

**SUNDERLAND HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

25 July 2014

**ADULTS PEER CHALLENGE**

**Report of the Executive Director of People Services**

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the outcome of the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge, which took place in March 2014. It highlights the key messages and next steps.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Following the removal of national targets and assessments, councils are working through the opportunities and challenges of self regulation, improvement and innovation in adult social care. The LGA is working with partners to develop a programme for sector led support, which will focus on promoting excellence and harnessing the skills of local authorities. Its core elements – regional working, robust data, annual self reporting and peer challenge – are consistent with the sector’s wider approach to improvement.
- 2.2 In March 2014, the People Directorate invited a Peer Challenge Team to undertake an assessment of progress and potential relating to the following scope:
- Provide an objective forward looking assessment of the ambition and vision of the People’s Directorate within Sunderland City Council and the opportunities this presents for enhanced outcomes for vulnerable adults
  - Assess the current plans for safeguarding vulnerable adults and the effectiveness of the newly developed model for adult safeguarding in the city
- 2.3 Through a process of internal and external stakeholder engagement, the Peer Challenge Team spent four days in Sunderland and on day five, reported key messages to officers and partners who had participated in the review process. This was followed by a written report.

**3. Key Findings**

- 3.1 The Peer Challenge Team reported that the People’s Directorate is well placed to secure enhanced outcomes for vulnerable adults through:
- The ambitious and clear vision in place
  - It’s good service and organisational platform
  - Well respected relationships and partnerships
  - Continued use of performance data

3.2 The Team also identified the following areas of consideration, in relation to the People's Directorate:

- Continue to embed changes and 'get the job done' before moving onto the next challenge.
- Consider the management capacity across the whole directorate.
- Delivery against 4 major programmes (Better Care Fund, Sunderland Care and Support, Personalisation and Prevention) is fundamental and they are interdependent for success.
- Mitigating the narrowing resource base will be a challenge, if gains do not arrive quickly enough.

3.3 In relation to Safeguarding Adults, the Peer Challenge Team identified that the newly developed model is a significant advance on the former service. It was acknowledged that things were at an embryonic stage and there was still work to do, in order to reach its full potential.

3.4 In particular, they identified that the relationships at the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board are mature and trusting and there is evidence of proportionate, timely, joined up and person-centred responses to safeguarding concerns.

3.5 Better understanding and use of metrics is required, improved access to safeguarding information on the Council's website is a must and a focus on service user and carer engagement and understanding experiences across safeguarding processes is required.

#### **4. Next Steps**

4.1 In response to the feedback presentation, the Directorate has developed an action plan (attached) based on the specific areas for consideration identified. The areas linked to the People's Directorate will be incorporated into existing transformation programmes underway.

4.2 In relation to the areas linked to safeguarding, the specific action plan was discussed at the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board in May, where all Partners agreed to the proposed actions and will be receiving regular reporting on progress against actions.