

TITLE OF REPORT: Adult Social Care LGA Peer Challenge

REPORT OF: Steph Downey, Service Director – Adult Social Care

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides the Cabinet with the details of the outcome report in respect of the recent Local Government Association, Adult Social Care Peer Challenge.

Background

2. Gateshead Council asked the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake an Adult Social Care Preparation for Assurance Peer Challenge on their behalf.
3. Dale Owens, then Strategic Director Integrated Adults and Social Care Services, commissioned an independent peer review to assess the ability of the Adult Social Care service to deliver good services to people, as well as assess the preparedness of the adult social service for a Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment.
4. The focus was an independent perspective on how prepared the Department are for a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection and how well Gateshead is delivering Adult Social Care services for its residents.
5. Gateshead council received the letter from CQC advising of the plan for their assessment on 18th March, the day before the Peer Challenge commenced. As such it was agreed that the priority of the challenge would be to offer feedback on whether the areas considered to be strengths are evidenced and whether there has been progress in the areas for improvement.
6. The team were on-site at Gateshead for three days from the 19th March 2024. In arriving at their findings, the peer team:
 - Held 30 interviews and discussions with over 150 different people including Councillors, officers, partners, people with lived experience, and carers.
 - Read a range of over 200 documents provided by Gateshead Council, including a self-assessment.
 - Completed 5 case file audits and spoke to 7 Carers and people with lived experience.

- Spent approximately 220 hours with Gateshead Council; the equivalent of 29 working days.

Proposal

7. The challenge report (attached) is focussed on the 4 key themes of the CQC Assurance Framework:
 - Working with People
 - Providing Support
 - Ensuring Safety
 - Leadership
8. The outcome of the Peer Review was very positive, with strong leadership across Integrated Adults and Social Care Services recognised, evidence of strengths based approaches being embedded, recognition of the ambitious data driven transformation programme, and a direction of travel towards commissioning for outcomes.
9. The view from the LGA was that the Self Assessment produced for the Peer Review was erring on the side of caution and that some areas for development were already further on in their improvement journey. Importantly the areas for consideration were already acknowledged by the Department, with plans in place.
10. An Action Plan has been developed which combines the actions identified in the IASCS annual strategy review with the actions identified from the Peer Review.

Recommendations

11. Cabinet is asked to accept the details and findings of the LGA Peer Challenge Report (Appendix 1) and accompanying Action Plan (Appendix 2).
 - It is recommended that in the interest of transparency and supporting wider improvement across the Health and Social Care sector, that the Council look to publish the report on their website.

CONTACT: Lesley Carlisle

Extension: 07720631488