

The background

In February 2014, the Somerset County Council Cabinet agreed to select an external organisation that would help create a more responsive and sustainable plan to deliver its learning disability services. This would give people with learning disabilities and their families more control over their services, to enable them to live in high quality and fit for purpose buildings, and have the same opportunities as everybody else. In doing so, they would receive a sustainable service that is good value for money.

Extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation formed part of the procurement process and the agreed method best designed to deliver future services would be a social enterprise model - a 'not for profit' organisation that has long term social value.

After a robust procurement process, Dimensions UK was selected in July 2016 as the preferred partner in the delivery of Learning Disability services. The social enterprise would commence as part of the 6 year contractual agreement between Dimensions UK and Somerset County Council. Discovery is the new social enterprise – and is a subsidiary of the Dimensions UK Group.

A safe harbour...



Discovery is a Somerset based charity, for Somerset people and is governed and run locally, reinvesting over half of any profits back into the local community.

The local Somerset vision is for people with learning disabilities and their families to:

- have more control over their services,
- make more day to day choices,
- live in high quality and fit for purpose buildings,
- have the same opportunities as everybody else,
- receive a service that is good value for money.

Discovery will support people with learning disabilities, autism, challenging behaviour and complex needs. People with learning disabilities and their families are at the heart of everything we do and we want every person we support to have a great life, with excellent outcomes.

We are driven by our values:

Integrity - We continue to embed our vision and aspirations for promoting equality and respecting diversity within our core values.

Ambition - We strive to ensure that at all levels we are representative of the communities we serve.

Courage - We are committed to developing and maintaining an open and inclusive culture which values and respects difference to enable us to reach shared goals.

Respect - The people we support and our tenants will be treated with fairness and respect.

Partnership - We aim to increase our knowledge and understanding of what makes good culturally sensitive person-centred support.

“We are delighted to be working with Somerset County Council to deliver high quality services for people with learning disabilities and autism. Discovery will help the council maintain financial sustainability whilst enabling local people with learning disabilities to have greater choice and control, to get involved with their communities, to find paid employment and get more from life.”

Luke Joy-Smith

With the support from our many stakeholders we can collectively make great things happen. We can build upon the great work that exists across the county and help develop those areas which have been struggling and are calling for additional support. Discovery is now an exemplary group of professionals, offering high quality support and wanting to make a real positive difference for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Discovery is governed by a board of trustees including a parent carer member and a customer member. A Strategic Partnership Board will also be established.

How you can get involved:

We want to engage with you to ensure your views and wishes and those of your family member are made more central to decision-making, and options for ensuring people's individual wellbeing is at the heart of that decisions making.

discovery
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