

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 10 September 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Re-tender of Supported Living care services for people with learning disabilities and/or autism	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

## Summary

“Transforming Learning Disability Services” is one of our Adult Social Care priorities 2023-2026: supporting people with learning disabilities to help them live as independently as possible, connected to their communities, and having fulfilled lives.

At the heart of this transformation is our “Together Towards Independence” programme. One element of this is where social workers supported people with complex needs to achieve their goals by using a strengths-based, progression approach.

The "progression approach" in the context of learning disabilities refers to a framework that promotes increasing independence and skill development for individuals with learning disabilities, often through small, incremental steps over time. This approach focuses on strengths-based support, aiming to help individuals achieve their full potential and become active members of their communities. It emphasizes person-centered planning, choice, and control over one's life<sup>12</sup>

We have had fabulous feedback from our care partners, people and their families about their care and support; and the difference it has made to peoples’ lives. Progression, strengths-based training has therefore been given to over 50 social and health care professionals staff, and we are embedding practice amongst staff further as we continue on our journey.

Our aim:

- People will enjoy a higher quality of life
- The profile of support will change over time (less people have intensive support; more have low level support)
- Care partners will be able to support us in addressing the 23% increase in demand for LD services over the past 5 years.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.alderadvice.co.uk/images/user/160329%20Progression%20Thought%20Leadership.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/partners-care-and-health/autistic-people-and-people-learning-disability/supporting>

An essential part of our journey is working alongside our care partners to make sure that everyone is using a strengths-based progression approach. Whilst we have great care partners in Bury, we need to make sure that every single one is supporting our residents to live their best lives and achieve their goals. Not just to maintain a “status quo” meeting people’s needs, but to support to develop skills and enable them to progress, where possible. We cannot achieve our goals unless we support our care partners to be the best that they can be.

Permission is sought to start the process which will ultimately result in the procurement of a new Supported Living contract in Bury, to replace the existing contracts. Following procurement rules and duties in s.5 of the Care Act 2014<sup>3</sup>, we will work with existing and new care partners to work on the development of a new service specification, which will ensure that everyone is working in the progression and strengths-based way.

The Supported Living service supports Bury residents with learning disabilities with their assessed needs under the Care Act 2014.

The service currently supports 177 people with learning disabilities in a range of accommodation – e.g. people living by themselves; 2-3 people sharing a house, a block of flats etc. We aspire for everyone to have “their own front door” wherever possible.

The Council currently spends £13.7 million a year on Supported Living for people with learning disabilities, with homes within the Bury area. Current services are bought on a “spot” basis from 21 private Partners in Bury.

In addition, the Council’s own Local Authority Trading Company (LATCO) is funded on a block contract arrangement; this is not included in this tender process, but their specification will be changed with mutual agreement (the block contract ends in 2031).

The Council also spend £2.7 million on support for people with learning disabilities outside Bury: these services are not included in the tender process because placements are specialist, where services may not exist in borough etc. Wherever possible, commissioners work with social workers to enable people back into borough – this support is carried out on a case-by-case basis.

This paper outlines the process that will be followed to re-tender the service; and provides assurance to Cabinet.

The Commissioning Team will follow a process of consultation, engagement, and co-production of a service specification and go to market to invite responses to the tender. Following the evaluation of tenders by the Commissioning Team, a paper will be presented to Cabinet asking for permission to award the contracts; and implement the new service.

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<sup>3</sup> [Care Act 2014](#)

The following process and timeline will be followed:

DATE	ACTIONS
September 2025 to mid November 2025	Commissioners will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a project group.</li><li>• Research best practice in other areas (locally and nationally).</li><li>• Co-produce consultation documents.</li><li>• Plan consultation workshops.</li></ul>
Mid November 2025 to mid February 2026	Period of public consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A survey for all stakeholders (online and hard copies).</li><li>• A number of workshops for stakeholders (face-to-face where possible).</li><li>• Evaluation of consultation feedback</li></ul>
January – March 2026	Commissioners will co-produce a new service specification and model with key-stakeholders and users and test this with partners at a market testing event.
March 2026	Delivery of tender documents to the market
April- June 2026	Receipt and evaluation of expressions of interest, involving people with learning disability
July-Nov 2026	Recommendation to Cabinet to award tender

## Recommendation

This report is now seeking approval for the following recommendations:

- The Commissioning Team will follow the timeline outlined and complete consultation, engagement, and co-production of a service specification.
- For the tender for Supported Living to be put to the market, as per procurement rules and support.
- For Cabinet to receive the results of the invitation to tender and award the contract between July-November 2026.

## Reasons for recommendation(s)

The re-procurement and timeline will afford commissioners the opportunity to complete comprehensive engagement with key stakeholders on a new model for Supported Living. We will run workshops with partners and professionals to understand what works well currently and whether there are opportunities to do things differently, and we will engage with residents and families, not only people who use the service, but also the Bury People First (our co-production network). Commissioners will co-produce a new service specification and model with key stakeholders.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

The option to “do nothing” and not follow the process and timeline will mean missed opportunities for the change, improvement, and innovation which supports the delivery of a new Supported Living model, which makes sure that people are given the best possible opportunity to progress and achieve independence.

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## Background

Transforming Learning Disability Services” is one of our 6 Adult Social Care priorities 2023-2026: supporting people with learning disabilities to help them live as independently as possible, connected to their communities, and having fulfilled lives.

At the heart of this transformation is our “Together Towards Independence” programme. One element of this is where social workers supported people with complex needs to achieve their goals by using a strengths-based, progression approach. Reviews of people with complex behaviour led to the following results from a sample of 37 people:

- 37 are experiencing improved wellbeing outcomes
- 28 (75%) are experiencing significantly less health or unregulated behaviour episodes
- 18 (50%) are judged to be more independent

We have had fabulous feedback from our care partners, people and their families about their care and support; and the difference it has made to peoples’ lives. Progression and strengths-based training has therefore been given to over 55 staff from the Council and NHS, and we are embedding practice amongst staff further as we continue our journey. This procurement will see the progression model delivered across our care partners as well as our assessment and support staff.

Our aim:

- People will enjoy a higher quality of life
- The profile of support will change over time (less people have intensive support; more have low level support)
- Care partners will be able to support us in addressing the 23% increase in demand for LD services over the past 5 years.

An essential part of our journey is working alongside our care partners to make sure that everyone is using a strengths-based progression approach. Whilst we have great care partners in Bury, we need to make sure that every single one is supporting our residents to live their best lives and achieve their goals. Not just to maintain a “status quo” meeting people’s needs, but to support to develop skills and enable them to progress, where possible. We cannot achieve our goals unless we support our care partners to be the best that they can be.

Permission is sought to start the process which will ultimately result in the procurement of a new Supported Living contract in Bury, to replace the existing contracts. Following procurement rules, we will work with existing and new care partners to work on the

development of a new service specification, which will ensure that everyone is working in the progression and strengths-based way.

The Supported Living service supports Bury residents with learning disabilities with their assessed needs under the Care Act 2014.

The service currently supports 177 people with learning disabilities in a range of accommodation – e.g. people living by themselves; 2-3 people sharing a house, a block of flats etc. We aspire for everyone to have “their own front door” wherever possible.

The Council currently spends £13.7 million a year on Supported Living for people with learning disabilities, with homes within the Bury area. Current services are bought on a “spot” basis from 21 private Partners in Bury.

In addition, the Council’s own Local Authority Trading Company (LATCO) is funded on a block contract arrangement; but is not included in this tender process, but their specification will be changed with mutual agreement (the block contract ends in 2031).

The Council also spends £2.7 million on support for people with learning disabilities outside Bury: these services are not included in the tender process because placements are specialist, where services may not exist in borough etc. Wherever possible, commissioners work with social workers to enable people back into borough – this support is carried out on a case-by-case basis.

There are no additional increased financial implications as the service is already budgeted for in the Care in the Community budget.

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

**Local:** The service supports people to live independently in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

**Enterprise:** Encouraging partners to work in new and innovative ways, backed by contracts which support these, promoting the best quality services.

**Together:** We are involving local people with learning disabilities, their families and those who know them well in all steps of the project, to make sure we have the best model of support, to improve their health and wellbeing

**Strengths:** The promotion of personal resilience and capabilities, in our progression model of support and also the current and potential social and community networks, to make sure that people stay connected and independent.

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### **Equality Impact and Considerations:**

An EIA has been completed which has highlighted potential impacts across several characteristics. All impacts have been considered and mitigating actions will be put in place to remove these impacts. With mitigations there are no adverse equality impacts.

Please see appendix 1 for Equality Impact Analysis.

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### **Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

In line with the Council's target to be carbon neutral by 2038, a minimum of a 6-week consultation period with stakeholders will enable thorough engagement. Ensuring the new Supported Living model is developed in a way which has the least possible environmental impact.

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### **Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:**

<b>Risk / opportunity</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The Council will not be compliant with Procurement rules and legislation.	Advice from legal services confirms that the Council is complying with Procurement rules and legislation.
The public consultation will not be legitimate and accessible.	The Council will follow the 'Gunning principles' and seek input and advice from the Comms Team as needed.

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### **Legal Implications:**

There are clear expectations to consult prior to implementing any transformation to services. Legal input and advice will be sought on the consultation responses and next steps.

Procurement colleagues will be involved in the full tender process, with legal advice and input in respect of the terms and conditions of the contract.

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### **Financial Implications:**

There are no additional financial implications arising directly from the report as the current services are already budgeted for in the Care in the Community budget and forecast changes in demand and cost factored into the medium term financial strategy.

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### **Appendices:**

Please see appendix 1 for Equality Analysis.

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### **Background papers:**

N/A

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Bury People First	An organisation for Bury residents with learning disabilities to have their voices heard on things that matter to them.
Gunning Principles	Criteria for public consultation.