

Pause and Learn

(Adapted with thanks to NASA)

Build on the
collaborative
way of
working

Walsall Adult Social Care Pause & Learn

Have an
excellent CPN
and Social
Worker

We go forward
with confidence

We are all
really a bit
tired

June 2021

VISION 2020

SUSTAINABLE MARKETS
SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS
SOCIAL JUSTICE

SECTOR LED
IMPROVEMENT

West Midlands Pause and Learn Context

- WM-ADASS has a comprehensive Sector-Led Challenge and Continuous Improvement Offer;
- Onsite Peer Challenges are part of a wider offer of support and development work by the West Midlands ADASS Branch but due to COVID-19 we have developed a Pause and Learn offer;
- Walsall Council had been due to have a peer review during 2020 as part of the final cycle of the existing Pause and Learn and had been on track for this to be completed however due to the resurgence of COVID 19 it was agreed to utilise the new approach with a focus on exploring how far the transformation agenda had been sustained during the last 6 months;
- Approximately 50 people have taken part, across 11 focus groups;
- The practice review was undertaken via the PSW group which included with a reflective discussion with key stakeholders including the Director led by the West Midlands Practice review lead Mark Godfrey;
- The team were provided with a high level of data and insight focused on some key importance;
- The team consisted of Dr Paul Edmondson – Jones Director of Adult Social Care, Health Integration & Well Being Stoke on Trent Council, Amanda Stringer Lead Commissioner, Staffordshire County Council, Colin Marsh Assistant Director Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Helen Trousdale Lead Commissioner, Staffordshire County Council, Craig Bayliss, Stoke on Trent Council.

Walsall Council is in the space of enabling the residents to live happy and contented lives



Why the 'Pause and Learn' Approach (NASA)

- The COVID-19 pandemic has and continues to impact on a whole range of service delivery and planning functions. The relaxation of restrictions is creating new challenges and opportunities at a time when resilience amongst communities, our workforce and particularly our service users and carers.
- WMADASS has an enviable record in delivering Adult Social Care peer reviews with all 14 councils participating in three cycles over a 6 year period with sharing of good practice, learning from peers and a critical friend approach embedded across the region – developing a 'Pause and Learn' offer to support the COVID-19 efforts in the councils was therefore a natural progression.
- The 'Pause and Learn' offer has been based on an approach used by NASA. They describe the key benefits of their approach which they use for all of their projects as:
 - Identify and spread local best practice;
 - Identify and eliminate waste;
 - On the spot individual and team leadership;
 - Build a team approach to problem solving;
 - Increase likelihood of project success.

We have a
strong, clear
vision

It's recognised as "a proven way to facilitate team learning during missions. It is sensitive, valuable and simple to implement" (Dr Edward Rogers NASA).

Everyone praising us
initially, now
forgotten



How the Pause and Learn has been facilitated and the Key lines of Enquiry

The process that has been followed:

- All conducted virtually;
- Short briefing from the DASS at the beginning of the Pause and Learn to set the context;
- Focus of team of encouraging and supporting participants to have a reflective discussions with each other. Each session framed around the following 4 key areas:
 1. What sort of team were you? Reflection on your actions
 2. When you were at your best?
 3. What did you anticipate well and what surprised you?
 4. What will you hold onto going forward?

(NB: we tried to end all focus groups with encouragement to participants to acknowledge how much they had achieved and the importance of reflection at key staging posts going forward);

In addition the Pause and Learn team reviewed:

- Summary of local some key local care market, COVID 19, and specific mental health key data;
- Provided a summary pertinent points from their perspective of the focus group discussions;
- Agreed with the council on approach for further feedback and reporting.

Holidays are just space where I
think about what I need to do
when I get back to work



Practice Reviews - Methodology

- The previous Practice Review was undertaken in Walsall over a two-day period 26/27 March 2019 and a summary of the progress made since then, which has been considerable, was included in this latest review.
- The three Principal Social Workers (including the host Principal Social Worker) examined 15 cases (5 each). Audit forms were completed for each case and provided to the Council by the Principal Social Workers.
- The case records were randomly selected and screened by an Advanced Practitioner to ensure documents were completed and had mental health as the primary need. The work had been undertaken over the past 12 months. It must be stressed that the review of case records was not a full case file audit, but an overview looking at the quality of social work practice, from the information provided by the Council.
- The Practice Review consisted of three virtual meetings. The first with the Director of Social Care for Adults, 5 Heads of Service/Group Managers and the host Principal Social Worker on 17 May; the second with 10 Team Managers/Advanced Practitioners on 20 May and the third with 6 Mental Health Social Workers/Senior Practitioners and 1 newly qualified Social Worker on 20 May.

More time to do
quality work

Staff are very
positive about the
future



Areas for opportunity - Full Practice Review

1. Key strengths

- Mental health identified as a priority by elected members and senior managers of the Council;
- Team Managers/Advanced Practitioners and Social Workers robustness and resoluteness in coping with the past 15 months and getting on with the job;
- Recognition at a senior level that work was required regarding mental health commissioning and co-production;
- Strong practice leadership of the host Principal Social Worker in implementing change and the strengths-based practice approach;
- Practitioners embracing the implementation of '3 Connections';
- Strong social work values and commitment to their role by Social Workers;
- Strong AMHP service.


Emotionally
and physically
drained

We did the
right thing, and
then sorted
the money




2. Areas of opportunity

- Developing a stronger approach to strategic engagement by the Council and Trust and a shared vision for Community Mental Health Transformation;
- Supporting Team Managers to develop stronger relationships with Trust Managers and have an open dialogue to address and resolve issues;
- Developing a strengths-based integrated mental health commissioning strategy for mental health provision;
- Rolling out '3 Connections' across adult social care and operational managers taking greater responsibility and ownership for practice developments;
- Developing an engagement strategy for co-production;
- Exploring the role that Social Workers play in raising peoples' aspirations to live a fulfilling life, ensuring they take a holistic approach to conversations.



Emotional
roller coaster



Adrenaline
keeps us
going



A data snapshot –

A significant corporate transformation programme has been in place instigated by the current Chief Executive, and the previous DASS had also led on significant piece of health and social care integration, with relationships with the NHS partners significantly improving and resulting in the current integration arrangements.

The improvement journey since the last peer challenge in 2018 has therefore appeared to have been significant and some key factors are noted below which demonstrate this, but also illustrate why Walsall is now keen to focus further on mental health and market management to further improve.

- National ASCOF Rank of Rankings is 54th – improved from 112nd in 2018/19;
- Proportion of adults in contact with secondary MH services who are in paid employment (8%) is in line with regional average, ranked 71st nationally and below the national average (9%);
- Proportion of adults in contact with secondary MH services who live independently (39%) is below the regional (49%) and national (58%) average, ranked 124th;
- Walsall's Gross Expenditure per 100k is 4th lowest of all West Midlands LAs. Expenditure per 100k on short-term care is slightly higher (ranked 9th);
- **26%** of LSOAs are in the most deprived 10% nationally – ranked 18th most deprived nationally and 3rd most deprived in the WM;
- 34% of CQC registered locations have a CQC overall rating of “Requires Improvement” (none are “Inadequate”). This compares to 20.4% RI or I rated homes across the region.

I want my old
life back

Energy on
Bronze call is
motivating



What sort of team/system were you?

- The Walsall Together team and the Bronze commissioning Cell are mature, stable partnerships where the individuals involved throughout Covid have deepened their understanding and trust of each other through a shared experience.
- The level of commitment to Walsall residents in all of the teams is very evident, and teams at all levels are proud to work for the council, and proud of the services they deliver and we heard many examples of optimism despite some of the difficulty and stresses of the last few years.
- The provider team is strong, well respected and has managed to gain the trust across children, adult social care and health colleagues. We heard many examples of their flexibility, agility and also care for each other.
- The executive leadership team, and the political leadership have a shared sense of purpose, recognise the challenges ahead, and the leadership of the Chief Executive in setting the culture of high support, and clear roles and responsibilities is really valued by all of the senior team.
- All of the different teams recognise that fatigue is now a real risk and that the offer for well being of each other and self care needs to be enhanced.

We start our sessions with our 'positive pants on'

Sharing of stories and a shared sense of humour

I feel energised and motivated when I am part of the Bronze chats



When you were at your best?

- When we focus on the people of 'Walsall' not on the needs of an individual organisation, was a reflection we heard from many groups and that the desire to hold on to a common purpose was incredibly important if individuals and teams were going to stay motivated.
- The AMPH response with wider mental health colleagues collaborating and working at a Black Country system level has demonstrated how working at different levels can have a positive impact and the flexibility and adaptability will be critical to the increased demand now starting to flow through into all elements of mental health pathways.
- The adaptability of a range of people, in roles as diverse as highways. Finance and procurement really helped break down silo's and injected fresh thinking into different parts of the organisation – having the space to think about how that can be continued irrespective of whether a crisis exists is seen as important.
- The change from a less contract based approach to a more relationship, partnership approach during COVID particularly with the market, and some of the other key parts in adult social care such as carers, has had a really positive impact. The Carer support organisation for example has seen a marked change since early in 2021 and a much more co-production approach.
- Many examples emerged at all levels on the importance of self awareness and learning, as a way of constantly improving but also mitigating risk, whether this was through individual coaching, group discussions or informal chats the culture of self awareness is when people feel they achieve more – the opportunities for this need to be built into transformation activity.

When we think
Walsall not our
organisation

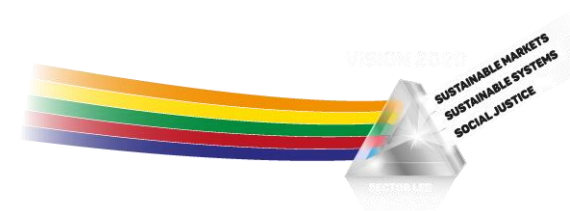
Risk when we take a
moment to slow down,
people will collapse



What did you anticipate well?

- The existing transformation programme with its focus on residents, staff and efficiency enabled the council to rapidly respond to the COVID crisis. For example the work that had been started and is still ongoing in improving the technology infrastructure and the use of teams was really important in enabling the workforce to adapt quickly;
- The need to respond to the NHS rapidly, and practically as evidenced by the standing up of 'Hollybank' was a great success. This not only provided practical support to the NHS but also really helped to continue to build the good relationships and partnerships in Walsall Together;
- We heard a number of examples where innovation, happened because governance was proportionate, making it easy for decision making and empowering people to make decisions is clearly a message from the senior leadership and has benefitted the residents of Walsall during this period;
- The joined up nature of relationships within Walsall helped the initial response at a local community level have an impact very rapidly, with local hubs and community centre's about to stay open and provide a direct link into council services if needed.

How much we could rely
on our provider staff to
adapt rapidly



What will you retain and going forward build upon?

- The council was already on a journey of transformation and the Chief executive and Council Leader had put in place a number of programmes of change to deliver improved financial stability, closer working with local community organisations, and utilising levers such as technology to better effect. These all put the council in a strong position going into COVID;
- The areas which the team heard as priorities for retaining and further focus were;
- Having a unifying core purpose across the different partnerships within Walsall which people who live, work and volunteer in Walsall can adopt;
- The facilitator and enabling role of the council during COVID was recognised as a valuable way of operating within the local system, and a strong civic, place shaping leadership style as key to the next phase of Walsall's transformation;
- Growing and nurturing a culture of self reflection and self awareness, underpinning by confidence in the freedom to act and proportionate governance Blended and flexible working;
- Collaboration and relationships with our stakeholders including the care market and a focus on living in your home as much as you can.

I work with an amazing team – committed
and experienced public servants



In summary – it's not rocket science

- Continue to celebrate your effectiveness as leaders of Place, providing the enabling, facilitative energy for the range of partners and stakeholders including Walsall Together as its shape adapts in the Integrated Care system response.
- There have been many examples of innovative responses during COVID across the council and partners. As new need and inequalities emerge, particularly in the mental health space, the door is open to think about how the strategic development and the operational delivery can contribute to new and different demand and strengthening communities.
- The experience for carers and people who use services during Covid has been varied as individuals and families have had to cope with a range of different stresses. The work you have started with carers to reimagine support, co-designing with them is really appreciated and valued. Building on this, a renewed focus on co-production across all ages and communities will be really beneficial to the transformation agenda.
- The overarching philosophy of the council as an enabler, politically, at senior leadership and expressed in the emerging partnership of Resilient Communities is consistent and well articulated. The people we met who work with, and for the council are really ready to deliver this and this energy needs to be maximised quickly and targeted at building resilience in areas that will reduce demand on health and care services.

Our ambition is to land on
Mars not just the moon



In summary – it's not rocket science

- Commissioning is starting to see its role as a place shaper, as in addition to managing the wider care market, the underpinning philosophy demonstrated by increased investment into local communities will really help support a shift to strength and outcome based commissioning.
- Amplify your successes, so that you are celebrating the great work that is going on, but also taking the opportunity to reflect on where you might build different offers in response to local challenges for example the adaptability and agile behaviour evidence in your provider services.

Our ambition is to
land on Mars not
just the moon



Thank You

The Pause and Learn team would like to thank all of the Walsall Team for all of their contributions during the process, we all learnt so much from the sharing of your experiences.

