

# **Sandbrook Short Term Assessment Unit.**

**Coproduction meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

## **Feedback from participants at the meeting.**

The purpose of this meeting was to look at:

- Manager and staffing levels and structures.
- Minimum Standards from Provider:
  - Training.
  - Skills.
  - Recruitment and Values.
  - Involvement in Interview.

## **Updates:**

Riverside and Sefton Council both have full approval for the project. There are just a few last minute legal arrangements to be agreed. The boards will then be put around the site and the demolition will start.

Members of the group who don't come to meetings have sent ideas through email.

All the updates will go onto the [STAU webpages on Sefton Council's Website](#).

Steven shared a computer design image of the site. This will be put on the website in a couple of weeks.

## **Manager and staffing levels and structures.**

We discussed what we would like.

- Flexibility.
- Responsive.
- Large pool of staff to draw from.
- Staff levels to manage people who need low, medium, or high levels of support.

- Service to have an on call staff pool who are paid a retainer if not needed.
- Providers to be asked about scenarios and staffing levels.
- The staffing needs to be for 24hrs a day 7 days a week, all year.
- Service needs staff available to react to urgent need.
- Service needs to be proactive and consider creative ways to solve issues.
- Managers and decision makers need to be available at all times (escalation policy).

### **Minimum standards from provider.**

#### **Training and skills.**

- Mersey Care Learning Disabilities team can support how the staff team should look like and what training they should have access to. But they are not the support for the service, the service should be able to cope without the community learning disabilities team's support.
- The profile of the people using the service can change and be mixed. The skills of the staff need to reflect the wide range of people they will support.
- Continual training and skill development. (Training programme)
- Understanding that the service is not the same as a supported living service. Skills will be specialist and wide ranging.
- We will develop a list of training we want them to have. This could be split into legally required training and contract required training.
- We will set a minimum training standard for providers to measure themselves against. If they can't meet this then don't apply.
- We will ask other providers for their minimum standards of training.
- Laura will provide a list of training of what we would expect to see in a staff team. (This will be included at the end of these notes).
- Positive Behavioural Support and Oliver McGowan training (both Tier 1 and 2) should be mandatory and staff will not begin in their roles unless this training has been completed.

Steven and Sam have used case studies of people who may have used the short term assessment unit to build a scenario to present to potential support providers. We would like to know how they would have appropriately trained and skilled staff in these scenarios.

We will talk to current providers about our expectations and their comments and ideas near the end of the year.

This part of this coproduction work (developing the service specification) is so important, we have planned the time to work on it to get it right.

Scrutiny will come from this group as it expands with current and past users of the service. The providers will be expected to understand and accept this involvement when they apply to run the service.

We want this to be a flagship project. Something that shows good practice and how it has benefited those who use it.

- We will support the support provider to find the right routes into external support that they can use.
- Training in communication for people who are nonverbal. This is often started but not kept up to date. This could include images of staff rotas and timelines.

### **Recruitment and Values.**

- We will decide what the minimum standard is.
- We will ask the potential providers about how they recruit and keep staff. We will want to see their policies to support staff not to burn out.
- We will want to see how many agency staff have been used in their current service.
- We would want to see copies of their recruitment processes and examples of what they have done previously.
- We would like to see their staff turnover figures and how often staff change.

- Decisions need to be able to be made at any time of the day and night, this should not be restricted to when an individual is available.
- We will review as we go along if we need to increase or decrease staff levels we will.
- Having speech therapist input or part of staff team. Behaviours that challenge are often due to not being understood, this is due poor alternative communication training. Skills can be shared in a staff team peer to peer.
- Physical health conditions can also effect behaviour, health support needs to be planned – how we will deal with having different GPs for each person.
- Staff to have experience in mental health and autism and how to separate the two in how a person behaves.
- We understand that we cannot be too demanding in recruitment.
- Continuous Professional Development should be built into the provision of service, including time to complete training under service pressures.
- Retention of staff is often due to how well they are appreciated, investing time and money into their development will bring commitment.
- Each member of staff will have different training, but skills and practice can be shared.
- Recruitment into this service and the extra care housing service may have an impact on the care and support workers available in Ainsdale. (Risk)
- Use of agency staff should only be in exceptional unforeseen circumstances and at the agreement of this group or the lead commissioner (who is part of the group).
- Bank staff should be trained and ready to go when needed, they can be paid to be on call. Bank staff should also be familiar with the service and completed induction.
- When a person has their initial assessment when coming to the STAU, this should indicate what skills are needed to support.

## **Interviewing**

- Members of this group will be involved in the interviewing of staff. As the service develops we will have more people in this group, and they will be involved in interviews.
- Initial interviews for the opening of the service. We want to be involved with the commissioned provider when this happens.
- The experience of carers and individuals who have had experience of support will be an important part of the interview process.
- We want a provider to be comfortable working in a co-productive way.

## **Comments received by email.**

### **Manager and Staffing Levels and Structures**

- Senior person on site 24/7
- Good service user to staff ratio. And flexibility in adjusting the ratio for specific circumstances.
- What happens if people have their own personal assistants? They must have access to their assistants, and they must take part in the process.
- ASD people don't like change. Staff must be consistent with individual service users. Or existing problems will be magnified, and new ones will manifest.

### **Minimum Standards from Provider:**

#### Training + Skills:

- Asperger Team should have input into what the staff team should look like.
- Need input from a team that can provide guidance on staffing requirements for Autism Levels 2 and 3.
- Will there be separate staff for Autistic service users and service users with learning disabilities? Or will staff have to have in-depth knowledge and skill in both?

## Recruitment and Values:

### Values:

- Caring.
- Protection.
- Empathy.
- Honesty.
- Courtesy.
- Respect.
- Do we need a mission statement?
- Speak to Autism Initiatives to see how they recruit staff?
- Will the service provider have a bank of staff who can only work at the short-term assessment unit?
- How will the service provider be monitored to ensure that staff aren't replaced with unqualified staff?

### Staff retention:

- Important to make staff feel proud to be a part of a "flagship" project. By having a core regular staff, they will feel ownership. The appointment of the right managers and senior staff is pivotal in creating a cohesive team and a culture of pride and ownership.
- Staff need to feel protected.

### **Due diligence on providers:**

- Accounts.
- Legal problems.

### Involvement in Interview:

- Interviews need to be discerning without being intimidating.

### **Any Other Business - Hope University Update**

Letizia and Tobiasz from Hope University have submitted the grant application to the Baily Thomas Charitable Fund.

We expect the outcome in November 2023.

They told us that they have had 70 respondents so far on the survey and 13 participants took part in the sensory room study. We have more participants to test until the end of July,

We are meeting after the end of testing on 21<sup>st</sup> September.

**Next Meeting.**

Date of next meeting. 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023. 1pm – 3pm.

This meeting will be in person in Bootle Town Hall and on Zoom.

Information will be posted on the [Short Term Assessment Unit webpage on Sefton.gov.uk](#)