

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE ADULT SERVICES AND HOUSING POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 28TH JUNE 2018

SUBJECT OF REPORT: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON THE VISION FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE IN NORTH SOMERSET

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: SHEILA SMITH, DIRECTOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

KEY DECISION: NO

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 The Panel are recommended to:

1. Note the outcome of the consultation and the amendments made to the vision document in response to the consultation; and
2. Endorse the amended vision to go forward for approval by the Executive in the Autumn

2. SUMMARY OF REPORT

2.1 This report summarises the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Vision for Adult Social Care and explains what changes are proposed in light of the consultation.

3. POLICY

3.1 Adult social care is one of the Council's most important responsibilities and the largest area of expenditure. This is reflected in the Corporate Plan 2015-19, which includes Health and Wellbeing as one of three outcomes the Council aims to achieve for local people, and sets ten ambitions for the Council, two of which are particularly relevant:

- Enable residents to make healthy choices and promote active lifestyles which reduce ill health and increase independence; and
- Commission or provide quality health and care services, which deliver dignity, safety and choice

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 Adult social care faces significant challenges due to increasing demand for services in the context of tightly constrained government funding. This has been recognised at a national level but reform to the funding system has been repeatedly postponed. It is therefore important that local authorities act proactively to manage demand and ensure that good quality services can continue to be provide to those who need them most.
- 4.2 In the summer and autumn of 2017 we worked with staff to develop a new vision and client journey for people approaching adult social care services. Following that work we developed a draft vision for the service that includes a 'new offer' that can be clearly articulated to the residents of North Somerset. This is a strengths based approach, which starts from an understanding of an individual's strengths and their personal, family and community networks and resources. Much of this is already best practice but we have not previously set out openly what residents can expect when they approach adult social care for care or support. The document also outlines a programme of projects to deliver the vision named 'Maximising Independence and Wellbeing'.
- 4.3 The document as revised following consultation is appended to this report.
- 4.4 In developing the vision and programme we have also taken account of:
- Legislation and guidance, including the Care Act 2014 and Care & Support (Direct Payments) Regulations
 - Social Care Institute for Excellence guide to Strengths-based approaches for assessment and eligibility under the Care Act 2014
 - The Skills for Care document: Using conversational assessment: principles and application an asset-based approach to working with people who access care and support
 - Practice in other Councils including, Bristol, Wigan, Leeds, Solihull and Worcestershire.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The vision was developed through a series of workshop sessions attended by over 100 staff from across the service. A public consultation on the resulting draft document was initiated on 29 January 2018 and ran to 23 March 2018. The consultation was open to all, including the public, service users, council staff, partner organisations and stakeholders.
- 5.2 The consultation was conducted via an online survey using the council's econsult System. In addition, groups and teams were offered the opportunity of a presentation and face to face discussion of the vision. The consultation process was promoted through an article in the March edition of North Somerset Life which is delivered to every household in the area, and items in newsletters such as Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) and Health Watch North Somerset which have a wide distribution amongst partner organisations. An Easy Read version of the consultation documents was produced and one copy in Braille was requested and

sent out.

5.3 There were a total of twenty four responses to the online survey. Seventeen were from individuals, all of whom appear to be North Somerset residents (based on home postcode supplied) or council staff. Seven of the responses were on behalf of an organisation comprising health partners, care providers and voluntary organisations.

5.4 External groups who invited Officers to present the vision and made comments were:

- Weston-super-Mare Breatheasy Group;
- Senior Community Link East;
- North Somerset People First; and a
- Carers Group for adults with a learning difficulty.

5.5 Internal Council groups who received a presentation were:-

- Councillors;
- North Somerset Council's Older People's Champions Group;
- People and Communities Trade Unions Joint Consultative Committee;
- Adult Care Contract and Commissioning Team;
- Gordano Valley Adult Care Team;
- Worle and Rural Adult Care Team;
- Adult Care Managers Team;
- Enablement Team;
- Hospital Care Team.

5.6 Views ranged from the extremely positive to the very negative, with others sceptical that the vision would make any difference. Key points raised included:

- There was some confusion over the purpose of the document, for example which part was the vision? There were also some acronyms or jargon which was unfamiliar.
- Some responses questioned whether the vision was compliant with the Care Act 2014.
- Some queried whether the vision took account of the impact of lifelong disabilities which impacted people's opportunities for independence throughout their lives.
- Some responses asked about the equalities implications of the vision, for example for carers, who are predominantly women.

5.7 Both the survey and the various group discussions were very useful in highlighting aspects of the document which could be improved. A number of changes have been made as a direct result of the consultation. These included:

- Making it clear that the Council will continue comply with the Care Act 2014 and other applicable legislation;

- Various specific drafting changes to ensure Care Act compliance, including the wording about how the Council will take account of Best Value
- Explaining the strengths based approach more clearly;
- Clarifying that the four levels of independence describe the outcome we are trying to achieve for people and are not a short-cut to assessing individual needs;
- Changing the structure of the document to make it clearer and easier to understand;
- Eliminating acronyms and unnecessary jargon;
- Making the purpose and the scope of the document clearer to ensure it is relevant for all types of need;
- An equalities impact assessment will be done on the amended document prior to final approval;
- Changing the name of the programme from Maximising Independence to Maximising Independence & Wellbeing, as suggested by one of the responses.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the budget for adult social care services will be better managed and that care and support packages will be proportionate and dependent on eligible needs being identified.

7. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In light of the questions raised in the consultation, legal advice was taken to ensure that the document is compliant with the Council's legal obligations. Amendments have been made as detailed above.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The pressures facing social care bring a number of risks, including financial risks and risks to the council's ability to provide the level and quality of services required by local people. Having a clear vision and taking a programme approach to change should help to manage these risks effectively.

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The vision and programme have the potential to impact negatively or positively on various groups including people with disabilities, older people and carers. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed to inform final approval of the document.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council's ability to achieve its objectives and fulfil its responsibilities across the full range of its statutory functions depends in part on how well it meets the challenges of delivering social care. If the vision and change programme are

successfully delivered the Council will be much better placed to achieve its other objectives.

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 The Council is not required to set an explicit vision or offer for adult care, nor to have a change programme. However, it is not considered that this option would help the council or its staff to focus effort in the very challenging context facing all local authorities with adult social care responsibilities. Not having a clear vision and offer also makes it hard for the public to know what they can expect and to hold the Council to account.
- 11.2 The content of the vision, offer and programme could be modified in many different ways. However, to be realistic, any alternative vision will need to take account of the demand pressures, financial challenges and legal framework.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Draft vision for consultation January 2018
- Responses to econsult questionnaire
- Social Care Institute for Excellence guide to Strengths-based approaches for assessment and eligibility under the Care Act 2014
- Using conversational assessment: principles and application an asset-based approach to working with people who access care and support, Skills for Care