

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....24th May 2018

1. Title of Item/Report

Autism Day Service at Ware Street, Stockton-on-Tees

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the service delivered to adults with autism and learning disability at Ware Street Resource Centre, and the plans being implemented to develop this service for the future.

In 2012, Stockton on Tees Borough Council (the Council) completed a programme of service reviews with the aim of identifying financial savings, innovative ideas for service delivery and new ways of working to support adults with a learning disability. The final report included a recommendation to explore the commissioning of local autism provision within the Borough; this needed to take into account value for money and the review recommendations were approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 10 January 2013.

A day opportunities service for adults with autism was established, utilising the existing Council building at Ware Street and commissioning a qualified and competent provider off the Tees-wide Autism Framework called Education and Services for People with Autism.

Ware Street was an unutilised two storey building with a day unit and two residential wings on the ground floor and two on the first floor (it was previously, a Council owned and run care home for adults with mental health issues).

ESPA was successful in supporting 5 clients with autism in the community through this local arrangement. Initially established as a temporary "pilot" to assess the potential of a local service to support young adults making the transition to adulthood (there was no local provision in Stockton on Tees at this time). It was agreed at that time to continue to extend the contract (31st March 2017) and allow additional market engagement and competitive dialogue to be undertaken by the Council and partners in health to review opportunities for further locally commissioned services to be developed (day opportunities, short breaks

and residential care).

This was within context of the wider community based day options delivered in-house through Allensway and Stockton Business Centre, respite through Lanark and additional specialist commissioned provision, including Tees Alive.

This resulted in the development of a model of day opportunities only (respite and residential was not progressed) for which the Council had commissioned ESPA to provide the service through a potential five year contract. Since this point, however, the Council had continued to look at the opportunities that the service at Ware Street could offer people with autism, and was exploring the opportunity to develop the top floor (day opportunities was only delivered in the ground floor) to support with respite care.

There were 11 people with autism receiving day opportunities services in Ware Street. This increase had taken place over 18 months, from the original 5 people with autism, and had exceeded expected demand.

In addition, 5 young adults had been identified by care managers who required this level of autism specific services and one adult placed out of area.

The initial day service at Ware Street utilised the day service element of the site, along with an office and kitchen in the residential ground floor wing. This was increased to allow for the use of one of the bedrooms and bathrooms, as required, to support clients with personal care needs and a small lounge, to help accommodate the additional clients.

Overall, however, the building was in a relatively poor state of décor throughout and was not appropriate for clients with autism in its current configuration. Specifically, there was a lack of toilet facilities, access was unsuitable, the site had been subject to vandalism and there was a lack of appropriate quiet areas and areas to provide personal care.

As part of the review, in order to meet the identified demand (taking the capacity to approximately 20 clients) and developing the environment to offer flexible services at weekends and evenings, a refurbishment plan was developed and agreed to allow the Council to continue to work in partnership with a regulated provider to deliver the day opportunities provision.

The initial designs had been completed, and a Steering Group had been established to manage the implementation of the physical redevelopment of the Ware Street site and the relocation to and management of the

service at the alternative site at Tithebarn House, High Newham Road, Hardwick for existing clients, whilst the building work was progressing.

The timeline for the development was detailed within the report. Work was expected to commence in July and completed in January 2019.

Running concurrently with the development work, the Council had been communicating and supporting the transition of service users into the temporary accommodation. A development day had been arranged for 11 April 2018 which would be followed by individual meetings with service users and families to ensure their individual needs and expectations were met. ESPA had developed transitions plans with key professionals in the Council and health to ensure this process was person centred and was able to meet individual needs.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The work completed to date be acknowledged.
2. Future development of services for people with autism be approved.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To provide an overview of the service delivered to adults with autism and learning disability at Ware Street Resource Centre, and the plans being implemented to develop this service for the future.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 4 June 2018.

Proper Officer  
29 May 2018