



Stockport Council in common with all other councils in the country are continually looking at different ways in which services can be delivered and money can be saved, without causing additional risk to vulnerable people. Adult Disability Services has had savings to achieve year on year and in 2013/14 a range of options were being considered to enable these savings to be made.

The remodelling of the 'in house' supported tenancy service for adults with learning disabilities was agreed and for the service to continue to provide support to people who are assessed as having complex needs, whilst seeking to identify alternative provision for those who are assessed as having less complex needs.

A project group was formed, that included representatives from the Assessment and Commissioning Team, the 'in house' provider service, finance and procurement. Representatives from Stockport Advocacy also formed part of the project group.

A series of awareness raising events and information sharing sessions were arranged for people we support and their families/advocates, to encourage consideration of their taking more personalised forms of support. This was linked to the "Making Choices, Having Control" programme which aimed to increase the options available to people.

All of the people supported by the service, were offered the option of an individualised budget and for those people who were not considered as having complex needs they were informed that it was the council's intention for their support to be tendered to a new provider over a 24 – 30 month time period.

Where people we support and their families expressed an interest in individual budgets, we explored this with them, with people being allocated social workers as part of the process to enable a personalised budget to be identified. This resulted in some people choosing who they wanted to support them and having their support provided through an individual service fund. Where people did not have family involvement advocates worked with them during the process.

It was clear there was an increasing number of potential providers who are able to provide support to people with a learning disability who have less complex needs and were able to do this at a lower cost than the in house service.

A Framework Agreement was implemented for the provision of support services for people with a learning disability. There is now a list of 26 providers within the Framework who are keen to provide tenancy support in Stockport.

At the beginning of this project the in-house service employed over 200 staff who supported over 200 people with a learning disability, across 60 supported tenancies.

The service managed vacant posts for some time which provided opportunities to reconfigure the size and focus of the in-house tenancy service for the future, without the need for TUPE transfers or compulsory redundancies.

The tenancies, where people did not have complex needs have been grouped together initially comprising 3 or 4 properties, typically supporting 12 to 16 people— and a new provider was sought.

The people supported in the properties were allocated a social worker to review their assessed needs and along with their families, they were supported to be involved in the procurement process, from developing questions for the written tender submissions, shortlisting all tenders submitted and interviewing shortlisted organisations.

Following the award of the contract people who are supported and their families were encouraged and supported to be involved in the recruitment process with the new provider, interviewing and appointing staff who would work with them.

When support transfers to a new provider the existing staff teams have not been transferring, but have moved to vacant posts in other parts of the 'in-house' supported tenancy service. This has eliminated any TUPE implications.

There has been a planned transition period for all of the outsourced services, during which time the new provider introduce their new staff to the people we support, their families/advocates and work alongside 'in-house' staff to effect a smooth handover.

We "tested the market" early in 2013, through a tendering process and have continued with this approach, working with people we support and their families as part of the procurement process. To date we have outsourced (through tendering and individualised budgets) the support to 131 people living in 32 locations across Stockport, previously supported by the 'in house' service, achieving year on year savings of around £1.3m.

Through this approach we have:

- Redefined the future strategic direction of the in-house tenancy service, focussing on those clients with the most complex needs, providing best value.
- Remodelled the supported tenancy services for people with less complex needs without job losses or TUPE transfer issues
- Supported people to explore individualised budgets
- Involved People we support and their families in the procurement process
- Ensured people we support are involved in the recruitment process with new providers
- Expanded the range of providers in Stockport to increase the potential for customer choice and control
- Reduce overall costs of delivering supported tenancy options for people in Stockport and significantly contributed to the Corporate Savings Programme