

# CASE STUDY

# CO-PRODUCTION

# Context



The Council commissions a Dementia Support Service comprising a Dementia Advisor, Memory Café and Music for the Mind sessions. This Contract was due to expire on the 31.12.2024.

During 2024/25, ELFT, who run the Memory Clinic, set up a Dementia Carers Group - providing clinical advice and support to residents with Dementia and their Carers. Whilst several of the residents accessed the sessions delivered by the Dementia Support Service, they felt there was little else available - leading to both decline for residents and 'burnout' for Carers - leading to them seeking Adult Social Care support.

In addition, staff at the Memory Clinic felt that the Dementia Advisor element of the Service was a duplication of effort as they tended to be referred the same residents and provide similar support.

Following this initial feedback, the lead-Commissioner ran a number of face-to-face sessions with residents with Dementia who access the current Service and residents and their Carers who access the Dementia Carers Group to better understand what was working well and areas for improvement.

In all, over 50 residents were engaged.

# Strengths-Based Approach



Residents were asked to about what activities / support would help them to remain independent in their local community. Several ideas were put forward.

The sessions were also used to provide information and advice about what is already available within the borough; and signpost Carers to the Carers Support Service.

The Dementia Carers Group was also advised of the Carers Small Grants Programme.

# Outcomes and Impact



After the co-production sessions, the direction of the Contract shifted. The current Contract was extended for six months to enable an outcome focused procurement – moving from a single Provider to a number of smaller block arrangements – with the aim of providing a wider variety of activities - offering more choice and control for residents.

Residents will continue to be engaged throughout the procurement, being asked to support the design of the specification, method statement questions and sit on the evaluation panel.

The lead-Commissioner is also working with GLL to engage the residents to design Dementia specific physical activities as part of this wider offer.

It was clear that the majority of residents engaged struggled following their diagnosis with ‘what next’. As such, the lead-Commissioner plans to work with the Memory Clinic to create a local information guide signposting residents to a wide range of advice and support.

# Lessons Learnt and Reflections



Dementia has been somewhat neglected over the last few years by 'the system'. The Ageing Well Strategy made this 'visible' and a number of actions were agreed, but unable to be completed due to resource. However, it has given the lead-Commissioner a 'springboard' to build a better relationship with the 'right' people in the Memory Clinic and to delve into the way both the Clinic and commissioned Service works together (and any duplication and gaps).

The Council has commissioned the current Dementia Support Service in the same way for over a decade; and whilst it has always sought feedback from its users (tweaking the model), which has been positive, it would have been beneficial to ask questions about the wider pathway. Doing this, and engaging with a wider range of residents with Dementia (than only those using the Service) has enabled a richer discussion.