**Our Voice Co-production Group**

**Terms of Reference**

We are a group of people with lived experience of adult social care committed to seeing the Adult Social Care Department (ASCH) in Nottinghamshire County council working more co-productively.

## **Our Aims.**

* To improve services for people and carers.
* To involve people and carers as equals with staff when making major changes to adult social care; to ensure that social care is co-designed with the people who will use it.
* To make co-production business as usual and to show the benefits of doing so.
* To support people to understand the benefits of working together, by providing opportunities to learn so people can develop their skills and knowledge of working in this way.

Our chosen definition of co-production underpins everything we do:

‘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.

These are our values, summarised in the acronym HEARD:

* **H**onesty and Trust
* **E**quality
* **A**ccessibility
* **R**espect
* **D**iversity

## **Our principles for working together.**

* To value and work with people’s’ skills, knowledge, experience, and interests to improve adult social care.
* We let people know what we are learning and achieving through co-production.
* Meetings will be made to work for everyone, taking into account individual needs and preferences. We will use language, written information and other kinds of communication that work for all.
* We are honest and open to promote mutual trust by respecting people’s views and wishes.
* We make time to respond to feedback, by looking at how we do things and changing them if we need to.

Although we cannot represent the whole population of Nottinghamshire that draws on adult social care, we seek to speak for everyone’s best interests. We promote diversity in our group to enable us to do this better.

## **How we work?**

Together with council officers we wrote the Better Together plan. It describes how we hope to grow co-production in Nottinghamshire. We have a key role in supporting and evaluating the development of co-production across adult social care.

Our purpose is not to do all the co-production in Nottinghamshire but to work alongside the Co-Production Team and other ASCH officers to implement the Better Together Plan.

We hold the department to account through the Making It Real Forum against the priorities set out in the Local Account.

Going forward Our Voice expects to be part of every element of co-pro work, in the spirit and ethos of co-production and that this should be embedded into the way of working together. Our Voice is Co-chaired by a person with lived experience and a member of the co-production Team. Meetings are regular and always have a hybrid element. They are to include an update from the making it real forum and other relevant work areas.

## **What is expected of all members?**

* To attend meetings or send apologies if we can’t.
* To respect each other’s views and to understand we won’t always agree.
* To recognise that everyone’s contribution is important.
* To ask if we need help.
* To be open and honest and keep each other in the loop as much as we can.

## **What support do we receive?**

* We are supported by the co-production team and our individual needs and requirements are taken into account.
* Training needs are identified on an ongoing basis.
* We are working with staff to develop guidance which will allow people to claim expenses and renumeration.

**Reviewed on:** 12 August 2024

**Next review date:** to coincide with the next review of the Better Together Plan