

**Decision Maker:** **Adult and Community Services Performance Development and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> July 2011

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent                      Non-Executive                      Non-Key

**Title:** **ADVOCACY FOR ALL**

**Contact Officer:** Carol Fletcher, Procurement Officer  
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**Chief Officer:** Terry Rich, Director of Adult and Community Services

**Ward:** Boroughwide

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1. Reason for report

This report advises Members of the services commissioned from Advocacy for All to provide services to clients in the borough and of the cost of each contract. The report also details projects undertaken by Advocacy for All that are not funded by the London Borough of Bromley. Members requested this information at a previous Performance Development & Scrutiny Committee meeting. A representative of Advocacy for All will be attending the meeting to answer questions.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to note the services commissioned from Advocacy for All.

## Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: N/A.
  2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council. Supporting Independence
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## Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost £177,100 per annum
  2. Ongoing costs: Recurring cost. £177,100 per annum,
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Learning Disability, Care Services Budget
  4. Total current budget for this head: £119,000 plus contributions from Carers Grant and the PCT Reprovision Budget
  5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget - 819 900 2006
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## Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A Staff are employed by the contracted organisation to provide the Services concerned.
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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## Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
  2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
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## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 350 approx. across all the projects.
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## Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

### **3. COMMENTARY**

#### **Background:**

- 3.1 Advocacy for All, formerly Bexley and Bromley Advocacy, was formed in 1995 as a citizen advocacy project for people with a learning disability. In 2005 they were the first organisation in England to start an advocacy project aimed at people with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome who live primarily in the London boroughs of Bexley and Bromley but also across other areas. Today Advocacy for All works with a diverse group of service users including people who may have learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments and mental health issues and cover a variety of issues.
- 3.2 The organisation is governed by a board of 9 trustees. They have 24 permanent members of staff and approx. 60 volunteers who undertake a variety of roles. All staff have enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosures and attend mandatory training courses including safeguarding.
- 3.3 Advocacy for All considers that the provision of "Advice, Information and Guidance" is very separate from advocacy. Their advocates are not support workers and believe that to be totally independent, the advocates must not have any other role in a person's life.
- 3.4 The organisation not only provides a number of projects solely in Bromley but also across boroughs. They have a proven track record of developing innovative projects for people with a learning disability and securing funding from a wide variety of funders.

#### **LBB Funded Projects:**

- 3.5 Advocacy for All have a robust monitoring system and this helps to ensure that all the projects funded by the London Borough of Bromley fully comply with the terms of the relevant contracts and that the services are only available to people funded by the Council unless the contract states otherwise.

#### **Bromley Advocacy Worker:**

- 3.6 This post was originally funded via Learning Disability Development fund monies but has been funded by Adult & Community Services since 2008/9. The contract requires the Advocacy Worker to provide short term crisis advocacy to service users referred to the service with a wide range of issues which are often complex and involve legal matters e.g. housing, safeguarding, benefit enquiries. The Advocacy Worker must ensure that the service provided is meaningful and appropriate for each individual service user and that any information given is provided in a format accessible for each user. In addition, the Advocacy Worker is expected to complete all relevant / requested reports, assist with risk assessments and obtain feedback from users of the service.
- 3.7 The latest monitoring information confirms that during the financial year 1.4.2010 to 31.3.2011, a total of 54 service users received support from the Advocacy Worker. With these 54 clients, the Advocacy Worker dealt with 95 issues, the majority of these related to housing (a total of 31) followed by behaviour (13) and disputes with services (10). At the end of the financial year 18 cases had been closed and 36 remained ongoing. The Advocacy Worker together with all Advocacy for All colleagues worked with the Council's Supporting Independence team to familiarise themselves with the personalisation agenda in Bromley to improve choice and opportunities for people with a learning disability living in Bromley.

#### **Bromley Sparks:**

- 3.8 The government's white papers "Valuing people" and "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" underlined the role of voluntary sector organisations in providing independent advocacy and support for people who have a learning disability to ensure they are able to express their views and ensure that they are fully involved in decision making. This contract was set up to promote independence and achieve the outcomes of the white papers for people who do not meet the Council's Fair Access to Care (FAC) eligibility criteria. Under the terms of the contract, funding was made available to support Bromley Sparks to provide self advocacy groups which meet and undertake meaningful activities within the community, to support and socialise with each other and other local or national self advocacy groups and to provide representation on a number of forums, committees and sub-groups including the Learning Disability Partnership Board, Bromley LINK and the Disability Independent Advisory Group for the Metropolitan Police.
- 3.9 Bromley Sparks currently has a membership of approximately 120 members and run a number of groups within Sparks e.g. Committee; Independent Living; men's, women's & children's groups; easy read, news and office teams and healthy lifestyles. The easy read group provides paid work for people with a learning disability and produces easy read materials for the Council including partnership board minutes. The group have obtained additional funding from Trust for London, EXCEL Care and members raise money through their easy read work to pay for the rent on their own offices in Community House. They now provide a drop-in where people can share their concerns, experience and learn new skills.
- 3.10 In addition to the above during the financial year 2010-11, members of Bromley Sparks consulted on the new Bromley "MyLife" website, attended a Police consultation day at the Ripley Arts Centre, became involved in the planning the launch of "Speaking Up Together" incorporating the Sparks AGM, attended the social care charging consultation meeting run by Bromley LINK and Bromley Mencap, and the Easy Read team completed the easy read form for the social care charging consultation. Members have joined the Go4it exercise project and actively encourage people to independently access exercise as part of their daily routine.

### **Speaking Up Group:**

- 3.11 This contract started in January 2007 and was aimed specifically at people returning to the borough or moving into supported living either from either the family home or residential care. The funding provides for the salary cost of one sessional worker who works for 12 hours per month & facilitates 2 meetings per month. The main objective of the group is to improve social networks for people with learning disabilities and promote community inclusion; and to help people gain in confidence & self esteem and become more independent and less reliant on statutory day services.
- 3.12 The group currently has a membership of 40 people. Members are able to voice their opinions and communicate these to relevant services and organisations. Members represent the group at the Bromley LINK learning Disability Task Group and Coordinating Group and the Partnership Board. The group is looking to increase its profile and has written a new action plan for the group with new ideas on how to promote the group. In addition, in conjunction with Bromley Sparks, members of the group are in the process of creating short sessions on self advocacy which they hope to deliver to other groups such as the Shaw Trust, Bromley College and Jobmatch. Members are also trying out new venues for social events to encourage members to travel to new places and develop new friendships as well as encouraging each other to host social events in their homes where space and consideration of other tenants allow.

### **Person Centred Planning (PCP) Co-ordinator:**

- 3.13 Person Centred Planning (PCP) is an approach designed to assist people to plan their lives and support. It is used as a life planning model to enable individuals with disabilities or requiring support to increase their personal self-determination and improve their own independence.

Person Centred Planning was adopted as government policy in the UK through the “Valuing People” White Paper in 2001 and the follow up to this Paper “Valuing People Now” in 2009. It is promoted as a key method for delivering the personalisation objectives of the governments “Putting People First” guidance for social care. The role of the PCP Co-ordinator is to:

- Provide support directly to people with a learning disability
- oversee the development and implementation of PCP’s across all providers in the borough
- ensure that PCPs are effectively co-ordinated
- provide training to enable people to lead on completing their own PCPs
- have a key role in monitoring outcomes of the PCP’s and ensuring that they are progressed
- maintain recording systems to capture needs arising from individual PCP’s and ensuring that the data is collated and utilised to inform future commissioning plans.

In addition, under the terms of the Agreement, Advocacy for All provide the following services:

- Publicise and promote PCP’s throughout the year
- Provide representation on the Commissioning Programme Board
- Provide office accommodation and management support for the Co-ordinator post.

3.14 The latest monitoring information from Advocacy for All (1<sup>st</sup> Jan 11 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 11) indicates that there are currently 83 person centred plans underway the majority of which relate to people within the PCT Re-provision programme. To date the PCP Co-ordinator has worked with service users and staff to complete 80 PCP’s.

3.15 In addition Advocacy for All have developed 32 support plans for people who are currently living in or looking to move supported living schemes within Bromley.

3.16 The PCP Co-ordinator has also arranged PCP training courses. The numbers attended include 175 people completing PCP Awareness training and 75 people completing PCP Facilitator training. Attendees include representatives from Council departments, Bromley PCT, schools, private providers, family members, people with a learning disability and third sector providers. It has also been agreed with the Council’s In-house service managers that the Co-ordinator would provide 1:1 support sessions for trained facilitators to run alongside team meetings and also to provide drop-in sessions with private support providers. However, monitoring information suggests that the take up of these facilities has been low within both groups.

3.17 The PCP Co-ordinator is currently exploring ways in which monitoring could be improved and undertaken to help inform future service provision within Bromley.

### **Bromley PCT Re-provision Advocacy Project:**

3.18 This project was set up to provide an advocacy service for people moving from NHS residential accommodation to community based supporting living accommodation. Due to the complex disabilities of some of these clients and where they lack the capacity to make decisions around their move, the Project has been working with the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate. The Project provides advocacy services post move up to the service user’s 6 monthly review.

3.19 **Young Advisors** funded by LBB on a consultancy basis (by Children and Young People Services)

- 3.20 This project provides training and support to a group of young disabled people to act as advisers to the Council, become fully involved in tendering processes, grant applications, recruitment and undertake consultation on respite, schools and other activities.

**Non LBB Funded projects:**

- 3.21 **Advocacy Services** : These are commissioned on an hourly rate by local authorities and provides an advocacy service for people who meet the relevant authorities FAC's criteria and who live within supported living or residential accommodation. A large part of the work includes supporting people through safeguarding adult procedures.

**Advocacy for People with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome (Bromley/Bexley):**

- 3.22 This project is funded via Three Guineas Trust and provides 1:1 advocacy for people with Autism and Asperger's in a way that meets their individual needs. The project aims to identify gaps in provision for people particularly those with Asperger's Syndrome who do not fit into any client group criteria and helps support people to access a diagnosis. The funding helps Advocacy for All ensure that people are receiving support in accordance with the Autism Act.

**Outreach & Disabled Parents Project: (Bromley/Bexley)**

- 3.23 This project is funded by Comic Relief and Mrs Smith and Mount Foundation. It supports parents with a learning, physical and / or sensory disability with their parenting skills and supports them through any safeguarding children and children in need procedures. The project provides funding for advocacy services to support people who do not meet FAC's criteria's. The aim of the funding is to reduce isolation and promote inclusion.

**Young People's Advocacy Project: (Bromley / Bexley)**

- 3.24 The project is funded by Children in Need and provides advocacy support for young people with a learning disability aged 14 plus and aims to ensure that their views are listened to as they face the transition into adulthood. The project also aims to encourage peer support for young people.

**Speaking up Together: (Bexley / Bromley)**

- 3.25 This project is funded by the Big Lottery and aims to bring together all speaking up groups to become a bigger voice for people with a learning disability both locally and nationally. In addition the project helps service users develop a website and promotes inclusion within the local community.

**Bexley Speaking up Group:**

- 3.26 The group is funded by LB Bexley and currently has a membership of approx. 42 members. The group aims to promote independence for people who do not meet the Council's FAC's criteria and improve confidence and self esteem. The group encourage peer support. All subjects for discussions are determined by members.

**Speaking up in Schools: (Bromley/ Bexley)**

- 3.27 The project is funded by individual schools and supports young people in 5 special needs schools to establish and run their own self advocacy groups and supports young people with a wide range of learning, physical and communication difficulties.

**Relevant Persons Representative (RPR):**

- 3.28 The project is funded by LB Bexley and provides funding for a relevant persons representative for people who have Deprivation of Liberty Orders under the Mental Capacity Act.

3.29 Advocacy for All also provide 2 different services currently funded by London Councils. Negotiations are currently taking place with the relevant Local Authorities relating to future funding of the projects.

- 1) **Self directed Support Advocacy for Disabled People: (Bromley / Bexley)** currently funded until August 2011. The main activities of the project are to:
  - Support disabled people who need advocacy support to access benefit entitlements;
  - Promote the take up of direct payments & individualised budgets
  - Provide advocacy through the personalisation agenda.
  
- 2) **Healthy Lifestyles for People with a Learning Disability: (Bromley / Bexley/ Greenwich / Croydon/ Merton/ Wandsworth).** The key activities under the scope of this agreement are:
  - Developing and promoting a healthy lifestyle;
  - Work with statutory and voluntary agencies to promote health;
  - Support users to develop their project;
  - Monthly healthy lifestyle groups;
  - Buddying system to support people access mainstream sport & leisure facilities;
  - Providing support and information in an accessible way on health related issues;
  - Accessible website ([www.advocate4health.org.uk](http://www.advocate4health.org.uk)).

#### 4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The services provided by Advocacy for All are designed to meet the Council's objective to support independence, particularly for vulnerable people.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The annual cost of the projects detailed in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.20 are detailed in the table below.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Cost in 2011/12</b>
Full Time Advocacy Worker	£47,703
Bromley Sparks	£20,000
Speaking Up Group	£20,246
PCP Co-ordinator Post	£51,049
Bromley PCT Re-provision Advocacy Project	£38,102
<b>Total Cost per Annum</b>	<b>£177,100</b>

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The government's white papers "Valuing people" and "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" underlined the role of voluntary sector organisations in providing independent advocacy and support for people who have a learning disability to ensure they are able to express their views and ensure that they are fully involved in decision making. The contracts with Advocacy for All help the Council to fulfil its obligations to provide independent advocacy support to people with a learning disability.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]