



Response to the Adult Social Care Local Account 2015

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I would like to thank everyone who has helped develop the 2015 Adult Social Care Local Account for Knowsley. I really appreciate all of your effort in taking the time to provide your views and experiences of adult social care and for supporting us to understand how services are impacting on people's lives. I have read it with great interest and I'm very pleased that so many of our adult social care services are supporting people to have a good quality of life. There are some really good examples of how services and support have a really positive impact and show how valued they are by the people who use them.

As you will be aware, Knowsley Council's funding from central government has been drastically cut. These cuts are continuing to be made year on year, meaning that the council is now facing a budget shortfall of £30 million over the next two years. This is in addition to the £60 million already saved since 2010.

Given the scale of the cuts from Central Government, the Council has had to look at all of the services and support it provides to residents. It has also had to reduce its own workforce costs, generate more income from other sources and work more closely with partners to find additional savings. Unfortunately, due to the scale of the funding cuts, the council simply cannot continue to provide the same level of services. Adult Social Care has to change the way it does things and a transformation programme has been put in place to develop new and innovative ways to meet people's needs.

The local account is therefore, more than ever, a really important process where the council and the public work together to understand what needs to change and which services are having the most effective impact on people's lives. Through this local account we have been able to identify areas where we can improve things and make things better for people who need care and support. We have used the things you have told us and the areas we need to improve on to develop an action plan for improvement over the next 12 months and we will report on our progress in the local account for 2016.

Where we can't do the things you have asked, we have been honest and have offered the best possible solution we can given the significant challenges we face. To make sure there is a continuing conversation and a close relationship between the council and those who use services, I wanted to share with you some of our plans to improve the areas you have said that need to be improved. I have included an action plan showing the issues that were identified through the Local Account process and what we will do to improve things.

Issue	Action
Transition to adult services	
Parents and carers have said they would like more information to be available when their child is going through the transition from children's services to adults services.	We will improve the information available on transition as part of the Councils responsibilities in the Care Act on having a comprehensive information and advice offer by July 2015.
More information needs to be provided on the eligibility criteria for adults services and how decisions are made about what support people get.	We will improve the information available on assessment and eligibility as part of the Councils responsibilities in the Care Act on having a comprehensive information and advice offer by July 2015.
People have said they would like more support during the transition to adult services including independent advocacy support from the voluntary sector.	From the 1 st April 2015, Adults who have substantial difficulty in engaging with the care and support process will be offered Independent Advocacy support as part of the Councils responsibilities in the Care Act.
It is felt that respite care is not suitable for younger adults during the transition from children's to adult's services. It is felt that respite does not meet the specific needs of younger adults and there needs to be more people trained to deal with children in transition with complex needs.	There will be a service review of the respite service which will include considerations of how respite can be improved during transition. This review will be completed by November 2015.
Younger Adults	
Local insight suggests that younger people may have to travel outside of the borough in order to find services which meet their needs.	A Market Position Statement will be developed during 2015 and the gaps in the availability of services for younger adults will be considered as part of its development. The Market Position Statement will inform future commissioning of services in adult social care.
Young people said they need more information, advice and guidance to say when things are not right and that they need support throughout the complaints process.	During 2015 we will also be increasing the availability of independent advocacy to support people to make complaints and appeals. Also, by July 2015 we will improve the information available on the appeals and complaints process as part of the Councils responsibilities in the Care Act on having a comprehensive information and advice offer.
Young people have said that there is a	The development of a Market Position Statement by November 2015 will

<p>shortage of housing options for young adults, with some housing such as Bluebell not being accessible to younger people. This can mean having to move to a different area to access suitable housing.</p>	<p>clearly articulate to Housing developers and Care Providers the need to offer suitable housing solutions for young adults. As part of this process, the Council will also work with providers to stimulate the market for more choices of housing for younger people.</p>
<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	
<p>Nationally and locally, it is felt that resources are not balanced between preventative and reactive spend (treatment). There needs to be a shift towards more preventative interventions and improving wellbeing. Any available preventative services such as counselling, often involve long waiting times.</p>	<p>Activity on phase 2 and 3 of the mental health and wellbeing programme is being planned and will be aligned with the Clinical Commissioning Groups development of a 4 year strategic plan for Mental Health. Phases two and three will be addressing the issues raised in the Adult Social Care Local Account.</p>
<p>Lack of a balance between services for physical health and mental health has been highlighted as an issue in Knowsley which should be addressed at a strategic and service user level, with insight suggesting a lack of understanding regarding the links between physical and mental health.</p>	
<p>An issue locally relates to increasing demand vs. reducing provision, and the differences in provision across the Borough. As mental health services in Knowsley are provided by a range of different providers this can lead to a lack of communication, consistency, choice and joined up working.</p>	
<p>Difficulties at transition points have been highlighted as an issue, not just between ages but also between levels of care, particularly for those with disabilities and for children moving between children's and adult's services.</p>	
<p>Professionals have raised concerns that there is a disjointed landscape of provision with unclear pathways to accessing mental</p>	

<p>health and wellbeing services, responsibilities and accountability, leading to some people being excluded from mental health assessments and a lack of clarity. Local insight has found that criteria for eligibility are conflicting between the Local Authority and service providers, leading to people falling through the gaps.</p>	
Learning Disabilities	
<p>People with learning disabilities said that turning 25 feels like a cut off point. Social activities are limited, and there are few services for encouraging skills, education, and employment and for preventing isolation.</p>	<p>By July 2015, we will improve the information on services available for people with learning disabilities over the age of 25 as part of the Councils responsibilities in the Care Act.</p>
<p>People feel that there needs to be more support for people aged 16-25 with learning disabilities and where they can go to continue education.</p>	<p>Individualised information about where people can go to continue their education after leaving school will be included in their Education, Health and Care Plans from the SEND changes which will be fully implemented by 2017.</p>
<p>More work needs to be done around local services and transport, ensuring families and people with disabilities have access to local facilities.</p>	<p>We will continue to engage with Merseytravel through our Learning Disability and Physical Disability Partnership Boards during 2015/16 to improve public transport options to local services for people with disabilities.</p> <p>In 2015/6 we will be retendering for our taxi and minibus framework providers to ensure that there is more efficient and timely taxi and minibus transport available for people with disabilities.</p> <p>We will also continue to develop more local services and facilities closer to people's homes where possible. In 2015, new extra care facilities will open in Huyton and Halewood, and in 2016 a new supported living service will open in Fazakerley.</p>
<p>There were a number of issues identified with Knowsley's sport and leisure services, for instance there are no inclusion facilitators to encourage participation in sport and leisure for those people with</p>	<p>'The Big Group' which is a self-advocacy group for people with a learning disability have commenced working on the following:-</p> <p>a) 'what is good' from their perspective,</p>

<p>learning disabilities. There is also no easy read information to publicise sports and leisure activities.</p>	<p>b) barriers to participation, c) case studies (good and bad experience) d) mystery shopper visits of leisure and community facilities.</p> <p>Investment from the autism initiative fund will be used in 2015/16 for reasonable adjustments to leisure facilities.</p>
<p>Many people have indicated that there are problems with their social workers. Poor communication, as well issues with the frequency of visits (not enough visits) have been highlighted. People also feel that there should be just one social worker assigned to them – not just a social worker for a specific issue.</p>	<p>We will be working to improve standards and methods of communication. From September 2015, there will be monthly social work surgeries available at each local day centre.</p> <p>Although there aren't enough social workers available to allocate one to everyone, we ensure that we have enough social workers and nurses who can work with the most serious and complex issues and cases.</p> <p>Everyone has access to the social work team via the duty system, via visits to Willis House and 70% of people with a learning disability will receive an annual review during 2015/16, including 100% of people living in residential care. By the end of 2016, everyone will have a named care co-ordinator.</p>
<p>Physical disability and sensory impairment</p>	
<p>People with physical difficulties feel that the staffing and waiting times for blue badges need to improve. There are not enough assessors for the demand so people struggle to get an appointment for a blue badge, and those that receive a badge are sometimes not receiving them until after the date on the badge.</p>	<p>The process from application to assessment for Blue Badges has been reviewed with waiting times for appointments at the Centre for Independent Living reducing to 3 weeks. Waiting times will continue to be monitored to ensure people with physical disabilities do not experience any delays in waiting for assessments.</p> <p>We will continue to improve waiting times by implementing a new process for assessing blue badge applications with our council's one-stop shops by July 2015.</p>
<p>Local insight suggests that there are not enough activities available for people with visual impairments and also activities to suit all ages.</p>	<p>We will be advertising all current and future sensory impaired services on a dedicated E-Marketplace. Services will be advertised electronically, in leaflet form and available in all accessible</p>

	formats. This will be completed by December 2015.
It was felt that there needs to be more accessible information for visually impaired people in hospitals and GP surgeries, and appropriate markings on lampposts around the borough.	Markings on lampposts are not provided, due to the initial cost and on-going maintenance implications for authorised attachments under Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract requirements. However, street lighting replacement does consider visual impairment and accessibility of the footway in the design process. Lighting columns are located to the rear of the footway where possible to maximise pedestrian access, columns are positioned away from trees, where possible, to provide relevant lighting levels and lighting equipment with high colour rendition properties is used to assist identify objects/colours of vehicles/clothing and enable better facial recognition.
Whilst people who have used the Centre for Independent Living and those who have received home adaptations have said that these services are good, waiting times are still causing problems with some residents unable to access these services.	Staffing within the aids & adaptations team has been reviewed with waiting times for assessment for both adults and children significantly reducing. Work will continue to further reduce waiting times for assessment for people requiring this service. Additional investment has been made in both Occupational Therapy and within disabled adaptations. Waiting times in both services are now being reduced.
Carers	
Carers have said that they are noticing the impact of budget cuts on services such as day care which provide them with a break from caring. They have said that this service can be as much about carers as it is for the person they care for	From the 1st April, carers will be entitled to an assessment of their needs and services and support if their needs are eligible. This will improve the support we give to carers and help to give them a break from caring.
Carers have said that there is little available to allow carers a break at weekends. They would like to see extended opening hours in day centres and weekend respite.	A service review of this service, which will be completed in 2015/16, includes a review of the current offer to determine if there is a need for weekends / evenings for some users instead of daytime. Work is also taking place with community groups to stimulate the community offer evenings and weekends.

<p>While there has been improvements in the information and advice available to carers, some carers have said that the information and advice should be available in one place and be consistent for all carers and that those who don't know about it should be better supported to access it.</p>	<p>The Council is currently looking at ways in which it can improve the information and advice that is available including updating its "know your care" website which will provide a single point of access to information and advice about services and support for people who use services and their carers. There will be more information available to carers by July 2015.</p>
<p>Some carers have expressed an interest in having a separate assessment of their own needs and have said they are pleased with the entitlements to an assessment that the Care Act introduces in April 2015.</p>	<p>Carers assessment will be available from the 1st April.</p>
<p>Carers have said they would like to have access to the people they are caring for's care plan and want to be more involved in its development.</p>	<p>The Council will be implementing a new assessment and care planning process from the 1st April. The new process will put clients and their carers at the heart of the care planning process.</p>
<p>Older People</p>	
<p>Older people have noticed increasing waiting times for blue badges through the Centre for Independent Living.</p>	<p>The process from application to assessment for Blue Badges has been reviewed with waiting times for appointments at the Centre for Independent Living reducing to 3 weeks. Waiting times will continue to be monitored to ensure people with physical disabilities do not experience any delays in waiting for assessments. We will continue to improve waiting times by implementing a new process for assessing blue badge applications with our council's one-stop shops by July 2015.</p>
<p>Older people have said they sometimes find referral pathways for social care confusing and difficult to navigate.</p>	<p>As part of the Better Care Fund plans and the Care Act implementation, the information and advice available on referral pathways and support to navigate them will be improved.</p>
<p>Disabled older adults and older adults who have no computer access have said they find the bidding process for social housing with Property Pool Plus difficult to use, as well as those older adults who cannot access computers.</p>	<p>Aside from the online bidding process, properties are advertised through a weekly newsletter which is available in a range of offices. The availability of this newsletter has been recently increased so that it is now available in Members surgeries and through Knowsley Older Peoples Voice. Weekly advert sheets</p>

	<p>can be posted or e-mailed to those who cannot access the adverts any other way. Customers can place text bids and can also contact Knowsley Housing Trust's Customer Access Centre who can place a bid on a customer's behalf.</p> <p>More information on alternative ways to bid for housing will be made available by July 2015 to support people struggling with the bidding process. This includes increased marketing of the auto bidding process.</p>
<p>Older people have said they are experiencing difficulties accessing some social care services, particularly those older people who are very vulnerable and don't know how to access support.</p>	<p>The Council will be increasing the availability of advocacy to support people through the adult social care assessment and care planning process. There will also be a better, more accessible offer of information and advice available to people from the 1st April 2015.</p>
<p>The loss of computer training activities previously delivered by Age UK means that older adults in Knowsley are facing problems accessing Information Technology and risk becoming digitally excluded. Also the development of digital services with no alternative way of access for non-computer users is said to be increasing digital exclusion amongst this age group.</p>	<p>Digital Inclusion has been agreed as a priority for the Knowsley Partnership. Through this work, partners have made a commitment to ensure that no residents are left behind in the digital age. Actions to ensure this will be reflected in the developing Digital Inclusion action plan (to be launched April 2015). The action plan will take an all round approach to; increase basic online skills; ensure access to the internet and raise awareness of the benefits and necessity of being online.</p>
Keeping people safe	
<p>Annual safeguarding Report priorities</p>	<p>These will be updated and published in the Adult Safeguarding Business Plan, 2015/16.</p>
<p>People have said that there needs to be more awareness and information on how vulnerable people can keep safe, and more CCTV around sheltered accommodation where most vulnerable people live.</p>	<p>The Council is currently reviewing all of its safeguarding processes and procedures including the availability of information and advice and how to report safeguarding concerns. A new contact/enquiry and referral process is being developed to ensure concerns from the public and individuals are being immediately addressed.</p> <p>During 2015 closer ties will be made</p>

	<p>with providers of Sheltered and Extra Care Accommodation to identify concerns and where possible ensure they are addressed. Stronger links will also be made with Community Safety to ensure concerns are being recorded and addressed.</p>
<p>It is felt that there needs to more information about how to report safeguarding issues and more convenient ways to do it, such as dedicated places in the community.</p>	<p>The Council is currently reviewing all of its safeguarding processes and procedures including the availability of information and advice and how to report safeguarding concerns. A new model is being developed to ensure the public can easily and quickly report general or individual concerns by October 2015.</p> <p>This will be publicised through Council and Partner agencies, leaflets, bulletins, email and the Knowsley Council website.</p>