

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 MARCH 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

ADVOCACY SERVICES – ADULT SOCIAL CARE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work undertaken to date in developing the provision of Independent Professional Advocacy services, which is being undertaken in response to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Council's ongoing remodelling plans.
- 1.2 To introduce and highlight progress of the Advocacy Pilot Scheme being undertaken over the next 12 months, which will be used to inform the development and implementation of a new advocacy service model from 2018/19, attached at **Appendix 1**.

2.0 Connection to Corporate Plan

- 2.1 This report links to the following improvement priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- Helping people to be more self-reliant;
- Smarter use of resources.

Plus the following background documents:

- Adult Social Care Commissioning Plan 2010 – 2020: Living Independently in Bridgend in the 21st Century;
- The Remodelling Adult Social Care Programme;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Section 181(2) of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 defines "advocacy services" as: services which provide assistance (by way of representation or otherwise) to persons for purposes relating to their care and support. Part 10 of the 2014 Act sets out the requirements for local authorities in relation to advocacy, which are to:
 - a. Ensure that access to advocacy services and support is available to enable individuals to engage and participate when local authorities are exercising their statutory duties in relation to them; and
 - b. To arrange an independent professional advocate to facilitate the involvement of individuals in certain circumstances.

- 3.2 An advocate is defined as an ‘appropriate individual’ who can speak on behalf of someone who is facing barriers to communicating or understanding, weighing-up, or deciding on information related to services that they receive. Advocacy services come in a variety of forms, and range from informal, peer and voluntary advocacy through to the provision of paid and professional advocates.
- 3.3 Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) is not meant to replace other forms of representation - it is a final option where other appropriate individuals, including family, friends and peers are not able to provide a voice for an individual. However, local authorities must arrange for the provision of an independent professional advocate when a person can only overcome barriers to participate fully in the assessment, care and support planning, review and safeguarding processes with assistance from an appropriate individual, but there is no appropriate individual available.
- 3.4 The council currently supports independent professional advocacy for adults with learning disabilities through a Third Sector contract with People First, who deliver support to people so that they may be empowered to have a voice and live more independently with lesser reliance on those around them for support. As well as providing independent professional advocacy, their work also helps support individuals to gain confidence and acquire self-advocacy skills, which helps promote person-centeredness in how services are delivered. Activities undertaken by People First as part of this contract includes:
- Independent Professional Advocacy service;
 - Coordinating ‘Having a Say’ (empowerment) group meetings;
 - Facilitating and attending consultation events – seeking views of individuals;
 - Participation at events with national bodies;
 - Delivery of accredited courses, where individuals obtain certificates of learning;
 - Facilitating Autism/Disability awareness sessions with various organisations;
 - Completing person-centred plans in partnership with Learning Disability providers
- 3.5 The council also meets its existing statutory requirements for independent advocacy under the Mental Health Act and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- 3.6 A range of other informal, community-based and non-statutory advocacy services for adults in Bridgend are provided independently as part of wider SLA agreements for other service provision by Third Sector providers to different client groups, including sensory impairment, dementia, and those who have had a stroke.
- 3.7 In recognition of the new duties for local authorities, Welsh Government has funded the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme (GTAP) to support local authorities with the commissioning of IPA services across Wales. Bridgend has secured the support of GTAP to assist in assessing levels of service demand, to help with stakeholder engagement, and to support the local work to develop a sustainable service model.

4.0 Current Situation

- 4.1 The Council has reviewed the range and level of commissioned advocacy services, including informal, peer and independent professional advocates. Consultation has also been undertaken with stakeholders in Bridgend including providers of

advocacy services along with other representative bodies including BAVO (including the Community Voice project), Bridgend Carers Centre, Community Health Council and other third sector services that provide peer or informal representation for a wide range of client groups. This engagement, which included individual discussions as well as a stakeholder workshop, has identified that whilst some of the most vulnerable people within services are able to access an IPA, there is a limited level of co-ordination in ensuring that everyone who is eligible for social services is able to access an IPA service, as defined under the new legislation.

- 4.2 The Golden Thread Advocacy Programme has supported BCBC since the summer of 2016 in order to support the commissioning process and engage local stakeholders, with the purpose of developing a robust and fully compliant service model.
- 4.3 A stakeholder workshop was facilitated by GTAP in October 2016 with representation from advocacy providers, as well as other services that offer representation and support to individuals and groups in the local community. This was undertaken in line with the new statutory duties for 'co-producing' service models with providers, service users and other stakeholders.
- 4.4 At the workshop, stakeholders helped to co-produce a 'Hub & Spoke' service model, which will be tested through a 12 month Pilot Scheme. The 'Hub' will provide information directly to the public and service users who make contact, signposting to a variety of community-based support services in support of the preventative approach, and will also make referrals to formal IPA services, as required. Collectively, the range of independent external services (formal and informal) will act as the 'spokes'. The Hub & Spoke model should allow for information, signposting and referral to all types of advocacy service, to ensure that people in Bridgend get the right service at the right time. In keeping with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, this supports a preventative approach in reducing escalation of needs and supporting early resolutions through access to the most appropriate type of support.
- 4.5 In moving forward, work being undertaken to further develop a statutory advocacy service response includes:
 - a. Development of an Advocacy Directory for Bridgend, to include all levels of advocacy available, which includes IPA. This will be a feature of the Information, Advice & Assistance service and will help those involved in the referral process.
 - b. Maintaining support for existing providers of advocacy including informal community support services and more formal peer/professional advocacy for learning disabilities and maintaining referrals into IMCA/IMHA as required.
 - c. Development of a Pilot Scheme of complimentary IPA services through working relationships with IPA providers with ability to provide:
 - IPA1: an Advocacy Information Hub (signposting, referral and information),
 - IPA2: a specialist IPA service based on specialised client support and communication needs, and

- IPA3: a fully accessible IPA service to ensure that as many people as possible are able to access an IPA as needed.

- 4.6 Through commissioning three specific Pilot Services within a co-ordinated Scheme, BCBC aims to ensure appropriate specialist services, and a sufficient pool of informal and professional advocates. This Pilot Scheme aims to reduce unnecessary escalation of needs, based on making sure that a service user's voice is heard and understood in finding early interventions, resolutions and service solutions to care and support requirements.
- 4.7 Invitations to quote for the Pilot Services were issued in December 2016. Three independent providers submitted bids in January 2017, and an evaluation panel has met to agree the successful tenders for each element of the Pilot Scheme, and it is planned to commence the Pilot Scheme in March/April 2017.
- 4.8 A Steering Group will be convened to oversee the Pilot Scheme, and to provide independent evaluation to help inform the development of a longer-term service model. Agreement to participate in the Steering Group has been given by the regional GTAP Development Officer, from Dr Mark Llewellyn (Deputy Director of the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care at the University of South Wales - an academic expert advisor on advocacy), as well as including representation from the service providers of the Pilot Schemes, and pertinent council officers.
- 4.9 Work to review, maintain and further develop advocacy services will be undertaken collectively by the Steering Group in their appraisal and analysis of the Bridgend IPA Pilot Scheme during 2017/18. This is especially important in light of emerging legislation from the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, which identifies a proposed duty to make Independent Professional Advocacy a regulated service requiring registration and inspection with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and Social Care Wales (SCW).
- 4.10 The Steering Group will also help to develop an evidence base from further stakeholder engagement, including consultation with local citizens and service users, and baseline data of actual take-up of service during the 12 month period, which will lead to a well-informed, independent evaluation of the Pilot Scheme. This will be used to build a robust business case for shaping a longer-term co-production service model in Bridgend, and potentially across Western Bay.
- 4.11 It is anticipated that a cost-efficient Hub & Spoke IPA model (that also dovetails with the Information, Advice & Assistance service) will enable the Council to meet its duties for early intervention and preventative approaches, connecting to a wider network of community-based services and activities.

5.0 Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6.0 Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been carried out in February 2017. In consultation with the Equalities & Diversity Officer, it has been agreed that a further EIA screening will need to be undertaken at a later date, when the longer-

term model has been developed for advocacy services, which will have been informed by the findings of the 12 month IPA Pilot Scheme.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 A budget of £50,000 pressure funding was awarded in the MTFS 2016-17 to 2019-20 and this is being used to fund the three distinct elements of the IPA Pilot Scheme.
- 7.2 Through providing accurate and timely information, advice and assistance as a first stage of intervention, it is envisaged that the new service model for advocacy services (which will be informed by the Pilot Scheme) will help prevent escalation of needs, and therefore contribute towards achievement of budget reduction targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1 The Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the information contained in this report, and provide comment on the work undertaken to date and on the proposed next steps.

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9.0 Contact Officers

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10.0 Background documents

None