

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK: How Aspire Works



WHO WE ARE

Introduction

Aspire Community Benefit Society (Aspire CBS) is a 'public service mutual' established in 2015 to deliver care and support services to adults with learning disabilities. It was founded as a vehicle to enable the care and support services for adults with learning disabilities to 'spin out' of local authority direct management and to be established as an independent not-for-profit social enterprise. At inception we had a 'block contract' with Leeds City Council for the provision of supported living, respite and day services to 900 adults with learning disabilities. Following the end of the initial 6 year contract, we are now in the process of moving towards individualised funding arrangements, which better reflects the more personalised nature of the services we deliver to the people we support.

This document describes how we operate in order to serve the people we support and the wider communities in which we operate.

Legal framework

The Aspire Group consists of Aspire Community Benefit Society and its wholly owned arms-length trading subsidiary, Aspire Services (Leeds) Ltd (registered number 09441598). Aspire CBS is the employing organisation within the Aspire Group and the regulated body which delivers care and support services.

Group Structure



Aspire CBS is a registered society in England and Wales under the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (registered number 7062) and is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Aspire CBS has exempt charity status (HMRC Charities reference number EW36148) and is VAT registered (VAT number 215

0549 36). Our Registered Office is: Westfield Chambers, Westfield Business Park, Lower Wortley Road, Leeds LS12 4PX

Aspire CBS is a company limited by guarantee. All permanent employees become a shareholder upon completion of their probationary period. No dividends are paid to shareholders.

Aspire CBS operates in accordance with its Rules which set out the Objects of the organisation, how we work and how decisions are made.

HOW WE ARE ORGANISED

Aspire CBS supports more than 900 adults with a learning disability and their family carers through day services, supported living services, respite and crisis services. Nineteen operational teams across the city deliver care and support services to individuals and groups, each led by a Service Manager, and supported by six Area Managers and three Senior Area Managers. See: Aspire's Organisational Structure Chart.

HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

In order to fulfil our Objects our Mission, Vision and Values act as our guide for what we want to achieve and how we will behave in achieving them.

Our Vision

To be at the heart of communities in which people with learning disabilities are supported to live life to the full.

Our Mission

To deliver ever improving quality care and support services, making us the provider of choice for customers, family carers, staff, commissioners and local communities.

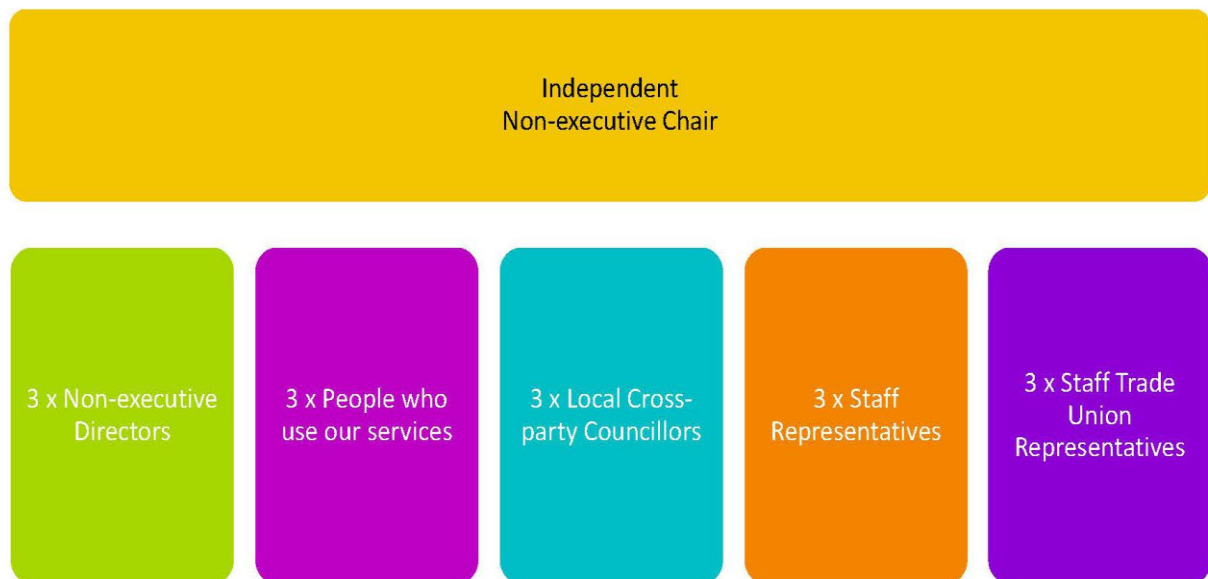
Our Values

To be:



Additionally we have developed an Ethics Statement which describes the principles which underpin our decision-making processes.

Aspire CBS has a Board which meets quarterly and has 16 Directors made up as follows:



All Board members are trustees of the charity and hold their role in a non-paid capacity. In attendance at board meetings are the Chief Executive, Operations Director, Finance Director and other members of the executive team, all of whom attend in a non-voting capacity. The Board sets the strategic direction of the business, oversees the management of performance against key targets and monitors delivery against the business plan. The Board also monitors risk and risk exposure, approves the budget, authorises expenditure over £50,000 and appoints the Chief Executive.

Aspire CBS also has a Finance & General Purpose Committee which is made up of non-executive directors, a staff representative and a Councillor. In attendance of committee meetings are the Chief Executive, Operations Director and Finance Director. The role of the Finance & General Purpose Committee is to monitor and track the organisation's financial health, providing detailed scrutiny of financial matters, overseeing the application and submission of procurement-related tenders and providing strategic advice and direction to the Chief Executive and the Board.

Our Scheme of Delegations and Senior Management Team – Roles & Responsibilities set out those matters which are reserved for the Board and those activities that have been delegated to the Chief Executive and executive team. The Chief Executive is personally accountable to the Board and to regulators for the management and overall performance of the organisation which includes delivering the aims of the business, managing resources effectively and efficiently, ensuring suitable arrangements are in place in order to discharge regulatory obligations, advising the Board on matters impacting industry, economic and social change

issues and appointing, leading and supporting an effective leadership team. The Chief Executive has authorisation for expenditure up to £50,000 and is responsible for all other recruitment.

The Chief Executive leads the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which also includes the Operations Director and Finance Director. The Chief Executive also leads the Senior Management Team (Business) which is made up of senior staff across each of the work areas in the organisation and to whom a number of decisions are sub-delegated in line with specific job roles (e.g. the Health & Safety Manager acts as our Competent Person). This team identifies, tracks and monitors key performance business activity and risk management issues.

The Operations Director leads the Senior Management Team (Operations) which is made up of senior staff across service delivery areas in the organisation. This team monitors operational activity and tracks a range of key performance measures and operational business issues. The operational team manage our direct service provision which by far and away is the largest part of the organisation both in terms of staff and resources and service delivery is the main purpose of the organisation.

HOW WE ARE REGULATED

In order to meet and maintain our statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations Aspire undertakes a broad portfolio of work. This is made up of key performance indicators and a range of submitted reports which provide internal tracking on key performance indicator movement and activity as well as the required external evidence to ensure and evidence overall performance and compliance to a wide range of stakeholders including the Financial Conduct Authority, HM Revenue & Customs, Companies House, Care Quality Commission and Leeds City Council.

We have a Quality Assurance framework in place to ensure that we focus energy, time and resources at the areas of practice that have the greatest impact on delivering quality services which meet all areas of statutory compliance and which are focussed around the people we support, staff and resources. These are linked to delivering improved outcomes in relation to our values and CQC's Key Lines of Enquiry.

HOW WE INVOLVE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

People We Support:

We put the people we support at the heart of everything we do. We have an active Customer Council with Customer Councillors and deputies from all our services. The people we support elect their Councillors every three years through a competitive voting process. Three of the Customer Councillors take up places on the Aspire Board and hold full voting rights. City-wide Customer Council meetings

are held 4 times per year and the Chief Executive is invited to attend in order to provide service updates, answer Councillors' questions and receive feedback. In addition, monthly area Customer Council meetings are held at which Councillors can feedback information from the city-wide meeting and people who use Aspire's services can raise questions or concerns. Through representation on the Board of Directors, annual satisfaction surveys and regular service-based meetings, the people we support have real influence over decisions made within Aspire.

Family members:

Family carers are invited to attend/contribute to the annual reviews of their loved ones. In addition, we have sought family carers' contact preferences for sharing a variety of information including our quarterly newsletter, Annual Plan, service updates and emergency situations. Each year we undertake a satisfaction survey with family carers in which there are several opportunities to provide additional comments/observations in free-text fields. Where a major change to services is proposed, we consult with family carers by holding 'in-person' meetings. In addition, throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we provided family carers with information and service updates via bi-monthly letters and regular telephone calls from staff in the services their loved one accesses. We also host Carer Information Sessions which are an opportunity for family carers to socialise with other carers and have direct conversations with members of Aspire's senior management team.

Staff:

Three places are set aside on Aspire's Board for this key stakeholder group and each has full voting rights. Selection is via a competitive voting process undertaken with all staff members. An annual satisfaction survey is undertaken with staff in which there are several free-text fields where people can submit additional comments/observations. Staff from services across Aspire are nominated as representatives on our Quality Matters! Groups. These focus on Health, Safety & Green Matters, Technology Matters, Diversity Matters and Future Matters. The purpose of these groups is to enable cross-service discussion on developments and innovation which could drive service improvement. Also, our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Staff Forum is a place where staff can confidentially discuss issues relating to race or discrimination in the workplace for raising with the senior management team.

Trade Unions:

Aspire works closely with Trades Unions and formally recognises GMB, UNISON and UNITE for the purposes of collective bargaining. We hold regular joint Consultative Meetings and a Health & Safety Committee with Trades Union colleagues. Places are also set aside on the Board for three staff Trade Union representatives, each of whom hold full voting rights.

Care Quality Commission:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) acts as regulatory body and undertakes inspections of our emergency service, respite service and supported living services.

The reports from these inspections are published on CQC's website and links to these are posted to Aspire's website.

Leeds City Council:

The Council is Aspire's principal funder. Places are set aside on the Board for three Elected Members and nominations for the places are made by Party leaders. Each Director has full voting rights, except on matters subject to a conflict of interest. In addition, a wide range of regular and ongoing meetings take place between the Council and Aspire, providing checks and challenges in respect of performance on the contract, Service Level Agreements and care & support matters.

Wider Sector Partners:

Aspire works in partnership with a wide variety of partners in the public, private and third-sectors. We take an active role on Volition (the voice of the Third Sector for health and care in Leeds) and work alongside a range of over 20 partner organisations with whom we work co-operatively on a range of projects. In addition to regular meetings, projects and events with partners, we make extensive use of social media to share information about events, activities and achievements. We publish a quarterly newsletter in written and video format.