

**14<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**Agenda Item: 7**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, INTEGRATED STRATEGIC  
COMMISSIONING AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

**‘BETTER TOGETHER’ - WORKING TOWARDS CO-PRODUCTION ACROSS  
ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The report seeks approval of the ‘Better Together’ plan: working towards co-production’ (**Appendix 1**) and the action plan for the first year of its implementation (**Appendix 2**).

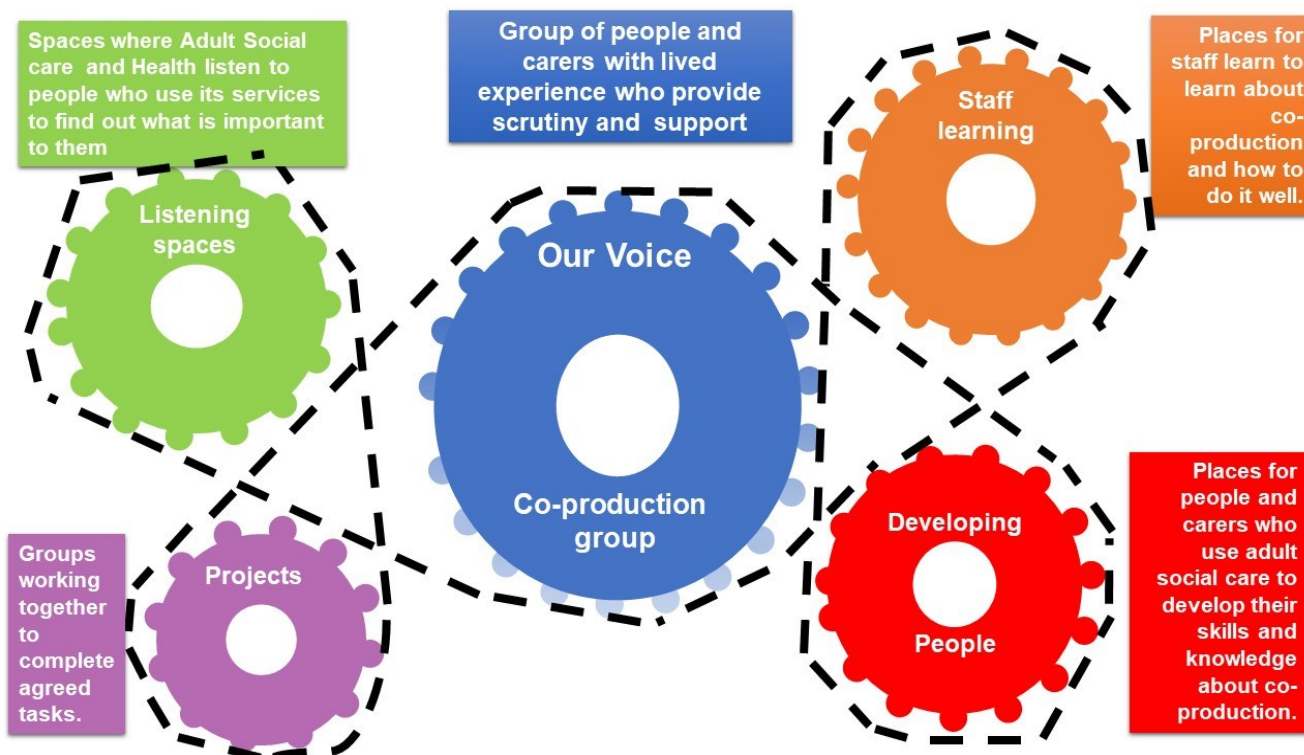
**Information**

2. The development of the plan builds on the work that has taken place over the last three years. These proposals first came to Committee in November 2019 and a further report that was presented to the Committee in November 2020.
3. The Department and Members have committed to supporting a strong model of co-production in line with the Think Local Act Personal definition:

*“Co-production is not just a word, it is not just a concept, it is a meeting of minds coming together to find shared solutions. In practice, co-production involves people who use services being consulted, included, and working together from the start to the end of any project that affects them. When co-production works best, people who use services and carers are valued by organisations as equal partners, can share power, and have influence over decisions made’*

Think Local Act Personal (2011) Making it real: Marking progress towards personalised, community-based support, London: TLAP

4. Whilst there were some changes in approach and inevitable delays and restrictions due to Covid, work on co-production has continued to take place within the department with a strong focus on the development through co-production of the proposed approach in the ‘Better Together’ plan. Core to this work has been the co-production steering group which met for the first time in September 2020. The group, now called ‘Our Voice’, has met monthly since this time with the Corporate Director and/or Service Director (Integrated Strategic Commissioning and Service Improvement) and a member of the department’s co-production team.
5. The ‘Better Together’ plan involves developing work in five interconnected areas (cogs as the plan refers to them).



6. **Listening Spaces:** the first area involves the department holding regular Listening Spaces with people and carers with lived experience. These are an opportunity for people to say what is important to them and for senior staff to hear directly about what is working and not working in relation to the services provided by the department. An initial programme of Listening Spaces with senior leaders will be held in 2022/23.
7. **Projects:** the second area involves the creation of projects that bring staff, other stakeholders and people and carers with lived experience together to find solutions to shared issues or problems. Several co-production projects have already taken place in Adult Social Care and Health including those on Disability Related Expenses, Direct Payments and Complaints. The next phase of co-production projects for 2022/23 will be agreed between Service Directors and Our Voice members. This approach will allow the department to continue to grow its infrastructure to support co-production whilst ensuring the co-production that is taking place is of excellent quality.
8. **Our Voice:** the third area requires Our Voice to move from being a steering group to a permanent co-production group that will scrutinise and support the department as it implements Better Together. To achieve this Our Voice will be supported to expand its membership, so it better reflects the diverse make up of people who use adult social care in Nottinghamshire. Members will receive training and support to enable them to carry out their new role.
9. **Staff Learning:** the fourth area is focused on supporting staff to understand what co-production is and how to do it well. Staff will have access to training, a 'co-production toolkit' and an online 'chat' forum where they can share ideas, information, and learning. The long-term vision is that the 'chat' forum will also be available to wider partners, including

members of Our Voice. The department is currently working with IT colleagues to explore digital solutions to support this.

10. **Developing People:** the final area involves ensuring people and carers with lived experience have access to information and support so they can develop their knowledge, skills and confidence to work alongside staff as equals. Two providers are undertaking one-year pilot projects to support our learning in this area. Nottinghamshire Carers have co-designed and recently launched Carers Space Notts, which will bring professionals and carers together to share ideas, information, and opportunities for co-production. Powher, the department's provider of statutory advocacy services, is co-designing a bank of people with lived experience who want to find out about and get involved in co-production projects. Both projects will present learning later this year and recommendations for next steps will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team in the autumn.
11. The impact of implementing the 'Better Together' plan will be:
  - People and carers with lived experience will be valued and placed at the heart of everything the department does, as a result they will report better experiences of their involvement with adult social care.
  - Managers will receive fewer complaints as services become better informed and more responsive to feedback.
  - Front line staff will have increased confidence in commissioning services that have been co-produced, recognising they lead to better outcomes for residents.
  - Colleagues from within the department and wider partner organisations will find it easier to collaborate and co-produce due to the infrastructure created by the plan.
12. To support the implementation of the 'Better Together' plan, work is underway to agree a suitable team to undertake the different components of this work within the existing cost envelope of the service. Alongside this, the department will be reviewing its approach to expenses and involvement payments. Effective co-production involves considerable time and commitment from those involved and mechanisms for compensating people for their time and for costs they have incurred is key to making this an equitable and sustainable process.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

13. The Better Together plan has been co-designed with people and carers with lived experience of using adult social care services. The plan outlines a framework for developing an infrastructure to support greater co-production across Adult Social Care. There are many drivers supporting a plan to work towards co-production.
14. The Nottinghamshire Council Plan highlights the need for departments to 'listen to communities' and 'work together' to develop a shared vision for the future. The Care Act 2014 statutory guidance refers to the need for social care to co-produce solutions with people in key areas including prevention, access to information and advice and market shaping. The new White Paper 'People at the heart of care: adult social care reform' (2021)

will require adult social care departments to develop new systems and processes that will benefit from being co-designed by the people who will use them.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

16. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **Implications for Service Users**

17. The 'Better Together' plan will provide a wider range of opportunities for people and carers who use adult social care to get involved with the department in ways that work for them. The involvement of people and carers with lived experience who want to work co-productively with the department will lead to the creation of processes and services that are more fit for purpose resulting in better outcomes for people using them.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the Committee approves the 'Better Together' plan: working towards strategic co-production' and the action plan for the first year of its implementation, attached as **Appendices 1 & 2**.

**Kashif Ahmed**

**Service Director, Integrated Strategic Commissioning & Service Improvement**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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## **Constitutional Comments (LW 03/03/22)**

18. Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

## **Financial Comments (DG 14/02/22)**

19. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Development of a Departmental approach to Co-production – report to Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 11th November 2019](#)

[Adult Social Care and Health Culture Change programme – report to Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 6th January 2020](#)

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

ASCPH796