

Making it Real (MiR) is developing its collective voice.

Shropshire's Adult Social Care recently went through what is called a 'Peer Challenge', where critical friends looked closely at what we do well and what needs to be improved.

The Peer challenge highlighted the enthusiasm of the adult social care workforce and all stakeholders; that is all people who provide and make use of care services. It saw a clear commitment to making a positive difference to the lives of Shropshire residents.

Achievement was recognised in the Council's approach to partnership and engagement, including the Making it Real and other partnership Boards. However, the Peer review team suggested that further clarity was required about how feedback informs changes in practice and strategy. They saw that MiR and other Partnership Boards are valued, but they identified that their impact on outcomes and practice needs to be improved.

This steer from the Peer challenge comes at exactly the right moment. Discussion has begun about developing the role of the Making it Real Board and amalgamating it with the experience of the original People2People (P2P) Board. A 'Collective Voices' workshop has given the opportunity to rethink the nature of the existing Boards; refocus partnership working and ensure a louder, more creative voice for lived experience in the development of Adult Social Care.

We now have an opportunity to be clear about what is working and to understand what has not worked. Any service or business that wants to grow or improve has to change, accepting the need for change will enable us to firmly place the ideas of coproduction at the heart of future developments.

The last few years have seen big changes in social care; at times we've all had to grapple with these changes. Now is a good time to build on the enthusiasm and commitment that has taken us through change and recapture the original principles and values of P2P alongside the personalisation ethos of MiR.

With the right balance of membership, a new Making it Real Board can be an even stronger positive force driving service transformation. Experts with lived experience can ensure that strategies and policies are grounded in reality: giving insightful feedback while being an integral part of innovative developments to services.

We are not creating another Scrutiny Panel (their role is to provide assurance to Cabinet). MiR's role is to give a real challenge to the practical side of adult social care work; to offer oversight, challenge and recommendations.

As written in the existing Terms of reference (and it might be good to see this copied wholesale into any new Terms of Reference);

“The Making it Real Board focuses the voices of experts by experience...

The Board's major responsibility is to ensure that co-production with people who use services and their carers is a reality and central to future developments. We believe that all social care services should be devised and enhanced with service user participation, giving shared opportunities to solve problems and design services”

A date has been set for the first meeting of the new Board (13th October 2017). This gives time to take stock of the achievements to-date of both Making it Real and People 2 People. It also means that we can confirm the membership of the new Board and prepare for the discussions about purpose and priorities.

Alongside this document you can find a brief paper outlining proposals for the new Board ([2017 08 04 - New Board Proposals - A Begley. Director Adult Services and Housing](#)). This has been produced to help start those initial discussions and so ensure that we get the genuine voice of lived experience at the heart of social care operations.

Regular updates will keep everyone informed about developments as we lead up to the first of the new Board's meetings in October 2017.

In the meantime, help us shape and influence the working and development of adult social care by having your say now. Let us know your thoughts on the way forward by feeding back any comments on the discussion paper.

We look forward to hearing your views. Please feedback any comments to stewart.smith@shropshire.gov.uk or makingitreal@shropshire.gov.uk