The review

A peer review of Lowestoft Rising took place between 26th November and 28th November 2014. Findings were presented to members of the sponsoring group on Friday 28th November. This report summarises the key strengths of the programme and identifies opportunities for Lowestoft Rising.

The review was conducted by a team of internal and external reviewers. It was conducted as a series of interviews; networking events; sessions designed to address the key themes of Lowestoft Rising, which are Community, Education and Drugs & Alcohol; and a formal feedback session.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role and Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carlton Brand</td>
<td>Corporate Director at Wiltshire Council (Lead Reviewer)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dave Hudson</td>
<td>Policing Standards Manager at the College of Policing in London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flora Ogilvie</td>
<td>Public Health Registrar from the Redbridge Public Health Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Blake</td>
<td>Communities Lead, Business Development at Suffolk County Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liz Jackson</td>
<td>Programme Manager at Suffolk County Council</td>
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<td>Malcom Grimston</td>
<td>LGA Member Peer</td>
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Commissioned by the Sponsor Group the review was scoped to do the following:

1. Reconfirm the sponsors’ ambitions for Lowestoft Rising, and ensure that those ambitions are consistent within the group.

2. Challenge how the work to date delivers on the ambition of Lowestoft Rising.
   - Taking into account both what we have achieved and, just as importantly, how we have achieved it, i.e. how have changes to our systems and processes created culture, organisational and behavioural change that has enabled us to progress.
   - What difference has Lowestoft Rising made – how much have we enabled and how much have we facilitated? How have we cleared the fog?

3. Review plans for future work, and challenge how that would deliver on the ambitions of the sponsor group.
   This might include:
   - How do we identify the building blocks that have got us to where we are, recognising the fact that ‘lift and shift’ might not work.
   - How do we take those building blocks to other ‘places’?
   - How do we get to single management delivery model for Lowestoft as proposed by original Peer Review (see p10 of Peer Review report) and agreed as the preferred delivery model at the joint management meeting in September 2013? How ready are we to ‘let go’ of the traditional model?
   - How could we use the work being done through the Commissioning Academy to help Lowestoft Rising?
   - Planning our next steps.

4. Make recommendations for change/future work.
“Lowestoft has all it needs here”

The quote above is from Change Maker Phil Aves and reflects the initial findings of the review team. The review team saw and heard that Lowestoft Rising had already made improvements in a number of key areas. Headline improvements below begin to demonstrate that Lowestoft Rising is not just about money or people but about how these are organised. The evidence showed:

- Street drinkers: reduced from 35 to 4
- Out of hospital: 450 patients seen in the community
- Burglary/ASB stats: down by 25% in 2013/14 and already set to achieve 20% this year
- North Denes NEET volunteering project
- Infrastructure and transport plan for the town (some delivery already)
- 70 businesses in school Work Inspiration sessions
- So far, calculations show £640k revenue saved
- Pride in Lowestoft: various significant events – including interest from the media and other stakeholder activity

Key messages and conclusions

The review team noted a number of strengths to be built on and opportunities to be taken as part of the initiative.

- The ‘Moving Lowestoft Forward’ transport and infrastructure strategy is significant as it provides a visual impression of progress in Lowestoft. The review team suggests that the sponsoring group consider integrating this formally as part of Lowestoft Rising and providing a single sponsor to ensure ‘join up’ of the two initiatives.
- Following a period of some instability, the sponsoring group now has an opportunity to bring mental health services to the group and involve them in key strategic decisions.
- The implementation of the Riverside development in Lowestoft provides an opportunity for true integration of services and staff if organisational development principles of integration are developed and agreed as early as possible.
- Lowestoft Rising has benefitted greatly from input from the voluntary and community sector and now needs to build on that success both at a strategic and operational level.
- Having proved the model in many areas the review team recommends that Lowestoft Rising now begins to move formally to Model 2 (integration) or Model 2 plus (shared management/shared budget).
- The review team recommended that consideration be given to giving Lowestoft Rising a brand or identity and suggested that the 5 ways to wellbeing framework might be a helpful way of explaining Lowestoft Rising to local people so that it is seen as relevant to people’s lives and not just about service re-design.
- The review identified a potential opportunity for the integration of Community Development Officers and other community officers from around the County – from Suffolk County Council, Districts and Boroughs, voluntary sector and others – this has the potential to release around £250,000 which could be reinvested in Lowestoft Rising.
- Having been successful in many areas of social improvement, the review team felt that Lowestoft Rising was now in a position to take these social elements to the next level and to agree the next three areas to develop. These could be selected from the 26 key outcomes that have been agreed.
- In order to understand its success, the review team now suggests that for the 26 specific outcomes, baselines are established and measures are developed that allow success to be measured without overburdening the initiative with bureaucracy.
• The review team witnessed very positive and inspiring events during the review period and heard evidence of others that had happened in Lowestoft. The team recommends that Lowestoft Rising build on the success of these events – one reviewer said “when something is going well, do more of it”.

Vision and principles
• The review team found that all partners currently involved in the initiative have an aligned and compelling vision and that this vision is clearly understood.
• The principles of Lowestoft Rising were seen to be well defined and ‘lived’ by those partners who were fully involved. However, the team heard evidence that some professions did not understand the principles, or understood them but were not living them. For example, providers of drug and alcohol services who were interviewed did not fully understand the programme and reported that GPs were could be better engaged with the drug and alcohol service (although no GPs were present). There was also evidence that Children and Young People’s services, some Ipswich-based corporate services (for example IT and Property), and some front line police officers did not fully understand the vision and principles of Lowestoft Rising.
• Given the feedback above, the review team suggests that the communication of principles and vision to staff is reviewed by the sponsoring group and that members of the sponsoring group are held to account if these are not demonstrated or understood within their organisations.

Leadership
• The review team saw evidence of great leadership within Lowestoft Rising, demonstrated by Phil Aves, Shaun Overy, and others.
• Those partners involved were seen to support and endorse the programme to such an extent that it was particularly noted that Health East were ‘bucking the trend’ of NHS culture seen elsewhere in the country in being so immersed in the Lowestoft Rising culture and supportive of integrated ways of working.
• There was evidence both in discussions with local members and with staff that local political leadership was strong and facilitative. The review team however raised questions about the role and level of engagement by the relevant Cabinet members.
• As mentioned earlier in this document, the review team felt that bringing a mental health service representative onto the Sponsoring Group and into service integration would strengthen the leadership and partnership even further. (Andrew Evans suggested it would be more effective to achieve greater local ownership from the Trust for mental health rather than expecting them to join the Sponsoring Group)
• Sustainability is a risk because of the ‘heroic’ leadership model employed
• Shared leadership/succession planning for key leaders

Culture
• The visit to the career session at Red Oaks primary school demonstrated to the review team that the perception that the young people of Lowestoft are lacking in aspiration was a falsehood. However the team did witness a lack of aspiration in some teaching staff.
• “Those who have live here and work here, walk it and talk it, those that don’t, don’t” - the geographical nature of Lowestoft is both an opportunity and a challenge. Many of those who live and work in the town are passionate about their local area, however those who operate from locations outside Lowestoft often perceive the town to be disconnected and lacking in opportunity.
• The review team witnessed evidence of professionals promoting perceptions which are not founded in reality. For example the 180 degree story where Lowestoft lacks opportunity due to the fact it is coastal,
professionals talking down the town and its communities rather than taking an asset based approach which looks to build on what is good about the town.

- The Organisational Development programme which was developed to support and run alongside the four themed areas started well but appears to have lost momentum and activity has been sporadic.
- The Commissioning Academy which is due to commence in January 2015 has the potential to be the catalyst for an integrated approach to commissioning services in Lowestoft across the partner organisations.
- The co-location of Waveney District Council and Suffolk County Council services at Riverside and the Mariner Centre present a unique opportunity to develop a culture of integrated services. The review team received mixed messages from local staff in relation to the organisational development activity undertaken to date which led them to question whether the culture and behaviour of staff will be aligned in time to take full advantage of these opportunities.
- The review team recommend that the sponsoring group look at the potential for co-locating all commissioning for Lowestoft to achieve the Model 2 plus.
- The team also recommend an urgent review of the Riverside/Mariner Centre staff engagement and service re-design programme.

**Governance**

- The decision by the sponsoring group to keep the governance light touch and appropriate to foster innovation and risk taking has been successful and has enabled Lowestoft Rising to develop substance and credibility.
- This approach has been built upon high quality relationships with trust and confidence which is evident both at a senior leadership level, support team and amongst those frontline staff who have engaged in Lowestoft Rising activity.
- The review team found that partners are leading on activity which is not traditionally theirs to lead on which is a sign of the maturity within the partnership.
- Whilst relationships within the sponsoring group and support team are strong, there remains a feeling that Lowestoft is operated by remote control from Ipswich, in particular for county services where middle managers and senior officers responsible for local services operate from Endeavour House and have limited visibility locally.
- The local member session demonstrated broad support for the principles and activity of Lowestoft Rising amongst councillors. Whilst they have a reasonable understanding of Lowestoft Rising, the review team suggest that local members could be further engaged in the delivery of its ambitions.
- The role of senior councillors, in particular the relevant Cabinet Members needs to be more clearly defined with greater levels of engagement.
- Some effort has been made to document the impact of Lowestoft Rising activity, for example the number of street drinkers and hospital admissions. However more effort should be made to provide measurable outcomes and to document actions from key stakeholder meetings, however being careful to not over-govern and stifle activity.
- Lowestoft Rising is currently operating as ‘enhanced collaboration’ but the review team recommend to the sponsoring group that they use the next 6 months to take opportunities which would propel them into ‘integration’. The integration of community development capacity and community safety present an opportunity.

**Partnerships**
• The partnerships which underpin Lowestoft Rising are mature, close and highly aligned.
• The focus of the partnerships has been delivery focussed and grounded in reality which has helped to galvanise support from frontline staff and managers locally.
• The absence of mental health from the partnership both strategically and at a delivery level is a clear omission. Whilst efforts have been made to engage mental health, the challenges of the last 12 months for the Trust have prevented any significant engagement. However the environment to approach the Trust to engage in Lowestoft Rising is now more positive and should be pursued.
• The business community have been engaged to some extent, particularly in the Education strand of activity. The review team recommend to the sponsoring group that they explore the role of the business community at a strategic level.
• The four strands of activity are well understood and defined, however greater linkages could be made between these and the partnerships which underpin activity.
• The role of the Voluntary and Community Sector is key to the delivery of the ambitions of Lowestoft Rising. There are signs of some good engagement, with membership of Community Action Suffolk at both the sponsoring group level and support team. However all partners, including Community Action Suffolk recognise the need to develop more fully the opportunities for engaging with the VCS. It is important for the sponsoring group to nurture the role of the VCS rather than taking it for granted and placing too great an expectation on the sector without support.

Property and Systems

• The review team were impressed by the new shared facilities at Kirkley Mill which they felt demonstrated real integrated working between partners. The team also heard about other shared programmes such as Suffolk Family Focus, which supported this view. The team considered this integrated working a real strength of the programme, although there is definitely opportunity to integrate further eg by co-locating information and advice services within Kirkley Mill.
• The development of Riverside offers further potential for services in Lowestoft to be joined up but the team added a word of caution that this should not be managed purely as an office move. Getting the culture, behaviour, service design and IT right first will add the extra value that would make this more than just a co-location of organisations and move it towards Model 2 plus or Model 3.
• Enormous potential for further integration in the form of an extra care/sheltered housing campus at the existing hospital site was identified during discussions with staff. If this opportunity could be exploited by partners, this would be an important next step in working together following on from the success of Kirkley Mill.
• To ensure the success of the Riverside opportunity, members of the programme should immediately confirm Riverside occupation plans, including IT and telephony and ensure that the appropriate level of support was available from partner organisations to deliver the culture change required.

Finance

• The review team congratulated Lowestoft Rising and its partners for having achieved the identified outcome of £640k revenue savings to date. It was felt that the deliberate strategy by the sponsoring group of not attributing activity to budget codes or specified cost savings had been a strength as partners had not been distracted by financial discussions.
• It was suggested by reviewers that Lowestoft Rising partners build on the point above to identify a mechanism for recycling cashable savings back into Lowestoft Rising to fund prevention work or other priorities.
• Lowestoft Rising partners should now be in a position to take some further risks and continue its movement towards Model 2 in some agreed services. The review team noted that there is already emerging evidence of pooled budgets and commissioning which could be explored further. For example, one opportunity might be to pool adult care and CCG funds – focusing on drugs and alcohol as a starting point.

• Partners should explore and, where appropriate, take advantage of new funding streams when available, and, where possible, funding should be simplified. For example, the drug and alcohol forum reported that they had been presented with multiple funding pots to apply for, each requiring a separate application process.

Communications

• The review team heard that staff and partners know about ‘Lowestoft Rising’ to a greater or lesser extent but that some, but not all, know about its values and live them.

• A question was raised there during the review which was ‘in adhering to the values of Lowestoft Rising, so you feel you can go against service policy?’ This is something that the review team suggests partners explore further.

• The team felt that communications about Lowestoft Rising needed to be re-launched to refresh the message and hail its successes. Headline outcomes should be communicated to all stakeholders to ensure that the success of the model is understood and to encourage buy-in. Staff communications should be ramped up to ensure the engagement necessary if Lowestoft Rising is to move to the next model.

• The team heard that those working on Lowestoft Rising didn’t feel that staff in more central parts of all organisations knew what was happening or understood the success of the model. Communications to staff in those areas – eg Endeavour House need to be considered, perhaps through shared staff events with members of the sponsoring group.

• It was also evident that there needed to be a concerted effort to engage the wider community in Lowestoft Rising and its aims and make it visible to all external stakeholders.

• The review team recommended that consideration be given to giving Lowestoft Rising a brand or identity and suggested that the 5 ways to wellbeing framework might be a helpful way of explaining Lowestoft Rising to local people so that it is seen as relevant to people’s lives and not just about service re-design.

• The team also recommended that along with an identity, Lowestoft Rising should establish a digital presence or community portal. A good way to do this, demonstrating the Lowestoft Rising ethos might be to work with High Schools/business who can design, write and operate (information, volunteering, links between groups and partners/schools/businesses, social media, online forum…)

• To underpin the above, the communications plan should be revised, and should have a lead sponsor to support it.

• And finally, although a recommendation about how to do this was not made, the review team felt strongly that Lowestoft Rising should formally celebrate its success.