

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission

Adult Social Care Peer Challenge

Date: 3rd May 2016

Lead Director: Steven Forbes



Leicester
City Council

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Adam Archer
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- Report version: 1

1. Summary

- 1.1 We recently took part in a peer review of our Adult Social Care services. This involved a team of senior peers from across the East Midlands region spending time with us, our partners, providers, service users and carers to help us drive improvement in areas of particular concern to us. The peer challenge forms part of ADASS's wider programme of 'sector led improvement' in the region, as all Councils grapple with unprecedented challenges facing adult social care and the wider public sector.
- 1.2 The review team was led by Joy Hollister, Strategic Director of Adult Care at Derbyshire County Council. She was joined by her Deputy Cabinet Lead Member and three senior managers from other councils in the region.
- 1.3 We asked the team to review the following 'key line of enquiry':
- How well is Adult Social Care in Leicester prepared for the leadership challenges it faces?**
- 1.4 Having already been provided with a file of key documents including our self-assessment, the team spent three days in Leicester. Over the first two days the team met over 70 elected members, officers, partners, providers, service users and carers. On the third day they prepared and presented their findings.
- 1.5 The review team lead has now confirmed these findings in a letter to the Strategic Director. The letter is attached as appendix 1 of this report and summarises both the strengths the review team found and suggested areas for development in the areas we asked them to look at. We are heartened by the team's recognition of the positive work we are doing in Leicester, and their helpful identification of areas for development has given us plenty of food for thought.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Note the feedback received from the review team.

3. Report

- 3.1 Adult social care departments are now subject to peer review to help drive improvement. The peer challenge forms part of ADASS's wider programme of 'sector led improvement' in the region. Sector-led improvement is based on the principle that stronger accountability through increased transparency drives further improvement. It is a process that allows local authorities to be open to challenge from their peers and to get support from them in order to inform improvement and drive change.
- 3.2 The sector led improvement process has three main elements: preparation of a self-assessment document; attendance at a peer challenge summit (where the self-assessment documents are discussed); and, a peer challenge (where individual authorities are scrutinised and feedback is provided).
- 3.3 The self-assessment (submitted in May 2015) covers the four domains of the Adult Social Care Outcome Framework along with Leadership; Use of resources; and, overall strengths and weaknesses. At the conclusion of the self-assessment we are asked to identify potential areas of focus for our peer challenge.

- 3.4 For the peer challenge, we agreed the following key line of enquiry:

How well is adult social care in Leicester prepared for the leadership challenges it faces?

In particular we wanted them to assess our strengths and weaknesses regarding:

Strategic Leadership -	Providing direction, promoting a culture of excellence and acting as role models
Resource Management -	Managing human, financial and technological resources effectively to deliver change, performance and continual improvement
Relationship Management -	Engaging effectively with staff, customers, partners and providers for mutual benefit

- 3.5 The adult social care peer challenge took place between the 21st and 23rd March 2016. The review team comprised of Joy Hollister (Strategic Director of Adult Care Derbyshire County Council), Cllr Rob Davison (Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Derbyshire County Council), Caroline Baria (from Nottinghamshire County Council), Linder Sellars (from Nottingham City Council) and Carolyn Nice (from Lincolnshire County Council).

- 3.6 The review team visited the council for three days. During this time a series of

interviews and workshops were set up to give the panel the opportunity to get a general understanding of the work of the adult social care, our key challenges and strengths, and explore the key line of enquiry. During this process the review team talked to members of staff across the department and the council, the adult social care Lead Member and Scrutiny Commission Chair, as well as key partners and providers, and service users and carers to scrutinise evidence and documentation provided in advance of their visit (including an updated self-assessment with the latest performance data and any new or updated evidence). Additional information was also made available during the visit.

3.7 At the end of the Peer Challenge informal feedback was provided. The feedback provided an opportunity for us to consider the way in which we are managing the challenges of delivering adult social care in the current social and economic climate. It provided us with the opportunity to gain an objective opinion from 'critical friends', who bring with them an understanding of how other local authorities are meeting current pressures.

3.8 The Peer Review team have subsequently provided a formal feedback letter capturing the main points and issues identified. The letter is attached as appendix 1 of this report, and highlights the following suggested priorities for our consideration:

- Consider using the leadership qualities framework
- Free up practitioners from the process
- Squaring 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 corporate, but clear on roles
- Communication, communication, communication

3.9 In conclusion, adult social care considers the sector-led improvement process as an integral part to its continued development. Feedback from the peer challenge review team will form a critical part of the decision making process for future direction of travel for some key areas of the department's work and its role within the wider Council.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

4.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Rohit Rughani, Principal Accountant, Ext 37 4003

4.2 Legal implications

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

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

4.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are no significant climate change implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Louise Buckley, Senior Environmental Consultant, 37 2293

4.4 Equalities Implications

There are no direct equalities implications arising from the findings of the peer challenge. However, we can all learn from the peer review findings and ensure that we effectively communicate the values and outcomes of the work we undertake to serve our residents.

Irene Kszyk, 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:**

6. **Summary of appendices:**

Appendix 1: Letter from Joy Hollister, peer challenge team lead.

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Our ref:
Your ref:
Date: 5 April 2016

Dear Steven,

Leicester City Council Adult Social Care Peer Review

I am writing to outline our findings and conclusions from the peer review conducted in Leicester between the 21st and 23rd March.

As you know the review team comprised of myself as the lead Director, Cllr Rob Davison (Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Derbyshire County Council), Caroline Baria (Service Director, Strategic Commissioning, Access and Safeguarding, Nottinghamshire County Council), Linder Sellars (Director of Quality and Change ASC, Nottingham City Council) and Carolyn Nice (County Manager, Adult Frailty and Long Term Conditions, Lincolnshire County Council), supported by Daniel Routledge (SDSA).

You asked us to consider how well Adult Social Care in Leicester is prepared for the leadership challenges it faces, specifically around three areas:

Strategic Leadership

- Provide direction, promote a culture of excellence and act as role models

Resource Management

- Manage human, financial and technological resources effectively to deliver change, performance and continual improvement

Relationship Management

- Engage effectively with staff, customers, partners and providers for mutual benefit

Firstly we would like to thank you, your team, the Members, partners and the users and carers we met for the friendly welcome we received during our time in Leicester. We were grateful for the open and honest way in which everyone approached the Peer Review.

We would also specifically like to thank Adam Archer for looking after us so well and meeting all our requests for extra information and timetable adjustments.

We started from the view that 'Leadership is everyone's business' and should not be considered as solely the preserve of senior staff and political leaders. The analogy we used was the NASA janitor who when asked what he was doing, replied "I'm helping put a man on the moon".

Context

You will naturally understand the context in which Leicester currently sits, but this is our reflection on how we found things during our time with you.

As a permanent Strategic Director you offer stability to a position that has seen much turbulence and this, and your visibility, was very welcome by staff at all levels. You also have two long standing, strong Divisional Directors with an extensive knowledge of the department and its history.

There is a strong political leadership which provides a clear direction for Adult Social Care and the Principal Social Worker also provides strong professional leadership. You also appear to be a learning organisation, taking on advice and support from external experts.

There has been a long period of change and organisational review within the department and this has impacted upon the staff and their confidence. We also found a workforce who repeatedly and consistently felt 'overwhelmed' and there was a feeling amongst them that Adult Social Care was under-resourced in terms of staffing levels.

Strategic Leadership – Strengths

There is a clear vision for the authority going forward and a clearly stated and understandable set of expected values for all staff.

You and the political and corporate leadership have a clear ambition for excellence both in terms of the services you provide and in the outcomes for the people of Leicester.

The high level strategy for Adult Social Care, which was written before you arrived, is clear and has had a degree of success in terms of delivery. We were also impressed with your operational plan for 2016/17, which is ambitious and thorough.

We found the staff to be very aware of the statutory framework and it was our opinion that you were more than meeting your statutory duties.

Strategic Leadership – Areas for development

Whilst the vision statement for the council is clear and ambitious, it needs to be translated carefully for Adult Social Care given the financial challenges you face. We felt there is a need for you as a department to focus on your statutory duties and that there was a need to ensure the 'prevent, reduce, delay' agenda was one that was owned by the whole council and not just seen as an Adult Social Care issue.

There is a need for the values of the organisation to be reinforced to ensure that accountability is held and clearly understood at every level and that people feel they have the permission to do what is right and appropriate and will be supported to do so.

There was also a sense within the department of a lack of clarity over the role of Heads of Service, which may in part be due changes in structure as a result of the organisational review, and where some decision-making should sit.

We saw some good evidence of innovation in projects such as the Integrated Crisis Response Service and the Day Services review, it is important that you take that learning and share it across the department.

The operational plan needs to be supported by a strong workforce plan to ensure that staff have the tools and skills required to deliver it.

In relation to your statutory duties, you need more clarity around where the boundaries of Adult Social Care are and these need to be communicated to corporate and partnership colleagues if you are to effectively manage demand within the department.

Resource Management – Strengths

The team found the department to have some effective, natural leaders within it and also that the corporate training offer was good. We were particularly impressed with the Professional Standards and Governance Board.

We found evidence of colleagues both within the department and in partner agencies collaborating in order to achieve the most positive outcomes for the citizens of Leicester.

It is our belief that Adult Social Care in Leicester is currently well resourced both in financial and staffing terms, although clearly you do have a challenge going forward to meet the future financial expectations for the department.

It was generally well recognised by those we met that good management

information will bring key benefits to the understanding and work of the department and we were particularly impressed with the new user satisfaction survey which seems to be a useful source of information for all levels within Adult Social Care.

We also felt that you had the appropriate technology in order to deliver some of the information needs as you look to improve your management information.

Resource Management – Areas for development

The authority recently undertook a manager's learning review and we would recommend you build on and implement the outcomes.

At the moment there appears to be an imbalance in the responsiveness and flexibility of the department. At times it appears the department is perhaps too responsive and flexible in relation to some work which should better sit outside it, so for example we heard from the focus groups that staff were being expected to respond to matters which would normally be referred to GPs. At other times there appears to not be enough responsiveness within the department to support different parts of Adult Social Care agenda, for example we found that people who use services were not having their care packages reviewed on a regular basis due to other work pressures and priorities.

There was also some concerning workforce data both in your sickness reports and the staff survey which need addressing urgently.

We were able to have sight of Rachel Ayling's use of resources benchmarking report, clearly you had only just received this whilst we were in the midst of the review, but we would think your response to it will be important for you in the immediate future.

The team also felt that the department would benefit from ensuring some protected time for leadership to consider finance and performance information in more detail. To be absolutely clear, when we talk about leadership in this context, we are talking about all levels of the department. One of the things we gleaned when talking to team managers, for example, was that they rarely got time to come together in the sort of group we were able to see and that they saw huge benefit in it.

In parallel to this, there needs to be a better understanding across the department of the strategic use of management information and as you implement and prioritise its further use, you should ensure that there is a level of consistency across the department, both in terms of what reports each tier of the organisation receives, but also in terms of how it is used, particularly at the Head of Service level.

We would also recommend a review around the processes and banding of

care home fees, which seemed a little confusing and we felt there is potential to streamline the process and potentially some savings.

Relationship Management – Strengths

At every level of the department, staff were enthusiastic for the clear and regular communication they had received from you since you took up post and appreciated your visibility in the department, particularly after such a long period of instability at Strategic Director level.

In the projects we looked at, we heard some excellent examples of effective communication in what were quite significant changes, this was well received by all.

We saw examples of emerging recognition of the need to manage demand, the portal you are developing for citizens to self-assess is a good example of this, and we felt that the partnership working between Adult Social Care and Public Health in relation to early help and early diagnosis was good.

Again in the projects around Elderly People's Homes and Day Centres we saw good examples of personalised approaches and in co-production with those who used the services. We also got a sense there was starting to emerge more collegiate working across the council and a move away from a silo-based approach.

We were particularly impressed with the relationships across health partnerships and found them to be mature, effective and robust and also the Health and Wellbeing Board we felt was in a strong place.

There also seems to be a good relationship between contract and commissioning staff and providers.

Relationship Management – Areas for development

There is a need for you to urgently review the clarity and consistency of organisational messages, with an opportunity to use action learning sets and road shows. In the shorter term, this may be assisted by regular meetings with all managers to ensure key messages are disseminated widely and that there is a shared understanding of accountability and support for decision-making.

We also felt the department could do a better job of recognising and celebrating the considerable strengths and achievements of Adult Social Care.

As mentioned earlier, the boundaries of Adult Social Care need clarification and communicating both within and without of the department. There is a need to ensure Adult Social Care staff are doing Adult Social Care appropriate work. As part of this, you should look at the front door, we found it to be too confusing and not as effective as it could be at keeping out inappropriate work.

This is critical in order to enable the department to manage its limited budget.

We also felt by increasing the timeliness of reviews of existing packages, there are possible opportunities to support people to become more independent and the potential for cost savings.

There needs to be a clarity in the offer Adult Social Care, and the wider council, can make to the people of Leicester and again this will need tying in to the boundaries of what Adult Social Care are. Related to this there is also a need to spread the understanding of the wider local offer, as well as promote social capital.

You also have an opportunity to take the learning from the success of the health partnerships and integration and share them across the organisation.

Key priorities

Clearly we have set out a number of things we would recommend you consider developing and as such we would like to outline what we would think should be your key priorities.

We thought the Leadership Qualities Framework would help your development as a department and you should consider its use.

You need to free up practitioners from the process, there are things being done by people who would be best served on other tasks. This could lead to better outcomes for citizens and reduce the sense of being 'overwhelmed'. Examples here include financial and welfare benefit assessments and debt recovery.

With the extra funding coming to Adult Social Care this year, it has given you a little time, but squaring the financial circle is vital for the department going forward.

John Bolton's work on use of resources shows that the only real way to achieve financial stability is through excellent asset-based social work. Reducing or negating the need for ongoing services is likely the solution for the financial challenge you face.

In relation to all of these issues, there are gains to be made by better management of demand at the front door and improvements in the timeliness of reviews of packages.

In order to understand your day-to-day business you have to be able to evidence it. Better management information will lead to shared ownership and accountability, which in turn should help your current workforce data issues and this feeling of being 'overwhelmed'.

You need to build on the support that is available from the corporate centre, whilst at the same time being clear about the boundaries of Adult Social Care and your role within the organisation.

Communication, communication, communication. All of the above can only be achieved by continuing to build on and develop the lines of communication across the department and beyond, something we feel you personally have recognised and are in the process of strengthening. As part of this we felt there was a differential between staff perceptions and the evidence we saw that would be improved by a stronger message.

Once again, we would like to thank you and everyone we met during our three days in Leicester for the openness with which you approached this review. We are also very grateful for the learning we have taken from you, which we will be able to apply in our own areas.

Yours sincerely

Joy Hollister
Strategic Director, Adult Care