

Local authorities working with user led organisations on social care transformation

Summary

This paper provides a background to the good practice example from Essex on local authority work with a user led organisations (ULO) on adult social care. It provides the current policy background to the involvement of ULOs in social care transformation and outlines the key characteristics of what a ULO is likely to be. It also provides some recommendations for members to consider for future LGA and IDeA work on the issue.

Recommendations

- *To note the report, which provides a background for the good practice example from Essex on how a local authority is working with a user led organisation.*
- *To discuss the proposal to co-sign a protocol with the National Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) & the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) which will look at working together to promote the provision of User Led Organisations as part of social care transformation.*
- *To discuss the proposal to put a paper to the Transforming Adult Social Care Steering Group, flagging up the protocol and highlighting the need to involve service users in the development of services.*

Action

As determined by the Board.

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Background – the policy context

1. *Putting People First*¹ stated that the sector will work with users and carers to transform people's experience of local support and services.
2. *Following on from this, the Department of Health's (DH) Local Authority Circular Transforming Social Care*² states that one of the core components that councils will be expected to have in place by 2011 as part of the redesign of their adult social care services will have to be:

An enabling framework to ensure people can exercise choice and control with accessible advocacy, peer support and brokerage systems with strong links to user-led organisations. Where ULOs do not exist, a strategy to foster, stimulate and develop user-led organisations locally
3. *In addition, as discussed in the Board meeting on 14 May, the Government's Improving Life Chances for Disabled People Report (2005) outlined that local organisations, run and controlled by disabled people, should be a vital part of the implementation of a new approach to supporting independent living. The Government has accepted recommendation 4.3 in the report that:*

By 2010, each locality (defined as that area covered by a council with social services responsibilities) should have a user-led organisation modelled on existing Centres for Independent Living.
4. *The DH is leading on delivering this recommendation. It has published a policy document which sets out the Department's interpretation of this recommendation*³. *This sets out the key requirements for how an organisation could be defined as a viable and sustainable User-led Organisation (ULO), modeled on existing Centres for Independent Living (CILs).*
5. *As part of building up capacity within the sector, the Department of Health provided two year's funding for a selection of organisations across England over the last and forthcoming year to become user-led Action and Learning Sites. The LGA sat on the panel which assessed the grant applications.*
6. *The DH also have indicated that they also wish to work with the LGA and IDEA to explore how co-development of services with users and working with ULOs can be highlighted to local authorities to be priorities for social care transformation.*

¹ http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_081118

² http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/LocalAuthorityCirculars/DH_081934

³ http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_078804

User led organisations

7. *User-led organisations are local organisations, run and controlled by disabled people, carers and other people who use support. They aim to promote independent living, be accountable to their constituency, and demonstrate a commitment to these throughout all their activities. The sort of activities that ULOs may provide include:*
 - *Information and advice*
 - *Advocacy and peer support*
 - *Support in using direct payments and/or individual budgets*
 - *Support to recruit and employ personal assistants*
 - *Assistance with self-assessment*
 - *Disability equality training and support the implementation of the Disability Equality Duty by public sector organisations in the locality*

8. *The exact nature of the services provided and their relationship with statutory agencies will vary according to local circumstances. However, the things that many ULOs should be able to offer local authorities (and other statutory agencies) include:*
 - *Experience of delivering the kind of services that are integral to the personalisation agenda, for example, research evidence shows that take up of direct payments is highest in areas with ULOs.*
 - *Providing access to information, advice and advocacy in order to help local people better navigate health and social care systems*
 - *Offering employment training and support to move socially excluded people.*
 - *Assisting local authorities to engage with different groups of service users and carers. Enabling local authorities to carry out their Disability Equality Duty in that they can ensure that local public services engage with the many different groups of disabled people.*

National ULO Protocol

9. *The National Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) and (the then) Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) both signed a protocol in June 2006 looking at working together to promote the provision of Centres for Independent Living (CILs) and User Led Support Services. This recommended that both organisations support the development and expansion of local, user-led support services. The protocol mainly focused on direct payments and so it is currently being refreshed in the light of social care transformation.*

10. *Subject to member approval, it is proposed that LGA and IDeA also sign up to the revised protocol. Members may be particularly interested signing up a document that flags up the need to involve local people in social care transformation, with ULOs being a possible mechanism for achieving this locally.*

11. *It is also proposed that the LGA and IDeA submit a paper to the national 'Transforming Adult Social Care' Steering Group to flag up the move to co-sign the protocol, re-emphasising that working with all local people and their representatives should be a key part of the programme. It could also suggest that other TASC members also sign up to the Protocol, reflecting the approach taken by the Putting People First concordat.*

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Financial Implications

12. *There are no financial implications for the LGA.*

Implications for Wales

13. *The transformation of the social care system applies to England only.*

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