

Supporting People

Learning Disability Sector Commissioning Strategy 2009-2014



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Introduction

This document follows from the Learning Disability Housing Strategy, which was written in 2007 and outlined the principles for future commissioning of services but did not state service delivery models explicitly.

In April 2008 £1.1 million of funding was allocated by the Supporting People Commissioning Body to the Learning Disability sector. This funding commitment was based on the proposal by the housing group to ensure services provide the best outcomes for people and best value for the local authority.

The balanced scorecard developed by the learning disability housing group and presented to the Commissioning Body highlighted the need to remodel the sector to ensure funds were being spent appropriately and release monies for the development of new services

Nationally and locally the approach to supporting people with a learning disability has shifted to personalisation and the use of Individual Budgets. This shift is reflected in the remodelling proposal.

The formal process for the re-configuration of services funded by Supporting People was developed in October 2008 through a steering group of key stakeholders including Supporting People, Torbay Care Trust, Devon Partnership Trust, Legal services and Speaking out in Torbay.

The housing group held a consultation event for people who use learning disability services, on the 22nd January 2009 to raise awareness of housing choices and to find out what service models were required in Torbay.

The housing group held a service provider and stakeholder event on the 23rd January 2009 to update participants on the values Supporting People services should be based on, strategic developments both nationally and locally, including the personalisation agenda and delivered workshop sessions to identify how commissioners and stakeholders can work together through the change process.

Key Policies and Strategies

The following strategies and policies identify the commitment nationally and locally to personalised services, based on people having choice and control about where they live and who supports them:

- Valuing People Now 2009
- Independence, well-being and choice 2005
- Getting a Life, Not just a service (draft 2008)
- Independence and Opportunity 2007
- Learning Disability Housing and Support Strategy 2007
- IBSEN Report 2008 (National Supporting People Individual Budgets Evaluation Report)

Aims of the Strategy

- To detail how Supporting People will commission services in line with the Supporting People Learning Disability Housing Strategy and wider plans and strategies
- To set out the specific services that Supporting People wish to commission in the learning disability sector

What We've Got Now

At present, Supporting People block commission services to a value of £1,075,362 in the learning disability sector.

These services consist of:

- 98 accommodation based units across 9 different contracts. 29 of these units are short term and 69 are long term.
- 38 floating support units within 4 contracts.

The type of services commissioned varies from family home models, shared housing, dispersed housing and a 40 bed building.

In addition, the learning disability sector is currently piloting Individual Budgets. The budget for this is £50,000. This £50,000 will need to be absorbed into the main learning disability budget by April 2010. At present (April 2009) there is one person receiving an Individual Budget. This person chose the same provider to deliver their care and housing related support. This provider does not currently hold a Supporting People contract. There are also a further six people who have had their budget calculated. The funding for the pilot is now all committed and outcomes will be monitored. This will enable us to learn lessons for the future use of Individual Budgets.

What We Want to Have

Key principles:

- We want people with learning disabilities to have a real choice of where to live and be supported to have their own tenancies or own their own homes if they wish
- We want service users to have a real choice of service providers and how their support is delivered
- We want people to have the option of an Individual Budget
- We want services that will support people with more challenging needs
- We want all accommodation provided to be of a good standard and landlords to be accredited
- We want short term services and floating support services to focus on learning independent living skills, move on to mainstream housing options, and where appropriate, accessing Individual Budgets to maintain independence
- We want all information within or about organisations to be accessible

All services funded by Supporting People, whether commissioned services or services purchased through Individual Budgets should:

- Be person centred and designed around the person not the organisation
- Put the service user at the centre of all decisions made about them
- Allow the service user to have choice in how support is delivered
- Support people to maximise their independence
- Support people to identify and use natural support wherever possible
- Be able to evidence achievements against Supporting People outcomes

Services block commissioned by Supporting People will be done so on the basis of being good quality, strategically relevant and good value for money.

The Services We Want to Buy in the Future:

By Block Commissioning

Accommodation based services

The balanced scorecard prepared by the Learning Disability Housing Group indicated the need for accommodation based services to make up no more than 25% of block commissioned services.

The block commissioning of accommodation based services will focus on short term services which are services that will provide a service to people for up to 2 years.

These short term accommodation based services will focus on learning independent living skills, moving on to mainstream housing options and, where appropriate, accessing an Individual Budget to maintain independent living where a service is required for longer than 2 years.

Accommodation based services will need to be able to work flexibly to accommodate people on Individual Budgets.

Floating Support

We will assess numbers of referrals and outcomes of floating support services to assess the numbers of units that are required.

Floating support services will focus on independent living and resettlement and will include supporting young people at transition, people living with older family carers and people moving on from other forms of housing (for example residential care)

These services should be flexible in terms of the number of hours provided to individuals to cover people with higher support needs and times when individuals need more or less support.

Where people need longer term support they will be given the option of accessing an Individual Budget

Individual Budgets

In addition to block commissioned services, Supporting People will fund Individual Budgets to allow people to choose the service provider they wish to support them. A reduction in the amount of services that are block commissioned will be necessary to free up funds for Individual Budgets.

New services

The following new services have been identified as those which would enable more people with a learning disability to achieve independent living:

- **Taster flat** – this service is needed to build on the assessment flat at Baytree. Further scoping work is required to identify what this service should look like.
- **Neighbourhood network model** – this service will be delivered to a capacity of 9 units and would be based on ‘keyring’ principles of 1 worker supporting 9 people where all properties are located within a mile radius of each other. Funding allocation for this service is set to a maximum of £40,000 per annum.
- **People with autism** – the referral hub have identified a need for service provision for people on the autistic spectrum as our current services do not meet this need. Further work is needed to identify if a separate service is required or if personalisation of services will fill this gap.
- **Advocacy support/brokerage** – the need for independent advocacy support and brokerage is fundamental to ensure that people can make an informed choice about services and ensure a smooth transition to personalised services. Further discussions between Supporting People and Torbay Care Trust are needed to decide how this will be funded.

How We Will Get There

- The number of short term accommodation based units commissioned will be reviewed and subject to a procurement process
- Long term accommodation based services will be reconfigured. Long term services will in future predominately be purchased either through the use of individual budgets or spot purchase agreements.
- The amount of floating support block commissioned will be under review through analysis of outcomes, utilisation and throughput to inform commissioning decisions.

Financial implications

The long term implications are that the learning disability sector will be functioning within the sector budget.

Short term the sector budget could be over spent during the reconfiguration process and the shift to Individual Budgets. Careful monitoring of this will be required.

New services will not be procured until financial resources are available. On-going review of the sector budget is required to ensure spend and future spend commitments balance.

The demand for individual budgets is set to increase with the strategic move away from residential care; this could put pressure on the budget as demand outweighs supply of funds within the sector.

The reconfiguration process has identified the need for independent advocacy for people to ensure they have choice and control about their services in the future; how this is funded needs to be discussed between commissioning partners. Additional funds will be required as a matter of urgency to ensure adequate support is available to people through this change process. The move towards personalised services requires independent brokerage that is currently not available in Torbay. Further discussions are required through the Putting People First Steering Group to ensure this is progressed in a timely manner.

