

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6 JULY 2023

WORCESTERSHIRE LEARNING DISABILITY STRATEGY 2023-2028

Summary

1. The Panel will receive an update on the new Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy 2023-2028. The representatives invited for this discussion are:
 - The Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Children and Families, Adult Social Care, and Health and Well Being, Worcestershire County Council
 - The Strategic Director, People, the Assistant Director, People and Commissioning, and the Lead Commissioner, Learning Disability, Worcestershire County Council
 - The Director for All Age Disability from Worcestershire Children First
 - The Managing Director, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB).
 - The Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

Background

2. The strategy has been co-produced by the Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board on behalf of people with a Learning Disability and their families and is an all-age strategy. The strategy was presented to and endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 23 May 2023 and a link is included as Appendix 1.
3. The Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board (WLDPB) has a membership of partners from across Worcestershire, including Expert Members by experience (one of whom co-chairs the Board), family carers, providers of services, and professionals from across health and social care. The WLDPB includes all-age representation from both Worcestershire Children First and Families in Partnership, as well as close links with young people with Learning Disabilities through Expert Member representation from the self-advocacy organisations SpeakEasy NOW and Our Way.
4. Over the last 12 months, the WLDPB has worked with stakeholders to co-produce the new Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy on behalf of all people with a Learning Disability in Worcestershire.

Development of the Strategy

5. To develop the strategy, the WLDPB talked to people with Learning Disabilities and family carers as well as people working in a wide range of support services across Worcestershire's communities. The Board ran workshops, attended coffee

mornings and self-advocacy groups and facilitated many conversations and discussions, as well as running a survey to find out people's views.

6. The strategy sets out some of the most important areas where the WLDPB think actions need to be taken by people and organisations in Worcestershire to improve the lives of people with Learning Disabilities and their carers. It is organised across seven themes:
 - Theme 1: A Place to Live – A Home
 - Theme 2: Communities Which Include Everyone
 - Theme 3: Purposeful Days
 - Theme 4: Being Healthy – Body and Mind
 - Theme 5: Life Changes
 - Theme 6: Being Safe
 - Theme 7: The Right Support for Family Carers.
7. Each theme area sets out high level aims for Worcestershire, along with some suggested actions. The WLDPB would like organisations in Worcestershire to use these aims and actions in their own individual strategies and delivery plans so that together we are helping to make Worcestershire a great place to live for people with Learning Disabilities.
8. The strategy is designed to be accessible to all and uses some “Easy Read” Photo symbols, as well as Jargon Busters and Explainers and photographs of local people. The strategy also includes many local case studies and quotes from Worcestershire people to show what success will look and feel like. A summary version is also being produced to accompany the strategy which will summarise the aims and actions and will be a full Easy Read document.
9. The WLDPB recognises and embraces the fact that the strategy is ambitious and aspirational, and that it will take some time to achieve all the aims and ambitions. Working with all partners, some specific actions have therefore been identified for focus during the first year of the strategy. These are summarised in the “Year 1 Action Plan” section at the end of the strategy document. The WLDPB will review the strategy every year and measure the progress in Worcestershire, looking at these actions as well as the bigger aims and actions in each of the strategy themes. The first annual review will take place in May 2024.
10. The Learning Disability Strategy is across all ages. There is a specific theme (Theme 5 – Life Changes) which focusses on major life transitions, including the transition from childhood into adulthood. The aim of this theme is: “We want people with Learning Disabilities to have a positive experience of major life changes, including the transitions from childhood to adulthood and into older adulthood.”
11. Within Theme 5, there are two specific high-level actions focussed on the transition from childhood to adulthood in order to improve experiences for young people with Learning Disabilities, specifically:
 - “There should be good quality information available to families from the earliest years about what adulthood will be like and what opportunities will be available, to enable children and young people with learning disabilities to plan their lives and achieve their ambitions” and

- “Preparation for adulthood planning should start from the earliest years, and services need to be co-ordinated so that young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities experience positive transitions as they progress through their education and into adult life.”

12. Organisations and groups identified who need to support the implementation of these aims include:

- Worcestershire Children First
- Worcestershire Adult Social Care
- Health services
- Schools
- Colleges
- Worcestershire Association of Carers
- Families in Partnership
- Housing providers
- Care providers
- Voluntary organisations
- People with Learning Disabilities
- Families of people with Learning Disabilities
- Advocates and representatives

13. As well as a specific targeted “Life Changes” theme, all the strategy themes are intended to have a positive impact on people with Learning Disabilities of all ages. The “Preparation for Adulthood” sections in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (“SEND”) Code of Practice (2015) identify four key outcome areas which local areas need to focus on to enable good Preparing for Adulthood outcomes:

- Education, training and employment
- Independent living
- Friends, relationships and communities
- Good health

14. These areas all directly link to themes in the Learning Disability strategy. For example, the “Purposeful Days” theme aims to increase opportunities for people with Learning Disabilities to be able to play active roles in their communities, including through volunteering or paid employment. Similarly, the “Place to Live – a Home” theme focusses on enabling everyone to live in a place they feel is their home, promoting and maximising independence.

15. Theme 2 “Communities Which Include Everyone” sets out the aim that “People with Learning Disabilities have a right to be fully part of their community”, calling on all of Worcestershire’s communities (including digital spaces) to be welcoming and accessible to all.

16. Good health is addressed specifically in Theme 4 “Being Healthy Body and Mind” which for the first time in Worcestershire’s Learning Disability Strategy gives equal prominence to mental health alongside physical health. This theme

focuses on reducing the significant health disparities which exist between those with a Learning Disability and the general population.

17. In the words of the Expert Member Co-Chair of the WLDPB: “We want this strategy to make a real difference. By taking action we can make a positive change to the lives of people with learning disabilities in Worcestershire.”

Equality and Diversity Implications

18. The aim of the new Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy 2023-2028 is to make Worcestershire a great place to live for people with Learning Disabilities. The strategy sets out some of the most important areas where actions need to be taken by people and organisations in Worcestershire to improve the lives of people with Learning Disabilities and those who know, love and support them.
19. Throughout the strategy there is a focus on reducing inequality and celebrating diversity, and this is best encapsulated in the five co-produced principles which underpin the strategy:
 - Working Together
 - Supporting Each Other
 - Including Everyone
 - Treating People Fairly
 - Enabling Good Lives
20. The implementation of the strategy by all stakeholders will therefore have a positive equality and diversity impact.

Purpose of the Meeting

21. The Panel is asked to:
 - consider the information provided relating to the Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy 2023-2028;
 - Agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Children and Families, Adult Social Care, and Health and Well Being, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB); and
 - Determine whether any further information or scrutiny is required

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy 2023-2028 - page 25 on this link [Agenda for Health and Wellbeing Board 23 May 2023](#)

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- [Agenda and Minutes for Health and Wellbeing Board 23 May 2023](#)

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.