

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION FEEDBACK – KEY THEMES AND CLARIFICATIONS

Key Theme	Issue	Raised by whom	Detail of Feedback	Clarifications/ Comments
CHOICE & CONTROL	Concern that day centres will close	Service user and providers	There were high levels of concern that the current day centres will close.	The council will not be closing any day centres.
		Service user and providers	Day centres provide a good, safe place for people to meet.	
	Day centre services need to be more flexible	Service user and providers	People wanted more activities during the evenings and weekends.	<p>All providers have been supported by the council to find personalised ways of working – this includes making their services attractive, flexible and competitive.</p> <p>Personalisation means that people with learning disabilities and their families will be talking directly with services about what they want (e.g. flexible opening). Services will need to respond to these demands to remain viable.</p> <p>This feedback will be used to inform organisations about the changes they need to make to their existing services.</p>
	Cost and quality of services	Carers/ Parents	People are concerned that if fewer people choose day centres, then the day centre costs will go up, so that it will be more expensive for those that do choose it.	The market of available services will change as more people have personal budgets. Services will need to offer affordable, flexible and attractive services to remain viable. The council will continue to meet its statutory duty, so personal budgets will be sufficient to purchase support required to meet people’s needs.

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	Concern about the quality of the workforce	Carers/ Parents	Some people thought staff in existing services and new services will need to receive specific training to be able to support people with learning disabilities.	<p>We recognise that organisations will be making significant changes to respond to personalisation. This will include workforce configuration and service delivery models.</p> <p>Southwark Council is working with the existing day centre providers to help them make these changes in a stable and manageable way.</p> <p>Personal budgets mean people can purchase services from whichever organisation they wish to get a service that meets their needs and aspirations.</p> <p>The council has created an innovation fund in order to stimulate the development of high quality services available to people with personal budgets.</p>
PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT AND THE INTRODUCTION OF PERSONAL	Uncertainty and suspicion	Service user and families & providers' staff	Whilst there was general acceptance that personalisation is a good thing, there was a high level of anxiety about the process to implement personalisation.	The council acknowledges this concern and will work with services users, carers/family members and support staff to demonstrate an equitable process.

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	Confusion between personalisation and cuts.	Service user and families & providers' staff	Some people think that personalisation is 'masking' the cuts that have to be made.	<p>Personalisation, as a concept/philosophy has been around since the 'Putting People First' concordat in 2007, though it had its roots in 2004 where a group of parents of people with learning disabilities asked their council for the money the council were spending on the service users, as they preferred to make their own choices about their care.</p> <p>Personalisation is generally accepted as good practice throughout the world.</p> <p>The government is reducing funding to councils, and this does impact on funding available to adults with learning disabilities. However, personal budgets are seen as a way of making sure people have more effective support that meets their needs, and that money is not tied up in large block contracts.</p> <p>The council aims to improve outcomes for people, even though the overall budgets are being reduced.</p>
	Loss of non-statutory advocacy service.	Carers/ Parents	There seems to have been a loss of advocacy service for people with learning disabilities.	<p>Advocacy for people who lack mental capacity is a statutory service and remains in its current form.</p> <p>Non-statutory advocacy has changed to be more facilitative – supporting people to understand their choices and access them. The council is referring to this as and information and access service, the purpose of which is to ensure the person's voice is heard throughout the entire process.</p>
	Assessment process	Carers/ Parents	How will the council know what people with learning disabilities really want?	<p>The outcome based assessment process is designed to identify what people really need to achieve the outcomes they want.</p> <p>The support planning process that takes place after the assessment identifies how the outcomes will be met.</p>

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EMPLOYMENT	Lack of full time employment opportunities	Service users and families	Many people with a learning disability do work, but very few work in full time, well paid jobs. Most can only get jobs that are less than 16 hours per week; only paid minimum wage; or voluntary	The Council held an event in June to look at best practice nationally around supporting people with learning disabilities to get and keep jobs. We are going to use our learning from this event to review the effectiveness of our existing contracts to support people into employment.
	Unique skills and attributes make people an asset to employers	Service user and families	People told us that people with learning disabilities had particular skills that need to be recognised and promoted to employers	Adult social care has launched an Innovation Fund which offers grants to providers with a focus on helping people into employment and supporting them to retain jobs.
	Not enough support to gain and keep employment.	Service user and families	People want more training and support to develop the skills for getting paid employment and support to keep their jobs once they have them.	People can use their personal budgets to get support in finding and retaining a job.
	Some people do not want to work	Service user and families	Whilst it's clear that some people are unable to work in full-time paid employment, there are many people with learning disabilities that want to work, just like everybody else – as it's important to them to feel like they are making a contribution to their families and/or their community.	Adult social care is sharing information from the consultation with colleagues as part of the development of the Council's economic wellbeing strategy, so that opportunities to increase the number of learning disabled adults in paid work can be realised.
	People with learning disabilities may have low aspirations.	Providers	Because of the culture of dependency that some people have grown up in, some people with learning disabilities and their carers/family have low aspirations about employment.	
	Confusion about what is meant by employment.	Service user and families	Some people thought the unpaid activities done in day centres were a form of employment	

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EDUCATION	Adults with learning disabilities access and value adult education opportunities	Service user and families	There is evidence from the feedback that many people with learning disabilities access education and they enjoy it.	Adult social care is sharing information with colleagues in corporate strategy to feed into work with education providers, so that the range of courses on offer meets local needs and there are clearer steps developed from education into employment.
	Mainstream education should be more inclusive	Service user and families	There is concern that there is not enough support in mainstream classes and that this should be the aim for many people with learning disabilities to be more inclusive.	
	Education needs to be meaningful, with identified outcomes	Service user and families	Whilst people enjoy the education available, there does not seem to be an identified outcome for many – what does it lead on to? Some people talked about “endless courses” that did not help them move on with their lives.	
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND SPORT AND LEISURE	People with learning disabilities already participate in a large number of activities – but most are in groups for people with learning disabilities, leaving people segregated within their communities	Service user and providers	More should be done to support people with learning disabilities to be a part of the community, being supported to engage with mainstream groups and activities.	We would like to provide more support to mainstream groups to be more welcoming and inclusive to people with learning disabilities by improving their awareness and accessibility. We will be exploring the opportunities available for the council to achieve this through its corporate actions and strategies.
	People value the friendships and relationships they have when attending day centres.	Service user and providers	People said that they do have friendships and relationships with other service users and staff when at the day centres. They do go out into the community – but usually in groups.	The Innovation Fund includes a focus on Peer Support, to encourage new & innovative ways to help people meet and extend their social networks. We will look to support planning to have an element of maintaining and developing new friendships

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	People said they need support to access leisure	Service user and families	More should be done to support people with learning disabilities to be a part of the community, being supported to engage with mainstream leisure groups and activities.	We would like to provide more support to mainstream groups to be more welcoming and inclusive to people with learning disabilities by improving their awareness and accessibility. We will be exploring the opportunities available for the council to support this through its corporate actions and strategies.
	Unpaid support is important to help people with learning disabilities access community activity, sport and leisure	Service user and families	People said that they sometimes access community events and activities via their family or unpaid support.	The Council acknowledges the role family and friends play in supporting our vision.
	Access and transport to events and activities	Service user and families	<p>There was limited feedback around transport and access. Some people liked travelling on their own on public transport – and do this at the weekends – although they still get day centre mini-buses to collect them and drop them off at the day centres.</p> <p>Parents and carers are sometimes nervous about safety.</p>	<p>We will develop a travel policy to clarify how we will support people to travel. We will consult on our proposed policy in the new year.</p> <p>Arrangements made during support planning will consider risks and risk management</p>

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CARERS	How will people with learning disabilities and their carers/ families cope with managing personal budgets	Service user and families	<p>There were a relatively large number of responses that shared concern about managing personal budgets. The key concerns were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responsibility of managing cash budgets • The time consuming aspect around the bureaucracy of recording payments for carers to manage • Anxiety of financial reporting – concerned we would make people take time to record and report their spend, but the Council would do nothing with the information. • Lack of understanding of the choices people can make about managing their personal budgets • General anxiety about people being taken advantage of or at risk of someone misusing their money 	<p>Personal budgets do not have to be a direct cash payment to the individual; there are a number of options.</p> <p>People who do not want to manage their own money can have the Council or a third party manage the money for them.</p> <p>There are a lot of organisations in Southwark that provide this money management support. People were able to meet some of these organisations at our Provider Fair on 9th Nov.</p> <p>All of these options will be clearly explained during the assessment and review process.</p> <p>We will develop a financial recording process that is clear and easy to follow.</p> <p>Financial monitoring will be proportionate and straight forward.</p>
	Respite care		Current day centres are important source of respite care.	Agreed.
	Carers needs		People asked if carers needs would be included in the assessment.	When carrying out an outcome based assessment the whole life and support structure of the person with learning disabilities is considered.
	Working carers		Working carers may not be able to continue to work if services are cut.	Carers will be offered an assessment to identify their needs. Once assessed the social worker or our partners Southwark carers will carefully consider what support can be offered to stop the caring role from breaking down.

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	Carer stress and responsibility		There is concern that the council does not recognise the stress that carers are under and also that change will increase the caring responsibility.	<p>Personalisation and our vision aim to support carers better through their inclusion in assessments and better engagement with them and their family member to develop a support plan that fully represents their aims and outcomes.</p> <p>We recognise that these both represent major change and that it is difficult to manage change without support. Given the level of concern we heard during the consultation we are going to commission a carers organisation to work with our carers and families (including carer groups) to help them better understand personalisation and directly support them through the process of setting up a personal budget. We will have this support in place by March 2013.</p>
	Changes are happening too fast for carers		There was some concern that the changes are happening too fast for carers to cope.	We recognise that the aims of the vision are large and it will take time for all of the outcomes to be achieved on both an individual and system wide level.
	Personal budgets could affect my benefits'		There was some concern that the personal budget would be seen as an income and would therefore have an effect on people benefits.	Personal budgets are not additional income – and do not affect people's benefits. We will confirm this with people at the time of their assessment and support planning.
	Financial Hardship		Some people said that with all the cuts in other benefits, any cut in service would mean financial hardship for families and carers.	Your personal budget will always be enough to meet a your assessed eligible needs.

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CHANGE	Many people are concerned about any changes	Service user and families	People generally agreed with the principles of personalisation and the vision, but are concerned about how well they would be able to cope with any changes to the way services are provided now	<p>We recognise that change is daunting and often difficult for everybody. To help address this, we will be providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to parents and families through the process from a carers group • Support to providers in their change management through a programme • Support to individuals through the support planning and assessment process • Time for the changes to be made and the vision to be implemented <p>Providers and people with learning disabilities will share stories of their success and difficulties so we can all learn from their experiences.</p>
	Some people said they liked the idea of personal budgets but were unsure how it would work for them.			
	Change is particularly difficult for people with autism.			
	Many people want to try new things			
SAFEGUARDING	Misuse of personal budgets	Providers/ Carers & Family	There was some feedback that showed concern that if someone receives a personal budget from the council, there is a risk that their family will not use the budget to support the person with learning disabilities.	The use of personal budgets is monitored and reviewed by the council.
	Hate Crime	Providers/ Carers & Family	Some people expressed concern about hate crime happening to the person with learning disabilities if they are not 'safe' in a day centre – more out in the community.	Risk and positive risk management is part of the support planning process.