



## Putting People First case study: culture change and user involvement

### **Summary**

1. Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council has undertaken a significant amount of work to achieve the culture change which is needed to effectively deliver the aims of Putting People First (PPF), and the adult social services department was recently awarded a Local Innovation Award for 'taking control of care'. Further, as part of PPF delivery, the council has developed a citizen's reference board to ensure meaningful engagement and coproduction with service users, carers and the wider community.

### **Key learning for other councils**

2. This case study demonstrates the importance of engaging service users and residents, making use of their knowledge and expertise to shape services that truly meet their needs. Key lessons for achieving this include:
  - Officers must ensure that they don't use jargon and that they engage in a dialogue with service users rather than making assumptions about their views. Time and effort needs to be spent developing individual relationships.
  - To sustain involvement, coproduction has to be meaningful, with a commitment of time and capacity to avoid tokenism. At the same time, involvement has to be engaging, so whilst discussion of policy documents will be needed at times, there should also be the opportunity for light hearted meetings.
3. The case study also demonstrates several mechanisms to effectively achieve culture change. In particular, engaging senior individuals and utilising their leadership skills can help drive the programme forward. Advocacy work – making use of the experiences of individual service users who have been positively impacted by personalisation – can also be an effective way of encouraging culture change.

### **User involvement**

4. In Trafford, two main boards govern decision making around PPF – the steering group and the citizens reference board:
  - Steering group – this is chaired by the director of adult social services and comprises cross council representation (such as the head of sports and leisure, internal audit and the head of legal services), as well as representatives from health and the community and voluntary sector. A member of the citizen's reference board also sits on the steering group.

- Citizen's reference board – this comprises community leaders, individual residents with an interest in adult social care and users and carers. Rather than only being a strategic discussion group, the board also has very clear decision making powers.
5. The citizen's reference board has been instrumental in assisting the authority to deliver PPF outcomes, and citizen engagement has been a central aspect of PPF since the start of the project. Initially, a launch event was held, with targeted invitations (for example to key community leaders and representatives from a full range of community organisations) but also a general invitation to residents of Trafford in order to widen their involvement base so that they weren't just working with those service users they had tended to engage with previously.
  6. The event was chaired by the lead member for adult social services and was attended by about 120 people. Attendees were asked what ongoing involvement they would like in the development of the programme. Twenty people indicated that they would like to be involved on a day to day basis. It was this group of people that were used to establish the citizen's reference board. In addition, many others indicated that they would like to be updated by email or involved in one off events.
  7. The citizen's reference board has coproduced many pieces of work with the authority. The first was an equalities impact assessment which influenced the design of the programme, leading to an action plan of work to ensure that personalisation outcomes were available to everyone in the borough. The citizen's reference board has decision making powers, for example in a recent 'innovation fund' project which provided start up funding to innovative voluntary and community based services in order to increase support available in the community, citizen's reference board representatives made the decisions around where the funding was going to be allocated.
  8. In addition to work with the citizen's reference board, the authority also works in partnership with the adult social services black and minority ethnic (BME) service improvement partnership which focuses on developing culturally appropriate services in the borough. The authority worked with them in the early stages of the programme to obtain their input into the equality impact assessment.
  9. More recently, the partnership is supporting the authority to develop innovative ideas around providing culturally appropriate services. For example, they are currently developing a project around community respite for people from BME communities. This project is in the very early stages of development, but it is envisaged it would offer day or overnight respite placements with families in the local BME community, rather than in traditional residential care, which has not always been successful in delivering culturally appropriate care. Further, those offering respite placements on a voluntary basis would be given an opportunity to continue this by following the authority's personal assistant learning and development programme, giving them the option to then go on to look for paid work within the social care market.

## ***Leadership and culture change***

10. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to support the culture change which is necessary to meet the requirements of PPF. For example, the cross council steering group representation has ensured that PPF hasn't been 'shifted to one side' as an adult social services responsibility, it has very much been central to Trafford's overall transformation journey. This has been a key enabler for the progress PPF has been able to make.
11. The lead executive member for adult social care has also been fully involved with the programme, and has attended a range of events that have been held to celebrate the achievements of PPF and look at moving it forward. He also chaired the transformation board, which was a transition group of users and citizens tasked with looking at where PPF needed to link in to the local strategic partnership (LSP) and wider authority agendas, at a time when the LSP was being reviewed.
12. The support of the lead member has been key in enabling the team to achieve culture change, and in particular in helping to overcome barriers where there has been resistance to the new way of working. The innovation fund project required a very different way of working with providers, initially eliciting resistance from the authority's central procurement function which raised concerns, for example, about financial regulations. Through strong leadership and commitment to the principles of PPF, the lead member was able to help drive the work forward and help to overcome this resistance.
13. The team has also undertaken targeted work in order to achieve culture change, focusing on two main audiences – external and internal:
  - Externally there was a learning and development programme for providers and the third sector, as well as ongoing dialogue with community organisations and groups. Part of the social care reform grant has been used to recruit a citizen's involvement officer, and the majority of their time has been spent developing relationships and supporting cultural shift with external partners.
  - Internally, a range of awareness sessions have been held, primarily for front line practitioners. These sessions were held from the beginning of the programme, to ensure that staff didn't feel that changes were being imposed on them and that they had been involved and able to contribute to the debate at an early stage. Senior managers were involved in these sessions to demonstrate that there was a high level commitment to personalisation.
  - Individual practitioners were also part of the PPF workstream working groups. This gave them the opportunity to influence and inform the development of the programme, giving a sense of ownership and involvement.
14. The learning and awareness sessions had two purposes. Firstly, to explain what personalisation is and the principles and concepts behind it. Secondly, in order to achieve 'buy in' to the concept, encouraging the new way of working and minimising resistance, the sessions explored the value base behind PPF. This was done through exploring the reasons why participants had come in to social care and asking them to discuss pieces of work that they have been particularly proud of. As the answers were primarily around helping individuals to achieve their

goals, the training was then able to link to PPF as an enabler to allow that to happen.

## **Rationale**

15. The authority's work with the citizen's reference board and BME service improvement partnership contributes to achieving the PPF milestone 'effective partnerships with people using services, carers and other local citizens'. This is a key aspect of PPF, which requires service users to work in a co-productive relationship with local authorities and their partners at all levels in the design, planning and delivery of new personalised systems and services.

## **Challenges**

16. Achieving the culture shift which is necessary to deliver PPF has been the biggest challenge in undertaking this work. There have been several aspects to this:
  - **Processes and systems:** As part of a large public organisation, introducing flexibility and variety into existing processes and systems has been challenging. The key to overcoming this has been a commitment to PPF from the lead member and chief executive. This has ensured that personalisation is seen as a model for transformation that sits at the heart of what Trafford is trying to achieve.
  - The director of adult social services has invested time in keeping the chief executive updated and involved on the progress of PPF and also explaining the thinking and reasoning behind the work. This engagement has been very effective in ensuring continued high level support for the programme.
  - **Managing public perceptions:** Managing the views of the general citizen body who will have had little information about the rationale behind PPF was seen as a significant challenge. A particular challenge has been ensuring that the programme is not misrepresented by the media. Whilst they have little control over the national media, the authority took a very proactive approach to local media management. For example, local press were invited to the launch event, and there have been periodic updates so that the press understand what the authority is trying to achieve through PPF. This has been successful in so far as locally, they have not had any adverse press. However, when criticisms of the concept of PPF are made in the national press, this can have impacts on public support in the borough.
17. An additional challenge in delivering PPF has come specifically from the area of mental health, in which the multi agency working involved makes achieving cultural change even more challenging. In order to develop awareness and understanding of personalisation in mental health teams, the authority developed a mental health personal budget pilot which involved giving one off personal budgets of up to £300 to individuals experiencing mental health issues.
18. The pilot has produced some very positive outcomes for the individuals involved. Importantly, it has also been successful in engaging staff, who were able to see first hand the difference personalisation can make. It has also given them job satisfaction as it has given them a chance to talk to their customers about their aspirations, and how they can make that happen. A key lesson has been that it is individual stories that convince people - i.e. rather than officers talking about PPF,

instead having service users who have benefitted explaining the difference it has made to their life.

## ***Outcomes and impact***

19. The primary outcome that the authority hoped to achieve through their work with users and carers, and in particular, through their work with the citizen's reference board, was to ensure that PPF did not result in a council produced vision for personalisation. Rather, they hoped that through genuine coproduction, they would be able to develop a new way of working which genuinely reflected the needs and aspirations of local residents.
20. The authority feels that this has been achieved; the citizen's reference board has had a significant influence on the development of the programme and members are very proud of their contribution. This work has resulted in a good outcome for the system as a whole, ensuring it meets the needs of service users, but also for the individuals involved, who have felt that they made a real difference to peoples lives.
21. In terms of the more general outcomes from and impact of PPF, the authority is about to start the process of implementing outcome focused reviews as a tool to enable assessment of this.<sup>1</sup> This tool was developed by Helen Sanderson Associates for the Department of Health and is based on the concept of a cycle of information coming from individuals, being collated on a more meaningful basis and then being fed back to commissioners, providers and service users for analysis, with an action plan being developed on the basis of this.
22. The implementation of personalisation is also resulting in cost savings. For example one person was attending a specialist day service out of the borough that was costing £1,400 per week. She shifted to a personal budget and, supported by a broker, is now volunteering with a local provider with a package costing £350 per week. In addition to these cost savings, there have been enhanced outcomes for the individual, for example volunteering has meant that her confidence and self esteem have increased.

## ***Next steps***

23. In order to ensure that their work on PPF and personalisation is sustainable, the authority has begun planning how there can be a seamless link between this and the 'big society'. This is an emerging piece of work which is being taken forward by the authority's executive, with a forthcoming 'big society' summit being led by the leader of the council. The authority is also talking to community groups about what 'big society' will mean for Trafford, in order to develop a local vision around this.

### **For further information please contact:**

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on outcome focused reviews see the following link:

<http://www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/Topics/Browse/Measuringresults/Review/?parent=3249&child=5625&>