



## **BUSINESS PLAN OCTOBER 2016-2017**

### **AWW objects are to:**

**To relieve the effects of mental health problems, disadvantage and disengagement amongst those people living in West Wales , and those areas of Wales commissioning advocacy in partnership with West Wales, through the provision of a comprehensive independent advocacy service.**

### **Background**

AWW was conceived in 1995 from the local mental health service user forum, becoming a charity and starting to provide advocacy services in 1998. The organisation has been an integral participant in developing advocacy services and promoting awareness of the needs of people with mental health problems, regionally and nationally.

In addition to developing and providing specialist independent advocacy service AWW also works to,

- Develop and provide specialist independent advocacy information and training including the development of self-advocacy training.
- Promote the need for specialist independent advocacy.

### **Current Governance and Management and Employee Structure:**

AWW services are provided by 3 full time and 7 part time advocates supported by a part time Chief Officer, part time Office Manager/Administrator and contracted finance function provided by SMART bookkeeping.

Effective governance is achieved via the Trustees of the Charity of whom 3 of 9 identify as service user representatives.

### **Current Range and Types of services provided.**

**Adult Service:** Providing one to one independent advocacy (non-statutory) to adults experiencing mental health problems. This service is age blind and provided to adults of all ages including older adults and those lacking capacity to instruct. This service can be provided via the medium of Welsh and English.



In its 17th year, the Adult service is currently provided by 1 part time and 1 full time advocate on funding from Local Mental Health Grant Scheme and Local Health Board.

**IMHA:** AWW also provides the statutory Independent Mental Health Act Advocacy (IMHA) service across the three counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. AWW has successfully tendered for the Hywel Dda University Health Board Lot Area IMHA contract from 1/1/16 to 31/12/20. AWW has delivered this service since its inception under the Mental Health Act 2007. The service is provided by 6 dedicated employees (3 full time and 3 part time) and supported by another 2 trained IMHAs as the needs of the service dictate. This service can be provided via the medium of Welsh and English.

**Ceredigion:** From Jan – December 2016 AWW is working in partnership with Eiriol Mental Health Advocacy to provide a drop-in advocacy service to residents of Ceredigion based in the Cardigan area. The advocate delivering the service for AWW is a fluent Welsh speaker.

**Children and Young People:** In September 2016 AWW will deliver a pilot project in South Pembrokeshire within local high schools and other CYP settings to raise mental health awareness and develop self-advocacy skills in young people. Evidence and evaluation from this project will be used to inform a larger bid, in collaboration with other independent providers, for similar work across West Wales.

All services are responsible to the Chief Officer with line management and supervision of advocates via the 2 professional/clinical leads. Cover is provided between services as necessary. 5 of AWWs advocates have completed the National Advocacy Qualification Diploma level which is accredited through City & Guilds, a further 2 have achieved the Certificate Level 3 and are working towards the Diploma and 2 other advocates are working towards the same qualification.

The organisation is managed by an Executive Committee of Trustees supported by the Chief Officer, Office Manager/Administrator and contracted finance support.

The service is linked to local, regional and national strategies.

Total funding currently in the region of £280,000 per year

**Organisational Strengths:**

Clarity of role and client group, independence, aims and objectives to diversify and account for very competitive tender market, strong quality assurance.

AWW services are founded on researched needs and with commitment to service user involvement.



Dedicated employees with excellent standards, qualifications, training and expertise working towards a common goal and with strong team ethos. Open blame free culture within the workplace and supportive management team.

Dedicated and growing number of members and trustees with wide skills spread and good and active service user representation.

A service that is respected and valued by service users, mental health professionals and voluntary organisations.

A clear vision for future need, with an acknowledged responsibility to respond to changing needs and market environment. Commitment to providing good quality independent advocacy without compromise to that when considering applying for funding.

### **Challenges:**

Limited sources of funding. Recognised need doesn't always equate to availability of funding streams to support that. Short term nature of some funding streams and much dependant on the success of statutory tenders.

Quasi-advocacy/non-specialist services.

Economic uncertainty in relation to general economic climate and uncertainty surrounding exit from the EU. Uncertainty relating to review of all mental health third sector contracts in light of ongoing economic restrictions.

Lack of funding for development worker/additional management support.

Provision of services on budgets frozen since 2012.

Statutory advocacy limits the sources of funding available to priority clients and has potential to compromise independence.

Lack of a comprehensive community advocacy service in Ceredigion.

### **Opportunities:**

New opportunities for development of advocacy projects with like-minded independent advocacy partner organisations, in collaboration.



AWW held the statutory IMCA (Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy Service) from its inception in 2007 until 2014. The IMCA contract will go out to tender at the end of 2016/early 2017.

Recognition of need for advocacy services in Ceredigion, review by Hywel Dda University Health Board contracts with mental health third sector providers.

Development of self-advocacy skills development project for Children and Young People in the West Wales area.

The current services do not meet all the advocacy needs of their target groups and changes in mental health law for Wales has increased this demand.

#### **Performance in relation to planned developments in previous Business Plan:**

Implementation of IMHA Contract – achieved.

Securing ongoing funding for Community Adult Service in Pembrokeshire – achieved to 31 March 2017.

Re-tender for IMCA service – news awaited on when this contract will go out for tender.

Service User Feedback and Involvement – increased uptake on service user feedback forms, involvement in Mental Health Forum events, strong service-user representation on Committee.

Strengthening of Committee – new Chair Jo Riggs January 2016, Treasurer Paul Lorimer 2016, other new trustees including representation from Ceredigion area. Updated Trustee Code and induction pack.

Collaborative Working – involvement in the Three County Advocacy Strategy Network in partnership with West Wales Action for Mental Health, exploration of tender possibilities with other organisations, provision of drop-in service in Ceredigion with AWW.

Develop Core Costs Funding Streams – not achieved to date.

Develop training strategy for employees recognising training needs and development goals – improved induction and training plans and policy, training matrix, ongoing annual appraisal to identify needs and goals, consultation with University Wales Trinity Saint Davids.

Develop Welsh Language capability – recruitment of advocates who are fluent Welsh speakers, publicity materials via medium of Welsh.



Quality Assurance Development – work towards the reaccreditation for the Quality Performance Mark for Advocacy Services is underway with completion of the Desktop Assessment.

## **Future Developments**

### **Immediate and short term developments: (6 to 12 months)**

- Secure ongoing funding for Community Adult Service in Pembrokeshire.
- Secure funding for wider children and younger persons' service.
- To further develop and implement a strategy for improving membership and participation including safeguarding our service user roots. Development of a service user reference group/other service user engagement fora.
- Further explore opportunities for collaborative working where appropriate including working with partner organisations to secure community service in Ceredigion. Establishment of Community Interest Company to act as a vehicle for that.
- Implementation of Pension Provision
- Change in Charity Status and Constitutional Developments designed to afford Trustees protection from liability and to lead to more effective governance of the Charity and improved ways of working for Committee.
- Developing training opportunities in collaboration with other providers.
- Develop core costs funding.
- Review and develop quality processes at every opportunity including achieving reaccreditation with the Quality Performance Mark for Advocacy Practices.
- Further strengthen our Welsh Language Resources to safeguard the rights of Welsh speakers, including provision of website via medium of Welsh.
- Further develop collaborative working in West Wales, establishment of Community Interest Company with other specialist providers.
- Implementation of Regulation of Advocacy Services provisions and involvement in consultation in relation to this.

### **Long term developments (one to three years)**

- Fill gaps in advocacy provision throughout the 3 counties and implement strategy for addressing and ensuring equitable access to advocacy for service users in our area.
- Secure long term funding contracts and increase statutory provision.
- Forge strong collaborations with other specialist independent advocacy organisations.



**Conclusion**

AWW provides a valuable service for people with mental health problems and impaired capacity in an environment of continuing financial insecurity. For AWW to meet the current unmet needs and respond to the government initiatives aimed at improving services for people with mental health problems, securing funding is a critical requirement.

The need to work with potential collaborators is essential for sustainability of all advocacy providers. AWW is leading in working with other specialist independent advocacy providers in the West Wales area to ensure that services are delivered locally by local people.

Signed .....Representative Management Committee

Signed .....Chief Officer

Date .....Review Date - September 2017