

Appendix 1

ASC Transfer Evaluation – Strengths and Areas of Improvement

May 2024

Strengths identified as part of the ASC Transfer Evaluation

Robust project management framework with key documentation in place strengthened by strong leadership and decision-making – Level 4 Substantial Assurance audit outcome.

Project documentation included the creation of a lessons log, which was used in workstream meetings to record early learning as it emerged. This helped to mitigate or escalate issues rapidly and it turn limited service disruption.

Workstreams well resourced and engaged. Effective project planning and mobilisation across all workstreams with full engagement from corporate colleagues.

Good post transfer planning, for example, in-person IT support across all base locations, rapidly resolving IT issues and well executed welcome and induction & training plan for transferring staff (including buddies) with engagement from Chief Executive and Director Adult Social Services.

Dedicated project management resource from both organisations which supported timely flow and management of information requests and agile decision making.

Scheduled staff briefing sessions were a positive way to respond to direct questions, plan how best to welcome colleagues to the council and start to build new working relationships that were different to the existing contractual relationship.

Weekly input from operational leads from both organisations to support a safe transfer with no disruption to service users, this supported understanding of services and decision-making.

Monthly update to the Lead Member to give assurance and oversight on key milestones of the project. High level of oversight and scrutiny of the transfer through frequent assurance progress reports to SLT, CMT, Cabinet and Scrutiny Panel.

Robust governance arrangements in place early on with clear terms of reference and escalation routes which ensured assured progress reporting.

Monthly engagement sessions with Trade Unions providing assurance and progress updates on the project with specific focus on 237 transferring workforce.

Areas of improvement identified as part of the ASC Transfer Evaluation

Receipt of key project critical information only one month prior to transfer date impacted on the ability to allocate effective resource to resolve issues in preparation for day one (2nd April 2024). Internal resources therefore were redirected to support critical activity, which impacted on the ability to effectively support wider project requirements.

TUPE information was not received by B&NES until the statutory 28 days prior to the transfer date, a significant amount of work was compressed into a small window prior to transfer date of 1st April 2024. This impacted on the sign off of the Business Transfer Agreement.

Missed opportunity by not having direct operational discussions with service managers during the final month of transfer. This approach may have been more effective in problem-solving and clarifying key information that directly impacted on service delivery.

Dedicated internal support to manage all key information requirements for developing the Business Transfer Agreement. Although the work on the BTA commenced in Autumn 2023 much of the information requirement was compressed to 2 months before transfer.

More diligence on initial costs presented by corporate support services on identification of required projected mobilisation costs and ongoing business as usual support costs post transfer.

B&NES corporate teams having direct access to HCRG Care Group national corporate team for IT/Systems, Finance and HR to ensure swift exchange of key data and information to resolve queries resulting in less post transfer resolution requirements and less burden for project managers to resolve technical issues.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) meetings involving both organisations should have been scheduled across key workstreams earlier in the project. This would have reduced reliance on the project team to respond to technical questions where SME meetings would have been more efficient and saved valuable project resources.

Lessons Learnt - the lessons log will continue to be updated for 3 months post transfer to allow all transfer activity to be captured. This will include feedback from the wider project group and from transferred staff. Findings will be compiled as a written report to be presented to the ASC Transfer Assurance meeting and shared with the Business Change Hub for wider organisational learning.