

Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

Front Sheet:

Directorate and Service Area:

Social & Community Services, Strategic Commissioning

What is being assessed

An option to stop council funding for the Aphasia Service

Responsible owner / senior officer:

Kate Terroni, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning

Date of assessment:

August 2015

Summary of judgement:

The council is considering an option to stop funding the Aphasia Service (also known as the Communication Support Service) which is jointly funded with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, as it is a non-statutory service which does not significantly contribute to prevention savings in the council's budgets. The service aims to improve the speech of people who are suffering with aphasia following a stroke, to reduce social isolation, improve people's confidence and overall health. In the year April 2013 to March 2014, the Aphasia Service supported approximately 42 stroke survivors and 17 carers per quarter. If the council ceases to fund the Aphasia Service, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group may choose to fully fund the service or the service may reduce its capacity in line with the reduced funding. The council contribution for 2015/16 is £16,595.

A reduction in service level is likely to adversely impact upon people who currently use the service, particularly older people who make up half of those currently using the service. People with aphasia are likely to have fewer opportunities to access services which effectively reduce social isolation and improve confidence and overall health. It would also have an adverse effect on carers accessing support from the service and/or who are positively impacted by the support it provides to the people they care for. Whilst there is an almost even gender split in who uses the service, the majority of carers in Oxfordshire are older women.

Current service users will be offered an assessment (under the Care Act 2014 national eligibility criteria) to determine whether they have eligible social care needs. People who take up an assessment and have eligible needs will be able to access support from the council to meet them. Those who do not have eligible needs will be provided with tailored information and advice on other sources of support and how to prevent them from developing.

There is a risk that the reduction in specialist support for people with aphasia results in people's needs escalating. Responsibility for supporting people with aphasia to manage the health aspects of their condition rests with health services. Close work with NHS partners will be needed to manage the implementation of this proposal and to monitor and mitigate the impact on people with aphasia, their carers and the wider health and social care system.

If service levels reduce in line with the reduction in funding, this proposal is likely to adversely impact upon the current provider of the service and its staff. This risk will be mitigated by the fact that the current employer is a well-established national organisation and by the robust employment market in Oxfordshire. There is also likely to be a short-term impact on council staff who will need to assist with transition planning, however as the numbers of people currently using the service are relatively low this is unlikely to have a significant impact on workload.

Detail of Assessment:

Purpose of assessment:

The option is for the council to stop funding the Aphasia Service as this is a non-statutory service which does not significantly contribute to prevention savings in the council's budgets.

This assessment is being carried out to ensure that the council considers the impact of these proposed changes on different clients, especially those who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act") imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person's disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Social Value

Under the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 the Council also has an obligation to consider how the procurement of services contracts with a life value of more than £173,934¹ might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area affected by the proposed contract, and how it might act to secure this improvement. However, it is best practice to consider social value for all types of contracts, service delivery decisions and new/updated policies. In this context, 'policy' is a general term that could include a strategy, project or contract.

¹ [EC Procurement Threshold for Services](#)

Context / Background:

The Aphasia Service (or Oxfordshire Communication Support Service) is commissioned by Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and is provided by through a third party by a grant funding agreement. It is jointly funded by the council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (the council contribution for 2015/16 is £16,595).

The service aims to improve the speech of people who are suffering with aphasia following a stroke, to reduce social isolation, improve people's confidence and overall health. It is available to older people living in Oxfordshire or those registered with an Oxfordshire GP. Benefits of the service include reducing avoidable admissions to hospital and preventing people from becoming unwell. The service also provides support to emotional and educational support to carers of people with aphasia.

Proposals:

The option being considered is for the council to stop funding the Aphasia Service as this is a non-statutory service which does not significantly contribute to savings in the council's other budgets. It is likely that there is some benefit to social care in preventing escalation of people's needs, but this is difficult to quantify.

If the council ceases funding for the Aphasia Service, the service may have to reduce its capacity in line with the reduced funding or find funding from another source.

Evidence / Intelligence:

In the year April 2013 to March 2014, the Aphasia Service supported approximately 42 stroke survivors and 17 carers per quarter.

The majority of these people were over the age of 65, with an almost even gender split. The majority were white, although approximately three people using the service each quarter were Asian/Asian British.

The high level outcomes for people which the service is trying to achieve are part of the national NHS Outcomes framework:

- Domain 2 - Enhancing quality of life for people with long term conditions
- Domain 3 - Helping people to recover from episodes of ill-health following injury
- Domain 4 - Ensuring people have a positive experience of care

The service then breaks this down into locally defined outcomes which include enhanced wellbeing, improved quality of life and increased choice and control. The service supports people to achieve all their agreed goals in 90% of cases.

The Aphasia Service is part of the wider system of rehabilitation and care services for people with stroke in Oxfordshire. The service works with the Speech and Language Therapists (SALT service) to complement specialist intervention. People who have had a stroke are eligible to receive the Oxfordshire Reablement Service, which provides up to six weeks support to regain daily living skills and maximise people's independence. As part of that service, where people have ongoing needs, they can be assessed (under the Care Act 2014 national eligibility criteria) to determine whether they have eligible social care needs. People who take up an assessment and have eligible needs will be able to access support from the council, such as equipment or long term domiciliary care, to meet them. Those who do not have eligible needs will be provided with tailored information and advice on other sources of support and how to prevent them from developing.

Source: Service Specification & Oxfordshire Communication Support Service quarterly report Q4 2014.

Alternatives considered / rejected:

The alternative to this option is that the council continues to fund the Aphasia Service. As central government funding to the council is reduced, the council needs to make significant savings to meet budgetary pressures.

The proposal to remove this funding is part of broader savings proposals to reduce spending without affecting statutory council services.

Impact Assessment:

Impact on Individuals and Communities:

The impact of this option will depend on the outcome of the council contribution stopping: whether activity is reduced in line with the reduction in funding or whether Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group decides to fully fund the service. This initial assessment considers what the impact would be if the reduction in funding did result in a reduction in service.

People with aphasia and their carers

AGE	
<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
A reduction in service level is likely to adversely impact upon people who currently use the service. They may need to find alternative sources of support to meet	Current service users and carers will be offered an assessment (under the Care Act 2014 national eligibility criteria) to determine whether they have eligible social care needs. People who take up an assessment and are assessed as having eligible needs will be able to access support from the council

some or all of their needs.	to meet them. Those who do not have eligible needs will be provided with tailored information and advice about other sources of support and how to prevent their needs from developing.
People living with aphasia following a stroke are likely to have fewer opportunities to access services which can effectively reduce social isolation, improve confidence and overall health.	People with aphasia can receive communication support from speech and language therapists. The council's prevention and core adult social care services will need to be able to meet a diverse range of needs, including those of people with aphasia. However, it needs to be acknowledged that this could only go some way to mitigate the impact of this proposal as there will be a reduction in capacity for specialist communication support which means that individuals will not have as much time working with staff to develop their confidence and achieve their goals.
People living with aphasia may be unable to access the right support, ultimately resulting in them becoming unwell and needing to go into hospital.	Responsibility for supporting people with aphasia to manage the health aspects of their condition rests with health services. Close work with NHS partners will be needed to manage the implementation of this proposal and to monitor and mitigate the impact on people with aphasia.
If alternative options/proposed mitigations are unable to effectively support people with aphasia, it could adversely affect their carers.	Carers are also entitled to an assessment of their own needs. People who take up an assessment and are assessed as having eligible needs will be able to access support from the council to meet them. This proposal, its impact and the mitigations developed will need to be considered in connection with other proposals affecting carers to avoid unintended adverse effects.
The majority of people using the service are white, although there is also a minority of people who are Asian/Asian British who use the service.	The council will ensure that alternatives and mitigations meet the various needs of Oxfordshire's diverse population. The main mitigation - assessment of need - will take into account cultural needs and tailored information and advice will be provided.

In developing mitigations, the needs of various areas of Oxfordshire will also need to be taken into account; this includes ensuring that the proposed prevention service operates across the county, including in harder-to-reach rural areas and areas with fewer resources, particularly volunteering capacity.

At this stage, no differential impacts have been identified on groups that share protected characteristics of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy &

maternity, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership beyond those given above.

Impact on Staff:

Staff in the wider health and social care system

<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
If service levels reduce in line with the reduction in funding, there is likely to be a short-term impact on council staff who will need to assist with transition planning.	The numbers of people currently using the service are relatively low; the increase in assessments and potential number of clients would not significantly affect workload.
If service levels reduce in line with the reduction in funding, and this impacts on the support available for people with aphasia to meet their needs and prevent them from developing further, it could adversely impact upon staff working across the health and social care system.	In developing this proposal further, the council will work with NHS partners to ensure that effective mitigations are developed which meet the needs of people with aphasia, prevent them from escalating and avoid increased demand on other parts of the health and social care system (and the staff working within it).

Impact on other Council services:

<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
People with eligible needs may need to have them met from other budgets.	This proposal impacts on a relatively small group of people (168 people in 2013/14) compared to the total number of Oxfordshire residents eligible for social care. The council can meet eligible needs in various ways, including: information and advice about options available within their communities; a range of preventative services; and providing a Personal Budget for various care and support options. The council will encourage people to think creatively about what resources they have already or can develop which they can draw upon, as well as the options that will best promote their independence.
If service levels reduce in line with the reduction in funding, and this impacts on the support available for people	In developing this proposal further, the council will work with NHS partners to ensure that effective mitigations are developed which can meet the needs of people with aphasia, prevent them from escalating

with aphasia to meet their needs and prevent them from developing further, it could adversely impact upon the wider health and social care system.	and avoid increased demand on other parts of the health and social care system.
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Impact on providers:

The provider of the Aphasia Service

The current service is provided by a well-established national organisation which specialises in working with people affected by stroke. The impact of this proposal on the future of this organisation represents a relatively small proportion of their overall business. However, there may be an impact on staff working in the service.

<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
If service levels reduce in line with the reduction in funding, this proposal is likely to adversely impact upon staff currently working in the service. Some may need to seek alternative employment.	<p>This risk will be mitigated by the fact that the current employer is a well-established national organisation, which may be able to redeploy staff to other services, and by the robust employment market in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The council will remain in regular communication with the provider as the option develops, to ensure that staff can be kept informed and to allow as much planning time as possible</p>

Other providers across the health and social care system

As the numbers are relatively low, this option is unlikely to significantly affect other providers working across the health and social care system. However, in developing this proposal further, the council will work with NHS partners to ensure that effective mitigations are developed which can meet the needs of people with aphasia, prevent them from escalating and avoid increased demand on other providers within the health and social care system.

Social Value
If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area.

How might the proposal improve the economic well-being of the relevant area?

N/A

How might the proposal improve the environmental well-being of the relevant area?

N/A



Action plan:

Action	By When	Person responsible
Decision on whether the funding will be removed as part of the broader budget proposals	February 2016	Council Members
Decision on whether this will reduce the capacity of the service	March 2016	Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
Revise SCIA for implementation of preferred option	March 2016	Commissioning Manager
Develop communications plan for service users, providers and social services staff	March 2016	Council Communications Lead

Monitoring and review:

Person responsible for assessment: Commissioning Manager

Version	Date	Notes (eg Initial draft, amended following consultation)
1.0	August 2015	Initial draft