

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE - EQUALITIES

14 JANUARY 2016

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

SUPPORT IN BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUES.

1. Purpose of Report.

To provide Members with an update regarding the provision of mental health services to adults in the borough, the Mental Health Commissioning Plan and progress concerning the Dementia Strategy and Delivery plan.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

The report links to the following priorities in the Corporate Improvement plan and Strategic Equality Plan:

- Working together to help vulnerable people stay independent;
- Working together to tackle health issues and encourage healthy lifestyles;
- To implement better integrated health and social care services to support independence, choice, empowerment, dignity and respect;
- To improve physical and emotional wellbeing by promoting active lifestyles, participation and learning.

3. Background.

3.1 Cabinet Equalities Committee receives regular reports and presentations on topic areas relevant to their remit. Community representatives and officers from Bridgend County Borough Council present on relevant topics at meetings to achieve a broader overview of issues and wider engagement.

3.2 A report was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2014 which detailed arrangements and progress in developing mental health services in Bridgend County Borough. The Welsh Government's Mental Health Strategy "Together for Mental Health" and delivery plan recognized that effective implementation is dependent on robust partnership arrangements in the form of a Local Partnership Board (LPB). A Western Bay LPB is responsible for oversight of the implementation of the national strategy as well as monitoring delivery at local level. The Western Bay Joint Commitments Strategy is the key strategic document driving improvements in mental health across the Western Bay region. Bridgend has produced a Mental Health Commissioning and Delivery Plan and whilst this reflects the priorities in the national and regional strategy it also focuses on local priorities following robust consultation with service users and carers.

On April 22 2015, a report was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the draft Bridgend Dementia Strategy and Delivery Plan. Over the last year officers have been working with NHS colleagues to

develop this plan to identify and formulate priorities and objectives for dementia services. Over the last three months consultation has taken place with a wide range of stakeholders including third sector organizations, service users and carers, service providers and practitioners.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 The mental health project of the Western Bay Programme has become the mental health delivery group reporting to the LPB on progress on the “Joint Commitments Strategy”. Bridgend is represented on this group and contributes to a number of work streams which sit under the mental health project. Within Bridgend the mental health commissioning plan identifies the following priorities which reflect those identified by Western Bay:

- Collaborating with partner agencies across Western Bay to provide a seamless and consistent mental health service;
- Working with colleagues within and outside the Council to develop a range of accommodation options;
- Developing a planned approach and rationale for specialist placements;
- Supporting carers to continue in their caring role;
- Developing a single point of access for mental health services;
- Promoting person centered assessment and care planning;
- Improving provision for those in crisis;
- Providing early intervention and information;
- Maximising the potential of community resources to improve wellbeing.

4.2 Progress has been made in the following areas:

4.2.1 The Local Primary Mental Health Support Service (LPMHSS) continues to go from strength to strength. Customer service questionnaires have indicated that 90% of those who have received the service have regarded it as helpful and would recommend it to others. Comments from those who have used the service include; “It has helped me come off my medication and keep my job”, “My new interests will help me negotiate my blackest days”. With respect to how the service could be improved the Directorate received the following comment; “I would have liked the service for longer”. The service is also developing innovative approaches to respond to need such as mindfulness and stress control programmes. 104 people have attended drop in stress control sessions, 68 people have attended activity sessions and 56 people have attended anxiety and depression sessions. One service user who attended made the following comment “my life is so much better with these tools and I’m slowly on the road to recovery”. Another responded with “this is just the first step in my life of change”.

4.2.2 A single point of access (SPA) for GP referrals into secondary mental health services has been successfully piloted in Bridgend. This is currently being evaluated with a view to rolling out the scheme in Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea. Interviews are being undertaken with staff who operate the system and with General Practitioners who refer into the SPA The Bridgend scheme will be developed this year to include all referrals to secondary mental health services which will improve access for those who are most vulnerable.

4.2.3 A review of community mental health teams is currently being undertaken in order

to establish a new model of service. This review is in response to a regional review of mental health services commissioned by Western Bay which identified a number of recommendations such as; enhancing the single point of access, reviewing current models and improving crisis interventions. Visits are taking place to crisis units in other parts of the country which will help inform a future model.

- 4.2.4 An accommodation work stream has put in place a single procurement and brokerage process for high cost specialist mental health placements. Within Bridgend we have seen more cost effective placements as a result of adopting the process as well as better outcomes for individuals. A common policy and procedure for aftercare services (under s117 of the Mental Health Act 1983) has been agreed enabling consistency across the region. Recently the work stream has undertaken an accommodation needs mapping exercise. This data is being used in Bridgend to inform adult social care commissioning plans. It is also enabling us to collaborate with colleagues in communities to develop specific mental health housing projects such as increasing the provision of floating support and a specialist housing project for those with complex mental health issues.
- 4.2.5 Improving provision for those in crisis is a key objective in the mental health commissioning plan. Work is currently being undertaken with health colleagues to scope the development of a crisis service. This is in response to service user and carer feedback which has indicated that it is an area which needs improvement.
- 4.2.6 Engagement with service users and carers is improving. A 'Stronger in Partnership' group (SIP) brings together professionals, service users and carers across the Western Bay region. This ensures mental health plans are more responsive to need. An example of this is that carers had raised concerns about the sharing of information. A guidance document has been produced which will be promoted and circulated widely and training for staff on information sharing is ongoing.
- 4.2.7 The Time to Change Wales (TTCW) campaign is a Welsh Government initiative aimed at changing attitudes within the Welsh workforce in relation to mental health. TTCW aims to work with organizations to sign a pledge and develop action plans to create 'mentally healthy' workplaces where staff are actively encouraged to talk about mental health. It is also designed to raise awareness, understanding and tolerance of poor mental health. Bridgend will be signing this pledge as part of a Western Bay commitment in December 2015.
- 4.2.8 Addressing issues of stigma and discrimination is also a priority in the mental health commissioning plan. Training concerning mental health and wellbeing is being rolled out across the Council to raise awareness. An E learning package was launched across the Council in November 2015 to raise awareness of mental health; the different conditions and interventions and issues of stigma and discrimination.
- 4.2.9 A meeting has been held with head teachers to enable the Authority to raise awareness regarding young people and mental health and wellbeing in schools. This initiative also aims to help early identification of mental health concerns regarding young people and facilitate early intervention.
- 4.2.10 As part of the Western Bay collaborative the Authority has supported the development of an electronic library of on line self-help guides to offer information

and advice on a wide range of subjects including anxiety, dealing with bereavement and alcohol dependency. By the 5 November 2015 there had been 1624 visits to the electronic library across the region.

- 4.2.11 Supporting carers to continue in their caring role is a priority in the commissioning plan and a specific forum for carers who support people with mental health issues has been established. There have also been initiatives to support carers at work such as events to raise awareness and provide information as well as a Facebook page for council employees. The intention is to further promote this to encourage carers at work to share their experiences.
- 4.2.12 As part of the preparation for the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, a Local Area Coordinator has been appointed to focus on early intervention and signposting. 30 individuals with mental health issues had accessed the service by 5 November 2015. Individuals are being supported within their community networks to access wellbeing activities which is resulting in better outcomes for those individuals. One example is that a gentleman suffering from depression and anxiety was unable to work. He has since been referred into a woodworking project to regain confidence and share his skills with view to eventually returning to work.
- 4.2.13 There has been a comprehensive consultation and engagement exercise on the dementia strategy and delivery plan during the summer period. This has taken the form of focus groups throughout the borough and individuals have also been able to respond via the BCBC website. Approximately one hundred individuals attended the focus groups and, by 5 November 2015, nine people had completed the on line questionnaire. Early indications are that the priorities identified; improvements in service provision, diagnosis and timely intervention, access to information and training are correct although concern has been raised regarding the ability to deliver in a challenging financial context. Additional priorities identified were in relation to improving transport links, improved housing and environment, more preventive measures, information for carers and specific services for those who have a sensory impairment.
- 4.2.14 The Authority has been maximizing the potential of technology with respect to people with dementia. A system for monitoring individual movement (Just Checking) to confirm levels of support required is being piloted. Five Just checking kits are being used currently and positive feedback has been received to date. For one person with dementia who was at risk of falling frequently the system identified that the risks were exacerbated at night. As a result the bed was brought downstairs negating the need for a night sit and reassuring the family carers.
- 4.2.15 The North Community Network is progressing plans to have a dementia friendly community. This is a city, town or village where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported. In a dementia friendly community people will be aware of and understand dementia and people with dementia will feel included and involved. Examples include awareness raising among staff working in shops, libraries, public transport.
- 4.2.16 The Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate are working closely with colleagues in the Communities Directorate to develop a range of accommodation options for people with dementia such as a floating support scheme and extra care housing.

4.2.17 Funding has been made available via the Western Bay community services project to support dementia coordinators in Bridgend. The role of the coordinator is to provide a responsive information and signposting service to people with dementia, their families and carers.

Future challenges

- 4.3 Whilst much has been achieved over the last year a lot remains to be done and there are significant challenges ahead:
- o Demographics - Demand and complexity of cases is growing at a time of decreasing budgets.
 - o Complexity - The Authority is seeing a change in the profile of the people requiring support with mental health. More than 50% have a substance misuse issue. People also have other issues such as physical frailty, sensory impairment, a personality disorder or offending history. Sometimes individuals are a cause of concern in their communities, but they do not want to engage with services or their condition is not of a nature or degree that warrants detention in hospital.
 - o Crisis - People are advising that the Authority does not have adequate crisis provision when they are most in need.
 - o Stigma - People who live with mental health problems are telling us that they are still facing discrimination and hostility, which needs to be tackled.
 - o Transition - there is a need to have clear transitional plans for young people with mental health issues.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 The report has no direct effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules but is required to effectively implement the Council's statutory duties in relation to equalities and human rights.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The report links with objective 4 in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan: "We want to increase and improve support for citizens with co-occurring mental health and substance misuse issues and ensure that our frontline/customer service employees are aware of and understand mental health issues."
- 6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the commissioning and delivery plan which identified a positive impact as the purpose of this plan is to ensure that service users with mental health problems and their carers continue to receive quality and responsive services. However, individual EIA screenings will be undertaken as and when required throughout the development of work streams under this policy and these screenings will be used to inform all decisions on the development of services. The Council is trying to achieve a greater understanding of mental health by everyone working and living in Bridgend so that people with mental health problems in the borough are better understood and better served.

7. Financial Implications.

Additional funding of £70,000 was provided through the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015-16 to meet the costs of the growing incidence of mental health cases. The demand and complexity of cases is growing and it will be a challenge to continue to manage this within existing resources.

8. Recommendation.

- 8.1 That the Committee receives this report and notes the developments in mental health services, the mental health commissioning and delivery plan and progress concerning the dementia strategy and delivery plan.

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Background papers: None.