

North Somerset Council
Adult Social Services and Housing:
Interim Co-Production Statement



Contents

1. Document information	3
2. Purpose of the document	4
3. Interim definition of co-production	4
4. The corporate plan and our interim aims	5
5. Assessment framework for local authority assurance	6
6. Our interim key principles	6
7. Our interim values	7
8. Feedback.....	9
9. Accessible information.....	10

1. Document information

Title	North Somerset Adult Social Services and Housing Interim Co-production statement
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Version FINAL	25/06/2024	Agreed by core DLT

2. Purpose of the document

This document presents a consolidation of our initial learning from engaging with both colleagues in other local authorities and Social Care Future, as well as reading relevant literature and our recent co-production activities with people with lived experience of adult social services. Consolidating our learning into an interim co-production statement has supported us to reflect upon where we are now and how we intend to approach coproduction going forward. This document aims to support the development of genuine co-production through an interim identification of co-production aims, key principles, and values. This document also highlights our initial steps towards developing meaningful relationships with others, co-creating sustainable and meaningful ways of co-producing, and solidifying strategic buy in.

We recognise that this document is not the final product, but a starting point for further conversations, learning and improvement. We acknowledge that we have not co-produced this document with experts by experience. However, our co-production panel have endorsed this document as a welcomed interim position. Our final Co-Production Statement will be co-produced alongside the co-production panel.

3. Interim definition of co-production

We believe that co-production is a relationship-based approach to developing and improving services, practice, policy, and strategy that emphasises partnership and collaboration between Adult Social Services and Housing and people with lived experience of our services. Co-production involves treating people with lived experience with equal respect, being interested in their thoughts and ideas, immersing ourselves in people's lives and experiences, recognising and utilising people's skills and strengths, and hearing people's voices to facilitate shared design, planning, decision making, and evaluation of care and support in North Somerset.

Co-production can lead to innovative solutions and unexpected outcomes, as it allows for a broader range of knowledge, values, and social relations to be considered. By moving away from predetermined objectives and embracing a more open and flexible approach, co-production enables people with lived experience to

contribute to the development of care and support that better meets the needs of individuals and the community.

4. The corporate plan and our interim aims

Our corporate plan sets out our shared vision and ambitions for North Somerset, what we will deliver to achieve this, and how we will track our success. It sets out how we will continue to be an open and listening council, how we will work to create a community that is fair for everyone and our commitment to being a leader in the response to the climate emergency. Our vision is to be open, fair, and green, building upon our core values of integrity; respect; innovation; care; and collaboration.

We celebrate our diverse communities, and we want to ensure that everyone can feel part of a safe, supportive community. To achieve this we will:

- Be honest and transparent with communities, providing clarity about how decisions are made. We will ensure that we listen to what residents want in their communities and that we engage and consult effectively and meaningfully on proposals before decisions are made.
- Work with all our communities to understand and reduce inequalities, and where we need to, we will focus more on areas with the poorest outcomes to support them to build strengths and resilience.
- Work with all our communities including our Town and Parish Councils to achieve the aims in our [Climate Emergency Strategy action plan including](#) how we will adapt to our changing environment.

In line with our corporate plan we aim to make co-production possible by:

- Developing sustainable and meaningful relationships with people with lived experience.
- Co-producing the structures that will guide and facilitate co-production between adult social services and housing and people with lived experience
- Facilitate strategic buy in by co-producing a clear vision, inviting, and embracing suggestions and challenge, and communicating progress.

For more information on our corporate plan please visit our [website](#).

5. Assessment framework for local authority assurance

In addition to our corporate plan, our interim coproduction statement also aligns with Theme 1 of the assessment framework for local authority assurance, [working with people](#), with a particular focus on the below quality statement:

We actively seek out and listen to information about people who are most likely to experience inequality in experience or outcomes. We tailor the care, support and treatment in response to this.

This quality statement covers:

- Understanding and addressing barriers to care and support.
- Understanding and addressing inequalities in experience and outcomes.
- Ensuring care and support meets the diverse needs of communities.
- Ensuring people are encouraged to give feedback, which is acted on and used to drive improvements.
- Meeting legal requirements relating to equality and human rights. This includes:
 - avoiding discrimination
 - having regard to the needs of people with different protected equality characteristics
 - making reasonable adjustments to support equity in experience and outcomes.

6. Our interim key principles

Our key principles in co-production centre around Respect, Recognition, Rewards, and Representation.

Respect: Respect involves treating individuals with dignity, fairness, and consideration, regardless of their background, gender, heritage, or other characteristics. It is about valuing diversity and promoting inclusivity and partnership.

Recognition: Recognition refers to acknowledging and appreciating the contributions and achievements of individuals or groups. It is important to recognise and celebrate diverse perspectives and talents, creating an environment where everyone feels seen and valued.

Rewards: Ensuring that contributions are acknowledged and, where appropriate, compensated. Compensating people for their time in co-production is an important aspect of ensuring that all participants feel valued and respected for their contributions. It is essential to provide fair compensation, whether it's in the form of monetary payment, vouchers, or other means, to acknowledge the time and effort individuals invest in the co-production process.

Representation: Representation involves ensuring that all individuals have a voice and are represented in the whole process, from thinking about what we need to do to ensuring it is done. It is crucial to have diverse perspectives and experiences represented to avoid bias and to foster a more inclusive community.

7. Our interim values

Our values in co-production are centred around the following principles:

1. **Building Mutual Relationships:** We prioritise establishing trust and mutual respect, recognising that strong partnerships are the foundation of successful co-production.
2. **Effective Communication:** We commit to open, honest, and clear communication, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued.
3. **Inclusivity:** We believe that everyone can contribute and encourage diverse participation to enrich our collective efforts.
4. **Recognising Skills and Strengths:** We are attentive to the unique skills and strengths of individuals, leveraging them to enhance our co-production activities.
5. **Creative and Person-Centred Co-Production Activities:** We use innovative and tailored approaches to co-production, focusing on the needs and preferences of individuals.

6. **Sensitivity to Trauma:** We are sensitive and responsive to the impact of discussing traumatic experiences, providing a safe and supportive environment for all individuals.
7. **Extend Co-Production Beyond Familiar Voices:** We aim to broaden the scope of co-production by engaging with a diverse range of individuals, ensuring that all voices, especially those less heard, are included in the process.
8. **Embed Co-Production Principles into Training:** We will ensure that the principles and practices of co-production are an integral part of staff inductions and mandatory training across all roles within the adult social services and housing workforce.
9. **Standardise Co-Production Knowledge:** By developing a consistent definition and promoting practical examples, values, and behaviours, we will foster a common understanding of co-production among all stakeholders.
10. **Create a Robust Business Case for Co-Production:** We will articulate the benefits and value of co-production, demonstrating its impact on service quality and community well-being.
11. **Understand Co-Production in Marginalised Communities:** We commit to exploring and learning from the experiences of co-production in marginalised communities to ensure inclusivity and equity.
12. **Focus on Transformative Outcomes:** Our co-production efforts will prioritise transforming people's lives.
13. **Value Lived Experience in Decision-Making:** We will rapidly incorporate the outputs of co-production into strategic decision-making, giving equal weight to the voices of people with lived experiences.
14. **Challenge Preconceptions:** We will address and dispel any preconceptions about the capacity and motivation of people with lived experience to be equal partners in service improvement.
15. **Recognise the Time Investment Required:** We acknowledge that co-production requires time to be done effectively and are committed to investing the necessary resources.

16. **Innovate Communication with Seldom Heard Groups:** We will train our staff to use innovative and creative means of communication to engage with seldom heard groups.
17. **Value Qualitative Data:** Our staff will be trained to appreciate and utilise qualitative data, recognising its importance in understanding the human aspects of service delivery.
18. **Co-Produce a Co-Production Charter/How-To Guide:** We will collaborate with all stakeholders to co-produce a charter or guide that outlines the principles, processes, and best practices of co-production.
19. **Measure success:** Together, we will measure the effectiveness of the co-production process to evaluate the degree to co-production activities address the needs and priorities of the community, whether people with lived experience have found co-production meaningful, just and fair.

These values guide our co-production process in the interim, ensuring that it is collaborative, empowering, and respectful of everyone involved. They reflect our dedication to a co-production approach that is inclusive, equitable, and focused on making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

8. Feedback

If you are unhappy about any action or decision in relation to coproduction, you should initially talk to the person you normally deal with. If you are unable to resolve your complaint in this way, you can contact:

Complaints Manager,

Adult Social Services and Housing,
Town Hall,
Walliscote Grove Road,
Weston super Mare,
BS23 1UJ

Telephone: 01275 882171

Email: complaints.manager@n-somerset.gov.uk

9. Accessible information

Council documents can be made available in large print, audio, easy read, and other formats. Documents on our website can also be emailed to you as plain text files.

Help is also available for people who require Council information in languages other than English. Please email asshsstrategyandpolicyteam@n-somerset.gov.uk or ring 01934 888 888.