

2010
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2011

AES Ltd : 2nd Year Report



ADVOCACY • (ESSEX) • SERVICES

AES Ltd Vision Statement
"Excellence at the point of delivery"

AES Ltd Mission Statement
"In partnership with our contracted advocacy providers, AES Ltd commissions equitable, consistent and quality advocacy services enabling people to be supported to take control and make positive changes in key areas of their lives"

Rosalind Peek

Advocacy (Essex) Services Ltd.



AES

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Foreword from the AES Ltd Chair

As Chair of AES, I am pleased to report on the continued success of our organisation, through contractual delivery and the formation of operational processes and our long term plans.

AES has been working in a very difficult external environment and many reductions in budgets and front line services have impacted upon the vulnerable people that are supported by the services that we contract with. These service providers are, however, all totally committed to empowering vulnerable people, recognising that the strength of their provision relies in large part, upon the strong local knowledge and relationships that have been formed over many years within the local community and with health and social care professionals.

The advocacy providers delivered in excess of 47,000 hours of support during the year, surpassing our contractual obligation by more than 2,500 hours. Although the true value of this support cannot easily be quantified, in monetary terms this equates to around £65,000 of added value.

During this year, AES hosted the Essex and Southend LINK during a transitional period ensuring that essential services were carried out and local people continued to receive support in as seamless a way as possible.

AES have received approaches from many organisations throughout the year expressing interest in the structure of AES and the work that it carries out. The Board of Directors are determined to progress and secure the long term viability of the company and undertook two externally facilitated away days to consider how this could be best achieved. Two new independent Directors have been appointed who are extending the skills of the Board and a third person will be joining the Board in August. Our staffing structure has been reviewed and additional staff recruited into post, enabling identified future objectives to be undertaken.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their commitment and support and especially our Contract Manager, Ros and Tara, her Administrative Assistant, for all their efforts and outstanding hard work during this past year.



AES Ltd Chair
Carole Cecil



Executive Summary

Advocacy (Essex) Services Limited is proving to be a highly successful management agent. Through a "Hub and Spoke" model it has commissioned advocacy services since July 2009 across the county of Essex, excluding Southend and Thurrock. Since then the organisation has developed and diversified. Throughout this financial year AES Ltd has shared its experience through national events/research, delivered a highly successful training and development programme and acted as the interim host of the Essex and Southend LINK. This document has been produced as an end of year report to provide an overview on the work of AES Ltd, the delivery of the services commissioned and to supply key performance data to demonstrate achievements made in the second year of operations (July 2010-June 2011) including developments planned for the forthcoming year.

Key Successes :

AES Ltd has achieved or exceeded all annual key performance requirements set (July 2010-June 2011)

Ongoing organisational review, development and improvement

Continual improvement including replacement of AES referral & management database pan-Spokes & full KPI delivery

Hosted a conference in partnership with Liberty & facilitated variety of training, development & presentations



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Participation & facilitation of joint initiatives including interim hosting of E & S LINK

Involvement in various Research and Development projects

AES Ltd has achieved all contractual objectives set in the second year of business. This includes commissioning over 47,000 hours of free independent advocacy to adults in Essex who have a learning disability, a physical or sensory impairment, are older people (65+) or carers.

AES Ltd has demonstrated a true commitment to supporting local providers, believing that they are best placed to provide services to the local people they know and serve. The unfortunate closure of one of our Spoke organisations (Cornerstone Trust) reminds us that these are vulnerable times reinforcing the importance and value of joint local working for the common good. As we enter into our third year, we strive to achieve the following objectives that we have set ourselves during our highly successful second year:

- Develop as a dynamic entity that can act as a catalytic agent for sustaining essential services and partnership arrangements.
- Take forward the implementation of the AES Ltd Business and Marketing Strategic Plans.
- Produce and contribute to the development of best practice resources to enable others to learn from the AES Ltd experience through our own initiatives and in the participation of other relevant research/activities.
- Continue to revise our structure and governance to ensure that the company moves from strength to strength.
- As a learning organisation, continue to develop joint working arrangements, promoting peer review and professional collaboration for mutual benefit locally, regionally and nationally.
- Identify new opportunities that will enable the company to sustain itself without the need to do so at the detriment of others.

Section 1 : Introduction

The move by Essex County Council towards single gateway commissioning led to the formation of AES Ltd, a not for profit company limited by guarantee. The seven partners recognised the need for strong county wide partnership work and the provision of equitable and consistent advocacy support for all vulnerable people. The organisation has completely revised its original governance arrangements and has overhauled its infrastructure to develop, diversify and attract new independent Board members as a learning organisation.

The “Hub and Spoke” model upon which AES Ltd is based, has attracted much interest and enquiry. As the company expands and diversifies, it remains true to its commitment to the importance and value of local services delivered to local people.

Section 2 : Background

The county of Essex covers 1,300 square miles and has a population of nearly 1.4 million people making it the second most populous county in England. The county council shares its functions with 12 district councils. The county is large and diverse with a number of towns with over 100,000 residents (Chelmsford, Colchester and Basildon) but also large rural areas. Essex is a relatively prosperous area. The average household income is above the UK average and unemployment is also well below the UK average. The county also has some disadvantaged areas and pockets of higher unemployment.

The population is growing faster than the national average, particularly amongst older people of which seaside towns such as Clacton have sizeable populations. Black and ethnic minority communities comprise an estimated 8.6% of the county compared with 2% of the population recorded in the 2001 census. Essex also has a well established Gypsy and Traveller community and AES Ltd welcomes active representation from this community on the AES Board of Directors.

Essex County Council has invested significantly in advocacy services to ensure that vulnerable adults' voices are heard. AES Ltd has demonstrated that it aims to continue this commitment and develop advocacy provision across Essex and beyond.

Despite financial constraints, there has been considerable investment and added value achieved through this agreement. This is testimony to the true good will and genuine commitment of AES Ltd and its Spoke organisations to provide high quality responsive services to those we serve.

Section 3 : Advocacy (Essex) Services Ltd

AES Vision statement: "Excellence at the point of delivery"

AES Mission statement: "In partnership with our contracted advocacy providers, AES commissions equitable, consistent and quality advocacy services enabling people to be supported to take control and make positive changes in key areas of their lives"

AES Ltd is a not for profit company limited by guarantee. The company was formed from the recognition of the need for strong county wide partnership work and the provision of equitable and consistent advocacy support for all vulnerable people.

Following an evaluation of the governance arrangements of AES Ltd and two related away days, the organisation has now developed a Business & Development Plan which includes:

- AES Ltd Mission statement
- AES Ltd Funding strategy
- AES Ltd User involvement strategy

It is the organisation's intention to expand and diversify further into local markets building upon the good reputation it has gained during its first two years. Future sustainability is paramount for the benefit of all local stakeholders that the organisation serves.

3.1 AES Ltd Premises

The company is based at Whitelands Business Centre, Hatfield Peverel, Essex. The office is located on the ground floor and has fully accessible premises consisting of a large office, a kitchen, toilet facilities and a large meeting/training room. It has a wide array of storage facilities and ample free parking.

Throughout the year the facilities have been accessed by a number of stakeholders including Advocacy providers for various meetings, Essex Advocacy Alliance for their quarterly meetings and a wide cohort of stakeholders for training and development purposes.

Feedback received from the completion of a venue evaluation form consistently rates the AES Ltd facilities as excellent and comments include:

"Modern training & meeting facilities in a great setting" "Outstanding venue - will use again"

"Excellent facilities" "Accessible and staff very helpful" "Everything is catered for"



3.2 AES Ltd Staffing

AES Ltd has recently revised its staffing structure and the new team includes:

- A part-time Manager
- A full-time Project Manager
- A part-time Administrator

3.3 AES Ltd Board of Directors

The AES Ltd Board has seven Directors including the Chair.

Carole Cecil : AES Ltd Chair

Carole is currently the Chief Executive of BATIAS Independent Advocacy Service. Her relevant qualifications include a Certificate in Advocacy from St Andrews University and Post Graduate Diploma in Business Studies (DMS) Dist. She has been with BATIAS since 2000, an organisation that works across South Essex supporting people with learning disabilities. BATIAS has a staff team of 50 and 40 volunteers who work from the three offices in Grays, Brentwood and Southend. Carole came into the voluntary sector 13 years ago having spent over 20 years as a Senior Buying Controller within the retail trade. As well as being the Chairperson at Advocacy (Essex) Services Limited, she is also a Trustee for BBWCVS (Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Council for Voluntary Service).



Moira Rowland : AES Ltd Director

Moira joined Independent Living Advocacy (ILA) in 2005 as a consultant deputising for the then Managing Director during an extended period of illness. Upon his death in 2006, she became a full time Director of the company. Before this she worked for 15 years as a team manager within Essex County Council; 3 years as a Quality and Development Manager. She also spent a period managing a woman's refuge. At the University of Greenwich she completed a Master of Art in Management and undertook a Post Graduate Diploma and Certificate in Applied Organisational Development in the Public Sector at Nottingham Trent University in 1999. She also has a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work.



Wendy Grafton : AES Ltd Director

Wendy is a founding Director of AES which was created in 2008. In addition to working closely with the other Directors of AES, Wendy brings her expertise in finance, marketing and new business development to the board. Wendy has experience of providing advocacy services to adults with learning disabilities via her role as Chief Executive of Cornerstone Trust from March 2008 to 2011.

In January 2010, Wendy became a non-executive Director of Essex Cares Ltd and she is currently chair of the audit committee. Essex Cares commenced trading during July 2009 and is an innovative business model created by Essex County Council to provide services for people requiring care, support and assistance living in the community.

Wendy's first degree is in mathematics and she earned an MBA from Cranfield School of Management in 1992. Wendy's background is in sales and marketing in the papermaking and packaging industry.



Avril O'Sullivan MBE : AES Ltd Director

Avril is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Tending Mental Health Support and has recently been awarded the MBE. She was the Advocacy Team Manager at the Independent Advocacy Service Tending Mental Health Support for twelve years growing the organisation from her and one part-time admin to eight full-time advocates and two full-time administrator staff and volunteers and a team of qualified counsellors. She was nominated by Essex County Council for her work which spans over 25 years working with people with a learning disability and was awarded the MBE. She has been a citizen advocate in the same partnership for over 10 years and has a range of relevant qualifications including an accredited course in Advocacy from Essex University, Diploma in Humanistic and Person Centred Counselling and Bereavement Counselling and NVQ Level 4 in Care Management.



Gary Clinton : AES Ltd Director

Gary came to advocacy in 2002 feeling that it was a natural progression of the work he began with the Citizens' Advice Bureau where he specialised in helping people to overcome debt and in advice work delivered within the community. This followed a long career in construction that was ended due to a serious accident. The belief that people are best served by society when their voices are heard is reinforced by Gary's experiences of delivering services to some of the most vulnerable members of our communities. Empowering people's voices is the most life-changing experience that many of the clients of advocacy experience, Gary feels honoured to be involved in this process. A senior advocate within Age Concern Essex, Gary delivers generic and statutory advocacy services across Essex.



Brian Cairns : AES Ltd Director

Brian joined the Board of AES with over 25 years experience working in further and higher education institutions. Initially starting his working life as an apprentice agricultural engineer in 1977, following further training he obtained an HND and BSc Degree in Agricultural Engineering before moving into a lecturing role. He then worked at a number of colleges before eventually moving to Writtle College where he became a senior lecturer in agricultural engineering. After completing a Diploma in Management Studies in 2000, Brian then undertook a number of management and business development roles and was responsible for apprenticeship contract management, health and safety inspections and quality assurance. With key successes in business development at Writtle College, Brian left in 2007 to take on the role of Director of sustainable built environment at MOVE Lifelong Learning Network where he became Regional Director. Brian has personal experience of working with learning disabilities as he is a Court Appointed Deputy for his older sister and has recently worked with learning disability teams in Oxfordshire to secure a supported living placement after his elderly father had a fall.



Derek Butcher : AES Ltd Director

With a background as Works Convener for the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGW) at Paxman's Diesel at Colchester, Derek was also Branch Chairman with TGW and Chairman of Health and Safety at Paxman's for 25 years; during this time he also contributed to important union meetings held in London during Sir Jack Jones' tenure. Derek then became involved in the miner's strike, working closely with Arthur Scargill and his people to help collect funds all over the country for the miners. At the time he was on the Lexden Church Council and also ran a Lexden youth club for 13 years. Derek was then employed by Essex County Council to act as Site Manager for the Wood Corner and Brick House Traveller Sites and subsequently lived on-site at Wood Corner for 12 years, up until March 2011. During that time he helped organise a number of Travellers' childrens groups and was also responsible for setting up and running an ongoing annual country fair day for more than 5,000 local people and visitors; an event to which he still contributes. Derek also contributed to the structuring and development of health and social networks, including the Local Involvement Network (LINK) and played an important role in high-level consultations that were held to help define and secure the future of Essex County Council's Traveller's section. Derek has recently retired and lives quite contentedly on the Brick House site with his wife Liz, two dogs and a few chickens.



Section 4 : Service Delivery : Commissioning of Advocacy Services

4.1 Types of Advocacy

AES Ltd commissions the following three types of advocacy:

- **Formal/Professional** - People being paid to advocate and to communicate effectively with individuals and represent their views on a short or medium term basis.
- **Self advocacy** - People either individually or in a group establishing control over their lives by being supported to speak up for themselves.
- **Citizen advocacy** - Trained volunteers supported to develop long term relationships with people, promoting social inclusion and providing support to enable people to speak up for themselves.

Related case studies:

Case Study 1 : Formal Advocacy

Referral Issue

Hospital social worker requested advocacy support for one of her clients M; a woman aged 86 whose discharge had been delayed for nearly three weeks.

Advocacy Actions

Visit made to speak to social worker who reported that family were unwilling to accept M back into family home and as M was refusing, despite her assessment indicating 24 hour care, to go elsewhere. A safe discharge had become impossible. The social worker was disappointed that the family had "made their Mum homeless."

The advocate visited M on the ward and found her to be capacitated and definite in her wish to return home to live as she had been for eight years with her son and daughter-in-law. No one had explained the reason for the delay to M and the advocate had to be the one who shared this upsetting information with M. M agreed to accept advocacy support.

M's medical records and her social worker's assessment indicated that there were complicated medical and personal care issues and this was exacerbated by information gathered from a visit to M's family home.

M's daughter-in-law, who had been shouldering most of the care duties for M, had recently been diagnosed with osteoporosis and was in a lot of pain and had some mobility problems. She was not prepared to have M home from hospital as she didn't think she could care for her adequately; she was very insulted that the social worker told her that she was making M intentionally homeless.

The advocate explained the social worker's assessment and what 24 hour care meant. M's daughter-in-law asserted that all that had been offered to support her and M was three calls a day and some respite "now and then," that this was less than had been offered before and that the care package had failed and been a "nightmare" for her family and for M.

The advocate arranged for a carers' assessment and referral to carers' advocacy service, liaised with hospital social worker and community services, GP and district nurses to see what support was available for M and her carer and the wider family. A benefit check was carried out and M's carer assisted to make a claim for Disability Living Allowance and Carers' Allowance and Attendance Allowance for M.

The advocate visited the social worker and her manager and made representations that the care package at home might be altered to reflect more accurately the needs and expectations of M, her carer and her family.

The advocate made referrals to Age Concern Essex Home Support and Befriending Services.

The advocate facilitated an MDT (Multi Disciplinary Team) meeting where M, Social Care, Complex Case Team, district nurses, OT (Occupational Therapist) and carers support were represented enabling agencies that need to speak to each other to sit around the same table and make decisions that worked. The presence of voluntary services and statutory providers meant that a frank exchange of information was possible and a coherent "joined up" plan for discharge and community support could be arranged.

Outcomes

- Within three days a safe discharge was accomplished and M went home!
- Care package was redesigned and care was increased to reflect M's needs.
- Day care service identified and accessed.
- Respite care accessed.
- An accurate financial assessment was completed.
- Age Concern Essex Home Support Service engaged in housework and shopping.
- Age Concern Essex Befriending Service signed up.
- Support group identified and accessed for daughter-in-law.
- Community gardening service (Probation Service) identified and accessed.
- £192.05 per week realised in extra benefits.

Case Study 2 : Self Advocacy

Due to cuts in funding, two housing schemes for older people in north east Essex were substantially changed. One had been sheltered housing, with wardens on duty for much of the day and the other scheme was still classed as sheltered housing but with much reduced assistance from wardens.

Meetings were arranged for the tenants and relatives in each scheme to explain the changes. This involved the Borough Council, the County Council and independent advocacy to ensure that all views were heard, especially for those people who had no relatives or friends who could attend.

Part of the changes involved removing the subsidised midday meal, brought in from a local activity centre. There were fears that this would lead to social isolation and a decline in the diet of some of the tenants, which could lead to deteriorating health.

The Team Manager from Essex County Council and the advocate talked to some of the vocal relatives and suggested that they do some local market research and ask local pubs to quote to provide meals, sample menus and prices to provide a service.

The advocate attended a group meeting for interested tenants and relatives from both schemes to consider the quotes and two potential providers were asked to present to the groups. One provider was chosen and dates confirmed to commence the service.

Health and safety issues were discussed with Borough Homes and standards agreed.

Six weeks after commencement, a follow up meeting was arranged with the tenants, the public house and advocate to discuss the menus, the quality of the meals and raise any issues they wanted to raise. A meeting was held with each housing scheme.

The comments and suggestions made were pulled together and the new menus were prepared incorporating some of the suggestions that were made.

Follow up meetings were arranged in two months.

If there are no further issues, then advocacy involvement will cease and the groups will continue directly with the pub if it is felt necessary.

The added value in involvement with this project came in the provision of good, reasonably priced meals for the tenants which also kept their social contact at no cost to the local authority and there was no increase to the tenants, as the meals were the same price. Some of the relatives expressed gratitude at having their weekends back – traditionally they felt they had to visit and cook meals to ensure their relative ate and had some social interaction.

This was an idea that grew out of the expressed concerns about lack of nutrition and loneliness. It was a good working relationship between Borough Homes, Essex County Council and advocacy. It was an idea in keeping with the tenets and principles of the Big Society.

The role of the advocate in this situation was to provide ideas to the group; to support and encourage the members of the group to be proactive and to ensure that some of the more reticent made their views known. Broadly, a key to self advocacy is to empower the group participants to take control of the project and to assist them to achieve their objectives.

This project did achieve its aims and objectives and those tenants who buy the meals have few complaints.

Case Study 3 : Citizen Advocacy (x2)

Case Study 1

Beth has been Jane's Citizen Advocate for five years. During this time, Beth has supported Jane through a period of change. Jane moved from a residential hostel, housing 20 people to a small community living bungalow which she shares with two other people. Beth visits once a week to support Jane to access the community; this has included trips to the shops, cinema and to visit friends.

The staff team at Jane's home keeps changing and Beth has been the one stable relationship in Jane's life. Through the development of a long term relationship, Beth was able to assist Jane in having weekly contact with her mother who was in her 90's. As Jane's mum had developed memory loss, Beth was able to assist with prompts when Jane visited. Sadly Jane's mother died in February. Beth has supported Jane through her grief, assisting Jane to attend her mother's funeral and helping her to maintain links with her extended family.

Case Study 2

Peter is a long term citizen advocate for Bill. This year has seen many changes in Bill's life which Peter has supported him through. Peter was present when Bill was informed that his brother had died and spent time with Bill supporting him to come to terms with his loss. Within a month of losing his brother Bill was informed that the house he lived in would be closing and that he would be moving. No home was identified and for a period of time it looked as if Bill would need to move into respite care until a home could be found. Peter has been the constant person in Bill's life, supporting Bill to make visits to possible homes and supporting him at meetings.

Bill has now moved into his new home and with Peter's continual support has settled in well.

4.2 Quality

AES Ltd works closely with its contracted providers to ensure that they deliver a service that:

- Assists service users to participate in their assessment, care planning and self directed support and to represent their views when necessary.
- Enables and ensures that service users make informed choices about their care and treatment.
- Ensures that service users are able to assert their rights and are supported to self advocate whenever possible.
- Encourages service users to explore their potential to the full, to take risks and maintain or regain control over their daily lives.
- Directs service users to appropriate and specific legal advice where necessary.
- Identifies issues of importance raised by service users from their views and experiences and promotes these through relevant means e.g. service user and carer groups.
- Builds and maintains effective partnership working with key local contacts and agencies, which will assist in the ongoing development of the service.

4.3 Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

AES Ltd commissioned services are underpinned by clearly defined codes of practice and the standards identified in the Advocacy Charter, 2002. All providers delivering advocacy services are required to ensure that their advocates undertake formal advocacy training and that their organisation undertakes National Advocacy Quality Framework accreditation.

This year, AES Ltd has assisted advocates undertaking their City and Guilds Advocacy Qualification and has commissioned six advocates to become City & Guilds Assessors. Currently, a training and development plan is underway to support our commissioned workforce to continue to deliver high quality services. The wide and diverse caseload which includes 2259 case referrals allocated between July 2010 – June 2011 is tabled below:

Referral Issue	No. of Cases	Referral Issue	No. of Cases
Welfare Rights	134	SOVA	134
Transport	10	Financial Management	248
Transitions	17	Equipment	27
Short-term Break	57	Employment	26
Self-funded Care	10	Discrimination	14
Self-directed Support	10	Dept	33
Self Advocacy Group	10	Court of Protection	18
Parents with LD	37	Complex	582
ILF Application or Review	7	Complaint	48
Housing and DFG	252	Citizens Advocacy	43
Forensic	7	Care Package	305
Carers	57	Hospital Discharge	173

AES Ltd has endeavoured to ensure that the best advocacy services have been commissioned. The AES Ltd referral and database system enables us to collate statistics relating to all aspects of the Advocacy services we commission. There are various monitoring arrangements in place which are methodically reviewed and evaluated to ensure effective, efficient and high quality services are delivered. AES Ltd believes that any feedback it receives is a useful testimony to the quality of provision especially when it is from those that know best – the recipients of services. AES Ltd has been working closely with Essex County Council to review these processes and introduce new arrangements to gain qualitative data pertaining to commissioned services. This includes:

- Setting up a task group to develop and implement a related strategy.
- Undertaking a wide range of spot checks during an assigned time period to establish existing practice including an investigation into how to engage service users' pan-Spokes.
- Extend the AES referral system to incorporate user feedback to ensure that their views are sought, monitored and evaluated.

The following details the service feedback received between 1st July 2010-30th June 2011:

Complaints

AES Ltd received **no** written complaints during this period.

No written complaints were received by all AES Ltd's contracted providers throughout this period.

Compliments

AES Ltd received **no** written compliments during this period.

A total of **86** written compliments were received by AES Ltd's contracted providers throughout this period.

Compliments

"I, my family and not forgetting Dad were so lucky with the valuable help provided by the Advocacy service"

I wanted to take an opportunity to let you know how appreciative I am of (your advocacy) services..... I live in Canada, but my mother lives in Essex. I feel powerless to influence events in the UK and Lorraine is like a life line for me. Her diligence and reassuring presence are beyond value. Often I am worried sick about a situation but Lorraine always sorts it out. She really is a caring person and I know my mother appreciates her solicitous attention. I must say, it renews my faith in human nature. All my associations with Age Concern have been positive but Lorraine takes the cake!

Compliments

I am writing on behalf of a neighbour, who lost her sonsuddenly last September. I got in touch with your good selves and received great help and kindness.... in her grief.

"I have been advocating for an individual with learning disabilities and a hearing impairment who required support to attend Magistrates court. With no legal aid and lack of a duty solicitor it was left to myself to represent him. This individual had been summoned by a Police bail bond for failure to pay his TV licence and including the Bond and costs the sum was over £500, which the person had no means of paying. I represented him by emphasising that how could people that were unable to read, write or hear be included in Cameron's vision of the bigger society if we continued to exclude them in this manner! After discussion, the Magistrate concluded that I was absolutely correct, that she agreed that something had to be done and all sums were to be waived. She was very complimentary about Advocacy stating that the individual was fortunate to have an advocate and she thanked me personally for attending. I am only sorry that I could not pin the Magistrate down and get a written compliment but I felt I may have been pushing my luck!"

Across the contract year (July 2010 - June 2011) AES Ltd delivered significantly over the 44,500 hours of advocacy contractually required. These hours were reported quarterly to Essex County Council as follows:

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
12,033.25	11,818	12,086.25	11,765.50

Co-ordinate the Demand and Supply of the Advocacy Support

AES Ltd has replaced the original database system (ARMS) and developed its own internet based system for managing all aspects of the advocacy contract. All Advocacy service providers are required to implement the system and have the means to produce all related KPI reports. One of the benefits of using the system is the ability to manage more closely workflow and advocacy demand/provision including priorities such as SOVA (Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults) and targeting particularly vulnerable members of the community. The following table provides a breakdown of relevant statistics collated this year (July 2010 - June 2011):

Referrer	No. of Referrals	Referrer	No. of Referrals
Relative	146	Self	340
Advocate	215	Care Advisor	14
CPN	12	Education Service	1
Employment Service	4	GP	9
Health OT	10	Health (other)	182
Housing Association	53	Police	1
Self-Funded SU	4	Social care Direct	10
Social Services OT	8	Social Service (other)	138
Social Worker	516	Voluntary Sector	170
Other	196	Care Manager	230

**Table of the referral sources of the 2259 referrals received at AES Ltd (July 2010-June 2011)*

District Council	No. of Referrals	District Council	No. of Referrals
Basildon	233	Epping Forest	134
Braintree	133	Harlow	163
Brentwood	136	Maldon	127
Castlepoint	96	Rochford	55
Chelmsford	268	Tendring	464
Colchester	370	Uttlesford	61
Outside Essex (but funded by Essex)	19	Total	2259

**Table of the district council referral sources of the 2259 referrals received at AES Ltd (July 2010-June 2011)*

Referral Broken Down by Service Group	No. of Referrals
Physical and / or Sensory Impairment	240
Older people (65+) In Hospital	103
Older people (65+) In the Community	704
Learning Disability	871
Carers	341

**Table of the 2259 referrals received at AES Ltd broken down by service group (July 2010-June 2011)*

Recent developments to the system will incorporate qualitative data monitoring to ensure that we seek feedback from all service recipients. We also have the means to effectively record all signposting and can now differentiate between the three different types of Advocacy delivered. We are currently negotiating arrangements with external parties interested in accessing the AES Ltd system and hope that this will contribute towards future sustainability and service development.

4.4 Service Development & Sustainability

No service is able to meet all of the needs of all of the users, but AES Ltd and the advocacy providers it commissions has strived to provide fully responsive services that cater for individual requirements and needs. In addition to this, AES Ltd in close partnership with all stakeholders achieved the following:

AES Conference in Partnership with Liberty

As part of our training and development programme, AES Ltd worked in partnership with Emma Norton (Liberty) who was the invited guest speaker. Her brief biography reads:

Emma Norton has been a member of the Legal Department at Liberty (The National Council for Civil Liberties) since 2009. Her caseload has included challenges to the UKBA, (in relation to its treatment of vulnerable immigration detainees); opposition to the system of DNA retention in the UK; police protest work and inquest work.

Before joining Liberty, Emma worked as a Human Rights solicitor in the firm Bindhams LLP, where she represented prisoners, the mentally ill and those in need of community services.

Prior to training as a lawyer Emma worked in prisoners' rights and on the east African team at Amnesty International.

In her spare time, Emma is a trustee of Unlock, a charitable organisation that works with reformed offenders. Once a month, she also provides free legal advice for women in HMP Send, via the Prisoners' Advice Services.





Emma Norton with Gary Clinton, AES Director and conference facilitator

AES Spot Check Arrangements

Historically, our service providers are well acquainted with annual inspection arrangements. AES Ltd has a different regime implementing a programme of regular spot checks, covering all aspects of service/contractual requirements - both policy and practice.

AES Complex Case Panel

The panel was set up last year and works in accordance with a related policy and defined terms of reference. This reads: "AES Limited commissions services from a number of different advocacy providers. There can be a wide and varied caseload that might be managed by each Advocate. These can include particularly complex cases that can be far more demanding and may be high profile as they could be in the media/public domain or result from mismanagement of a known commissioner or agent of a commissioner. The integrity and independence of the Advocate must be maintained (despite any influence of various stakeholders) and the panel can be called upon to supply information, support and guidance to Advocates that require support." The panel continues to provide invaluable support and has received acclaim outside the county; for example, related details were included as part of a national research project we are involved with, commissioned by DoH and facilitated by GAIN (Gateshead Advocacy and Information Network).

AES Training & Development

Again, AES Ltd has facilitated a training and development programme in response to identified needs and requests from various stakeholders. This has included training that is required contractually and also more varied development facilitated by external trainers and through internal experts from within the Spoke organisations. We have also identified a number of key developments to be taken forward and each of these initiatives has been assigned to different members of the AES Board to progress.

Advocacy Block Services Policy

Best practice arrangements are in place and revisions are ongoing to ensure services are tailored and truly independent. This is a specialist area of advocacy and a number of factors have to be managed that require specific training, development and support. As these referrals can require immediate and intense involvement, we are developing a team of specialist advocates. For example, recent media attention regarding Southern Cross Homes has led AES Ltd to develop a strategy in keeping with this policy.

Section 5 : Monitoring, Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

5.1 Overview

Through the commissioning of AES Ltd to coordinate & manage advocacy provision this ensures that an independent central point of contact is available for anyone requiring advocacy within Essex. The AES Ltd automated system provides a clear process for logging referrals and monitoring their progress. This facility will continue to be widely publicised through local community contacts, publications, web links, health care and resource centres. All promotional opportunities in the coming year will be closely scrutinised to ensure that services are widely accessed by those that need them most.

5.2 Implementation

AES Ltd has been working closely with Essex County Council to widen existing AES monitoring arrangements. In the first operating year, the company focused more on the collation of quantitative data from its service providers. This year AES Ltd has given particular attention to the development and management of a qualitative framework to demonstrate the impact of our commissioned advocacy provision. The new arrangements we intend to roll-out include:

- AES Ltd to have direct contact with service users to gain feedback.
- AES Ltd to have direct contact with referrers to gain feedback.
- Extension of our database to include an evaluation of each case prior to case closure.
- Various engagement initiatives to increase participation in all aspects of what we do and how we do it.

AES Ltd has implemented a quarterly monitoring programme with county colleagues to ensure effective management and evaluation structures are in place. These scheduled meetings have ensured effective joint working arrangements between AES Ltd and Essex County Council. Our county Account Manager has also observed our spot check arrangements and attended relevant events and initiatives.



Section 6 : Budget & Breakdown of Spend

The budget allocation to AES Ltd can be broken down into three main allocations 1] Management fee 2] Advocacy budget 3] other funding.

6.1 Accountant

AES Ltd uses QuickBooks financial management system and the accounts are audited by Hewitt Warin Limited, local Chartered Accountant's based in Harlow.

6.2 Financial Statement

The following information is a detailed statement of financial activities for the year ending 30th June 2011. This provides an overall breakdown which does not form part of our statutory financial statements which can be accessed via Company House.

Incoming Resources	Essex County Council	Management Fund	127,238.00
		Advocacy Funding	1,167,680.00
	Southend Borough Council	Management Fund	3,500.00
	Training Events		7,584.00
	VAT Adjustment		4,157.00
Total Incoming Resources			1,310,159.00
Resources Expended	Management Costs	Recruitment	360.00
		Office Equipment	199.00
		IT (including Maintenance and licences)	19,922.00
		Insurance and Indemnities	3,254.00
		Rent, rates & property service charge	10,834.00
		Salaries /Pension and NI	58,885.00
		Travel Expenses	948.00
		In House Training	13,494.00
		Other - Postage/stationery/communication	729.00
		Utilities including mobile phone	2,516.00
		Other inc HR and health and safety	2,750.00
		Marketing	2,291.00
		Contingency	5,780.00
		AES Ltd Conference	1,305.00
		QuickBooks	774.00
		Business continuity	5,500.00
		Accountant	3,000.00
	Advocacy Funding	Spoke Organisations	1,135,930.00
	Spot Purchase		31,750.00
Total Expenditure			1,300,221.00



Contact Details



ADVOCACY • (ESSEX) • SERVICES

For further information regarding AES Ltd please contact :

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