

## **Appendix 4: Summary of Consultation and Engagement with Providers and Professionals**

### **1. Aim of the consultation**

Some of the current services have been in place for many years and are well established.

The aim of the consultation exercise has been to gather a wide range of views on what is working well and not so well with some of the existing services. The key comments and feedback will feed into the specification for the services.

Where possible, we will involve a wide audience in the evaluation process for the tenders. This will include people who have been involved with the project which Disability Sheffield have led on.

### **2. Consultation with social work teams, and other professionals**

#### **a. Social work teams**

The Commissioning service has attended team meetings and held specific sessions and spoken to 21 social workers.

#### Supported Living services/support delivered within the home

In terms of what is not working so well:

- There are issues with services such as organisational safeguarding. The support and the buildings require some modernisation. The services need to be aligned with the demand- for more core and cluster and single tenancies
- There needs to be more of a focus on prevention and reducing the level of support which is needed
- Need for a 'pathway' out of supported living

In terms of the gaps in services, these are some of the comments we have received:

- Supported living needs to be outcomes focussed and strengths based
- Providers should offer specialist enablement services. If providers can't offer it, may be this is a service which SCC should provide
- There needs to be better use of Assistive Technology

#### Day services/Activities outside of the home

In terms of what is working well, specific services were mentioned which provided meaningful activities.

In terms of what isn't working so well:

- Lack of capacity for building based day services & a lack of services who can offer 1:1 session
- There may not be the right services to meet the needs of people who have more complex needs
- Individuals who are receiving support often have limited income to access activities in the community
- Some existing providers struggle when the needs of individuals' change

In terms of gaps in services, these are some of the comments we received:

- Day service providers should be encouraging independence, for example by supporting independent travel
- The provision of equipment for people with physical disabilities
- Providers should offer set activities at times, where a person could attend and pay for a particular activity. A person should also be able to bring their own 1:1 support to an activity rather than using 1:1 support from the day service provider.
- In the wintertime, there are often less activities on offer. Providers should consider how to offer activities all year around
- There is not enough focus on enrichment, there should be equal emphasis on people achieving their outcomes as well as engaging with activities that they enjoy

### Short breaks/overnight stays

In terms of what is working well, many people and their families have developed good relationships with providers over the years, and this enables good quality, planned respite for the person and the parent carer. There is a need for good quality services as some providers are become fully booked in advance.

In terms of what is not working so well:

- More buildings that can provide a service for people with complex needs
- Single occupancy properties- for people who find it difficult to share
- Overall lack of building-based provision which leads to limited choice
- If some providers can offer a respite service on an emergency basis, this can often be based on a high staffing ration
- There is a lack of options for respite, and a lack of beds in building-based services.
- Respite should enable meaningful activities inside and outside of the building base. The respite stay should be geared towards the person achieving their outcomes, and a way of increasing independence ready for when that person moves on from the family home.
- It can be a challenge to find respite on an emergency basis

In terms of gaps in services, these are some of the comments we received:

- There is scope to consider developing some form of brokerage process for sourcing overnight respite
- Explore the potential for supported living providers to also provide short breaks in the same service
- There needs to be a wider range of short breaks options- not just traditional building-based respite.

### Supported Employment

In terms of what is working well, there are a lot of organisations that are good at helping people access work placements and help with writing CV's.

In terms of what is not working well:

- There is a difference between getting work placements and getting people in to paid employment. There is often a gap in supporting people from work placements in to paid employment
- Organisations do pay 'lip service' to employing people with a Learning Disability

In terms of gaps in services, these are some of the comments which we received:

- Services/providers should be measured in terms of how many work placements become paid employment
- Colleges, day services need to do more to support people in to work placements and employment
- More joined up working and clearer information is needed regarding benefits and the implications of paid employment. The lack of understanding can be a barrier.
- There needs to be ongoing support for people to get work placements and paid employment. Mainstream employers do not have the specialist knowledge to support people with a LD, so the placement can break down.
- There needs to be more information about what supported employment is available
- Many of the supported employment opportunities are focussed on horticulture and building activities, more choice is needed

**a. Health professionals from the Clinical Learning Disability Team**

Supported Living/support delivered within the home

In terms of what is working well:

- Some of the supported living services have consistent staffing- which works well
- Good quality supported living is based on the quality of space- particularly for people who have ASD.

In terms of what is not working so well:

- There should be flexibility to facilitate successful transitions
- There should be more variety of accommodation and the types of shared spaces which are available in shared houses
- Supported living providers should be sourcing activities within the community

In terms of gaps in services, these are some of the comments which we received:

- there needs to be more 'core and cluster' services, and more choice generally. Demand is high but supply is low.

Day services/Activities outside the home

In terms of what is working well, these are the key points from the feedback:

- Not every provider is successful with every service user
- Some providers are very proactive in terms of reviewing care plans and liaising with health professionals
- Some providers are very person centred, and evidence where they have followed the individual's care plan

In terms of what is not working so well:

- Some of the building-based services may need some modernisation to appeal to younger people
- The success of activities often depends on the support workers who are supporting the individual to access these activities
- Need to ensure there is sufficient range of provision available- to ensure there is choice for people who have complex needs & who require a building-based service
- When support workers take an individual out for an activity, this can have an impact on the individuals' budget.

In terms of the gaps in existing services:

- There should be better communication about the services which are available
- More variety of services for people whose behaviour challenges services

#### Short breaks/overnight stays

In terms of what is working well, some people are happy to have support workers to come to the family home to provide an overnight break as a planned break. However, this is not the right option for every family.

In terms of what is not working well, and where the gaps are in provision:

- Services find it difficult to accommodate a mix of planned and emergency respite. Partly due to a lack of availability and when demand for this is at it's highest (for example over the weekends).
- Services can be reluctant to accept an emergency respite in case of the impact on the people who are accessing planned respite.
- A key gap is a dedicated building-based service just for emergency placements

#### Supported Employment

In terms of what is not working:

- There have been examples of work placements but limited transition to paid employment
- There are very few meaningful employment opportunities for people with a LD and/or ASD

In terms of gaps in current provision:

- There needs to be better understanding and support around the benefit system, and how employment can impact. This support should be ongoing as unforeseen events can disrupt family income.
- SCC should have a central employment hub or service where people can be signposted to

### **3. Consultation with existing providers**

There are existing Forums with the day service providers and with the supported Living providers. Consultation with existing day service providers began in December 2019 but had to be paused during 2020 & 2021. Consultation with existing supported living providers began in Summer 2022.

### **a. Supported Living Providers**

There is an existing regular Forum for Supported Living Providers, however, we held a separate event to consult specifically on a range of themes.

The providers were consulted on these key themes:

#### **i. Finance and Contracts**

We wanted to consult on issues around the current pricing structure and contract. We also want to seek views on potentially alternative pricing structures, new systems, and processes, and the potential to have a longer contract term.

Some of the feedback we received included:

- Providers were welcoming of a potential for a longer contract term- the tender cycle is resource intensive
- Providers welcomed the potential to rationalise the current hourly rate structure, but the initial rate must be set at the right level
- Providers raised the issue that the hourly rate is normally determined by the complexity of need for the individuals

#### **ii. Workforce**

We wanted to consult with providers to find out the key issues and challenges which they are experiencing with recruiting and retaining staff.

Some of the feedback we received included:

- There are significant difficulties in recruiting the appropriate staff. Examples of the issues include lots of inappropriate applications. Some providers are seeking applicants from overseas but there are considerable costs associated with arranging the necessary work permits.
- Training is expensive, and staff are trained and then leave for another provider
- Providers are finding it difficult to retain staff- NHS & SCC have better terms and conditions for care staff so many private sector providers lose staff to the public sector
- Staff move between providers

#### **iii. Efficiency**

The Commissioning service operate the processes for sourcing care packages and supported living services. We wanted to consult with providers to find out how to work more efficiently.

Some of the feedback we received included:

- Providers were seeking clarity on how social workers and families select the care provider- there could be scope to improve this process
- Providers suggested that a standardised referral form could be developed which would be an improvement
- Providers suggested that in some instances an early assessment of the individual would be beneficial
- In terms of providers picking up smaller packages, several suggestions were made to improve this: group packages together; targeting the packages at providers; providers covering distinct areas

- Providers suggested it may be beneficial to understand more about if there are any geographical areas which have particularly high demand for services

#### iv. Innovation

We wanted to consult with providers to identify potentially key areas to develop further.

Some of the feedback we received included:

- Engagement with Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups: should be given a greater priority- concern that families are in crisis and coping; massive skills deficit with the workforce
- Building independence through friendship groups: Providers in the same locality could set up community hubs where people can share experiences to support the development of friendship groups; providers should be implementing more partnership working; providers should be linking people to local activities in the community
- Outcomes based commissioning: Commissioning should be less about the number of hours and more about implementing mechanisms that allow for flexibility when required- everything is geared towards working in volume of hours; We need to consider how to change the way in which referrals are made e.g., instead of a package of so many hours per week hours per week we commission the provider to deliver a particular outcome for an individual

#### j. **Day opportunities/Activities outside the home**

In terms of what is working well, since December 2019 engagement with day service providers, including the bi-monthly provider forum, has seen huge progress in establishing the scope and ambitions of the sector as well as the continued development of strong working relationships.

- Staff are dedicated, trained to a high standard, and deliver quality services to individuals who want to help improve people's lives.
- Flexibility in what is being delivered which makes it easier to be innovative and think outside the box to achieve creative outcomes.
- There is a wide selection of services and providers in the city.

In terms of what is not working so well:

- Providers are not always involved in the individuals' reviews
- Providers do experience some resistance to changes with individual's care. This can include from family members.
- Providers don't always feel as though they are acknowledged as being experts
- Barriers created by the social care system creates inconsistency – specifically the move from specialisms to localities.
- In terms of processes, there are sometime delays with the packages being set up on the Council's system. This can cause cash flow problems.
- It can be a difficult process to agree
- There is a lack of choice for individuals
- Some services are struggling to get referrals

In terms of gaps in current provision:

- Lack of activities for individuals with lower-level needs and those not eligible for social care
- Needs for a culture shift towards modernisation of services to help achieve the goals of young people
- Links with schools; a few providers have good links but not all
- Lack of quality guidelines from local and national government makes it more difficult to measure quality consistently
- Gap between Children's and Adult social care and how the outcomes are not aligned, and assessments once they move into adults take a long time to start.
- Social workers do not visit services, so do not understand what the service is offering
- An Accredited Provider List would be a good idea as it would open up more choice
- It can be difficult to provide bespoke activities as the services do not always have the staff numbers to deliver them.
- It would be useful to have payment guarantees for out of hours/ bespoke activities as we hire rooms based on the attendees, if people do not turn up and payment is withheld then they must take the hit financially.
- People with a learning disability need a wider range and choice to be able to pick the care based on their interest and the times they want to be able to access services.

#### **k. Respite/Short Breaks providers**

A consultation session was held with key providers.

In terms of what is going well:

- Planned short breaks and respite is going well & people who are familiar with the service access respite regularly
- Some providers have been working together when a person needs overnight respite and short breaks
- Some providers have been working together when a person needs overnight respite/short breaks

In terms of what has not been working so well:

- Providers have reported that it can be difficult to recruit staff with the right skills. Particularly for supporting individuals who have complex needs
- Staffing issues can influence a provider's ability to support people with complex needs
- Providers feel that there can be issues with the referral process which can lead to placement failure and poor quality of care and support
- Social workers are not always aware of services
- The rate agreed also reflects the building-based costs of the support, not only the staffing costs
- There are some cost differences with providing services for people with complex needs, for example staff training requirements are higher
- It can be difficult to arrange transport for people with physical disabilities. It is difficult to recruit care staff who can, and are willing to drive
- There are issues with having the packages set up on the Council's systems- which causes delays to payment and difficulty in auditing these packages

- Providers have found it difficult to negotiate package rates
- The cost model needs some development- one approach is to have an hourly rate for daytime support and an overnight cost
- There have been instances where an individual was dropped off for care without the provider being given the chance to accept the support package. There have been assumptions made that the provider will accept them, regardless of the level of need and compatibility with others

In terms of gaps in the current provision:

- There is not enough provision for people with complex needs and behaviour that challenges services. This led to breakdowns in family arrangements, and placements out of City
- There is a lack of emergency provision for people to access at short notice, due to a lack of available beds
- At the beginning of an emergency placement, there is a lack of planning for the individuals' next move. This can lead to the individual living in the service for a period until a new arrangement can be put in place