



# Use of Resources Peer Challenge

Yorkshire and Humber Regional Peer Challenge Programme

April 2021

# Peer Challenge Methodology & Design

- A supportive approach undertaken by ‘critical friends’.
- Undertaken by a team of 6 peers who are experts in ASC within the region
- Submission of a self assessment (ratified by partners) followed by 3 days (24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 until 26<sup>h</sup> March 2021) of focus groups and 1:1s with stakeholders from within and without of ASC
- Designed to help the authority and our partners assess current achievements and strengths of the system, along with areas for development in order to continuously improve
- The Challenge used the LGA/ADASS framework around making the best use of reducing resources, and focussed on Leadership, strategy and vision; Business Processes; Long-Term Support & Recovery

# Leadership Strategy and Vision

*“We know ourselves”*

# Leadership

- We know ourselves (the self-assessment was insightful and matched the team's findings)
- Leadership at all levels are committed to the vision and to delivering excellent services
- We have an engaged, briefed and experienced Portfolio Holder
- Significant challenge lies ahead to achieve the ambitions set by the leadership team. The timescale for change could take up to 3 years.
- Time is needed to embed new roles within the Corporate Management Team, to provide stability and clarity and drive cultural change

# Strategy

- The People Directorate is driving the agenda & there is already evidence of sharing learning
- The New Alliance with key partners is incubating collaboration & innovation
- There is a perception that the development-based economic growth agenda is the Council's priority due to consistently high local media profile. There is an opportunity in the Ten-Year Plan to embed shared priorities between People and Place.
- A climate should be created to support systematic change for joint working with internal and external partners. If the system were to pull resources together for ASC, the approach would deliver the agenda and make it everyone's responsibility. ASC would benefit from increased internal corporate support.
- ASC will require help and support to strengthen the service and address demand. Partners and specifically Health CCG and PCNs should also accept and adopt this approach. This is most relevant to York as historical problems with health finances have resulted in challenges for the Council. In addressing this, the benefits can be reaped by all parties.

# Vision

- It is clear that York's leadership at all levels, is committed to a vision which aims to help people to have 'better, healthier, happier, more independent lives', and to delivering services to support this happening.
- ASC can only achieve our ambitions to use resources well if all partners share and agree the long-term vision with ASC.
- We need to interpret our vision to make it useable and accountable - better, healthier, happier more independent lives

# Business Processes

*“CYC can be proud of their front line staff”*

# Our workforce

- CYC can be proud of their front line staff.
- They are committed to ASC.
- Service managers, partners, volunteers, carers & people using services spoke very highly of front line staff and of their commitment, focus and support to customers (having strength-based conversations with their customers, and working across organisations in people centred ways).
- There are a number of acting up posts and vacancies; and a real need for stability to deliver on the vision and rebuild the teams. Staff are exhausted, recruitment delays are unhelpful.
- The amount of finance devolved to staff is small compared to the large spend on delivering care. Streamlining or reducing staffing capacity further will, in the opinion of the peer team, seem like the council will have gone too far in the reduction of capacity to be able to deliver effective services and consequently, the vision for ASC.
- If ASC don't have sufficient numbers of staff to deliver appropriately planned services, then more people will be provided with services. This will be counter intuitive and should be avoided.
- A small investment in return for the delivery of the plan will pay dividends in the long term.



# Developing the workforce further

- Effort to manage demand through primary, secondary and tertiary prevention is predicated on staff having time to use their skills to provide the right support at the right time. This way, the best outcomes can be achieved while at the same time meeting savings targets.
- Staff are appreciative of the training and process changes implemented so far which have improved their day to day practice and the support from managers, who they feel valued by.
- There is positivity around the development of the People Directorate and evidence that opportunities are being used to build on workforce development training and succession planning
- Staff would benefit from refresher training following the strength based practice launch a few years ago

# Business support and infrastructure

- There are currently high expectations on social workers and managers due to lack of specialist business support
- Consider how we might develop a sense of collective corporate ownership
- Social workers and service managers do not have the corporate business support or infrastructure that they require to enable them to focus on delivering social work.
- The peer team picked up a sense that the front line are fire fighting to keep up with their workload, which risks minimising opportunities for demand management via strengths based approaches.

# Information architecture

- The data currently in place will not evidence delivery of the vision. Better triangulated information which accurately reflects the current situation, maps performance and budgets, and is appropriately aligned to team structures will enable better monitoring and ability to respond to financial challenges.
- This will also assist in developing the collective corporate ownership required to support ASC, and thus enabling barriers to meeting targets to be addressed effectively.
- A new Quality Assurance Framework is being developed, but the business intelligence offer is at present driven only by the ASCOF framework, and there is little or no intelligence offered at team level.
- Having business intelligence provided to ASC in a timely way, to the right people, will aid the delivery of services.
- Data collection should be built by working with service managers
- Recognise that teams and budgets need alignment to avoid a cycle of mistrust (between finance, members and service managers).

# Long Term Support

*“Good joint working across all systems partners”*

# Working with partners

- Positive and innovative commitment to Early Intervention and Prevention with good joint working across all systems partners (small charities, social prescribing model and Local Area Co-ordination, CVS, Carers etc). Support should continue to community groups and volunteers not just during crisis but in the long-term
- Use the market position statement to demonstrate all partners intent to early help and prevention and to reduce, avoid or delay the need for long term care wherever possible. Ensure this is jointly owned but also radical and clear regarding the changes it expects to see in its provisions.
- We have engaged internal partners within Housing and Communities who wish to support the ASC agenda, and should be encouraged to do so (e.g, providing appropriate accommodation options for people with learning disabilities).
- Room to build on current work with PCNs around our intermediate care model
- Need to deliver the work plan for the development of a s75 agreement to meet the needs of people with CHC, complex needs and s117 through jointly agreed resource and processes. This work could be overseen by the developing Integrated Care Alliance.
- The peer team were unanimous in advocating a neighbourhood focused approach, and locality working for social workers, working in community settings.

# Reviewing existing support

- Consider the refresh of long-term contracts which are expensive & rigid & which need to respond to the collaborative approach to delivering services to avoid duplication & overlap; & to make sure they are best placed for recovery & maintaining people's independence for as long as possible
- Review packages to meet need, avoid over provision and use local community provision - Packages of care should be reviewed using a strengths-based approach to make sure that care provision has not exceeded need. Social workers need sufficient time allocated to them to do this. They also need a wide range of support options available to them to provide appropriate provision.
- Planning a model of support for independence beyond the home will result in better outcomes for people.

# What next

- A systematic plan to achieve aims & objectives linked to a financial recovery plan.
- This needs to be appropriately resourced to ensure operational staff are supported to achieve the transformation of services.
- Suggested milestones:
  - Move to Neighbourhood teams
  - Time and support for social workers
  - Incentivize preventative work across the system
  - Increased Corporate Support from Finance, Business intelligence, Business Support, , HR & ICT, to allow ASC to focus resources on their priorities.
  - Agree how to use technology to complement services
  - Enhancing Intermediate Care strategy with support from health colleagues to ensure it is home first and not care homes first
- Ensure Inequalities are addressed in the strategy
- Consider a supplementary Member Challenge Panel focused on the business

# Concluding remarks of the report

- *The new structure has already provided the basis for the transformation...this is a three year journey. As well as changing structures and processes it is equally important to allow time and give attention to the culture and practice of the directorate. It is also evident that the department needs the help and support of colleagues in the council and partners for example health.*
- *York has many positives upon which to build an approach that meets the long-term planning for recovery in ASC. An engaged, stable and committed workforce at the front line. A new People Directorate which is structured to plan support from childhood to adulthood. A vibrant and engaged voluntary sector that want to shape services and deliver them with you, and many strengthened relationships with health and other partners and streamlined processes upon which to build long term solutions.*
- *ASC should further strengthen the close alliances it has across the council such as the Housing Service and Community Services to build relevant and appropriate provision; and to further develop the corporate infrastructure which is evident in children's services across the whole People Directorate.*