

**MEETING: Health Overview and Scrutiny**

**DATE: 18 September 2019**

**SUBJECT: Update on Persona Care and Support Ltd**

**REPORT FROM: Kat Sowden, Managing Director**

**CONTACT OFFICER: Kat Sowden, Managing Director**

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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

**1.1** Persona Care and Support Limited was established 1 October 2015. The services which comprise Persona had previously been in-house services of the Council. In order to improve the sustainability of these services for the future the decision was taken to separate them off into a Local Authority Trading Company. This is a company which operates independently but is wholly owned by Bury Council.

**1.2** Persona provides a range of adult social care services to people who are vulnerable due to age or disability. These include:

- *Day Services supporting 354 customers per week (Based on attendance 1 January 2019 – 30 June 2019)*  
Pinfold Lane Centre (40 places per day for people living with dementia)  
Grundy (70 places per day for older people)  
These services provide support to 193 older people per week which contributes significantly to them being able to remain living independently at home.  
10 Learning disability community bases plus some outreach facilities providing support to 161 customers per week.
- *Short Stay Services supporting 175 customers via 240 separate stays (Based on 1 January 2019 – 30 June 2019)*  
Spurr House (36 beds for older people) supported 109 customers through 157 separate stays  
Elmhurst (27 beds for older people) supported 66 customers through 83 separate stays  
Woodbury (4 beds for people with a learning disability) supported 23 customers through 66 separate stays
- *Supported Living Services*  
Supporting 83 customers living in 47 different properties to maintain a tenancy and live independently in their own home  
29 people supported with lighter touch floating support

- Extra Care Support (3 schemes)  
Redbank – supporting 41 tenants with a 24/7 emergency response service  
Peachment Place – supporting 39\* tenants with a 24/7 emergency response service and 10 customers with care and support needs via personal budgets

\*This will increase to 60 once the scheme is fully let

- Shared Lives  
Providing 34 placements of which 16 are long term, 9 are respite based and 9 are for day care

**1.3** Persona's vision is to be the leading provider of adult social care in Bury, delivering excellent service all the time, every time. This involves providing support which improves quality of life and is tailored to the individual.

**1.4** Over the past four years Persona has focussed on three main priorities. The Business Plan containing these has recently been refreshed to take the organisation through until 2021 (Appendix 1):

**1.4.1** Maintaining High Quality Efficient Services

**1.4.2** Building Effective Governance

**1.4.3** Developing and Growing our Business

**1.5** Further background information was provided to Health Scrutiny in the report of March 2019.

## **2.0 ISSUES**

### ➤ Risk Management

Persona has a comprehensive risk register which identifies a range of operational and corporate risks and highlights mitigating action. This is regularly reviewed and included as standard in Board agendas.

### ➤ Equality and Diversity

Persona continues to observe high standards of practice in its approach to equality and diversity and this is enshrined within the values of the organisation under the Respect value.

Demographic data on the workforce is included in Board agendas as standard. The workforce is predominantly female (81%), and older with 52% aged 51 years and above. As an employer of more than 250 staff Persona is obliged to undertake Gender Pay Gap reporting. The current gender pay gap is 6.05%.

### ➤ Consultations

Persona has a number of mechanisms in place to ensure that the views of customers, staff and stakeholders are gathered and taken into account in the operation of the business.

Customers are asked to complete satisfaction surveys to feedback on their experience. Compliments and Complaints are collated and reported.

Staff have a number of opportunities to provide input through:

- Managerial arrangements – supervision, appraisal, team meetings

- HIVE – a digital survey system which also allows colleagues to give each other praise and recognition through Hive Fives
- Formal consultation arrangements – effective shop steward and Joint Consultative Committee arrangements in place
- Employee Forum is in place where representatives across teams meet to support information sharing, explore operational challenges, and obtain workforce feedback
- Annual Staff Conferences to share information and gain feedback on developments within the organisation

A forum for stakeholders including carers, family members and other professionals, Friends of Persona, is in place to gather feedback and ideas.

### **3.0 WHAT IS WORKING WELL?**

#### **3.1 PersonAwards**

The annual PersonAwards take place in October and will fall in the week of the organisation's fourth anniversary. This year 125 nominations were received from staff, customers and family members. We have also been successful in securing sponsorship through a range of partner organisations for each of the awards.

#### **3.2 Finance**

Persona has consistently maintained a healthy financial position since its creation, achieving the £1.2 million savings target set at the outset and generating a surplus each financial year (See Appendix 2). Income increased from 2017/18 as a result of new contracts (Peachment & Pennine houses - £180K in 18/19, £1M in a full year), additional self funding income, improved debtor recovery and contract price increase to cover the pay award. In addition, costs have been controlled so additional income has allowed us to spend more on building maintenance and compliance, investing in ensuring our building base is of a good standard without adversely impacting overall profitability.

Due to the favourable financial position, Board has recently approved the distribution of a £200K dividend to the Council.

#### **3.3 Customer Satisfaction**

The annual customer satisfaction survey was completed in July/August and results are currently being analysed. An annual complaints review is also being finalised.

#### **3.4 Workforce**

The workforce has grown from 350 in October 2015 to 466 in April 2019. This growth is linked to increasing resilience in flexible staffing as well as business growth. The workforce is now comprised of 62% Local Authority terms and conditions, 33% Persona terms and conditions and 5% other terms and conditions (due to the TUPE in of a small service from another employer and an NHS service).

#### **3.5 Opportunities**

Persona is currently engaged in work to explore opportunities for further growth and development in partnership with the Council. This presents the opportunity to develop a more flexible and mutually supportive partnership

approach. A business case is currently in development and will report back to Cabinet in October 2019.

### 3.6 Growth

The Escape service, launched in 2018 as a specific service for young people with learning disabilities is growing and fast approaching full capacity. Strong partnerships with Bury College have resulted in the service providing 33 days of support per week to a number of young people. This year we have also adapted the service to offer a summer attendance option for college students which has resulted in provision of 44 places per week during the summer period. It is clear there is a need for services which support young people with additional needs and this will be an area for development in future months.

### 3.7 Local Care Organisation

Persona is now a partner in the Local Care Organisation and is delighted to be able to play a role in transforming health and social care through innovative and integrated models of care.

## 4.0 WHAT NEEDS TO WORK BETTER AND WHAT ACTION IS IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THIS?

### 4.1 Quality ratings

The organisation has experienced some challenges in some areas in respect of consistency in quality. This was identified in 2017 and is evidenced through the CQC ratings:

Regulated Service	Oct 15	Jun 16	June 17	Aug 17	Oct 17	Oct 18	Jan 19	Feb 19
Spurr House	Good		Requires Improvement		Good	Requires Improvement		
Elmhurst	Requires Improvement	Good					Good	
Woodbury /Shared Lives	Good			Requires Improvement				Good
Supported Living	Good			Good				

The latest inspection of Woodbury/Shared Lives resulted in a Good rating. Three out of the four registered services are now rated as Good on all five Key Lines of Enquiry. Inspections of Spurr House and Supported Living are expected in the coming months.

### 4.2 Quality Management

In response to issues around consistency, work commenced in 2018 to develop a quality assurance framework. This includes a comprehensive daily, weekly and monthly set of audits and inspections, recruitment of a Compliance Manager whose duties include quality assurance checks, and external periodic mock inspection. This framework is now embedded in Elmhurst and Spurr House and is beginning to be adapted and rolled out in to Woodbury and Supported Living. This internal quality management framework is in addition to the external regulatory framework and the regular inspections undertaken by

the Councils QA and Infection Prevention Control teams.

#### **4.3 Sickness**

As described in the last report to Health Scrutiny, sickness levels within Persona are higher than we would like to see and this can have a negative impact on continuity and quality of care. During 2018/19 consideration was given to a number of ideas and feedback on how we could improve this was gathered from staff teams. As a result of this a revised sickness benefit scheme was launched to staff in July 2019 and staff had the opportunity to sign up voluntarily. The new scheme is as follows:

- 3 days basic sickness pay per annum
- SSP between day 4 and day 48
- 75% basic pay from 13 weeks and up to 2 years of absence

In addition, any employee who signs up to the scheme receives a funded health cash plan which enables them to access a range of health benefits including claiming back dental treatment, physiotherapy, opticians, access to counselling etc. There is also an agreement to annual leave being used more flexibly.

This scheme is designed to encourage employees to be more proactive about managing their health and wellbeing. It has been launched alongside access to a range of free wellbeing initiatives including stretching and meditation sessions and access to mental wellbeing support and resources.

All new starters to Persona will automatically have this sickness benefit scheme in place. In addition, 40 existing members have staff have already transferred across to the new benefit scheme. Monitoring of attendance of those on each benefit scheme will take place from August 2019 and will be reported back to Board to identify the impact of this investment.

#### **4.4 Medication Management**

Management, administration and recording of medication has become a significant task within all of our services. This is in line with the experience of many other providers and is outlined in the recent CQC report Medicines in Health and Social Care (June 2019). In short stay services in particular, the volume, turnover and complexity of customers that are supported involves 5 medication rounds per day and administration of hundreds of different medications. In 2018 our monitoring systems indicated that error rates on medication, particularly in short stay were higher than we would like them to be. As a result we have taken a number of actions to address this including:

- Changing our supplying pharmacy
- Implementing electronic medication administration systems
- Moving to medication being kept in individual customer's bedrooms
- Training all care staff in short stay to administer medication to make the process more person centred to the customer and less arduous to the staff
- Improving our training
- Increasing our competency checks and observations
- Implementing audit systems as part of the QA framework
- Implementing a range of tools such as stock labels to help manage different parts of the process
- Weekly error reporting to Persona Leadership Team

A cross service piece of work is currently underway to review and redesign the Medication Policy and procedures to make them more consistent between

services and simpler for staff to understand and therefore get them right.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The creation of Persona in October 2015 was the start of a journey. Organisations are not created overnight and over the past years and months the organisation has begun to develop and evolve. Establishing strong governance arrangements and a value base has been a key foundation in this. The development of the organisation has not been without its challenges and this will continue to be the case. However, Persona has developed the expertise and agility to take it forward to develop as a sustainable organisation for the future.

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### **List of Background Papers:-**

Appendix 1: Business Plan  
Appendix 2: Financial Position

### **Contact Details:-**

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