

## Shropshire Health and Wellbeing Board meeting 08.07.21 Agenda item 5. Public Question

Question submitted by Sue Gerrard, Marilyn Jones, Sue Stewart. July 2021

### REALLY MAKING IT REAL: A REVIEW

**“The Making it Real Board has significant, but as yet unrealised, potential to improve services for the people of Shropshire. Will the Health & Wellbeing Board support the proposers to spearhead a drive to reinvigorate it and become fit for a future purpose”?**

Response provided by Kate Garner, Service Manager, Community Partnerships and Day Opportunities, Adult Social Care, Shropshire Council

There are a range of partnership boards currently in existence in Shropshire Council's Adult Social Care (ASC) that commit to the inclusion of people with lived experience as board members. The Shropshire Carers Partnership Board, Autism Partnership Board, Mental Health Partnership Board and Direct Payments board, as examples, all involve Experts by Experience as equal participants in their work.

Making it Real is one such partnership board. Its vision echoes the introductory words of Think Local Act Personal's (TLAP) 'How to do Personalised Care and Support', also known as the Making it Real (MiR) framework;

“Personalisation is rooted in the belief that people want to have a life not a service.”

Our board's Plan on a page document explains “We believe that all Social Care Services should be devised and enhanced with the participation of people who use services, giving shared opportunities to solve problems and design services”. Until 2020, MiR had developed a system where geographically based Advisory groups fed in and out of discussion with the Making it Real board, and successes included supporting developments around carers support and direct payments.

In his Chairperson's report of 2020, the previous chair recognised that “Maintaining the Making it Real Advisory Groups with enthusiastic people and fresh ideas has been difficult, so it may be time to rethink.” This reflection, that had been noted by Making it Real Advisory groups and The MiR board, hit home at the time of the COVID pandemic and a recognition of the importance of different ways of working. The MiR Board supported a suggestion of 'pausing and reflecting' on the work of Making it Real and seeking out ways to enhance its position for the future.

In January 2021 a call was put out for people to be involved in this pause and reflect work with a positive desire to “consider how we move our journey together forward”. The report 'Making it Real – our journey together' (drafted by the MiR co-ordinator) was distributed at the same time “to help get discussion moving”. MiR obtained support from Think Local Act Personal, which has wide experience of co-produced work, to help shape sessions.

Discussions have been running for a number of months now. They were initially guided by the following words in the 'Our journey together' report.

“... a recent social care future blog, sum(s) up perfectly the future that we can all agree on and strive for together. 'We want to live in the place we call home with the people and things

that we love, in communities where we look out for one another, doing things that matter to us. That's the social care future we seek'.

How we create the right conditions, environment and opportunities to discuss getting that outcome is what we need to sort in the coming months. **It would be good to discuss where we have come from, what we have achieved and how we best go forward with enthusiasm as part of a (series of) 'pause and reflect' sessions that we ran in early 2021.** With the support of TLAP it would be good to consider our options and prepare for the future together as citizens and not just people who deliver and people who make use of services.'

The meetings have been committed but not always easy. Discussions have been lively, but they have also been testing for those involved. They have clarified but at times also confused the role of Making it Real in the minds of participants. To a degree this may have been expected as together we try to define Making it Real and its ways of working in the future. A lead ASC commissioner from Essex County Council attended one meeting and shared their own approach to Making it Real with the hope of supporting new thinking in Shropshire.

Our next steps as we move out the pause and reflect phase into action, is developing the process to bring 6 Experts by Experience onto the MiR Board. We want to ensure that between them individual Board members contribute a diversity of lived experiences and insights and will also be vital that Board members are interested in the work of all our teams and the experiences of the people they are there to support.

We will tell people about MiR and its purpose and set out the experience, values and skills that are needed to be a member of the Board. We will invite people who would like to join the Board to tell us why this is, what personal experience they bring and how they would be the voice of the people who use social care services in Shropshire.

We will work with the current MiR Board to assess applications against agreed criteria and to agree the final makeup of the Board membership.

The review of Making it Real and the creation of a refreshed and revived Board is happening at an exciting time in Shropshire as the Integrated Place Partnership is developing and looking for opportunities for co-production and to hear the voice of people who have experience of local care and health provision. Experts by Experience and Making it Real in Shropshire have a long history of working to enhance and change the design and delivery of services, and the continuation of this is something to be celebrated.

---

**Supplementary information to this question, which was provided by Sue Gerrard, Marilyn Jones, and Sue Stewart.**

### **Making it Real and the Integrated Care System**

Making it Real (MiR) currently exists as an involvement hub to bring together the voices of Shropshire citizens in matters related to adult social care. All local authorities are now required to develop into an Integrated Care System. This will be a collaboration between them, statutory health providers, the voluntary and independent sectors, and citizens, to support all the components of living well. Within this system the formation and strengthening of new and existing relationships will be a crucial factor.

Shropshire currently has no Adult Social Care Partnership Board that would engage with key

stakeholders, participants, and citizens to address the impact of the wider determinants of health on adult social care services. The MiR Board is ideally placed to take on this role. We propose that either an Adult Social Care Partnership Board is set up, with MiR working alongside with a similarly broader remit, to enable everyone to have their voices heard, or that the MiR Board take on the function of an Adult Social Care Partnership Board. In either case, MiR should have a vital role in developing better, more cost-effective outcomes for all. Now is an ideal time to review the role of Making it Real.

### **Our concerns about Making it Real**

Making it Real has organised five 'pause & reflect' meetings in the past year. Participants and Committee members have raised numerous concerns, suggestions and topics for discussion, including Integrated Care Systems. But planning has only just begun, and no clear information about MiR's relationship with SHIPP has been available.

A significant amount of time in these meetings has been taken up with presentations from outside agencies. Attendance by people using services has dwindled to single figures – a decline that began well before Covid. The presentations have been relevant, but have left little time for reflection, discussion and planning for the future. Several presenters have been invited without consulting participants. No formal record has been kept of the meetings, making it difficult to take forward constructive contributions. In short, it isn't clear where MiR is, where it's just been, or where it's about to go next. This poses an ethical governance question around transparency.

We have other, more long-standing, concerns about Making it Real:

- MiR's Chair, Jon Hancock, stepped down in 2020 but MiR participants were only notified 3 months later when one asked why he wasn't at a meeting.
- MiR no longer has a functioning Board or a co-chair, only a council-appointed facilitator. MiR has the potential to become a citizen's forum to complement the work of SHIPP, rather than a local authority function.
- MiR's Terms of Reference state that all board members are appointed and that one of the co-chairs is the portfolio holder for Adult Social Care. There is no other clear process, directive or evidence of a board. Should current active participants be co-opted onto an interim board? This could facilitate the planning of an AGM to create a more formally accountable board to coincide with the inception of the ICS structure in April 2022.
- MiR's Terms of Reference present a clear vision and principles, but in practice there is no clear direction of travel.
- MiR's Terms of Reference conflate reporting with accountability.
- MiR's Terms of Reference mention continuous improvement and transformation, but in practice these are treated as vague terms about getting better, rather than specific and well-developed approaches to designing processes from the perspective of those using services.
- MiR has no clear strategy for improving social care services, in part because it doesn't have an overview of where ASC services are currently.

We feel that MiR has considerable potential to engage citizens, enhance their skills, and bring about significant improvements in their quality of life, but the demonstrable lack of focus, energy or significant outcomes explains the decline in involvement from people who use services. This document is a summary of our proposed strategic framework (a fuller document is available) that we think will improve MiR's functioning and **make it easy to do the right thing.**

## Objectives

MiR's aim is for people to have a life, not just a service. To achieve that aim, we propose that MiR adopt the following objectives:

- Ensure that services work for the benefit of Shropshire's citizens rather than that of the service.
- Bring together key representatives from all stakeholders including other Partnership Boards, notably Shropshire Carers.
- Bring together individuals with common concerns or issues.
- Recognise that all transitions are equally important - change of circumstance/step up or down/ CYP and older age - and each will bring its own specific issues.
- Actively recruit, support and train participants.
- Involve citizens as equal partners in the collaborative design, delivery and evaluation of adult social care services.
- Integrate these initiatives into the wider determinants of health and wellbeing.
- Ensure services implement improvements promptly in response to issues raised by people who use services (or explain why not).
- Appoint a chairperson and a co-chair to set agendas and help board members assign priorities and initiate projects.
- Minute every meeting, record progress and update from action points raised.
- Report to and be monitored by the Health and Wellbeing Board quarterly.
- Provide an annual chairperson's and co-chair's report.
- Inform all citizens of the aims of the Board to encourage participation.
- Review approve and publicise projects and suggested changes to procedures or services.

*Prioritising learning together over deliverology creates the safe space for innovation and lasting improvement.*

*Thinking in systems - understanding things as connected and interdependent - leads to better outcomes for all.*

*Focusing on the relationships between people creates better ways of working and better places to work.*

*([www.humanlearning.systems](http://www.humanlearning.systems))*