

TITLE	Approval of Wokingham's Strategy for Residents with a Learning Disability
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Monday 23 December 2019
WARD	None specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Adult Services - Matt Pope
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - Charles Margetts

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a new Council strategy for Wokingham's residents with a learning disability and the families, partners and carers who support them.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive approve Wokingham Borough Council's Strategy for People with a Learning Disability, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Learning Disability is defined as individuals who have:

- A significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information and to learn new skills
- A reduced ability to cope independently with everyday living tasks
- Impaired social functioning
- A disability that started before adulthood with a lasting effect on their development

The level of difficulty experienced by people with a learning disability can vary considerably from mild to severe requiring a range of support from low to complex support. Some people with mild learning disabilities may experience few significant problems but people with severe learning disabilities may have a variety of interconnecting needs, which significantly impact on every aspects of their lives. This includes a significant number of people who have a learning disability who are also autistic.

For some people it is not the degree of learning disability that determines the level of support they need but the presence of a number of other significant factors such as mental illness. It's also important to note that many people with a learning disability experience conditions of older age when they're younger, including dementia.

The Council supports more adults with a learning disability, who are eligible under the Care Act, than other parts of the country. Wokingham has the second highest population needing support in the south east. The council supports 520 learning disabled adults with a Care Act eligible support package:

- Overall 80% require direct support with everyday living tasks
- 32% have substantial support and complex needs

As a consequence the council spends a significant proportion of its adult social care funding on people with a learning disability. The Council spends £19.8 million per year on learning disability support, which is 42% of its adult social care budget. It is expected that significantly more people will need support with a learning disability over the next 5 years.

The proposed strategy sets out how it will meet this need and address the increased pressure on its resources in Wokingham.

Wokingham Borough Councils strategy for residents with a learning disability has been developed within a national framework and sets out how the council will transform the lives of our learning disabled residents in the 21st century. This includes people with complex learning disabilities, preventing them from needing long term hospital care.

The strategy will ensure that the council is able to meet its obligations under the Care Act 2014 including:

- Providing support that prevents people's conditions from getting worse
- They get the right information and advice they need to make decisions about their care
- They have a choice of good quality support and care services that can meet their needs
- The strategy has been developed using an extensive range of national and local data covering:
 - How many learning disabled people live in Wokingham
 - The level of support they need
 - A prediction of the number of learning-disabled people the council will need to support over the next 5 years
 - How much the council will need to spend to fund their support

The Council has developed and designed the strategy with learning disabled residents and their advocates. Families of people with a learning disability and carers have also determined what the strategy will do. The Council will continue developing its plans with people who use learning disabled support and will fund organisations that help them and their carers have a voice.

Many people with a learning disability have complex and multiple health conditions that significantly impact their ability to manage their basic needs and live independently. This includes mental health conditions and autism. Their health is often poor and their life expectancy is 23 years lower than the general adult population. As a consequence learning disabled people need a range of support from council funded adult social care services and the NHS.

The Council is good at helping people with a learning disability get and keep a job but it needs to do better in terms of helping more learning disabled people be independent in a home of their own.

The council also wants to improve how it supports young people with a learning disability prepare for adult life. This includes making sure that they and their parents have what they need to make good decisions regarding their future.

To deliver against these aims, over the next five years, this strategy includes proposals to:

- Review the council's offer covering support that helps learning disabled people by modernising this and creating more choice
- Plan and design housing, neighbourhoods and transport that meet the needs of learning disabled people and which are learning disability friendly
- Create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care
- Set up a new service to support disabled young people prepare for adult life
- Work with the NHS to improve the support learning disabled people get from their GPs and hospitals; to ensure they get the health checks they need and that people with more complex needs get the right support
- Review our offer to residents caring for people with a learning disability

BACKGROUND

People with a learning disability experience complex neurological conditions that can significantly impact their ability to manage some of their most basic needs. They can also find it difficult to build and maintain safe and healthy relationships and to process information affecting their ability to make decisions. These challenges are often compounded by other lifelong conditions that significantly affect their physical and mental health. As a consequence the average life expectancy of people with a learning disability is 23 years lower than the rest of the adult population.

The proportion of Wokingham's adult population who have a learning disability and who need support is one of the highest in the country. Within the south east region Wokingham has the second highest prevalence of adults needing support with a learning disability.

There is limited national research on the factors that may affect local populations in terms of the number of adults who may have a learning disability. Therefore, it is not possible to determine or reliably speculate as to why more adults living in Wokingham need support with a learning disability.

The Council spends more on services for people with a learning disability per head of the adult population, than most south east councils with responsibility for adult social care services. 42% of the council's annual budget allocated to adult care is spent on support for Wokingham's residents with a learning disability.

In 2018/19, the Council spent £19.8 million on learning disability support, for 517 adults entitled to social care funding under the Care Act 2014. However, the council's social care spending on each learning disabled person, is well below the average for councils in the South East and in line with the average for England.

Therefore, there is nothing to indicate that a learning disabled person living in Wokingham, receives more support or funding when compared to learning disabled people living elsewhere in the country. Equally, the Council's high spend on learning disability services per capita is not as a result of inefficient spending, when compared to other councils but arises from a high proportion of Wokingham's adults needing help with a learning disability.

Government data shows that the number of Wokingham people needing learning disability support, has grown at a faster rate than the rate of increase for England and the South East. Over the last five years the overall rate of growth for Wokingham has been 10% against a 6% growth rate for England and the South East. Critically an analysis of children and young people supported by the council with a disability via an Education, Health and Care Plan, indicates that this rate of growth will continue over the next four years.

The Council's strategy for people with a learning disability is designed to address the challenges this level of high and increasing demand brings. The strategy recognises the importance of the council planning effectively, to meet the goals and needs of what is the most significant community of disabled people living in Wokingham. This includes challenging and addressing the discrimination and inequality that learning disabled people face, which prevent them from being educated and trained; getting a job; receiving the right healthcare and doing the things that are fundamental to everyone's

well-being. However, the financial challenges this demand brings are significant within the context of the council's increasingly limited resources.

The increasing demand challenges set out in the strategy will have an impact on the Council's mid-term financial plans. However, the strategy sets out a clear work programme, developed with our partners, which is designed to address the financial pressures. The work programme will support achieving outcomes that increase the independence of many learning disabled people the council helps, reducing their need for social care. These initiatives will mitigate the impact on the council's spending plans arising from the anticipated increase in overall demand for learning disability support.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£21.4m	See comment below	Revenue and Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£21.4m	See comment below	Revenue and Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£21.4m	See comment below	Revenue and Capital

Other Financial Information

The capital and revenue bids required to support changes identified in the strategy will be factored into the council's medium term financial planning process which will be reviewed annually. The costs associated with the strategy for 2019-20 will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Over 150 people with a learning disability and the advocate groups that support them, have been directly involved with developing the strategy through a series of focus groups, individual meetings and discussions of the strategy at existing forums. Easy Read presentations were developed with CLASP and a joint communication approach was adopted, to ensure that people with a learning disability were able to understand and fully take part in discussions. CLASP represents and advocates for people with learning disabilities.

Parents, families and carers have also been extensively engaged with and through community groups such as SEND Voices and Wokingham MENCAP.

Individual face to face meetings were carried out with people with more complex care and communication needs, their families and the staff who support them. Telephone and online surveys aimed at people with learning disabilities, parents and carers and education and social work staff were also carried out.

With the support of CLASP the final strategy, its proposals and the comments drawn from the above, were considered and approved at the Learning Disability Partnership Board. The partnership board is open to all people with a learning disability, carers, statutory partners and user and carer groups and is led and run by people with learning disabilities.

The strategy proposals and the actions set out in the initial implementation plan arose from this engagement.

The Director of Adult Services will report quarterly at the Learning Disability Partnership Board, on the council's progress in implementing the strategy. This will give people with a learning disability, carers and stakeholders a further opportunity to review the strategy and the implementation plan.

Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group and the NHS were comprehensively consulted with and the strategy developed in line with their recommendations. This included discussion of the strategy at Wokingham's Leadership Partnership board, whose membership includes all local NHS bodies and the Primary Care Networks that represent GPs.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The strategy provides a full and detailed analysis of the equalities issues affecting people with a learning disability, across the delivery of health services and social care but also access issues regarding employment; education and training; transport; and community facilities. The proposals set out in the strategy are designed to address these issues and to ensure the human rights of people with a learning disability.

List of Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Wokingham's Strategy for People with a Learning Disability
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Contact Wesley Hedger	Service People Commissioning
Telephone 07710 064511	Email wesley.hedger@wokingham.gov.uk