

TRANSCRIPT

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Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the attached transcript is an accurate record of your audio recording, sometimes difficulties are encountered in understanding technical words, people speaking with a foreign accent and in some cases when somebody is speaking from a crowded room with a lot of background noise and from mobile phones.

Where we have had difficulty understanding words we have indicated this as [unclear] with the appropriate time stamp, or simply attempted to spell the word phonetically but followed it with [ph].

[Start of recording]

Debbie Ward – Director for Adult & Community Services, Dorset County Council:

There is nothing average about Dorset. Everything is an extreme in one way or another.

Alison Waller – Strategic Commissioning Manager, Dorset County Council:

In one of our areas we have the highest elderly population in Europe.

Harry Capron – Head of Commissioning & Development, Dorset County Council:

Dorset County Council spends around about £79 million on adult social care. Now unfortunately we spend probably about half of that on residential care. We would much rather spend the money on supporting people to live independently at home.

Narrator: In this programme we will see how commissioners and providers are working together in Dorset to address the challenges posed by personalisation by way of two new projects; a fund to support small providers, and an umbrella group for user-led organisations.

Debbie Ward: We are now looking at all sorts of innovative ways to make sure that people can have their individual needs met. The process has given us permission to take some risks, to look at what outcomes can be that are so different for people.

Alison Waller: It has been a real experience, and a real eye opener I have to say.

Commissioning for Personalisation

Tim Appleton – Project Leader, New Ground:

We will do that, okay. Owen, do you want to do the apples?

Owen Filsell: *Yeah, I don't mind.*

Tim Appleton: *Okay, do you want to get rid of that lot?*

Owen Filsell: *Oh, there are some here.*

Tim Appleton: *Yeah, they are quite good at hiding themselves.*

Narrator: With £200,000 set aside by the County Council, the Dorset Social Care Innovation Fund seed funds small independent providers with the aim of nurturing a diverse local market, so that people with personal budgets get a genuine choice in the services they can access. The fund has already started to bear fruit, not least for one project in the town of Bridport.

Tim Appleton:

The project has only been going a few months, but it came about because I have had an allotment for quite a few years now, I have also been working with adults with a learning disability for a few years, and I thought I would marry the two together.

The New Ground project is trying to reconnect people with a learning disability with the food that they are eating. So the idea is that they watch the seed go into the soil, they watch it grow, they nurture it, they water it, they harvest it, and then have the opportunity to cook it.

Are they looking okay?

Owen Filsell:

Yeah.

Alison Waller:

The idea is that we try to stimulate the market to respond to the challenges of personalisation through offering choice, flexibility and something a bit different, that adults with disabilities may want to access.

Debbie Ward:

The community make bids into us, to demonstrate how they can meet specific needs, how they can provide real support into that micro market, and offer what we need to be offering.

Tim Appleton:

Initially I was going to fund the project myself through personal investment, but I then heard about the Social Innovation Fund, £2,000 allowed us to build the tool shed and the shelter, we are going to get a polytunnel, which is going to help create an all year round growing space. We would be looking at having some chickens here; I guess there are no limits to what we could do.

We can save in a pot and plant them in the ground next season.

Owen Filsell:

Okay.

Tim Appleton:

We will make a pile of them there. And then we will store them over the winter, and plant them in the spring.

Sitting around having a cuppa, sitting in the sunshine chatting, that is all part of it as well.

Narrator:

Tim's aim is that eventually the project will be entirely funded by personal budgets. Two of the first people to use their personal budgets to spend time on the allotment are Owen and Anthony.

Anthony Bulpitt:

I have been coming here before, starting in May. I like weeding and stuff, I like making shed and stuff.

Owen Filsell:

I like it very much because I like to work here.

Tim Appleton: They work right in the middle of town here, these people are the people that they are going to be walking past every day, and it is very important that they can walk past someone, might get a cheery wave or a smile, they feel more connected to the community that they are living in and participating in.

Narrator: A key feature of the innovation fund is that the panel which assesses application consists mainly of service users and carers themselves.

Richard Peacocke – Panel Member, Social Care Innovation Fund:

Well mine is a mental health disability, and then we have other people in wheelchairs and such like, and we all bring our sensitivities to the panel, and share them with each other.

Alison Waller: If anything I think those individuals are tougher on those applications, are very precise about what they are looking for, and they are very challenging, because ultimately they have been recipients of our services, or they could be recipients of our services, and they can talk with passion, knowledge and experience.

Richard Peacocke: It allows me, as a service user, to actually put something back into the society, and especially the local society, that has looked after me so well.

Andy Clarke – Trustee, Woofability:

Welcome to Woofability, this is our lounge. They are always very welcoming and talkative as you can hear.

Narrator: On the other side of the county the innovation fund is supporting an idea borne of one couple's personal experience of disability.

Jenny Clarke – Trustee, Woofability:

I had an accident some twenty-eight years ago, and when I came out of hospital, having broken my back, we had a pet retriever, and instinctively she started to do things for me, and then I started to train her to try and do more as well. I said to Andy, if we can do this for me, it must be something we could do for other people as well.

Narrator: Eighteen months ago Andy and Jenny put their idea into practice and started their own Charity.

Alison Waller: Woofability was an application that we received in the early days of the innovation panel. And the idea of the dogs was not only to provide practical help within the home, but it was also to provide an outlet for that person to actually get out into the social world, and to care for another being really.

Andy Clarke: We now have nineteen dogs in training.

- Jenny Clarke: And all of the training, to start with, is done by ourselves in house. And then we rely on people who look after the dogs from time to time for us, and they go out into the society and actually mix with lots of people.
- Andy Clarke: And everything is done on a voluntary basis, we don't have any staff or anything like that.
- Jenny Clarke: And within the next six to eight months our first dog will be going out to somebody, some very lucky person, who is disabled, and it is going to change their life. Because you are disabled doesn't mean to say you don't go to the theatre on your own, or a restaurant, or go swimming. Our dogs have been through every different walk of life, so that when that disabled person takes that on, and they form a bond with the dog, the dog is already socialised in every place that that person might want to go.
- Narrator: The innovation panel granted Woofability £5,000 of seed funding, which Andy and Jenny have invested in marketing and developing their own breeding programme, with the long term aim of funding the dogs through self-directed support.
- Jenny Clarke: Well this is Monty and he is doing a lot at the moment; he is picking up the post, and answering things for me, and answering the door, picking up the phone.
- Monty, come here, good boy, here Monty!*
- And at the later stages they do all sorts of things; they can help someone get in and out of bed, they can pull up a duvet, they take the washing out of the washing machine, and they press the button at traffic lights to cross over the lights as well, and take money out of the wall. They are not so good at remembering pin numbers, but they will take the money from the wall.
- Pull Monty, Pull Monty, pull, pull Monty! Whey! Good boy Monty! Good boy!*
- Narrator: As well as providing practical help to disabled people, the dogs will have a social function too.
- Jenny Clarke: If you are in a wheelchair, as you can see I am, and when you go out and about, particularly if you have got a carer with you that is pushing you, people tend to speak over your head to your carer. So much so, my first experience was going into a shop and saying to somebody, "Oh I will have some apples, and the lady looked over my head to my mother and said "Would she like red ones or green ones?" And when I go out with the dog, and I have got a dog with me, people come up to me, and they still don't speak to me, they speak to the dog now instead. But they want to come and talk to see what my dog does.
- Debbie Ward: Making that shift to that micro market, to the large market where you are purchasing in, you have all of an

organisation that should be able to deliver for you, there are some real risks associated with that, which we recognise. But the innovation fund process has given us permission to take some risks, it has given us permission to look at what outcomes can be that are so different for people, and it has given us a way of managing that without putting everything at risk.

Narrator: A separate project being pioneered in Dorset is an attempt to improve the capacity of the county's user-led organisations.

Alison Waller: I asked a number of user-led organisations across Dorset to come into a meeting. And very much threw that open on the table to say, how can we work in partnership to actually deliver?

Narrator: One of those user-led organisations was a disability group based in a leisure centre in Bournemouth.

Dave Thompson – DOTS Disability:

What quickly became clear was we all have limited capacities, that is one of the things that, I guess, defines user-led organisations; we are good at what we do, but we tend to be quite small.

Jonathan Waddington-Jones – Chief Executive, DOTS Disability:

Between us the user-led organisations have an awful lot more clout, between us we have got a turnover of in excess of 1.4 million, and we have got a joint membership of four thousand disabled people and carers.

Narrator: What was decided was to use their combined resources to create a virtual centre for independent living called Access Dorset. The user-led organisations decided among themselves that DOTS Disability should coordinate the project.

Dave Thompson: We are in the middle of building a website at the moment where people will be able to get into a dialogue about what they want to do with direct payments, what kind of services they want to see developed. We hope that we will have people putting in pieces about, okay I went for a meal last night, what was it like in terms of accessibility? But let's keep a fun element to this as well; what was the food like, what was the atmosphere like? We want this website to become basically the people's website for anything relating to disability across Dorset.

Alison Waller: From me, in terms of a commissioner, I provide support, advice – hopefully timely support and advice – and keep them very clear about the direction of travel, the design, and the ongoing progress of that project is very much left to the user-led organisations.

- Narrator: Alongside the County Council Dorset comprises two unitary authorities and two primary care trusts within inevitable funding complications.
- Dave Thompson: My post is funded by Dorset County Council for two years, but in this first year we also achieved funding from the Department of Health, which was match funded by Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole Councils, which makes a lot of sense to us, because there are lots of people that live, for instance, in places like Christchurch that access services in Bournemouth, and vice versa. So for us those local authority boundaries aren't so important I guess.
- Debbie Ward: It is really important when we are trying to encourage a micro market as well as dealing with our major suppliers, as currently are, that they can work across our boundaries. Because underlying all of this push to personalisation, all the enthusiasm that goes with that, there has to be the practical ability to deliver services, and to keep them sustainable.
- Narrator: Dorset Advocacy are another user-led body contributing to Access Dorset.
- Jonathan W-Jones: We are now having the public launch of Access Dorset in January.
- Michael Pochin – Development Manager, Dorset Advocacy:
- Yes.
- Jonathan W-Jones: Whilst every organisation will have an opportunity to promote its own unique specialisms ...
- Michael Pochin: Yes.
- Jonathan W-Jones:
- ... and expertise ...
- Michael Pochin: For us, being part of the Access Dorset network means that we are tuned in to what service users are saying about what they want from services, from advocacy, and that we are hearing those messages and not just being driven by what we think people want and by what our funders think people want.
- Dave Thompson: We are not looking to create a merger, it is a real challenge to be working with all of those different organisations that have different interests and points of contact.
- Jonathan W-Jones: It's about sharing our expertise, sharing our knowledge, sharing our training, sharing our back office functions. And that way we can be a lot more efficient and a lot more powerful.

- Narrator: While the power to deliver services is being dispersed across Dorset, the commissioners remain aware of their responsibilities.
- Debbie Ward: We need to make sure we are getting value for money, very difficult when you are commissioning something that is perhaps unique, or hasn't been in that way before, and is untested.
- Alison Waller: What we need to do is learn to listen to the sector, who are specialist, and combine that with our own knowledge.
- Debbie Ward: Enabling that creativity to happen, and handing over the power, in some circumstances, to make sure that we really are getting what people need.

[End of Recording]

