

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Karen Smith, Director of Adult Services
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	23 February 2023

## ADULT SERVICES OVERVIEW

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the work of the Adult Services directorate including financial position.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To comment upon progress being made, propose potential improvements and highlight any areas for further scrutiny which will be reported back as appropriate.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To ensure constructive and robust scrutiny of these areas of work.
- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

- 4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priority is: Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

### 6.0 Adults Social Care Update:

#### 6.1 Staffing

Adult Social Care (ASC) staff are now working a hybrid model with the majority of staff choosing to work from home 2 days a week and office based for 3, although this varies depending upon personal circumstances. ASC also introduced flexible working in the autumn

and some staff are utilising this to support a good work/life balance.

## 6.2 Adult Social Care Community Team Update

This area of service has historically consisted of 3 teams, the Initial Contact Team, dealing with all new incoming work and the North and South Community Teams dealing with longer term work. However due to long term sickness, maternity leave and a range of vacant posts that services were unable to recruit to a decision was made in December 2022 to amalgamate remaining staff into one team covering all community functions.

All staff take part in a daily duty rota dealing with new incoming enquiries, this work is prioritised by Team Managers and allocated as soon as possible. However the volume of work coming in currently outweighs staff capacity to work through and so (unusually for us, but in common with the position nationally) some people are having to wait longer than for services to respond. Clearly this is not the way services would want to work and staff in other teams and departments have been helping out when their own work queues and pressures allow. There has been very limited success with use of agency staff and limited success from a virtual recruitment campaign. There had been no take up on the offer of overtime for frontline staff, which is perhaps a reflection of how exhausted existing staff are.

It is also proving difficult to find backfill arrangements to cover sickness and maternity. However, significant staffing gaps experienced throughout the summer and into Autumn are now easing, with new people starting in post, and people returning to work from long term sickness, which is having a beneficial effect on the pressures within teams.

To support teams, an Agency Manager has been appointed from the end of January 2023 until the end of March 2023, to help work through the backlog of work in this area in an appropriate order.

Refresher training has been undertaken on legal duties and practical area, as well as team development days to help support staff.

The Council has now begun work on the '3 Conversations' approach, which is a nationally-recognised, evidenced programme that engages staff and managers to change how services work with people to better meet their needs at the earliest stage, and in the process makes us more time-efficient and cost-efficient.

## 6.3 ASC Health Linked Services

National Policy has switched ASC's attention to 'Discharge to Assess' where people are discharged from hospital once they no longer need hospital care, and the follow up assessment and care planning is done at home or in a community residential setting, depending on need. This has the knock on effect of increasing the level of care needed on discharge, and introducing more changes as the person recovers. Most ASC staff work within

multi-disciplinary teams which include: the Hospice, Neighbourhood PCN's, the ARC, Rapid Response, A&E, the Patient Assessment and Discharge Unit, Home first, and the Transfer of Care Hub. The majority of the services work over a 7 day rota.

The Discharge Support Team who undertake the assessments and work following an individual's discharge from hospital are now based here at Bickerstaffe, alongside Continuing Health Care (CHC), NHS colleagues and the Council's 2 CHC Social Workers.

This team in total has a 6 social work vacancies, 2 people LTS, 1 person on a phased return, 2 Social Workers on maternity leave and 2 more staff due to go on maternity leave shortly. This has been managed by really good relationships within the team and staff flexibility to cover for missing posts. However it does of course add strain when also trying to cover a 7 day rota and while staff in this service area did pick up some additional hours to help out with Christmas and New Year working and the significant surge in pressures within the NHS throughout December, it is not a sustainable arrangement.

#### 6.4 ASC Community-Based Work

The remit of both of the ASC teams is to support and promote the wellbeing of vulnerable adults across Blackpool whatever the cause of their problems in line with local and national policy requirements. We work with young people coming into adults from Children's Services who are in care/care leavers and this includes those with mild to moderate disabilities. For the 18 years plus population we work with those who have long term health or disability related needs, mild/moderate learning difficulties, mild/moderate mental health issues, drug and/or alcohol related problems or issues associated with older age including dementia. This includes safeguarding work, which covers concerns like poor care or negligence within the regulated care sector but also abuse of individuals by family members or strangers.

This work involves multi-disciplinary working with the police, health, CQC, MASH, MARRAC and in house quality monitoring. Staff in ASC teams also undertake Mental Capacity assessments and best interest meetings along with associated S21A challenges and Court of protection work. A number of staff in ASC teams are qualified BIA assessors and undertake these assessments as part of the departments Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards work.

Statutory responsibilities are those covered by The Care Act (2014) including prevention, assessment, care planning, the commissioning of services and undertaking reviews. Safeguarding work also falls within S42 of this legal framework. The Mental Capacity Act (2005), which includes work around mental capacity assessments, also linked BIA and best Interest work, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, Court of protection work and Section 21A challenges. The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) placing new responsibilities on local authorities around accommodation and support. The Health and Social Care Act (2022) with an emphasis on integrated working. Also the Human Rights Act sitting alongside other universal legal responsibilities falling under Equality and Diversity/Equal Rights.

The Council's ability to respond across all service areas has been impacted by staffing issues in the care sector as a whole, and at times over the last 1 – 2 months we have had between 90 and 100 people waiting for care packages in the community. We are currently in a better position with approx. 25 people waiting at this time, due in part to a new care provider starting work in Blackpool.

The legacy of the pandemic is still being felt across the sector with people presenting at point of crisis both to ASC and in health, having not sought help sooner due to fears about hospitals, worries about finances and a reluctance to ask for help when the news portrays a system in crisis, we have also had people who have missed out on early diagnosis and treatment for conditions that have deteriorated and while this probably is reflected across the country, for Blackpool's population with some of the existing struggles around poverty related issues this simply deepened the crisis.

#### 6.5 Coopers @ Ambleside and Devonshire Respite and Short Breaks Service

Blackpool Council's Respite and Short Breaks Service for learning disabled and autistic adults has been providing high quality care and support for over 20 years. The service has evolved and developed during this time and the Council now has what is considered to be a specialist Respite and Short Breaks Service that is supporting a range of individuals, their families and carers across the Town.

The Council was proud to open a new purpose built establishment early in 2022, which has doubled the capacity of the Respite and Short Breaks Service from 6 to 12 beds. This exciting development was supported by NHS England and Blackpool Council through joint investment of circa £2m. Working with individuals, their families and carers to ensure a modern and state of the art service equipped with all the technology that supports safe and person centred care delivery.

The increased capacity has enabled the service to not only respond to an ever changing demand from individuals already requiring support, but to also extend an offer of support to other individuals who may be in a crisis situation and/or their families and carers; examples include:

- 6 families have been supported in an emergency due to ill health of the carer/family member where the Coopers Services has provided care to the individual,
- 3 discharges from hospital have been supported where the individual was not able to return home due to adaptations being required to the property. Before the expansion of the Coopers Service, the individuals would have needed to remain in hospital for longer and/or require a Care Home placement,
- 4 families have been supported where carers have needed additional support in the short term. This has ensured that the carer arrangements have been sustained in the longer term,
- 2 individuals have been supported as part of a safeguarding process ensuring that

they were cared for in a safe place during the investigation,

- 2 individuals have been supported that has directly prevented an admission to hospital. This has ensured that the individual has been able to recover more quickly and return home sooner than they may have done following a hospital admission,
- 3 individuals supported whilst adaptations were completed at their supported living home,
- 1 individual supported following the unexpected death of their carer.

A total of 689 bed nights have been used in an emergency and/or to support a crisis that 21 individuals have experienced. There is an impact of flexing the service to meet the demand from emergencies and crisis as this typically results in needing to cancel or rearrange bookings that are already in place. However, out of the 26 bed nights that needed to be cancelled to accommodate the emergency/crisis care, 22 of these were booked for another period with support from the family and the remaining 4 families postponed a booking until later in the year.

The Coopers Service is also currently supporting 17 young people as part of their preparation for adulthood as they transition from being supported by Childrens Services to Adult Services. This is an important element of the Coopers Service, and now that the Hornby Childrens Respite and Short Breaks Service is also part of the same Division as the Coopers Service. It has made the planning much more seamless for the individual.

The Coopers Service currently supports a total of 63 families who regularly use the service for Respite and Short Breaks for their loved ones. Carers contribute so much to the overall health and care of individuals who need the support of services. In these challenging times where social care and health are under so much pressure, we need carers more than ever. Services like Coopers are essential in supporting carers to sustain caring for their loved ones, without carers or services supporting them, social care and health services would be experiencing even greater difficulties.

## 6.6 Primary Night Care Team

Blackpool Council's Homecare and Reablement Service is the only social care provider in Blackpool that delivers a dedicated overnight care team. This is a small team of experienced social care practitioners providing care between 10pm -7am across Blackpool. The care provided is typically short visits to assist with personal care, medication and other care related tasks. The complexity and acuity of needs has increased over the past 12 months and individuals require more care overnight than at any other point over recent years. The team also support a direct referral pathway to Vitaline (Technology Enabled Care Service) and the Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours Social Workers) and provide urgent care at times of crisis on an unplanned basis. This type of provision makes all the difference when in some cases the only alternative would be to request an ambulance and therefore this team are essential in the Council's support of admission avoidance (Hospital).

The acuity of needs and complexity of care has resulted in significant demand for the Primary Night Care Team. Further investment into this team has been supported by the Council and an additional team of practitioners is now in place. This will ensure a dedicated team is available for North, Central and South Blackpool overnight. The team will be better able to respond to urgent requests for support as well as planned care for those who need regular care throughout the night. With this expansion of the team, they will also be making available longer care visits including 'waking watch' in specific circumstances where one of the team will remain with the individual throughout the night. This may be to support a family member who is the primary carer or to support an individual with palliative care needs and who is nearing the end of their life. During December 2022 the Primary Night Care Team supported a total of 54 individuals and provided 758 individual care visits throughout the night, both planned and unplanned in response to a crisis.

Overnight care needs and how these can be met is a significant challenge and in typical circumstances this may result in an admission to hospital or longer term residential care. For Blackpool to provide this essential service means that individuals can remain at home in their preferred place of care with wrap around care and support, no matter what time of day or night this is required.

#### 6.7 Warm Space@Nibbles Café

The Nibbles Café which is part of the New Langdale Daytime Support Service for learning disabled adults, has been at the forefront of developments over the years. This has resulted in the expansion of the Nibbles Café from its HUB at the Blackpool Centre for Independent Living into Anchorsholme Library and Carleton Crematorium. The Nibbles Café has established themselves as an essential community asset supporting local community groups. The Nibbles Team support learning disabled adults to undertake training as part of their journey towards further education and/or employment in catering and hospitality and the Cafes have the benefit of two specialist and qualified Chefs supporting the delivery and ongoing development of the Nibbles Café brand.

Given the importance of the Nibbles Café and their established reputation in the local community. The Nibbles Team developed a 'Pots of Kindness' model that enables customers to make a donation which then can be used to pay for a hot drink or meal for those customers who may be experiencing particular financial difficulties. All three Nibbles Café locations offer the 'Pots of Kindness' and in addition, they are also offering the locations as a 'Warm Space' where local residents can simply visit to get warm, if that helps. The Nibbles Team have worked hard to ensure the locations are known within the local community and they can provide information to local residents around community support that might be available.

What the Nibbles Team has experienced is that local residents in some cases find it difficult to ask for help. So, the team have worked with the Food Bank Partnership and will be providing 'food parcels' for customers in that might require this type of support. This will be a

discrete offer to local residents recognising the potential stigma of this type of support. The Nibbles Team will be using reusable material bags with the Nibbles logo as 'food parcels' so that it does not draw attention and simply looks as though a 'takeaway' meal has been purchased. Local residents requiring this level of support will automatically receive a hot drink from the 'Pots of Kindness' donations too. The Nibbles Café plan to make this offer a permanent feature going forwards as the team continues to support the local community.

## 6.8 Budget/Finance 2022/23

Adults Services is currently forecasting a net overspend of £2.3m as at Month 8. Forecasted pressures sit within short term packages of care linked to hospital discharge (£2,101k), in which the Council are supporting a minimum of an additional 40 residential packages and 120 care at home packages which are in part being offset by the Discharge to Assess (D2A) recharges to the NHS for the first 7 months of the year (£613k). The forecasted overspend on Complex Cases (£532k) is due to an additional 11 packages as at November, on top of the 125 packages used to set this financial year's budget. There is a pressure in residential and nursing placements (£269k), due to 12 additional long term packages which are over and above the numbers used to set this year's budget. Supported Living hours have also increased but are offset with savings on supported housing packages to create a net forecasted overspend position (£76k). Direct Payments commissioned PA hours increasing by 1500 hours per week offsetting with additional claw backs have also resulted in a net forecasted overspend position (£100k). Adult Social Care is forecasting an overall underspend of £125k, £62K of this relates to additional income from the ICB in relation to Direct Payments, a further £41k Community Mental Health Transformation grant income from Lancashire County Council and the remainder of the saving is due to a number of vacant posts across the service.

In-year pressures are being managed via close oversight and taking advantage wherever we can of additional external funding – during winter, it is not uncommon for additional short term funding to be made available to NHS and social care. For next year, the delivery of a balanced budget is part of the Council's annual budget-setting arrangements and a number of ongoing discussions with the ICB.

## 6.9 Adult Social Care Market Reform

It was announced in November 2022 that Charging Reforms would be delayed until October 2025. As part of the grant conditions for this financial year a Fair Cost of Exercise was published on the Council website on the 1 February 2023, with an updated Market Sustainability Plan to follow in March 2023. Outcomes of the exercise were presented to providers as part of the fee setting consultation in January and we continue to engage in discussion regarding the published figures.

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 Outlined at 6.8 of the report.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 Legal considerations are covered within the main body of the report

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.1 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.