

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting: Community Wellbeing, Health and Care

Subject: Developing Strength Based Practice in Adult Social Care

Date of meeting: 9 December 2024

Report by: Marijke Cochrane, Quality & Performance Manager, & Vernon Nosal, Transformation Manager

Cabinet Member: Councillor Matthew Winnington

Wards affected: All

1. **Requested by** Councillor Matthew Winnington

2. **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet Member on the status of the Strengths-Based Practice (SBP) Programme, and to share the activities and key recommendations from the *Design Phase* of the SBP Programme.

3. **Information Requested**

3.1 **Background**

In line with many other Local Authorities Portsmouth City Council is seeking to work in partnership with residents to empower them in order that they are given choices to assist with the way they live.

The Council values are:

- **respect** – we treat everyone with respect, considering the feelings, wellbeing, safety, and rights of others
- **integrity** – we are accountable, can be trusted and take responsibility for our actions
- **collaboration** – we work together as a team and with our colleagues, residents, partners, and communities to achieve more
- **inclusive** – we recognise diversity, are open, fair and provide equal opportunity to all
- **people-focused** – we put people first and ensure our customers are at the heart of everything we do

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

In order to align with these values the adult social care (ASC) strategy sets the following as a vision:

"As part of the community of Portsmouth, adult social care promotes health and wellbeing for all, helping people to build on their strengths, through advice, support and care, enabling them to feel safe and able to contribute to their communities."

The ASC strategy¹ sets out key outcomes for residents in need of care and support as prevention, optimising wellbeing and supporting residents to live independent lives, with Strength-Based Practice as a key activity.

The Care Act 2014, has an expectation that Local Authorities will take action to prevent, reduce and delay the need for care and support and promote independence. This has a significant weighting in all aspects of service provision in England and many Adult Social care departments follow the approach of the "Think Local Act Personal" initiative², supported by the Local Government Association. This initiative has prevention as a key tenet alongside helping people to remain independent, at home, for longer and ensuring that services are co-produced with local communities.

3.2 Strength-Based Practice in Portsmouth

The method through which ASC in Portsmouth is seeking to realise its vision and ensure better outcomes for residents is known generically as "Strength Based Practice"³ and there is considerable evidence to show that implementing this way of working has significant benefits for residents wherever it has been implemented.

In Portsmouth, a group of independent professionals have been working with staff to analyse current practice, identify that which needs to change and make recommendations regarding next steps. The analysis and identification of areas of change are now complete.

The Design stage, commenced after this analysis.

The design phase involved several key activities under 3 workstreams:

1. **Vision Development:** Developed the SBP vision through workshops with senior managers and representatives from ASC support groups.
2. **Skills and Practice Development:** SBP training courses for staff and managers, gathered feedback, and planned how to sustain and further develop SBP skills. (Workstream one)
3. **Systems and Processes Mapping:** Evaluated current assessment, support planning, and review processes to identify opportunities for improvement. (Workstream two)

¹ [ASC Strategy](#)

² [Home - TLAP](#)

³ [What is a strength-based practice approach to care?](#)

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

4. **Staff and stakeholder collaboration:** Conducted workshops and interviews with staff, experts by experience, carers, and other stakeholders to gather feedback and insights across all three workstreams.
5. **Culture Mapping:** Mapped the existing culture within ASC and identified opportunities to develop a culture that better supports SBP.
(Workstream three)

This activity produced a series of Key Recommendations:

Practice Workstream:

1. **Training and Development:** Enhance SBP training for different roles, including awareness training, motivational interviewing, and legal literacy.
2. **Supervision and Peer Support:** Develop supervision and feedback channels to reinforce SBP and form SBP “Communities of Practice.”
3. **Recruitment and Induction:** Use value-based recruitment and mentor new recruits in SBP from day one.

Process Workstream:

4. **Assessment and Support Planning:** Implement core standard Care Act assessment, support planning, and review templates.
5. **Practice Guidance:** Update guidance to support new ways of working and align SBP with other requirements.
6. **Provider Accountability:** Increase provider transparency and accountability for the support they provide.

Culture Workstream:

7. **Communication and Leadership:** Share the SBP vision widely and support leaders to set a good example.
8. **Reward and Recognition:** Reward and praise SBP behaviours and develop a library of SBP success stories.
9. **Addressing Myths:** Identify and dispel myths and unwritten rules that can be barriers to SBP.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.3 Next steps

The recommendations from the Design Phase have been agreed by the service and will inform the development of the **Implementation Phase** of the Strengths-Based programme which is currently being developed. The next steps are to prioritise key activities and develop a long-term plan to monitor and deliver the programme recommendations in stages against agreed milestones and objectives.

The work entails significant change within ASC and with internal and external partners and will take 2-3 years to become business as usual. It is important that this way of working becomes embedded as how we work in Portsmouth and is owned by the service, not something that is introduced and seen as external to practice. Taking the time to embed this and working with colleagues, rather than 'doing to' is essential. Work to date has involved staff from across the service who have embraced the philosophy and can see that working this way will result in better outcomes for people.

One of the key tasks ahead is to design a set of performance indicators which will include the ability to measure progress in terms of resident outcomes, workforce satisfaction and value for money.

.....
Signed by (Director)

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location