

## REPORT TO THE CABINET

**Date of Meeting:** 12 March 2019  
**Cabinet Member:** Cllr W Gareth Roberts & Cllr Dilwyn Morgan  
**Author:** Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director  
**Contact Telephone Number:** Ext 32468  
**Title of Item:** North Wales Learning Disabilities Strategy

---

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Learning Disabilities Strategy sets out the vision for the Health and Care services for people with learning disabilities in North Wales. It contains information about the needs of the population and what matters to them, what needs to change and the actions required to drive the change.
- 1.2 The strategy has been co-produced with people with learning difficulties, their parents/carers, local authorities, health workers across the children and adults services and providers within the sector (private and third sector).

**Cyswllt:**

01286 679729 • 01286 679490

[cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)



## 2 Why the need for a decision

2.1 The North Wales Learning Disabilities Strategy sets out the way we will work to achieve integrated learning disabilities services in North Wales.

## 3. The decision sought

3.1 To obtain the Cabinet's approval on Gwynedd Council's commitment to implementing the Learning Disabilities Strategy locally.

## 4. The background and relevant considerations

4.1 The North Wales Learning Disabilities Strategy sets out the way we will work to achieve integrated learning disabilities services in North Wales. It was developed jointly by local authorities and the Health Board with support from Public Health Wales. It includes what people with learning disabilities and their carers have told us matter to them, these are:

- Finding a good place to live
- Doing something meaningful
- Friends, family, and relationships
- Being safe
- Being healthy
- Getting the right support.

4.2 The vision for North Wales is that people with learning disabilities will have a better quality of life, will live locally where they feel 'comfortable and safe', where they feel valued and included in their communities, and where they have access to effective personal support that promotes independence, choice and control. It is worth noting that this vision is in line with Gwynedd's vision for the field; and, our local work programmes, as part of the Council's 'Redesigning Care Services' improvement plan, tie in with this strategy.

4.3 In the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 are statutory duties for Regional Partnership Boards to prioritise the integration of services in relation to people with learning disabilities. This is a priority in the North Wales Regional Plan, likewise in the Council's improvement plans: 'Re-designing Care Services' and 'Community Resilience'.

4.4 In order to fulfil our vision and provide services based on what matters to people, five work packages have been designed within the strategy that note the way we will help people with learning difficulties live a good life:

- **Integrated Structures:** we will ensure that health and social care services work together better to support people with learning difficulties by creating effective integrated structures on a local level and across North Wales to create a consistent and continuous service.
- **Workforce Development:** Ensure that staff know how to communicate well with people with learning disabilities. We will make reasonable adjustments to services to make them easier to use, so that people get the health and social care they need in their language of choice.

- **Commissioning and Procurement:** We will work with other organisations to ensure we have the types of supported housing that people need. We will consider the possibilities of creating combined budgets, where appropriate, across health and social care in the region. We will look at creative ways of developing the services, including direct payments/support budgets and combined direct payments. We will work with the provider market and will support it in developing new ways of working, including social enterprises.
- **Community and cultural change:** We will work with the local community to ensure people with learning disabilities gain access to many different activities and meet new people if they so wish. It entails greater collaboration with local employers to develop employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities together with other daytime opportunities.
- **Assistive technology:** We will find ways of using technology such as alarms and mobile phones to help people become more independent.

4.5 Within each of these fields are included the needs of those with profound and multiple disabilities, and assistance for people through transitions in life, from early years to ageing well.

4.6 The strategy contains information about the population, the existing services and the changes we wish to see. Among the key findings is that approximately 810 children and 2,900 adults with learning disabilities receive services in North Wales, although the actual numbers could be higher. The number of people who need support is on the rise as people with learning disabilities live longer and there are more young people with complex needs who require support. There is also an increasing number of older carers (including parents and families) who provide care and support for people with learning disabilities. People with learning disabilities tend to have poorer health, require greater health care and are at risk of earlier death compared with the general population.

4.7 Gwynedd's programmes in the field have been developed through needs assessments at a local level, and extensive engagement work has taken place across Gwynedd as part of the Learning Disabilities Transformation Group's work programme.

## 5. Matters to be Noted

5.1 The strategy focuses on using existing resources more effectively in order to sustain the service provision and improve outcomes.

5.2 Implementing the strategy to deliver the five work packages has staffing and financial resource implications for the six local authorities and BCUHB. The North Wales Care and Well-being Improvement Collaborative (NWCWIC) has submitted a successful bid to Welsh Government's transformational fund and has secured £1.7 million for the region to fund these additional costs.

5.3 The funds are available for the two financial years of 2018-19 and 2019-20. The purpose of the fund is to make significant progress with the new continuous health and social care models that will be sustainable in the long term.

- 5.4 It will be used to fund a project transformation team, to fund projects for change, especially projects that focus on reducing medium and long-term costs, and continuous evaluation.
- 5.5 The Equalities Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the Council to assess the effect on Equality. An assessment was undertaken to assess the effect on equality and possible inequalities that could arise through the development and implementation of this strategy.

## **6. Any Consultations Undertaken Prior to Recommending the Decision.**

### **6.1. Views of the Statutory Officers:**

#### **i. Monitoring Officer:**

No comments from a propriotiry view point.

#### **ii. Head of Finance Department:**

As it states in section 5.2-5.4 of the report, a Welsh Government Grant of £1.7 million is available to the North Wales region to fund the additional transformation project team, and to fund local project costs for 2018-19 and 2019-20, with the expectation that this leads to sustainable social care in the long term.

As costs relating to additional staff/resources resulting from implementing the strategy will be funded through the grant (with Denbighshire Council administrating the grant on behalf of the region), I understand that there will be no additional financial commitment for Gwynedd Council though implementing this strategy.

The number of people needing support because of a Learning Disability is increasing, with an ageing carers population. Therefore, we need to ensure that we make the most efficient use of current resources in order to reduce costs in the long term. I understand that this strategy enables us to do this, for example through –

- Ensuring that suitable services are available for individuals to reside locally, rather than having to reside in costly out of county placements.
- Cultural change and offering more community/preventative opportunities
- The use of assistive technology in order to support people to live independently

### **6.2. Views of the Local Member:**

6.2.1 Not a local matter.

### **6.3. Results of Any Consultation:**

---

## **Appendices:**

### **Appendix 1 North Wales Learning Disability Strategy**

**Appendix 2 North Wales Learning Disability Strategy – Well Being Assessment**