

# Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission

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## **ASC Peer Challenges – Progress Report**

Date: 5th September 2017

Lead Director: Steven Forbes

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### **Useful information**

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Adam Archer
- Author contact details: 454 4133
- Report version: 1

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is intended to provide Scrutiny with a high-level summary of actions / improvements initiated as either a direct result of, or informed by, recommendations from the three Peer Challenges we have engaged in over the last two years. Some of the positive feedback received from the Peer Challenge teams is also highlighted. The three Peer Challenges in question are:
- East Midlands ADASS Sector Led Improvement Peer Challenge (March 2016)
  - LGA Commissioning for Better Outcomes Peer Challenge (November / December 2016)
  - East Midlands ADASS / LGA Safeguarding Adults Board Pilot Peer Challenge (May 2017)
- 1.2 Peer challenges form a major part of the Sector Led Improvement programme for Local Government and are actively supported by the LGA and ADASS amongst others.
- 1.3 Peer Challenges are an opportunity to challenge authorities, and support improvement in local government. The challenge is a constructive and supportive process with the central aim of helping councils improve. It is not an inspection; it is delivered from the position of a 'critical friend' to promote sector led improvement.
- 1.4 The starting point for our Peer Challenges is preparing a 'self-assessment'. This document captures the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the department and is used to identify the scope and key lines of enquiry for the Challenge.
- 1.5 Having furnished the Challenge Team (predominantly senior peers from other local authorities) with relevant documentation, the Team will then spend an agreed number of days on-site meeting with a range of interested parties / stakeholders. Following these meetings the Challenge Team prepare their feedback which is presented on the last day of their visit and followed up by a full report.
- 1.6 The feedback from all three Peer Challenges identified significant areas of good practice, with the hard work, creativity and dedication of staff frequently highlighted. The feedback also identified 'areas for consideration', that is to say areas in which the Challenge Team felt we had scope for improvement. After each Peer Challenge we have developed an action plan to take forward the areas for consideration highlighted in the feedback. As referred to above, this report looks at how we have responded to this feedback as expressed in our action plans and whether this has had a positive impact on ASC practice and performance.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Commission is requested to note this report and comment on the value of the Peer Challenge process for ASC.

### 3. Report

#### 3.1 East Midlands ADASS Sector Led Improvement Peer Challenge (March 2016)

3.1.1 This was our second Peer Challenge as part of the East Midlands ADASS Sector Led Improvement Programme. The focus of this Challenge was on 'leadership', looking particularly at how effectively ASC: provides strategic leadership, providing direction, promoting a culture of excellence and acting as role models; manages human, financial and technological resources to deliver change, performance and continual improvement; and, manages relationships, engaging with staff, customers, partners and providers for mutual benefit. The Challenge Team was led by Joy Hollister, the Strategic Director of Adult Care at Derbyshire County Council.

3.1.2 Following the on-site exercise, the Challenge Team lead provided a formal feedback letter capturing the main points and issues identified. In addition to recognising much good practice, not least the ambition for excellence both in terms of the services we provide and in the outcomes for the people of Leicester, it highlighted the following suggested priorities for our consideration:

- Consider using the leadership qualities framework
- Free up practitioners from the process
- Squaring the financial circle
- Demand management at front end and reviewing of packages
- Understand and evidence your day-to-day business so shared ownership and accountability can be achieved at every level
- Build on available support from other council departments, but be clear on roles
- Communication, communication, communication

3.1.3 Since developing the action plan to address these priorities considerable progress has been made, highlights include:

- Although the leadership qualities framework has not been formally adopted, those elements deemed to be particularly helpful have been integrated into departmental practice.
- A number of initiatives have been undertaken to streamline business process to free up practitioner time.
- The department is currently on track to meet its savings targets and is working towards a sustainable financial solution.
- There is increasing evidence that demand is being effectively managed, with fewer contacts resulting in the provision of long-term packages of care.
- The review of existing packages of care has contributed to the department savings.
- Performance management has been improved, both in terms of the quantity and quality of data reported and the extent to which performance is owned across the department.
- Collaborative working with other council departments, particularly Public Health, has improved.
- Awareness of the department's strategic priorities has increased by developing the 'golden thread' between these priorities and individual and team performance.

### **3.2 LGA Commissioning for Better Outcomes Peer Challenge (November / December 2016)**

3.2.1 The CBO Peer Challenge is intended to help local government help itself to respond to the changing commissioning agenda in ASC. A challenge involves exploring an authority's ambitions, performance and delivery structures against the CBO Standards. These standards were commissioned by the LGA and ADASS, funded by the Department of Health and developed by a team from Birmingham University. The standards are centred on three domains: person centred and outcomes focused; well led; and promotes a sustainable and diverse market.

3.2.2 Within the context of the CBO Standards we asked the Challenge Team to focus on: joint commissioning and systems thinking; micro commissioning and outcomes; and, demand management. The CBO Challenge was managed by the LGA with the Team being led by Professor Graeme Betts, a Care and Health Improvement Advisor with the LGA, and previously a DASS with a number of local authorities.

3.2.3 The final report of the Challenge Team highlighted a number of positives, in particular the extent to which our staff are resilient and work hard to deliver positive outcomes under pressure. The increasingly positive integration with health was also highlighted, with specific reference made to our work on the Better Care Fund, which has attracted national recognition.

3.2.4 The following key areas for our consideration were also proposed:

- Create a compelling strategic vision of the future that can be clearly understood by all
- Use a narrative to communicate a few clear priorities and how these will be delivered
- Corporately own demand management across the system – this is key
- Focus on streamlining processes and delivering outcomes
- Use data that measures and drives the impact of change
- Move to an asset based approach and clarify the role of frontline staff
- Now is the time to consolidate work underway and continue to focus on the priorities and take decisive action at pace
- Use existing structures such as the Programme Board to drive change and hold the organisation to account

3.2.5 Progress has been made against all areas of the action plan, with most of them being taken forward and embedded as business as usual. Some highlights include:

- The Annual Operating plan sets out the actions to support many of the actions in the plan
- Our communication of the Departments strategic priorities sets out our leadership vision and direction to ensure the Department continues to be well led.
- We have set out a programme of work to ensure that we embed a strength-based, preventative model, to promote wellbeing, self-care and independence.
- We are reviewing our brokerage arrangements to maximise social workers capacity.
- We continually review our governance arrangements to ensure they are fit for purpose
- Work with housing colleagues has been strengthened.

### **3.3 East Midlands ADASS / LGA Safeguarding Adults Board Pilot Peer Challenge (May 2017)**

3.3.1 Along with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) volunteered to take part in a pilot peer review, facilitated by the LGA. The subject of this challenge was the LSAB as a body in its own right. Having said that, the Challenge Team explored the Council's role as the 'accountable body', a statutory partner in its own right, and the host organisation for the Board's support team.

3.3.2 The Challenge team, led by Deborah Stuart-Angus, Independent Chair, Kent and Medway Executive Safeguarding Adults Board, praised the ambition of the LSAB and recognized many areas of good practice. They commented that over the past eighteen months there have been clear improvements in terms of the Board's direction, the amount of activity of the Board and its sub-groups and the level of challenge between members which bode well for its future prospects.

3.3.3 In addition to a number of detailed suggestions, the Challenge Team identified 3 key recommendations for the Board:

- Create a Strategic Plan that sets a performance framework
- Increase capacity for Independent Chair to fully engage all partners
- Clarify the work of the sub-groups to improve accountability and assurance

3.3.4 The final report from the LSAB Peer Challenge was only received in late August and is currently subject to Board acceptance. Having said that, based on earlier drafts of the report and the 3 key recommendations set out above which have remained unchanged, considerable work has already been undertaken:

- A Strategic Plan has been drafted and due to be presented to the LSAB for sign-off.
- The Board Office has been working with the independent chair and partners to ensure that her capacity can be optimized.
- Where appropriate the terms of reference for LSAB sub-groups have been revised and 'milestone plans' introduced.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

3.4.1 Holding a Peer Challenge is a resource intensive exercise. However, there is a broad consensus amongst those engaged in these exercises that they are helpful, both in providing independent corroboration of what we know and acknowledgement of the positive work we do, and in bringing insight from practice elsewhere as to how we might drive improvement.

3.4.2 While we can't draw firm conclusions about the impact of the Peer Challenges on our performance, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that engaging in Peer Challenges has made some contribution to the overall improvement in ASC performance we have seen over the last two years.

**4. Financial, legal and other implications**

4.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance, Ext 37 4101

4.2 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from the contents of this report

Pretty Patel, Head of Law, Social Care & Safeguarding, Tel 0116 454 1457.

4.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

Duncan Bell, Senior Environmental Consultant Ext. 37 2249

4.4 Equalities Implications

Corporate Equalities Lead, ext 374147.

4.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

**5. Background information and other papers: None**

**6. Summary of appendices: None**