

<p>Adult Social Care Strategy 2021 – 2025</p> <p>Consultation feedback from the Voluntary Sector group</p> <p>Meeting: Friday 14th May 2021</p>
<p>Attendees:</p> <p>Kent Association for the Blind (KAB), Medway Voluntary Action (MVA), Wisdom Hospice, Sunlight Trust, Walderslade together (WALT) Medway Parent Carer Forum, Centre for independent living, Megan CIC, wHoo Cares, (individual names not included due to data sharing purposes)</p>
<p>Feedback; Digital:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sunlight Trust<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well written.• People lack the skills to use digital. So would need to consider the users skills – Sunlight run a Smart skills digital training (smart phones). How to use a smartphone.2. WALT<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secured funding to provide members (clients) with devices and sessions on how to use them. Need to consider digital skills and access for those who can't use digital.• Everything WALT does is online now. Won't shut down digital when they open again and will offer a blended approach.3. KAB<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be enabling but not the solution for everyone. Flagged up sensory impairments. They hold a pan sensory contract and are keen to support people with impairments.4. MVA<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services had to offer online because of COVID, but some could not do that easily and some trained their users. KAB and others mentioned making sure the documents have been made accessible.
<p>Response: Medway Council recognises that the digital approach will not be appropriate for everyone and there will always be an option to contact us in other ways.</p>

Further comments:

1. Wisdom Hospice

- Like the direction of travel. Personalisation and Population Health Management. Manage the patient's rehabilitation.
- Would like to know Medway Council's position with the Kent & Medway Care Record.

2. Medway Parent and Carers Forum

- 0 – 25. transitioning concerns from Parents. Have to be in crisis before we receive help.

3. wHoo Cares

- Format – font too small.
- 'Just enough' phrase included in the document is concerning...
- Community is mentioned lots of times, but nothing mentioned on how to support the VCS'
- Social Care staff – what will happen to the wider social care work force if the number of people being supported by Adult Social Care reduces.

4. MEGAN

- 'Just enough'... poor statement.
- Mental Health (low level) would want to know what the criteria for ASC eligibility is so that referrals made are accurate.
- Safeguarding – why so many referrals that do not turn to actions?
- They have a user voice project for Mental Health so they could share the draft. Jackie Brown asked that any feedback could be shared.
- Where is the Support for the community providers?

5. Centre for independent living

- How does the Strategy link to council and departments and their work?

6. Climate Change agenda

- Partnership Commissioning are starting to work with providers to reduce their carbon footprints.
- Adult Social Care will carry out virtual meetings/assessments *where appropriate* to reduce travel/carbon emissions.

Response:

Kent & Medway Care Record: Our data is already being shared. A technical glitch has delayed the ability for Social Workers to access the record; this will be resolved as soon as possible.

Transitions: A Preparing for Adulthood group has been set up, initially focussing on transition from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care, however this will be expanded. Jackie agreed to attend a meeting with the forum to discuss this further.

Format – font too small: Amended by Medway Council’s communications team

‘Just Enough’ phrase: This phrase does not mean that we will not provide the right level of care, we want to provide a level of care that enables people to remain independent, when that is appropriate. It is known that if care from a statutory service is put in place, people can often become dependent on it when it is not always needed. By putting ‘just enough’ care in place it will support independence

Supporting the VCS: Population Health working with the VCS and how it has a parity with statutory services. Medway ASC are looking to introduce a Co-production board which will assist us in working together.

Community does not just mean VCS, it means neighbourhoods, church groups, families. A strategic priority of **Medway’s Culture Strategy** is ‘Wellbeing - Increase active participation to address obesity, mental and spiritual health, promoting active minds, bodies and lifestyles and seeking to address social isolation

Wider Social Care Workforce: Our Market Position statement and Accommodation Strategy will be developed this year. This will be considered in the developments of these strategies and as part of the Adult Social Care Transformation & Improvement programme.

Adult Social Care eligibility criteria: Will look in to providing this information going forward to support partners/people when making referrals to ASC.

Safeguarding Referrals not resulting in Enquiries: Referrals may be meant for ASC and not safeguarding. Will discuss with colleagues whether better information and understanding of safeguarding criteria is needed.

Linking with other Council Services: The council takes its Adult Social Care responsibilities very seriously. The AD ASC will be attending meetings across the council to discuss Adult Social Care and how services can support the division and the strategy.

Feedback received in writing

Healthwatch Medway – Steering Group

- Please could there be a summary document of the key points?
- Will there be an easy read version?
- How will progress be measured?
- How will this be implemented?

An excellent document was the consensus

Appendix 2 – Feedback from Consultation

Response: We will produce a summary document and easy read version.

The strategy will be implemented via the Adult Social Care Transformation & Improvement Programme and progress will be measured by the Portfolio Holder's monthly dashboard meeting and the council's Corporate Transformation Board

Age UK Medway welcomes the acknowledgement that all older people have the right to live a fulfilling later life, remaining independent in the comfort and security of their own home, for as long as it is safe for them to do so. We will be pleased to support the Council's vision, and welcome the opportunity for the charity's range of independence and wellbeing-enhancing services to contribute to the Council's achievement of its strategy

CMC Advice - Thank you for your strategy paper on Medway Adult Social Care. It has been brought to my attention that there is not enough resources to support those at the "Front Door". So, all inquiries that have anything remotely to do with social health is being forwarded to the social care teams, overwhelming them in the process. It would be good for you to expand on the use of Social Prescribing Link Workers at the front line to signpost, refer or even take on as a case, so that those who are most needy get appropriately referred. A good example of this is being practiced in Primary Care throughout England in GP Surgeries. It is now being proved that Social Care and the NHS alone need other community services to prevent and prolong people's quality of life. So, in closing, I feel strongly that there be plans to expand on the plans for a Medway Link Worker Team be considered, as part of the strategy.

Response: The Transformation & Improvement programme includes a review of Adult Social Care's 'Front Door'. It is vital that we get this right to ensure that we are supporting those who need support from the statutory service. We will consider the expansion of the Medway Link Worker team as part of the programme.

Further to our meeting this afternoon, here are my comments on the draft Medway Adult Social Care Plan:

Digital exclusion

The council goes into details about the form its digital transformation will take. However, a sizeable section of Medway's population do not use digital devices. As far as we are aware, the figure for Medway is not available, but the Office of National Statistics calculated that in the UK as a whole, 10 per cent of adults did not use online services in 2018. So if Medway is typical in this regard, the number of Medway residents is likely to be substantial. Yet digitally-excluded people get no mention whatsoever in the council's draft social care strategy.

People who cannot afford a computer or a smartphone, have one but lack sufficient bandwidth or the confidence to use digital equipment, or are prevented

from doing so by difficulties in seeing, manipulating equipment or understanding face exclusion from more and more aspects of daily life, and this divide has been exacerbated by Covid. Furthermore, the digitally excluded are often the very people who need social care – four-fifths of the 5.3 million people in the ONS survey were aged 65 or over.

The council should explain in its digital transformation plan just how the needs of people in Medway who are digitally excluded will be met, especially those who, perhaps because they are blind, partially-sighted or have dementia or limited dexterity will never be able to use digital devices.

Care homes

Support for people in care homes should be a major part of the council's work in social care, yet these people are mentioned only in passing in the draft strategy, in the context of the hope that as many Medway residents as possible will not go into residential care.

Yet many people have social care needs which mean a residential or nursing home provides the most suitable environment for them, and this number is likely to rise in the future. The council's strategy should recognise this reality and explain its objectives and strategy for supporting people in care homes, whether they be council placements or self-funding residents. To restrict mention of care homes, as the council does its draft plan, to giving a figure on the number of residents part-funded by the council, a desire to work with the Care Quality Commission and the aspiration that Medway residents will not need residential care is woefully inadequate.

Medway Healthwatch would welcome a meeting to discuss the council's approach to helping both digitally-excluded Medway residents and people living in care homes.

Response:

Digital Exclusion – While there is a need to 'channel shift' due to people's expectations to communicate with the council electronically, we fully recognise that this cannot be the only method of communication. There will always be options to interact and communicate with the council using other methods.

Care Homes – Support for Care Homes is a major part of the council's work in social care. An Accommodation Strategy will be developed this year which will include objectives for supporting people in care homes. Adult Social Care works closely with the Care Quality Commission, including monthly meetings with the regional officer.

Meeting: A meeting will be arranged with the AD for Adult Social Care, Partnership Commissioning, Digital and Business Change to assure of Medway's commitments in the areas above.