ; however the most up to date figures on a national basis suggest that prevalence in the adult population is 1.1%. Autism is common in people with a learning disability, with a higher prevalence amongst those with a more severe disability. The autistic spectrum is wide; some individuals function independently and only access universal services whilst, at the other end of the spectrum, there are those with profound needs that require very specialist services.
- 4.78. There has been some work on a Tees-wide basis to determine demand across the area, however during the review work commenced to identify more accurately the level of projected need in Stockton. Increased awareness of current and future needs should enable better commissioning.
- 4.79. Due to the lack of dedicated local services, a number of clients access services out of borough often at significant expense. For example, the specialist day services provision at ESPA in Sunderland is attended by six Stockton clients at an annual cost of £188k, including transport. There are also a number of clients accessing residential care out of the Borough; some of these clients may be able to live in supported living, however it is probable that a number will continue to have needs best met through residential care.
- 4.80. Analysis of clients in Stockton-based services has shown that a number of people would benefit from autism specific care, including day and respite care. Future need is being mapped and work has identified circa 7 clients per year moving through transition from children to adult services over the next few years.
- 4.81. Phase 1 consultation highlighted to Members the concern over the lack of local provision, and the need to develop services including day time activities. As part of the second stage of consultation there was an enthusiastic response for the proposal to increase the range of services in Stockton Borough, with recognition that services were needed for the full range of needs. There were a number of suggestions for possible services from carers including: sport and leisure, better information and support, sensory and therapeutic use of animals techniques, and more appropriate options for housing, respite, and day time activities.
- 4.82. As out of Borough residential and specialist day services are expensive, the Committee recommend developing local residential and day service provision where this represents value for money. The Committee recommend that:

**18. the Council should explore the commissioning of new autism provision in the Borough.**

**Homecare**

4.83. A number of clients receive home care services from a number of external providers. During the period of the review a tendering process for older people and learning disability home care services took place. A new contract started on 1 October and savings in relation to learning disability services will equate to approximately £71k for a full year. Work will also take place to assess the merits of an e-procurement system for future home care packages, following evidence received by the Committee from Durham County Council.

**Community Support**

4.84. There is also a Community Support service. This is being reviewed in line with the revised home care arrangements. We are currently considering whether the in house service provides anything different/unique to the commissioned service and also the merits of developing the in house service into an assessment/reablement service. A reablement service is designed to closely assess clients for around 6 weeks to determine the level and nature of services they require. If the current service concentrated only on reablement then current users of in-house services would be offered commissioned services.

**Supporting work**

4.85. As can be seen the review has proposed a number of changes to services to ensure improvements and value for money. The Committee endorses a number of supporting actions that should be made to ensure sustainable improvements are made.

4.86. A range of support is in place to train current service users in the use of **independent living skills**, including budgeting, travel training, preparing meals and undertaking simple domestic tasks. The Committee felt that this work needed to be better targeted in order to ensure clients had set goals and could progress towards supported living where appropriate. The actions in the new strategy should address this. The approach to travel training will also need to be linked to the separate review of Community Transport.

4.87. For those who have been in residential care for any length of time, and who have been identified as having needs that would be best met through more independent living, it is recognised that some would need extra support to enable this. This could include access to time-limited care in a supportive environment that would both provide training in relevant skills, and further assessment of the client's needs, in order to fully prepare them for more independent living. New contract specifications would provide details of required housing and social care support.

4.88. Following work to better understand the nature of the local client and carer group, the Committee found that in some cases entry to residential care was on an emergency basis due to the client's **carers being no longer able to care** for them at short notice, and with little preparation for independent living having been made beforehand.



- 4.89. There should be a method of preparing for such situations through better identification and communication with vulnerable carers, whether vulnerable through age, deteriorating health or their own disabilities. For example, as of early 2012, there were 54 elderly carers in Stockton, 16 of whom were between 80 and 90 years old, and 3 were over 90 years old.
- 4.90. Care managers are as a result of the review now actively targeting vulnerable carers for support. The Committee were pleased to note that all carers will be offered a carers assessment. If a client with vulnerable carer/s was identified, the review officer should discuss with them the opportunities available for independent living. The client and carer would be given the opportunity to meet with someone who lives independently, and offered support to visit supported living schemes within Stockton. If they wish to pursue this they will be allocated to a care manager to support them. If at this time the client and carer decline, the review officer will schedule the next review for 6 months, and continue to offer this level of support to the client and their carers.

### Transitions

- 4.91. A good **transition process** should both fully prepare clients and carers for what care they may or may not in future receive, and also enable those planning and providing services to have a good understanding of the needs of potential future clients. The nature of support provided to adults as compared to when they were children can be significantly different due in part to different legal requirements, and it is important for clients and families to have a full understanding of the process and potential changes.
- 4.92. The review has identified that there should be better planning from the stage of the 14+ review. This should include: more regular meetings between transitions staff and commissioning teams, improved intelligence to support the commissioning of additional local services where appropriate, for example a Bridge Building to increase a young person's ability to access universal services in the community rather than automatically entering more 'traditional' adult services.
- 4.93. The Committee is conscious that the provision of more services in community settings requires **appropriate infrastructure** to be in place. This may be for instance minor modifications to community venues to improve access, and improvements to toilet and changing facilities for those that require them. The Committee is proposing that awareness should be raised within SBC of the need for Changing Places-type facilities for people with complex needs in order to ensure they can access more community based activities<sup>1</sup>. This could be through inclusion in specifications for new developments or changes to existing buildings where appropriate and subject to funding availability.
- 4.94. The Valuing People Now framework aims for **more personalised support packages**. Alongside the proposed improvements to better achieve this within in-house and commissioned services, all service users are now offered the opportunity to secure services via a personal budget. This will require commissioners to work with providers to ensure appropriate services are available to choose from, and stimulate the creation of new ones where appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> See: [www.changing-places.org/](http://www.changing-places.org/)

### **Improvements to ways of working**

4.95. The Committee identified a number of improvements regarding care management and commissioning that are being taken forward in order to ensure that sustainable improvements to the learning disability service take place. A number of actions have been taken forward and will need to be embedded in future service delivery. These include:

- Improved use of staff skills in the selection of care package providers, with appropriate input from commissioners and procurement, relieving pressure on care managers so that there can be more focus on planning of client care;
- a dedicated review officer has been appointed in order to undertake detailed reviews, ensuring that outcomes are identified where appropriate, and then met, and a robust approach to care planning will ensure that opportunities for independence are maximised;
- refreshed and more robust contracting arrangements, with more detailed terms and conditions, are being established with providers to avoid confusion as to what should be provided. For example, those in 24hr residential care and who have assessed needs for day time activities should have this provision paid for by the residential provider. There will be an ongoing involvement of the Procurement Team;
- improved data collection and usage. This should include both client assessed need and projected need, taking into account transitions, but also more systematic feedback on the services that people use;
- consistent approach to charging across all services.

4.96. In general terms, Adult Strategy as commissioners will have greater oversight of learning disability services as a whole, backed up with improved intelligence on current and projected needs, and closer working between operational staff, care managers, and housing staff. A working practices handbook has been developed in order to capture the full range of changes that have been made and this will need to be kept up to date.

4.97. It is proposed that in future, the commissioning team will have a role in ensuring the quality and value for money for both in-house services, and those that are externally commissioned. Service Level Agreements (SLAs) will be established with in-house providers, and should include compliance with expected performance and financial targets. This will lead to several benefits:

- a greater ability for commissioners to decide whether services should be commissioned or in house as they will have more detailed comparator information on cost, quality, service utilisation, etc;
- as new services develop or more people choose to design their own care packages using personal budgets, an annual review of services will ensure 'budgets follow people' and in house services receive payments dependent on levels of utilisation;
- clearer choice for service users, their carers and care managers;
- a regular annual refresh of service level agreements will ensure services remain relevant.

4.98. As outlined above a significant number of clients live in residential care, and alongside the work to ensure people are appropriately placed in residential care, work has also been undertaken to ensure that each residential placement,

where it continues to be needed, represents value for money. The Committee found that costs greatly vary; the highest cost case, which is out of borough, is currently £4,253 per week net, and the lowest cost £242 per week net.

- 4.99. A significant piece of work has been undertaken starting with the most expensive placements to better understand the breakdown of costs and to begin negotiations where costs seem unreasonable. For example, some care homes provide elements of very specialist care that individual clients may not need but for which fees may be charged to the Council. This work has resulted in ongoing negotiations with providers and some immediate cost reductions. A team comprising staff from operation, procurement and commissioning services has been leading on negotiations with providers in order to see where increased value for money could be achieved. The process has been undertaken on the basis of achieving value for money for the care provided.
- 4.100. A refreshed approach to contract review and renewal commenced during the review and this will result in much tighter contracts with more emphasis on outcomes for clients. Previously there was no standard contract documentation for providers resulting in varying levels of quality and were in need of renewal. New more robust contracts have been produced with support from the Council's procurement team and legal services and are now being rolled out with providers. The new contracts are much clearer about what is expected from providers including the provider being responsible for either providing or paying for external day care and meals if someone is in 24 hour residential provision.
- 4.101. The more robust review process has identified those who live outside the Borough and who in some cases are able to live in the community in the respective locality. These cases may then lead to a change in the client's ordinary residence resulting in the 'host' local authority rather than Stockton Council becoming responsible for the client's care. All such cases are taken forward in conjunction with legal services, and significant input from care management. Recently, eleven clients have been considered in this way; three cases have been settled and savings agreed to date will amount to c. £138k per annum. Work will continue to be undertaken on remaining cases however due to the nature of negotiations and the frequent need for clients to have independent advocacy, it is not possible to put a firm estimate on any future savings.
- 4.102. The Committee recommend that:
- 19. the improvements to care management and commissioning as outlined in the report and included in the Working Practice Handbook, be implemented to ensure a successful implementation of the Committee's recommendations and the proposed commissioning strategy.**

### **Implementation of recommendations**

- 4.103. The Committee recognise that to implement the review in full, should the recommendations be accepted, there will need to be a period of intensive transitional work. This will include:
- during the transition period, day services would be providing services both at Rievaulx and an increasing range of community bases therefore there may be a period of 'double running' of services, until all clients have been

reviewed and their future placements confirmed. In conjunction with Community Transport, transport provision for clients who move location will be carefully considered;

- work to establish the fair cost of residential provision will continue, as will ordinary residence cases where appropriate;
- the pilot Community Bridge Building scheme will need to be fully assessed and if the decision is made to mainstream the service, will be rolled out to a wider client group and new entrants into adult services where appropriate;
- consideration is also being given to increasing the capacity of the care management function for a time limited period in order to cover the increase in assessment and support for clients work during the transition;
- additional support within the commissioning and procurement teams may also be required.

4.104. The Committee found that, as the Council more robustly reviews clients' needs for meaningful day time activity, it is likely that some people will move into different provision as current provision may not meet identified need. Some care plans have already identified the need for increased independence and services such as Community Bridge Building could support some of these clients (this could include developing options for using personal budgets, accessing activities within the local community, accessing work or volunteering). Such changes will mean that utilisation levels within services will require regular review and it is anticipated commissioners will carry this out as part of their enhanced monitoring role of in-house service provision.

### **Financial Implications**

4.105. This review has identified a number of areas that have the opportunity for greater efficiencies and financial savings of at least 15%.

4.106. By progressing ordinary residence cases, re-negotiating some high cost residential placements and re-commissioning homecare fees savings have already been achieved, which equate to an annual saving of £300k. Further savings of approximately £500,000 would be achieved through:

- Ending meal subsidies in day services and changing how meals are provided in respite provision;
- Day service and respite service re-configuration, including changes to management and staffing structures;

4.107. Work is also ongoing in a number of areas which will deliver further savings which have yet to be quantified:

- Re-negotiation of high cost residential placement fees with providers;
- The provision of local autism services;
- Successful outcomes being achieved through Community Bridge Building;
- Successful outcomes on a number of ordinary residence cases that are currently being progressed;

- The provision of more cost effective independent living options as an alternative to residential placements, and;
- Re-commissioning of supported tenancies.

4.108. It should be noted that it is difficult to quantify the savings achievable as they are subject to a number of varying factors. For example, a successful outcome in ordinary residence disputes is dependent on agreement with a local authority and / or successful legal challenge. Reducing the cost of high cost residential placements is dependent on successful negotiation with providers. Savings arising from independent living are dependent on the willingness of existing service users in residential placements to move.

4.109. Some of the recommendations and actions may require an invest to save approach, e.g. additional staffing, local autism services, Community Bridge Building, and housing. Further details of the individual projects, resource requirements and potential savings will be presented to Cabinet in due course.

4.110. Should the review recommendations be accepted, it is proposed that the Adult Social Care Programme Board monitor the implementation of the review and achievement of financial savings as part of the wider review of Adult Services, in addition to the agreed arrangements for the monitoring of previously agreed recommendations through the Select Committee process.

### **Legal Implications**

4.111. The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 sets out the need to ensure that people live safely in the community. It identifies that Councils with social care responsibilities should assess the needs of people and arrange provision of community care services to meet these needs. Guidance on eligibility criteria was renewed in 2010 and is now called 'Prioritising Need in the context of Putting People First' (previously called 'Fair Access to Care Services' - FACS).

4.112. The local authority must have due regard to the general equality duty under s.149 Equality Act 2010. The Act extends protected equality characteristics to include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership status. People with those characteristics have protection under equality legislation. There is a legal duty on the local authority when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.113. Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the 3 aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies including the development and review of policy, service delivery, and commissioning and procurement.

4.114. Having “due regard” to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

4.115. The duty is a continuing one and “due regard” must be given before and at the time a particular decision is being considered which may affect people with protected characteristics.

4.116. In addition to any or all, of the other protected characteristics, people eligible for learning disability services are covered by the Act as a protected group due to their disability.

4.117. An interim Equality Impact Assessment was developed in order to inform the development of the proposals and was considered when the proposals were agreed in principle in May 2012; the proposals at the time were scored as having a positive impact. The EIA has been updated with the results of the phase 2 consultation and this has now been given a score of 76 (positive impact).

4.118. Also relevant is the Autism Act 2009. This required the Government to produce an autism strategy and also statutory guidance for local authorities. The guidance was published in December 2010, and is called 'Implementing Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives: Statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the autism strategy' and must be taken into account by both local authorities and the NHS.

4.119. The Autism Act required that the guidance cover the following:

- the provision of relevant services for the purpose of diagnosing autistic spectrum;
- conditions in adults;
- the identification of adults with autism;
- the assessment of the needs of adults with autism for relevant services;
- planning in relation to the provision of relevant services to people with autism as they move from being children to adults;
- other planning in relation to the provision of relevant services to adults with autism;
- the training of staff who provide relevant services to adults with autism;
- local arrangements for leadership in relation to the provision of relevant services to adults with autism.

4.120. Article 8 of The European Convention on Human Rights (respect for private and family life, home and correspondence) is likely to be engaged where changes to

individual care packages occur particularly those involving a change of living arrangements. If it appears that an individual's Article 8 rights are interfered with then consideration will need to be given to whether that interference can be justified (such as in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others).

## **5.0 Conclusion**

- 5.1. The Committee have undertaken an in-depth review of learning disability adult social care provision in Stockton-on-Tees. It found that there was scope both to improve services provided by or on behalf of the Council, and to make significant savings.
- 5.2. Proposals were made to ensure a renewed emphasis on independent living where appropriate, increased choice and community venues in day services, more access and choice in respite care, and improvements to autism provision.
- 5.3. The Committee was pleased with the response to the consultation held during summer of 2012 and welcomed the broadly supportive feedback on the proposals. The Committee would like to place on record its thanks to all those who took the time to complete a survey or attend a consultation event.
- 5.4. A significant proportion of the identified savings can be achieved through improved working practices and internal efficiency measures that would not impact on the care someone receives. Other savings can be made at the same time as improving service delivery.
- 5.5. The proposals are wide-ranging and there may be anxiety for clients and carers during the period of change; a number of concerns were raised particularly in relation to changes to day services at Rievaulx. The Committee recognise these concerns but believe that the proposals to change the way in which day-time activities are delivered in the Borough will lead to more modernised local services and create a more flexible and person-centred approach.
- 5.6. The Council will need to work hard to continue to engage and consult throughout in order to make sure that clients and carers are fully involved in the ongoing process.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Summary of Phase 2 Consultation Results

Reported to Adult Services and Health Select Committee on 26 September 2012

#### Method of consultation and type of feedback received

1. The consultation took place for 12 weeks between 11 June and 31 August. A number of techniques were used in order to gather feedback from a range of interested parties including: services users (sometimes referred to as 'clients'), families and carers including young carers, young people in transition, service providers including SBC staff, interest groups, and the wider public.
2. The approach included:
  - A consultation document including a survey which was mailed to all carers and made available to stakeholders including staff (this is referred to as the 'carer survey' in this report), an accessible version was provided to all service users (referred to as the 'service user survey'), and the document was also made available online;
  - A dedicated webpage was created on the SBC website, including a link to the survey;
  - Awareness raising via Stockton News and press releases;
  - Facilitated consultation sessions for service users at Allensway, Brighter Futures, Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre, Rievaulx, and Abbey Hill School. These were facilitated by Stockton Helps All, an independent advocacy organisation, and included discussions with those in transition from children to adults services;
  - 9 public, facilitated consultation events were organised; these were aimed primarily at carers (two sessions were unattended);
  - Briefings for SBC staff, provider organisations, trades union, and local MPs;
  - Presentations at the following groups: users of Brighter Futures, Eastern Ravens (young carers), a dedicated session for BME community, SBC Members Policy Seminar, Renaissance (Stockton's LSP), Stockton Locality NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, and the Learning Disability Partnership Board;
  - A specific session – the 'All Welcome Event' - was held with representatives of the following groups invited to attend: Area Partnerships, Stockton LINK, BME Network, Faith Network, Parish and



Town Councils, Stockton United for Change, Catalyst, Health and Wellbeing Partnership, and Over 50s Assembly.

3. Stockton LINK have been involved in discussions on the planning of the consultation and organised the BME consultation session on behalf of SBC.
4. In addition during the consultation period parents and carers of service users at Rievaulx requested additional consultation sessions. These were organised by the providers of Rievaulx (CIC), and attended by members of the Adult Commissioning Team. The report of these 4 sessions is included at Appendix 5 **[Appendix 2 of this final Committee report]**.
5. A small number of letters and emails were also received.
6. The 12 week, phase 2 consultation, followed an initial phase 1 consultation that took place in the summer of 2011 and this was designed to gather views from service users and carers on what they thought of the way services were currently provided. The feedback from phase 1 was used to shape the proposals for change and can be found via:  
  
<http://www.egenda.stockton.gov.uk/aksstockton/users/public/admin/kab12.pl?cmt=HEA&meet=38&arc=71>
7. The detailed results from each of the methods of consultation are outlined in detail in the following Appendices **[Nb. for access to the following appendices please access the following link, apart from the CIC report which is Appendix 2 to this Committee report. [www.stockton.gov.uk/learningdisabilityservicesreview](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/learningdisabilityservicesreview) ]:**
  - Appendix 1 – Results from Service User Survey and Carer/Stakeholder Survey
  - Appendix 2 – Comments made in survey responses
  - Appendix 3 – Feedback from the service user sessions run by Stockton Helps All
  - Appendix 4 – Feedback from the public consultation events, and other forums attended
  - Appendix 5 – Report of CIC – Additional feedback from parents of users attending Rievaulx
  - Appendix 6 – Additional responses received

8. This summary report outlines the key points from each of the above in relation to the proposals for change. The appendices contain the full set of results for transparency, and a summary of the results will be made available to those who requested it during the consultation, and made available online, as well as to the Committee itself. Appendix 2 demonstrates the full range of comments made, and each comment has been briefly summarised for analysis purposes.

### Overall summary of results

9. A brief summary of the main issues is as follows:
  - In **response to every question in both the service user and carer versions of the survey, a higher number of respondents agreed with a proposal than disagreed.** (In the response to the service user version, there was a higher percentage of respondents that ticked 'do not know' compared to the carer version, although it was the most frequent response in only three questions).
  - **A number of survey questions elicited very positive responses,** in particular the proposals to increase the amount of provision 'in-Borough', increasing the range of day time activities, support for supported living, improvements to short breaks/respite care, and services for those with autism.
  - The facilitated **service user sessions indicated that there were more mixed views on some proposals,** including changes to the model for day services. Other discussions indicated widespread support, for example increasing access to supported living.
  - Discussions at the public engagement events covered the **consultation process** itself especially the need to involve carers in decisions, the **individual needs of clients versus the higher level general principles** contained in the proposals, the **practicalities of using more community venues** for day services (including Brighter Futures), **support for Rievaulx** and the positive nature of activities there, and the **practicalities of using personal budgets.**
  - **Concerns were raised in relation to the consultation process at Rievaulx Resource Centre by some of the carers of service users who attend.** Additional consultation sessions with parents and carers were organised by the provider CIC, and these were attended by SBC representatives. There was a strong feeling that these views should be represented in this report.
  - A common theme throughout the responses was the need to ensure that whatever services are provided, they must meet the individual's needs. (However it is important to recognise that this may differ from an individual's assessed need under the Council's eligibility criteria and assessment process).
  - Feedback and other comments in relation to the consultation exercise itself are outlined below under 'General Comments'. All comments received during the

review will be considered by Learning Disability Services and the Adult Services Commissioning Team, and actions taken forward where appropriate.

### **Summary of results by proposal**

10. The full rationale for each proposal was provided in the interim report considered by Committee and Cabinet (on 17 May 2012). In that report it was outlined that should any of the proposals be taken forward, service users will be at the heart of any decisions taken and their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights will be respected.

### **Day time activities**

**Proposal 1: In future there should be only one building based service in the future and this will provides services for people with complex needs. We believe the building based day service should be based at Allensway and service users with complex needs currently at Rievaulx would move to Allensway.**

11. Overall the surveys showed a positive response to this suggestion, in particular the carer survey responses. In response to the service user survey, more people agreed than disagreed with the proposal, however the most frequent type of response was 'do not know'.
12. Concerns were raised in relation to the travel arrangements to Allensway, and the impact on friendship groups and the impact of change and disruption to client routines. Respondents were keen to ensure that the facilities at Allensway would be suitable for increased numbers of users with complex needs and have the capacity, and some welcomed the use of a purpose built building.
13. During discussion with service users facilitated by Stockton Helps All, these issues were raised, together with concern that things should not change unnecessarily, and if there is change this must be for the better. During discussion, 18 people are recorded as being against the proposal, and 17 in favour.
14. Proposals 1 and 2 could both impact on the future care of clients currently attending Rievaulx Resource Centre. The proposals would mean that clients with complex needs would be offered services at Allensway, and those without would be offered community based settings (including Billingham), with the current model of services being concentrated on one site at the Rievaulx building itself no longer being used once the new model was in place.
15. In the surveys, when analysing responses to questions compared to the services used, there was a higher level of disagreement amongst users and carers linked to Rievaulx, although the numbers providing this information overall are small for comparison purposes.

16. The additional feedback from Rievaulx parents outlines the community nature of the unit involving all users of the service; if those with complex needs were placed together at Allensway there was concern that they would not get the stimulation from being with people with a range of needs, and this may impact on their condition.
17. This concern was also reflected in the public events, and also the comments within the survey. There was some unhappiness with the perception that all service users with complex needs were being concentrated in one place.

**Proposal 2: Service users who do not have complex needs would be supported to access services provided in community settings (based on the existing model of Central Stockton Day Services and Brighter Futures). Service users that do not have complex needs and who currently attend Allensway and Rievaulx would be supported to access an increased range of community settings, including in Billingham.**

18. There were higher levels of positive responses to this question in both surveys compared to proposal 1, although in the service user responses 'do not know' was again the most frequent type of response. At the discussions with service users, there was a generally positive response and more choice in activities was welcomed; some required further information on the proposals, and the type of places they would be using. Younger people commented that they preferred the idea of community activities compared to day services, and in general that they wanted to have as much choice in their lives as possible.
19. Comments in the survey were similar to those in response to proposal 1, and there was discussion at the public events. The opportunity to provide a broader range of activities and venues was welcomed by many. In terms of usage of community venues generally, there were suggestions that more council-run venues should be opened up for this type of use, requests that service users are kept safe and guided by appropriately trained staff, recognition of travel issues that need to be addressed, and the need to carefully choose (or adapt) community venues to ensure their suitability.
20. Concerns related to the impact on change for clients, the needs for structured activities and whether this could be delivered in community venues (this was also reflected by some service users), and that whilst younger clients may be more inclined to want to go to community venues, this would not necessarily be the case for older clients.
21. There were a number of comments particularly related to Rievaulx at the public events, positive comments on services there, and suggestions for future service development, dominate the response provided by CIC. These include: concern that the positive aspects of services at Rievaulx are not being considered, the sense of community and mutual support, recognition that some clients may be able to access more community based activities but this is not suitable for all,

belief that Rievaulx is already fully integrated in the local community, and that users prefer Rievaulx when they are offered or have experienced other options. Some people felt that although younger people had expressed the wish to have more choice in services, this had to be set against the message of 'no change' at Rievaulx. In addition the Friends of Rievaulx group stated that they had raised considerable sums of money in order to support activities linked to the centre, and examples of this spending are included in Appendix 6.

22. There was some recognition that there needed to be improvements to the service provided at Rievaulx, including access to the community, but that Rievaulx should be retained as a base for the Billingham area. A number of local community based locations were suggested including the Forum, and the need for effective and reliable transport was also emphasised. Suggestions were also made about the need to improve the experience for some individuals by more flexible use of the space, and more person-centred planning of activities.

23. **Review team comment on proposals 1 and 2:**

The LD review revealed a lack of clarity about some of the day service provision. Some services appeared to be providing too wide a service 'offer' and others lacked clarity around purpose, audience, access criteria etc. Commissioners have therefore spent time with providers understanding service models, reviewing and clarifying issues and establishing a clear menu of services for service users, their carers and care managers to consider.

24. Members will recall we currently have two primarily building based services, one 'In house' at Allensway and one commissioned at Rievaulx. Care management reviews have identified that a number of service users would benefit from further integration into the community and some from improved access to work volunteering etc. As a result of this intelligence we consulted on some proposed changes to day services suggesting that we retain Allensway as our building based and complex needs provision on the basis it is a purpose built facility as opposed to Rievaulx which is based in a converted school. The implication of this would be that service users with Complex needs attending Rievaulx would be transferred to Allensway whilst remaining service users would take advantage of more community based services.

25. We anticipated consulting on this principle would be difficult as we could not present to service users and carers a detailed new delivery model, believing it important to first gauge opinion via the second stage of consultation. Whilst overall there is support for only having one complex needs facility there are clearly some concerns about how it will work and the intention would be to work up a detailed model involving service users, carers and of course the day service provider. The provider, CIC, informed us this is the only 'traditional' model of day care they as a company provide and are supportive of a more community based provision.

**Proposal 3: We propose to no longer subsidise traditional two course meals at day services in the Borough. The proposal is to provide a café style, or packed lunch if preferred, service instead.**

26. Overall in the survey returns and discussion with clients there was a positive response to this proposal, although there was a more even spread of opinion in the carer survey responses.
27. A range of comments were made across the survey and at events. As there is a range of day services in place across the Borough, many service users already use a packed lunch and this was reflected by their comments in the survey. Many welcomed the opportunity to exercise more choice, and some commented that it was unfair that some in the Borough are provided with meals and others are not. There was also some acknowledgement of the cost of meals provision and that this money could be better spent on care.
28. Concerns centred around the need for service users to have a balanced diet and whether they would be able to make healthy food choices, and some clients enjoy the hot meals and would be prepared to pay more for them. It was stated that some clients would be unable to handle money, and in particular some clients need support with how they eat their food dependent on their needs. In addition, a number of carers stated that meals were another method of supporting carers as this meant that they did not need to cook a hot meal on a night.
29. **Review team comment:**

The provision of meals is varied across day services but at Allensway and Rievaulx a two course sit down lunch is provided. Whilst the meals are popular with some services users, some elect to bring a packed lunch. Whilst charges are made for meals they do not cover costs and so are heavily subsidised. Under proposed new arrangements where service users can either bring a packed lunch or purchase food from a new café style provision service users will still get advice and support on nutritional matters and help preparing and eating food if required. The Council's Catering Service has helped develop the new proposals, and has significant experience in providing for a range of clients with varying needs and dietary requirements. It would be the intention to provide a cash-less payment system, similar to what operates in schools when paying for school meals, and therefore reducing the need for staff and service users to handle money.
30. In the immediate future clients who live in residential provision and who access these services would not have to pay for lunch in the café as this will be funded as part of their care plan - residential providers will be expected to pay for this in future to prevent any double funding.

**Proposal 4: We propose to review the popular Brighter Futures Service to determine the future purpose of the service, access criteria etc, ensuring that service users move on from the service where appropriate via links into community bridge building, for example. It is anticipated that this service will provide a transitional approach catering for younger clients to the age of 25 in a community based setting and as an alternative to going to college.**

31. There was a positive response from both sets of survey responses; however in the service user responses 'do not know' was the most frequent response. In discussion with service users, and in the comments in the survey, it was clear that many people did not use this service and so did not comment/understand, but those who did all wanted to see it reviewed and developed. Those in transition commented that the idea sounded like a good one and may allow them to develop, but would want more information on the service before deciding.
32. Comments included the need to ensure that a range of skills are developed by the service, and it needed to ensure that clients move on to other appropriate services as they develop. Service users discussed how Brighter Futures enabled people to develop their skills in a safe environment, and suggested the introduction of a buddy system to enable new entrants to settle in.
33. In the public events, there were comments questioning the suitability of the venue used for Brighter Futures activities, and some carers also commented that they wanted more involvement in the planning of the service.
34. A specific session took place with carers of those who currently attended Brighter Futures. These comments are included in Appendix 4. There was some concern about the aim of moving clients on to other services after a set period of time as there would be disruption and belief that there were currently no appropriate services for the group to move on to. Attendees requested that a specific service be commissioned for this client group. There was recognition that there needed to be regular reviews and clear outcomes set.

**Proposal 5: We propose that no new day care provision will be commissioned out of Borough unless we are satisfied we cannot currently meet the need locally.**

35. Across the surveys and in discussion with survey users, there was support for this proposal. Many comments were made in support of keeping services local, close to family and friends, and concerns were raised about transport provision for those out of Borough.
36. It is recognised that in some cases placements may need to be secured out of the Borough in order to meet individual needs, and there should be an element of choice. At the public sessions there was some discussion on the future of TASC (out of Borough) day services. It was stated that complex needs clients that attend there benefit from mixing with a range of clients.

**Proposal 6: For those people receiving day services out of borough who currently live in Borough, we will encourage and support them to receive services in the Borough (subject to needs being met), and commissioners will need to determine whether enough need exists to commission services locally.**

37. There are high levels of support for this proposal in both types of survey and in discussion with clients. Across the range of comments made, there was general support for this proposal, so long as the services locally were of a good quality, were cost effective, and continued to meet the needs of clients.
38. It was again suggested by service users that a buddy system would be a good idea for any service users who are new to services in the Borough.

**Proposal 7: We will consult with service users and carers to decide whether day services should close during the set holiday closure periods. Any changes would have to be implemented for 2013 as staff and service users/carers may already have booked holidays for this year on the basis of set closure dates.**

39. Consultees were asked whether the current set closure times (based around Summer, Easter and Christmas) remained appropriate to their needs.
40. A clear majority of service user survey responses and in discussions, indicated that they would prefer that day services were open during holiday periods. Several people stated that it was good for service users to have consistency, that there was still a need for activities to take place during this period, and it was better to have choice as to when to take their holidays. However some people felt that it was also good to have a break from these services, and/or they preferred to know when they would be closed.
41. The result for the carer survey was very close and 36 were in favour of retaining the set closures, 35 against and 23 did not know. A number of comments were made, including that it was better to have choice and that day services 'should not be run like schools'. Of those that supported retaining the set closures some carers felt it was good to give clients a break from the services, and that it made it easier to plan if there were set closures. The range of comments made is in Appendix 2. A majority of staff who responded felt that the set closures should not be retained.

**Proposal 8: We will deliver and assess the results of a Community Bridge Building (CBB) pilot to support individuals to increase their independence, further integrate into local communities and where appropriate access volunteering opportunities and paid employment. A group of individuals who are suitable for bridge building will be identified by care managers in consultation with service users and carers. Depending on the successful outcomes of the pilot the intention would be roll this service out.**

42. Consultees were asked whether they supported the idea of CBB in order to inform the decision as to whether the pilot should be rolled out permanently.



The surveys contained high levels of support for the proposal. The discussions with service users revealed support although some clients did not know about the service, or felt that their needs were met by their current day time activities. Young people in transition were positive about the general idea but would want to know more about the type of activity that would be available to them. The ability to attend work was seen as being particularly important to them.

43. Many people either stated that they were involved, or with something similar, or expressed support for the idea and the increased choice it would bring. Service users welcomed the chance to learn more skills and enter volunteering and work, and that it would benefit both clients and employers.
44. Comments from carers included the need to ensure that clients received appropriate support to access these activities, and that this option may not be suitable for all. Some also believed that this type of service was already provided, including through Rievaulx.

**Proposal 9: We will actively work with the Council's partners to encourage the development of community business opportunities for service users. This would mean the Council providing advice and assistance when opportunities arise.**

45. Both surveys, and discussions with service users, reported a high level of support for further work in this area. This was again seen as an area that could lead to skill development, and a possible route into work. Comments in the service user response highlighted how opportunities could be explored to involve service users in Stockton market and retail outlets, and craft fairs, exhibitions and other public places. Young people in discussion felt that this would increase the opportunities for them to work, and they would also like to develop their own businesses.
46. The carer responses outlined a range of suggestions as to who could be involved in this and how it could be taken forward including: partner organisations, local businesses, helping with children, community radio, sale of crafts and produce, and increasing advertising opportunities, establishing a forum to take this forward, and that it could be included in training provided by SBC or other providers.

#### **Proposals in relation to residential care**

**Proposal 10: As a general principle we propose to enable more people to live in more independent, supported living, and to reduce the use of residential care. Residential provision would usually be recommended if independent living would not meet assessed need or if the independent living scheme would not provide value for money.**

47. Answers to the surveys and discussion with service users revealed support for this general principle. Service users in discussion were keen to make clear that

people would need support and skills to enable them to live independently (for example travel training and cooking skills). Information provided as part of this process must be understandable to enable clear choices to be made. When discussing the issue, young people felt that being able to move into their own property, with support if needed, would feel like a natural progression for them.

48. There was general support for the idea of increasing opportunities for independence that would come from supported living schemes. A range of comments were made in the surveys including: ensure that individual needs continue to be met, and that it may not be a suitable option for all, prefer to avoid moving clients who are settled in accommodation, there should be an element of choice, and that there must be risk assessments of the placement to ensure clients remain safe in the community.
49. There was some concern that the term 'independent living' can seem very daunting, and that it must be made clear that appropriate support will be in place for clients that require it.

**Proposal 11: For those whose assessed needs are still best met through residential care, we aim to increase the range of 'in- borough' residential provision to help people stay in the borough, and reduce the use of out of Borough placements.**

50. This proposal received a widely positive response and service users in particular highlighted that clients would benefit from being closer to friends and family.
51. Most comments reflected the need to ensure that there was choice for clients within the process. A few comments highlighted that service users and carers were happy with current arrangements and did not want to move. This may also reflect their response to Proposal 12.

**Proposal 12: Where appropriate and following reviews, service users in out of Borough residential care will be encourage and supported to return to in-Borough residential care.**

52. This received a positive response on the surveys and in discussion with service users, who were keen to stress that there must be enough provision in the Borough to enable this to happen, and those returning must have a range of options to move to in the Borough where possible. It was also stated that people who have been away for a long time must not be forced to return. Some survey responses indicated that clients were settled in their current accommodation.

53. The idea of a buddy system to help settle someone who was being re-introduced to the Stockton area was again mentioned by the service users in discussion.
54. A range of comments were received in response to the carer survey. Respondents thought that the quality of care should be as good if not better in the Borough compared to out of Borough. Some carers were keen to ensure that clients in settled accommodation were not uprooted just to fulfil a 'new policy', and clients' friendship groups and wishes needed to be respected. It was also pointed out that the most appropriate care for a particular client may only be found elsewhere.

### **Proposals in relation to housing options and supported living**

**Proposal 13: In order to increase the opportunities for supported living, the principle is to increase the choice and range of affordable homes for supported living, with appropriate care and support.**

55. This proposal attracted very high levels of agreement across both surveys, and did not lead to any disagreement when discussed with service users.
56. Service users in discussion welcomed the opportunity to have some choice over where they may live, and potentially with their friends, and felt it would be helpful to visit different options before making a choice. Comments in the survey referenced the need to ensure there is a choice of good quality options, and that homes must be affordable.
57. There were many comments to this proposal in the carer survey. These included ensuring that there was more choice and information, effective life skills training in place, examples of good practice, the different options that may be explored, the potential to reduce the need for respite care, better working with Choice Based Lettings and Registered Providers of social housing, and making sure that appropriate oversight and quality assurance was in place. Other comments included recognition that it may be tried for clients but not prove to be suitable.

**Proposal 14: We propose to encourage and support those in residential care who are ready to move into supported living.**

58. This proposal received support across the surveys and in discussion with service users, although with a smaller margin. Clients both in the survey and in discussion often mentioned that people should not be moved to places where they do not want to go, and many are settled. The discussion groups

welcomed the opportunity to 'do things for yourself' for those that wanted to move to supported living, and in the survey there were suggestions including safe entry systems for homes.

59. Similar comments were made in the carer survey response as to proposal 13, with emphasis in ensuring that the planning for such arrangements is client centred. Some also felt that it may lead to 'over-confidence in some clients.
60. A number of comments were received across the types of responses that stressed the need to ensure that service users in supported schemes were compatible and that the placement generally is suitable for individual clients. Young people discussed the desire to be able to choose who they lived with, and also that they would like to have the opportunity to develop important skills first. For the majority of young people in the group, the opportunity to live more independently was an aspiration for them.
61. Some carers stated that the service user they cared for was ready for supported living but was on a waiting list, and it was recognised that there needed to be more work to match supply and demand.

### **Proposals in relation to short breaks and respite services**

**Proposal 15: We propose to increase capacity in respite care to meet current unmet need whilst making efficiency savings. In the short term this will mean an additional 3 beds at Lanark Close.**

62. This proposal attracted very high levels of agreement across both surveys. Service users when discussing the issue welcomed this, stated that they enjoyed attending Lanark, and that it may enable them to have a wider choice of dates, as long as it did not get expensive to attend.
63. There were a number of positive responses in relation to this proposal, and many commented on the need to increase respite provision – some thought that it needed more than 3 beds - and also the need to increase provision that is available at short notice. It was noted that the venue is safe and that the care was of a good standard.
64. Comments from those who disagreed with proposals were centred around how this would be achieved and any effect on other services. For a few people it was felt that Lanark could not meet their needs. Some comments were made about the inflexibility of booking arrangements, and shift patterns and their impact on care and service users' ability to attend activities.

**Proposal 16: We propose to develop a menu of more varied short break options that will either be commissioned by the Council or accessible via use of personal budgets.**

65. This proposal generated the highest levels of net agreement across both surveys, and was also popular with service users in discussion. Service users when discussing the issue commented that it would be good to have change in venue, and that also it would be good to have more variety of activities when attending respite care, potentially including group breaks.
66. More detail provided in the surveys referred to the need to increase choice, availability, options including 'foster care' and care for the over 65s, and services for those with autism.
67. A personal example of positive alternatives to traditional respite care was provided in the public engagement sessions.

**Proposal 17: We propose to work more closely with the NHS in order to explore providing a joint respite facility for those with more complex health and social care needs.**

68. This proposal also attracted high levels of support in the survey. When discussing the issue services users either did not have experience of such respite care but could see that joint services needed to work well, or were happy with the current provision if they were aware of it.
69. The feedback contained in the survey responses highlighted a number of issues, including the pressure under which carers were under, the particular needs of those with complex conditions, the impact of other health conditions, the need to expand Asygarth (respite facility provided by TEWV NHS Foundation Trust), the need to ensure close working arrangements, and also a desire that this does not affect the quality of existing services or create duplication.

**Proposals relating to the development of Autism services**

**Proposal 18: We propose to increase the range of services in Stockton Borough**

70. Both the surveys revealed high levels of support for this. The majority of clients when discussing the issue felt that although they did not all have experience of autism, it would be good to provide more services for those that did. In the client survey it was recognised that support for both high and low needs was needed, and it was also felt that support would be needed for when parents are no longer able to provide care.

71. The carer survey provided a wide range of suggestions for developing autism services. Respondents wanted to see appropriate supported living, day services, respite/short breaks, residential, activities linked to therapeutic use of animals, sport and leisure, sensory techniques, and better information and support for carers. The importance of staff awareness and training was mentioned, as was dedicated teams. The desire for services to be developed locally in the Borough was expressed several times - 'local services are desperately needed'.
72. At the engagement events there were questions about potential providers, and it was queried as to whether the funds were available.

### **Community Transport**

73. The Council is also reviewing the community transport services as part of a separate review. As many people using learning disability services use community transport, both surveys asked for opinions on the current service, at section 19 of the surveys. These are outlined at the end of Appendix 2, and the comments will be included as part of that review as they relate to learning disability services.
74. Overall respondents were positive about the transport provided and it was a necessary part of client care, however some felt that the journeys were too long, and other suggestions were made to improve the service.

### **General comments**

75. A number of additional comments were made during the review:
- Some respondents commented that they welcomed that the broad thrust of the proposals as a whole was about improving choice and local services;
  - Some respondents reported that they agreed with the proposals in principle but would wish to know more about how they would impact on individuals. Also some felt that changes to services may impact on client behaviour with the knock-on effect on carers and providers. The importance of routine for some clients was mentioned several times;
  - A general need for better information about the range and appropriateness of local services, particularly in relation to the usage or personal budgets. Some people also felt that the responsibility of handling personal budgets was too much and that the money allocated did not always match what they thought was needed;
  - Concerns were stated in relation to the general impact of changes to the welfare system, and other service developments that affect this client group, for example changes to adult education courses;
  - A query was raised in relation to the timescale and whether any changes would be immediate following Cabinet in November, and some queried the affordability of proposed changes;

- The supporting role of carers was emphasised several times.
- Discussion at the BME focus group outlined how some in the community were not aware or did not feel that residential and respite settings could respond to their cultural needs. There was more of an expectation that families would look after older people and those with disabilities in the home, however this was becoming more difficult due to the increasing pressure on all members of a family to work, and the high level of some needs.

### **Comments on the consultation**

- Some respondents did not feel that they had enough information to answer a question fully (for example, they needed more detail on the type of community venues that could be used more for day time activities). A definition of complex needs was requested. Some felt that the accessible version of the survey was not accessible enough;
- Some comments appear counter-intuitive in that when analysing them, where respondents have indicated that they disagree with a proposal, there is actually some agreement within the comments and it is likely that the wording/rationale behind a proposal was not understandable in some cases (for example in relation to reducing the amount of day care provided out of Borough, proposal 5).
- The information provided by CIC, and also in some consultation survey returns, made clear that some carers of those at Rievaulx did not believe that the results of the facilitated consultation session with service users at the centre should be considered in this report. They were unhappy that parents were not involved and that there was not enough support given to clients to enable them to exercise their choice on the various proposals.  
**Review team response:** We acknowledge the views of carers however the Council is under an obligation to consult directly with service users. The purpose of engaging an independent advocacy organisation was to assist service users in expressing their views.
- Some felt that service users would 'aim to please' during discussion and provide answers that they thought were required.
- A couple of comments stated that decisions had already been made and the consultation was tokenistic.

**Response provided to the phase 2 consultation co-ordinated and submitted by CIC (providers of Rievaulx)**

**Rievaulx Resource Centre Consultation**

The following report contains information collated via 4 consultation meetings held between CIC, parents of students who attend the Rievaulx resource centre and Stockton Borough council representatives.

The purpose of the consultation meetings was to gather people's views and ideas about the on-going EIT review (Efficiency, Improvement and transformation) being conducted by Stockton Borough council of Learning Disabilities services which will affect the Rievaulx resource centre in future years.

The council will be gathering views during this period and preparing a report to go the council cabinet in Oct/Nov of this year where a decision will be made about the day services provision within Stockton.

***Parents of the students who attend the Rievaulx resource centre feel very strongly that their views are read by people who will be making those decisions and request that this report is appendices to the main report presented to cabinet members and referenced within the body of the report.***

All of the consultation groups were asked the same questions and the following are their responses.

**Question 1 – What is currently working with your service?**

- There is a variety of Activities
- Flexibility of sessions – if a person does not like something they can move to another group or take time out and return. The building base makes this successful. Being out in the community would mean some people would be excluded from experiencing some things because of the behaviours/ disability.
- The Rievaulx provides great community projects and external sessions.
- Communication and the service have improved over the past 2 years.
- The students and families feel a real sense of community/friendships within the service. People have friendships from childhood etc. This is really important. Students have a good peer support mechanism, which allows them to be comfortable and be themselves. People can have a bad day and this will be supported and people will be respected as who they are.
- Some people who access the service feel so safe they communicate and interact more than in any other part of their life.
- The Rievaulx provides people with a social life and friendships.
- The times of the service are ideal for people who have routines. Change to this would upset people.



- The entire group of parents feel the students choose to come to the Rievaulx and enjoy the service. (numerous people have tried elsewhere but like the Rievaulx)
- The building provides people with security – for example when the weather is poor people still will have a safe place to attend. Versus a hub type of service where not everyone would potentially have a secure place due to the small building/ environment (parents have experience/knowledge of this from other carers)
- Knowing the student is at the service and safe provides parents with peace of mind.
- Parents were concerned that people will be placed together based on need (all high support needs to Allensway) Parents felt this was very institutional and that it would mean people would not get social interaction and stimulation from people with a range of needs – that they would be excluded.
- Parents feel that people who attend the centre are fully integrated already within the community of Billingham through the regular access they have to the community.

### **Question 2 – What is not currently working?**

- Some parents (mainly those whose relative lives in residential care) do not get regular feedback on what their relative is doing at the service.
- Some parents felt that Rievaulx staff should attend CPA/reviews. At present Rievaulx staffs do not always get invited.
- The timetable cannot always be personalised because of resources.
- Some students do not get on and this needs to be thought of in the session planning and breaks planning to ensure it is better managed.
- The impression of the service passed on in the last council report was negative. Parents would like to see all the positive achievements and impressions passed onto council members next time.
- Transport needs to be more flexible if the modernisation includes more out of hours and weekend activities.

### **Question 3- What ideas do you have around how the building at the Rievaulx centre can be used more innovatively?**

- Make sessions more individual – use all of the building including the flat friends of Rievaulx paid to be built. This will increase people's independent living skills.
- Provide more outside activities to enable the centre to have more spaces for new people. But have the base of the Rievaulx as a 'fall back' for if a person is having a bad day or the weather means we have to abandon sessions.
- Make some of the projects social enterprises – such as the coffee shop – include opening the area to the general public.
- Make use of the actual site more – develop the gardens, develop the sensory rooms. Friends of Rievaulx will be happy to support this in the future as they have in the past.

- Could Stockton offer CIC a ‘peppercorn rent’ enabling the building to be modernised etc.

#### **Question 4 – What ideas do you have for sessions and new things to do?**

- More Choice and flexibility needs to be built into the session plans.
- Support people to become volunteer’s at places, also promote using volunteers/parents/family members to facilitate sessions.
- Make some of the great session ideas bigger – for example drama at a local theatre and support it to do public shows. Support the gardening project to become its own enterprise. Support the development of a shop to sell produce students may make and exhibit their art works.
- Parents feel that they would need a personalised meeting to discuss the programme for their relative based on likes and dislikes. People feel that some students would not have the motivation to keep with a long term group and not like it. At present the way the service runs people can have a ‘get out’ and choose to leave the group. This would be important to have in any new service design.
- Look at having sessions around educating people on their rights and how to keep safe – such as hate crime, safeguarding.
- Work on projects with statutory services – such as police and ambulance.
- Have more focus on people developing their skills – eg drama.
- Look to facilitating holidays for people.

#### **Question 5 – What would you like to see happen at the service?**

- Stay as a day service in the building, offer more choice and flexibility.
- Continue to facilitate relationships and sense of community people feel which makes people feel safe and allow them to be themselves.
- People building new skills.

#### **Question 6 – How can we build into the programme flexibility and choice for sessions, this includes weekends and evenings?**

- Be mindful of people’s routines and how change can affect people both at day services and at home.
- Plan with individuals to make it right for them and their family.
- Understand that the service provide parents with a short break and peace of mind their family member is safe – changing things where transport is not offered, late nights and session abandonment because of weather or behaviours – this will provide less of a short break and more stress due to uncertainty. (families have experience or knowledge of this happening)

#### **Question 7 – What resources are available in the Stockton and Billingham area that you know people would like to access?**

- A base is needed that provides options, accessibility and safety – there is no building base (Hub) that meets this requirement in the Billingham area.
- There were numerous leisure facilities such as the forum identified.
- Options such as the Parkside building and five lamps community centre, daisy chain

- Parents again discussed the issues of transport to and from venues – they would still need transport to be efficient and trustworthy. Parents have experience and knowledge of situations where parents are responsible for the transport and this will impact on the family's short break and or working life. Each option needs to meet each family's needs.

*It is important to note CIC have struggled to find a suitable alternative to the Rievaulx as a Hub within Billingham that provides accessibility and space to ensure people are safe and secure*

**Question 8- How do you feel we can consult with students in the future to support them to direct their services more and be in control?**

- This needs to be completed for individuals on an individual basis. CIC needs to meet with people and provide them with an offer so they can choose with their family and key worker. Each person will need the information presenting differently to help them make a choice and they will need time to think about it properly.
- Continuing health care funding may need to be utilised if a session meets a person's health need.
- People may need support with welfare rights if vocational support services are chosen.
- Parents were concerned that people who can communicate are listened to and those with more complex needs are not.
- **Parents asked that the council's consultation with students is not used.** The session that was observed involved people placing stickers next to their choice – nobody facilitated people understanding the choice or the impact of the choice. Therefore the results are not a true reflection of people's real choices.

Notes compiled by - Caroline Bairstow, Assistant Director, CIC.

## **Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

See separate Appendix

