

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**24 June 2021**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION**

**DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT SERVICES UPDATE**

**SUMMARY**

The report is to inform Cabinet that the Council is bringing two services in-house for further development:

- **The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service**, including Minor Adaptation, Handyperson and Home Repairs/Improvement related Advice & Information
- **The Shared Lives Service**: carers will share their home and family life with the person receiving support

Evidence shows that the Carers Service, which was previously brought in house, has had an exceptional impact in supporting informal carers. We want to have a similar positive effect on people's lives through the HIA and Shared Lives services.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. For Cabinet to support the development of delivering both services in-house
2. For Cabinet to note the HIA service is being brought in-house, and the HVE team will deliver this service from 1 July

**DETAIL**

3. In 2018/19, the carers service was brought in-house following a comprehensive service review and delivery options appraisal based on population needs, service demands, cost-efficiency, and service quality. The same rigorous process has been followed when considering future options for the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service and the Shared Lives Service.
4. The Council's approach to service reviews has always been a pragmatic exercise considering new forms of service delivery in the search for improved quality and cost-efficiency. Part of this due diligence for all services is to consider, based on an assessment of available evidence, whether the best interests of people receiving the services and the Council are met by developing the services in-house.
5. In-house services have the potential to lever a range of benefits to the Council, including lower costs, a stronger public service ethos, a longer time horizon, greater scope for coordination and integration of services, economies of scale, greater accountability and transparency, and better management of risk. Further, it provides an opportunity to work closely with the operational teams and have the flexibility to develop the services based on best practice and the needs in the borough.
6. The Stockton Carers' Service was brought in-house in 2018 with an annual budget of £280,466. The Carers' Service has demonstrated a positive impact in supporting informal

carers, and it continues to develop as a service and engage carers in the borough. As a result, the service has gone from strength to strength to meet the Council's standards and align with Council priorities. Some of the key outcomes are identified below:

- It has grown from 100 people on the Carers Register when provided by an external provider to over 1800 people at present. In addition, each carer has completed the statutory carer assessment and support plan.
  - The in-house service introduced a very popular carer emergency card to ensure the carers have a robust contingency plan in place in case of an accident or emergency. The plan will enable carers to feel reassured about their loved ones and the arrangement. Over 1000 people have taken the opportunity to apply and supported by this service.
  - The service has increased the Time Out Support to 75 hours per week to enable carers to access up to 8 hours of free respite support per month from their caring role.
  - Many carers have told us that they found the service had a positive impact on them. They feel the Council is committed to supporting informal carers and appreciate the close links with other Teams within the Council.
7. Both the Home Improvement Agency and the Shared Lives service are being brought in-house. The HIA service will be provided by the HVE team from 1 July 2021. The Shared Lives service will be managed alongside our existing Carers Service, and following further discussions with the current provider, we anticipate completing the service transfer in September 2021.
8. We want to have a similar positive impact on people's lives through both services as we have with the carers' service. The brief information below outlines the rationale and benefit of bringing the services in-house.

### **Home Improvement Agency (HIA)**

9. The purpose of the service is to provide early intervention and prevention for vulnerable people to maintain their independence and to remain in their own home. Also to support health and wellbeing to prevent the need for longer term care and support.
10. The HIA service has an annual budget of £370,000. The service will consist of (a) *Minor Adaptations*, including Sensory Loss equipment fitting; (b) *Handyperson services* focusing on falls prevention and enabling independent living; and (c) *Home Improvement Related Advice Improvement and Support Service*, including related funding/grant application support.
11. The Council always works closely with providers to ensure they provide excellent services to the residents of the borough. Throughout the contract period of the HIA service, it has been difficult for the Council to gain oversight of the service performance. The Council has also given substantial advice and support throughout the contract period regarding service improvement.
12. A decision was taken in 2021 not to renew the contract or retender and instead to bring the service in-house. It will give the Council more flexibility in developing and improving the service based on best practice and ensuring the service meets the Council's standards. Importantly, the Council will have oversight of service performance and will ensure future development is in line with Council priorities and population needs.
13. The HIA service will be provided by the SBC Community Service, Heating Ventilation and Electrical (HVE) Team from 1 July 2021. The HVE team has demonstrated excellent service quality and partnership through the Major Adaptation service, which is already provided in-house. Their approach to service development and improvement is driven by focusing on customers' needs to ensure the Council has an excellent reputation for

ensuring people are satisfied with the work and service provided. Service satisfaction is an essential element for HIA service because of the nature of the work they provide.

14. Bringing the HIA service in-house gives opportunities to work closely with Community Services, Adults and Health and Housing (Facilities Disabilities Grant) to enable the service to focus on strategic developments and improvement in the future.
15. We have set up a steering group to focus on service development and improvement. The HVE team will collect feedback from people receiving the service on service satisfaction and areas of improvement to ensure the Council provides an excellent service.

### **Shared Lives Service**

16. Shared Lives (SL) Service is a CQC regulated form of social care (personal care). The current annual budget is £180,000. An adult who needs support and accommodation moves in with an approved Shared Lives carer after being matched for compatibility. Together, they share family and community life. Although the SL Carers are paid for their support, the ethos is that the person receiving support becomes part of the family. The SL carer's home is the base of the service.
17. The Council has appraised the SL service delivery options and identified that the best long-term option for the Council is to deliver the service itself in order to meet the demand for the service.
18. The service will be placed with the Carers Service. The advantage of putting the SL service with the Carers Service is that the carers' service is already in contact with carers from all walks of life. Carers who are compassionate and have the skills and experience to support someone who requires personal care. Carers often say they would like to help others live a happy and meaningful life which may mean that carers already known to the Council would be keen to become Shared Lives Carers.
19. Potential Shared Lives carers will provide access to appropriate training and support to ensure people new to Shared Lives understand the regulations and the commitment required.
20. Shared Lives will give the person receiving support the feeling that they live within a family. See the case study below as an example.

#### **Case Study**

Client A was a young lady with a learning disability and resided in a children's residential care home. As part of the transitions into adult services, Client A was assessed to establish whether a Shared Lives placement would be suitable to meet her needs once she turned 18 years of age. Client A was shown a number of services, but she chose to reside with her current shared lives carers in a 3 storey house. She is independently mobile and does not require any aids or adaptations. She has lived successfully for the past 10 years with her shared lives carers.

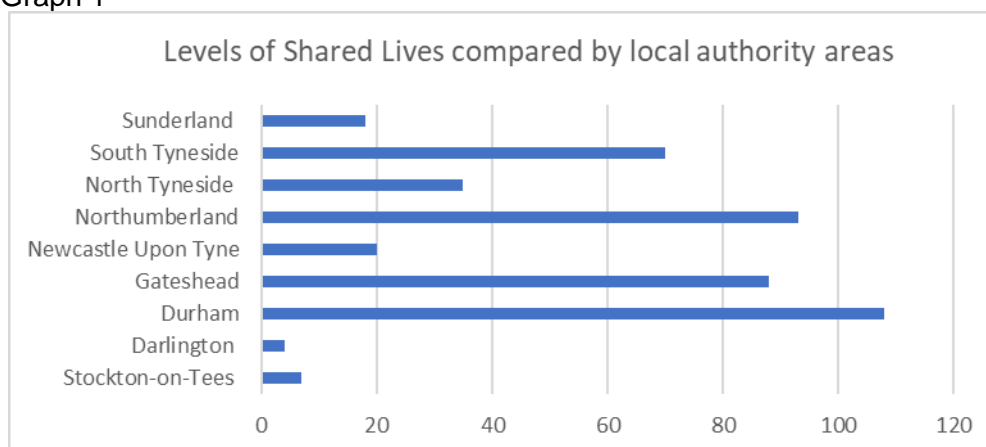
Client A has a very good quality of life and is happy with her routine and the support she receives. Client A enjoys spending time in her bedroom, using her iPad or organises her belongings into boxes. She continues to attend groups such as a walking group and is able to travel by taxi to Middlesbrough to her work placement. Client A loves the cinema and theatre, musicals and pop/tribute concerts, crafts etc. Client A likes lots of different music types, like Elton John and Take That, and her favourite band is "Years and Years".

Client A is supported by her shared lives carers to develop her independent living skills

such as personal care, cooking skills, purchasing items to cook and is supported with her finances, support with medical appointments etc. Since living in shared lives, client A has continued to keep in regular contact with her family, visiting once a week for tea. Her shared lives carers include her in all major celebrations, such as birthdays, Christmas, and other special events. She enjoys going on holidays with them each year, such as a trip to Florida and enjoying short breaks in a caravan.

21. SL can support people who need long term care and support, respite/short breaks and day support and is open to all people accessing our services, including older people, those with mental health, learning disability and physical disabilities. Stockton Council will develop the "offer" for SL in collaboration with ADASS and Shared Lives Plus to ensure we maximise the opportunity this service can offer. Across the North East, a number of councils have well-established SL models and are delivering a number of placements. Graph 1 below has shown the difference between areas, and Stockton has a potential demand for continued development.
22. Although we have not defined specific targets for the number of SL arrangements we would expect to put in place in the next 5 years, an assessment of the Stockton on Tees market with Shared Lives Plus had indicated we could achieve up to 50 placements over that period.

Graph 1



23. To summarise, bringing the HIA and Shared Lives services in-house will enable the Council to support more people and allow the Council to continue developing and improving the services alongside other teams within the Council.

## COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

24. A community impact assessment is completed as part of the decision-making process to ensure the impact on all elements of the population is understood.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

25. The Home Improvement Agency service has an annual budget of £370,000. The Shared Lives service has an annual budget of £180,000. Both budgets are sufficient for the services to be provided. Budgets will be monitored alongside service development opportunities.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

26. Bringing services in-house is required to be considered within the Council. It is specifically set out in paragraph 3.258(b) of the Council's own Contract Procedure Rules. The rule requires the Council - as a prerequisite to any external procurement exercise - to ensure that consideration is given, in the first instance, to any in-house provision in circumstances where current/future service models and options for delivery are being explored.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

27. The decision to bring the services in-house is considered low risk. Both services have gone through a comprehensive service review and options appraisal to support the decision to bring in-house.

## COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

28. The recommendation made in this report will support the council plan and the priorities. Both services aim to enable the vulnerable people in need of support to maintain their independence to live a fulfilling, meaningful life and support their health and wellbeing.

## CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

29. There are no implications for children and young adults due to the recommendations made in this report. However, the Shared Lives service will support the transition from children to adult services focusing on children with learning disabilities currently looked after by foster carers.

## CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

30. The services have consulted the key partners during the service review and development to ensure the in-house service reflects the needs of the population.
31. Consulting people receiving the service will be ongoing and essential for service improvement and development once it has been brought in-house.

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Education related?

No

Background Papers

None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

The services are not ward specific.

Property

None