

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 January 2021

Title: Disabilities Improvement Programme Report	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
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Accountable Director: Chris Bush, Commissioning Director for Care and Support	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Elaine Allegretti, Director of People and Resilience	
Summary <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has requested an update on some of the key issues affecting the Disability Service, and our response to those (as described in the recently created 'Disability Improvement Programme'). Through the Corporate Plan we describe, in high-level terms, our ambitions for our most vulnerable residents. The strategy made clear, amongst many other things, that we must change how we provide support to those living with a disability in our borough.</p> <p>The Disability Improvement Programme describes how we will deliver our ambitions as outlined in the Corporate Plan through a series of key workstreams. It articulates how we will seek to improve experiences and outcomes for our residents with a disability, whilst responding to growing demand, and how we may best get to grips with increasing cost pressures within the Disability Service. The improvement plan also illustrates the delivery mechanisms and governance of the programmes, and the financial implications – both in terms of one-off 'programme' costs, and the impact on revenue budgets – of doing so. This report provides an outline of the improvement programme for OSC to consider and comment upon and is accompanied by a short presentation to convey the key messages.</p>	
Recommendation(s) <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Note the contents of the Disability Improvement Programme; and(ii) Note the improvements and developments for those who receive services from Disability Care and Support, and our plans for the next 2 years.	
Reason(s) <p>Support for the Disability Improvement Programme will assist the council in fulfilling its statutory obligations to provide care and support for residents with a learning disability</p>	

and supports the intention of the Council's Vision and Priorities, including encouraging civic pride, enabling social responsibility and growing the borough.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Our Disability Service is facing unprecedented challenges. The entrenched needs of some of our residents, coupled with emerging risks to children are placing an ever-growing strain on a system that is increasingly unable to cope. The situation has been compounded by a growing, rapidly changing population that is pushing the existing system close to breaking point. To meet these challenges, we needed to consider how we can deliver services in a more efficient and cost-effective way.
- 1.2 Put simply: our population is growing – in both numbers and complexity of need - and this is placing significant pressure on existing service delivery models and generating enormous financial pressure. Doing nothing was not, and is not, an option.
- 1.3 Demand for Care and Support and services to support those living with a disability has been increasing – in some cases alarmingly – and this trend is predicted to continue. There has been a 40% increase in the number of children needing an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); an unprecedented growth that shows no sign of abating. Complexity of need is also increasing, as are those living with Autism and coping with a substance misuse problem.
- 1.4 Extensive conversations with our service users, parents, carers, and staff taught us many things, and the collective evidence confirms their views. They told us that:
 - Services are disjointed with limited synergy across education, health and/or education;
 - That there is not enough support for young people transitioning into adult services – with little in the way of vocational support or specialist ASD day services;
 - That accommodation options are limited for both young and older adults alike;
 - Day services are very traditional with little innovation nor do they run across weekends and evenings for adults; and
 - Currently there is not an all-age behavioural support service to work with families and providers to maintain a service user in the community if their behaviour was to become challenging.
- 1.5 These changes mean that many of our services are no longer fit-for-purpose, by either design or a simple inability to cope with the volume of demand. This is impacting upon quality of delivery (and, therefore, outcomes), but also challenges our ability to discharge some of our statutory duties and, in the case of the Disability Service, threatens our prospects of securing a good SEND OFSTED inspection result (with an inspection expected within the next 12-18 months).
- 1.6 In addition to this our current configuration of services, provision and approach stands little chance of arresting the rising demand in any meaningful way, and we are seeing this manifesting through significant overspends in the Disability Service, a position that is predicted to worsen.

1.7 To arrest this trajectory, change must be made. This was the case at the time that our strategy was written, and is even more the case now following the existing, and expected, impacts of the pandemic.

2. Improvement as part of Recovery and Legacy

2.1 We know that the impact of Covid-19 is being, and will continue to be, felt profoundly in Barking and Dagenham. A population that was battling with social, economic and health inequalities have seen these exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic. We are already seeing emergent evidence (though by no means incontrovertible) that poorer communities are being the hardest hit, and that is before the consequences of a predicted, deep recession.

2.2 Our communities, and in particular the most vulnerable residents within those communities, will need considerable, and in some cases long-term, support to recover from the effects of the pandemic and to weather the storm of an oncoming economic downturn: in short, it will take every ounce of community resilience; collaborative working; system leadership and creative thinking just to stand still. Set against our lofty ambitions for closing the equalities gap, improving the economic and health outcomes for our residents, and making Barking and Dagenham a great place to live, the challenge is stark.

2.3 The challenge of supporting our most vulnerable residents could not be more daunting: years of austerity leading to cuts in vital front line services – the very services that are now being called upon to lead the response to the pandemic – only serves to increase the difficulty of the task at hand. This is a sector that was sadly underprepared in resourcing and capacity terms. However, it is this very environment within which a range of creative and collaborative responses have emerged.

2.4 Work is ongoing within Care and Support to work through the long-term recovery and impact of Covid-19 on our residents, our operational models and our relationships with the community and our partners. We need to plan for the short to medium term as we expect another wave of Covid-19 in the new year and surges in demand for Adult Social Care services as the NHS moves towards resuming much of its business as usual activity. The closure of schools and other key services such as day centres, as well as the change in the way that both social work teams and providers have been operating has seen a significant impact on safeguarding referrals and 'line-of-sight' increasing both the immediate risk (as families are placed under increased stress from proximity and all that goes with it) as well as the medium-to-long term risk of a surge in activity. However, we must also construct a model of delivery for the future that takes the best of what we already have, builds on the creative solutions that have emerged through the pandemic so far, and discards legacy ways of working from the past that plainly have no place in the new world.

2.5 For Care and Support, this has lasting implications for shifting the focus of our resources from the hospital to the community, the way in which we work with the community to deliver social care and our future social work practice, including the role that care technology plays.

3. The Disability Improvement Programme

- 3.1 To respond to these challenges, the Disability Improvement Programme was created. The programme brings together our plans into a single package of improvement work. These plans have been co-produced with core staff in Care and Support and in consultation with residents and service users (in some cases). This co-design of services will be at the heart of all future development and is a core principle of our improvement activity.
- 3.2 The workstreams of the disability programme, and the purpose of each workstream, is described below.

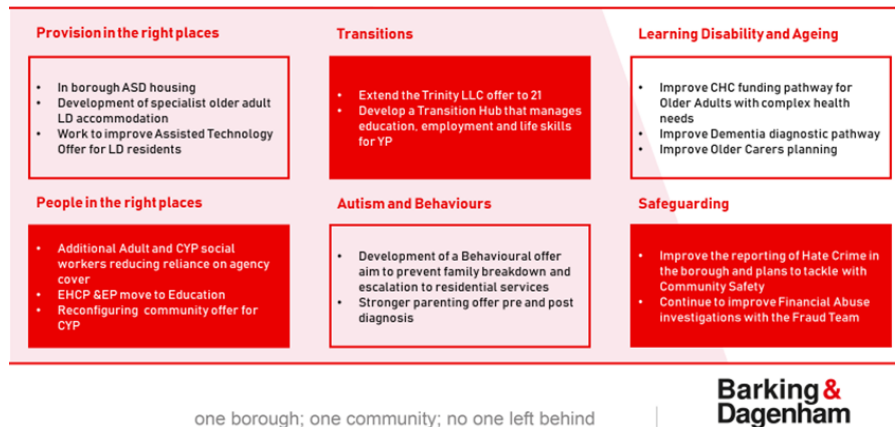
Disabilities Improvement Programme Workstreams

- **Provision in the Right Places:** Ensure that the correct services, that meet current and predicted needs, are in place to improve outcomes and reduce forecast financial pressure through prevention.
 - **People in the Right Places:** Sufficiently resource the correct parts of the system, moving staff around to deliver a properly integrated response.
 - **Getting Transitions Right:** Improving the pathway and support for children and young people with SEND/LD to become independent adults.
 - **Autism and Behaviours that Challenge:** Recommissioning services to respond to the growing pressure that this cohort is placing on the system and improving their outcomes.
 - **Learning Disabilities and Aging:** Improving the dementia pathway, securing appropriate housing options and effective planning for death.
 - **Safeguarding:** Reviewing our Safeguarding Partnership arrangements to ensure that we are clearly responding to the risk in our community.
- 3.3 The accompanying presentation, which will be made to OSC, delves into more detail on each of these workstreams and allows an opportunity for further expansion, and discussion.

4. Benefits and outcomes

- 4.1 To understand whether the programme is working, a bespoke outcomes framework has been developed and is embedded in the Council's Single Performance Framework. This framework sets out the key indicators with a set of success criteria for each outcome to demonstrate what is improving and what is working well throughout the life of the programme. It does not replace the existing performance management framework and is not inclusive of all key performance indicators across the service.
- 4.2 In addition to the intended, specific, and measurable outcomes there are also a cluster of other key benefits that we expect to realise from the programme, as follows:

Benefits summary: Disability Improvement Programme



5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Improvement Programme was developed in consultation with service users, operational staff, and commissioners. It was extensively discussed with Senior Officers (through Corporate Strategy Group – who endorsed the programme in July 2020) and presented to PIR Members Group in September 2020.

6. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Finance

- 6.1 The Disability Care and Support service has been under severe financial pressure for many years – not just in our borough but across the national health and social care system. This is the result of a number of intertwined factors including demographic changes and rising numbers of Adults and Children living with severe disabilities, increasing complexity of need and changed expectations and the rising costs of care (driven in term by increasing labour and property costs.) This resulted in an overspend of £5.2m at the end of 2019/20.
- 6.2 Considerable growth funding (£4.8m) was put into the budget for 2020/21. However, these upwards trends have continued – and have been somewhat worsened by the impact of Covid so that the service is once again forecasting an overspend of £4.8m for this current financial year. The service work with finance to undertake a regular medium-term forecast exercise and this shows a likely forecast increase of expenditure from £24.7m in 2019/20 to £33.9m in 2022/23.
- 6.3 These are services that the Council has a statutory and moral obligation to provide for its most vulnerable residents and the factors driving costs up are largely external to the organisation. This means that expenditure is difficult to reduce significantly through short term management action and so this service represents one of the biggest financial risks to the Council. However, such high levels of year-on-year growth are likely to outstrip any available funding and will become unsustainable. Therefore, deeper, and longer-term strategies to promote independence and resilience and to develop and manage the care market are vitally important.
- 6.4 The Disabilities Improvement Programme has been developed partly in response to this need. There are three main strands of financial implications. Firstly, an initial

investment in the programme is required to ensure successful delivery. Cabinet on 20th October approved funding of £0.727m for Programme Management and related implementation costs across Adults, Disabilities and Mental Health, to be funded from the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts.

- 6.5 The PID shows that revenue investment in the service is also required. Additional staffing is required to deliver the statutory service safely based on the increasing numbers of service users and some new service offers to support a more preventative and approach. It is estimated that this additional requirement will be in the region of £1.5m and this will be written into the MTFS subject to final validation and agreement of the phasing requirement.
- 6.6 Thirdly the PID does include some measures to reduce the cost to the Council. These include the impact of the new preventative model, new provision such as a potential Supporting Living unit at Brocklebank, and improved business processes ensuring that client and continuing health care contributions are received. These are currently forecast as in the region of £1.5m but will also be subject to validation.
- 6.7 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy and 2021/22 budget are currently under development and will include the final new investment and savings targets agreed with the Commissioners and Operational Services in line with the strategies set out in this PID.

7. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Lindsey Marks, Deputy Head of Law

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: Disability Service Improvement Programme Presentation