Embracing the chaos
Exploring systems, shaping leaders
A self-directed learning programme to develop complexity-competent social care systems leaders

'Trust is a must. Openness is encouraged.'

The Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS)
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Exhibition catalogue
Embracing the Chaos is a cross-sector programme to develop leadership responses to complexity, transformation and reform in social care.

The programme provides safe, facilitated space for leaders to explore individual, shared and systemic challenges. It encourages self-directed and peer learning, inviting participants to work on live challenges or opportunities throughout the year. Participants shape the programme to address these, and to meet their own development goals.

Together, we have identified three ‘lines of enquiry’ we are interested in understanding more fully:

- **INFORMING** our sectors about collaboration and competition. Enabling the agency, resilience and self-care of everyone in the social care system.

- **INVOLVING:** People, communities, activists, colleagues and partners. How to generate mutual trust and relationships. How to step back and allow/involve/enable active leaders to step up/into the change process.

- **INFLUENCING:** Our organisations, boards and strategies; External partnerships, politicians, policy, procurement – and beyond.

Embracing the Chaos is hosted by CCPS, facilitated by Wren and Greyhound, led by:

- Ashley Young, British Red Cross;
- David Barr, Aberlour
- Donna Murray-Trail, The Care and Wellbeing Cooperative
- Kate Haycock, Richmond Fellowship
- Linda Jardine, Children 1st
- Lorna Ascroft, Scottish Government
- Luan Grugeon, NHS Grampian
- Nicky Campbell, Kibble
- Scott Ritchie, Mainstay Trust Ltd
- Una Munro, Mungo Foundation
- Wendy Bates, Health in Mind

Guide produced by

[Wren and Greyhound](https://www.wrenandgreyhound.co.uk)
Instructions for taking part in the non-event...

There are none! We invite you to be curious.
Interact with our exhibits, hosts and guests.
Make your own event.

**BUT: Please share your notes!**
use the carbon paper enclosed or share a photo
@CPprogramme
emma.donnelly@ccpscotland.org

Exhibition Catalogue

Use this guide to
explore our exhibits
chat to other people
make notes
contribute ideas

You can download a copy from
wrenandgreyhound.co.uk/resources
About the non-event
We organised this non-event to involve people in our exploration of leading in complex situations.

It’s a non-event because we’re not experts and we don’t have lots of concrete things to tell people. And we think the challenges and ideas are already well known and discussed in our sector. We don’t want to add to the noise.

About Embracing the Chaos
A self-directed learning programme to develop complexity-competent social care systems leaders

Background
In 2017/18, Coping with Complexity\(^1\) developed new perspectives on leadership and change within systems. Its seminar format with well-chosen speakers attracted leaders from all sectors of the social care world, including funders and commissioners, public and third sector leaders, policy-makers and academics.

Embracing the Chaos is another cross-sector programme to develop leadership responses to complexity, transformation and reform in social care. The programme provides safe, facilitated space for leaders to explore individual, shared and systemic challenges.

It encourages self-directed and peer learning, inviting participants to work on live challenges or opportunities throughout the year. Participants shape the programme to address these, and to meet their own development goals. It is designed for leaders from a range of roles, organisations and settings – anyone responsible for leading change in complex systems.

Programme design and principles
A small, self-directed peer group of 11 people are working on challenges of their choosing, in ways of their choosing. As well as having six meetings of its own, the group will also co-design workshops, events or seminars that will be open to others, like this non-event. The programme aims to make an impact at different levels:

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<th>Individual</th>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>System-level</th>
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<td>• Access to uniquely valuable leadership development&lt;br&gt; • Energy and inspiration for sustaining leadership role&lt;br&gt; • Protected time and space to think, reflect, develop&lt;br&gt; • Ideas and solutions for complex challenges</td>
<td>• Access to new information, ideas and innovation&lt;br&gt; • Stronger relationships across sector boundaries&lt;br&gt; • Opportunities for influence</td>
<td>• Evidence and examples of social care reform&lt;br&gt; • Intelligents and insight to inform policy and practice&lt;br&gt; • Cross-boundary learning and development</td>
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\(^1\) [http://www.ccpscotland.org/hot-topics/complexity](http://www.ccpscotland.org/hot-topics/complexity)
Lines of enquiry
Embracing the Chaos participants identified individual learning goals which we have grouped into three themes.

INFORMING
Are there new ways to act on collaboration and competition?
How do we promote the agency, resilience and self-care of all of the players in the social care system?

‘INVOLVING’*
What role do our organisations have to play in making sure people, communities and activists are empowered to shape their lives and the systems that surround them?
How do leaders step back to allow/empower other leaders to emerge within our organisations and systems?
(How) do we trust others to step in?
(How) do we trust ourselves to let go?
(How) do we encourage others to trust us?
How do we generate mutual trusting relationships?

*We use inverted commas when talking about ‘involvement’ because the word suggests an uncomfortable power imbalance and that agendas are ours to involve other people in, rather than theirs to shape.

INFLUENCING
How can we have effective influence within our organisations?
With our colleagues, boards and strategies?
How do we influence across organisational boundaries?
Politicians, policy-makers, partnerships, procurement – and others?

#EmbracingTheChaos
@CPprogramme
@Graeme_Reekie
Programme mottos

‘Trust is a must, openness is encouraged.’

‘We’re all part of the problem, we’re all part of the solution. We are the system.’
Notes
Use this page to make any notes. If you’re willing, we’d love a copy – just return the carbon copy before you leave.
The exhibition

Photo credit: Wellcome Collection
Coping with Complexity. Nice People, Terrible System.

These two documents came out of previous CCPS development programmes. They share valuable learning about how people understand and address systems change, within health and social care and beyond.

They provided useful background reading for Embracing the Chaos, helping us establish a baseline level of understanding of what had come before us – and of key concepts and language.

The Embracing the Chaos group have decided not to produce an end-of-programme output like this. Instead, we want to share our questions and our learning, creating a suite of resources as we go.

*Hint: you’re in one right now!*
Postcard provocations

These provocations began life as a promotional giveaway for Wren and Greyhound, first introduced at the CCPS conference in 2016. Since then, people have begun to use them as a facilitation tool for meetings and events, including Wendy Bates from Health in Mind who is on hand to talk about them today.

We used them in *Embracing the Chaos* as part of a pre-programme mailing. Participants received a full set of 20 postcards and were invited to use them to think about what they wanted to get out of – or put into – the programme. This led to all sorts of creative and previously unimagined uses.

One person displays a new postcard on their desk every day to give them inspiration, using one of those crocodile clip photo holders. Another worked through all 20 cards with a colleague to create answers and responses to each. Collect a set for yourself and tell us how you use them! [10 more are in the pipeline – watch this space!]
Learning targets
In our first meeting, the Embracing the Chaos group made targets for what we want to learn, inform, improve and influence, using a tool developed by Jen Curran at Wren and Greyhound. It worked really well for generating thought and discussion. First, we made our own individual ones, then collated them onto a shared group target. We’ve shared our notes below and invite you to use the tool for yourself.

What we want to LEARN
- System change
- Personal effectiveness
- Learning with and from others
- Systems and complexity
- Management realities

What or who we want to INFORM
- Organisational direction
- Senior leaders
- An approach to leadership thinking about change
- Changes to data – commissioning, procurement, bureaucracy
- Working to strengths
- Wider sector colleagues
- Learning from SDS

What we want to IMPROVE
- Relationships and collaboration
- Community connection
- Data, evidence, practice
- Intentionality

Who or what we want to INFLUENCE
- Third sector – and why a healthy vibrant 3rd sector is vital
- Our organisations: strategic thinking
- Policy and decision making
- Partnerships
- Personal effectiveness
- Wider systems thinking
Embracing the Chaos at the Mungo Foundation

This exhibit, from Una Munro at The Mungo Foundation shares one organisation’s journey through complexity and system change.

With a commitment to ‘brave leadership’, the organisation named, owned and addressed the challenges it faced in recent years. Una is on hand today to tell the story so far – and generate ideas for the next chapter.

The risks involved in staying the same are greater than the risks of changing
Leading Through Uncertainty
Linda Jardine from Children 1st shares some of her learning about the challenges of leadership in complex and changing environments. Summarised here, it reflects upon her own experience of ‘embracing the chaos’ that is complexity and uncertainty and of maintaining a vision of core and purpose.

Start with “I”
- e.g. ‘I need to be comfortable with, complexity, ambiguity and change.’
- Provide enough certainty for people “to get on with things”
- Ask: How did I get here?

Handle the Ambiguity
- See the woods from the trees
- Be comfortable applying judgement
- Be comfortable with relaxing strict control
- Handle feelings when it doesn’t go to plan
- Comfortable with modifying
- Collaborate and empower around the core

“In too many organisations the strategy process only seems to produce documents and does not produce belief and commitment to a way forward for the organisation”
‘Embracing complexity’ Bolton, Allen and Bowman

Delivering “Managed Emergence”
- Has to be in the every day
- Set of actions, initiatives and experiments
- Ideally a set of coordinated evolving change initiatives that respond to emerging issues
- Intent to reduce uncertainty
- Keep managing unexpected

Complexity Thinking Leadership
- Participation
- Shared intentions
- Understanding based on dialogue
- Not just defining what should be done
- Still room for individual style

- There’s no going back! -

Set Simple and Clear Intentions
- “Rules of thumb” to guide actions
- Broad direction setting
- But - intentions allow for flex
- Need to review

Emerging and co-evolving
- With the environment
- Prediction of stability is only a judgement
- Healthier to think of the strategic evolution of an organisation
- Organisations are evolving, as is our understanding
The Care and Wellbeing Co-operative has a community-led approach to providing care, support and wellbeing activities in rural Perthshire. It supports over 30 microenterprises to deliver a range of care and support to rural communities.

Developing a new type of care and support workforce (microenterprises) in the rural economy has begun to fill gaps. New provision has arisen in response to local need. But the approach presents questions for framework-based commissioning:

- How can creativity within ‘approved provider’ commissioning frameworks be enabled and facilitated?

- How can the potential of micro enterprises be tapped? Is it a risky unregulated workforce or a way to inspire natural supports within communities (and attract young people into the workforce)?

- How can we make it ‘okay’ for local authorities to commission microenterprise?

- How do microenterprises work within Health and Social Care Standards to prove and maintain quality and safety?

- Can systems be changed from the ‘outside’? Or do change agents need to be recognised by the established order?
The iceberg of systems thinking

This activity was developed by Emma Donnelly and Dee Fraser at CCPS based on a powerful concept in David Stroh’s book on ‘System Thinking for Social Change’ (one of the Chaos programme’s go-to reads).

The activity has proved useful in workshops and events, helping people to think differently and, importantly, generate new ideas about shared systemic challenges. Try it for yourself!
**Authoritarian slides**

These slides have run on a loop during two of our meetings to share some key messages from discussions and important quotes from our reading.

At first the slides helped to brighten a windowless room, but they also come in handy for prompting thought and conversation. We call them ‘authoritarian’ because they are fairly blunt and declarative.

Of course, the messages are anything but, encouraging us to think in new ways about power, authority and leadership.

‘**Design, don’t engineer**

**Discover, don’t dictate**

**Decipher, don’t presuppose**’

Source: ‘Surfing the Edge of Chaos’ Richard Pascale et al

‘**Aim at creating other leaders – not followers.**’

Source: ‘Quality Involvement Flow – The systemic organization.’ Domenico Lepore et al

(See the *Library of Chaos* reading list if you’d like to seek out the source of any of the quotes you see in the slides).
Agency poster

Believe it or not, this poster began as an almost verbatim minute of an Embracing the Chaos conversation. The points that people made in the group were so affirmative that they lent themselves to the simple, bold type of communication a poster can provide.

Graeme worked on drafts and shared them tentatively with the group - it’s one thing to have a clear vision, it’s another to get other people to share it! But pleasingly, not only did the group agree it would work as a poster, two people had already printed and begun to use it as such. A quick brush up by the group (and by a proper designer) led to the poster you can take away with you today. [We won’t mention the time Graeme spent dropping pebbles into his garden pond and trying to photograph them in mid-air and mid-splash!]

The first statement needed discussion, because it could seem negative or limiting. In fact, it was designed to be the opposite. It arose from a realisation that we disempower ourselves when we think other people have all the power (other people like bosses, partners, funders, commissioners, policy makers). In fact, bosses, partners, funders, commissioners and policy makers all face their own constraints. So the message is that if everyone has constraints there’s no point waiting for anyone else to do things. We all better do what we can, right now.

Agency has become a core concept and goal within our group.
Embracing Adult Social Care Reform

Scottish Government and COSLA recognise the significant challenges within adult social care in Scotland. Within the new landscape of integration, Health and Social Care Partnerships’ local strategic commissioning plans signify a step towards a new future for adult social care.

However, there continue to be challenges. While local redesign, innovation and collaboration are working towards reform, Scottish Government and COSLA recognise that there is a particular role for national support in ensuring the right conditions are in place for Partnerships to develop and deliver their plans, and realistically be able to make policy a reality.

The national programme for Adult Social Care Reform can be a vehicle for developing collective leadership of this agenda with these sectors. This would include learning from organisations that are changing to meet the new landscape and needs of our population, sharing good practice, supporting these efforts to be maximised throughout the sectors, and developing collective, pragmatic responses to the shared challenges across the system.

Leadership of social care reform must be far-ranging. There is a need for parties from different parts of the sector – including Scottish Government and COSLA – to come together to consider the changes that still need to be made, their respective contributions to those changes, and to take decisions collectively that will enable those changes to happen. A key focus of the national programme would be on creating the right environment for collective decision-making.

Because these themes resonate so clearly with those in Embracing the Chaos, the group decided to contribute its questions, ideas and suggestions to the Adult Social Care Reform programme. We have mapped the programme’s outcomes to our own ‘lines of enquiry’ and look forward to sharing ideas about and experience of leadership, empowerment, influence, autonomy, control and the role of relationships in systems change.
The Library of Chaos

Reading has been a greater part of this programme than previous CCPS/Wren and Greyhound partnerships. Partly because systems, complexity and chaos are pretty hefty topics. And partly because participants really are taking the opportunity to create and curate their own leadership development programme.

Find a copy of our reading list and pop it into the ready-made. Take it away and check out some reading, viewing or learning for yourself. Tell us what you think – and what you think we should be reading and sharing next.
Reflective Questions

Embracing the Chaos is not an Action Learning Set, but it does have some things in common with that approach. It brings together leaders to help each other in a supportive peer environment where it’s okay to acknowledge that we have challenges to which we don’t have easy answers. It generates ideas by sharing questions.

The questions listed here came out of just two group meetings. Group participants shared a leadership challenge then were presented with questions, ideas and suggestions by colleagues. The questions were then grouped into headings, given a quick edit, and are presented here as a powerful bank of tools and ideas.

Give it a go.

Think of a systems or leadership challenge you face. Find a heading in the list that matches it, then read through the questions (or select one at random). Now take the rest of the day off to think about it!

There’s some genuinely powerful stuff in here. Select it carefully, give yourself time to work with it and breakthroughs will follow.

INFLUENCE - External
INFLUENCE – Internal
MANAGING CHANGE, RISK AND FEAR
INVOLVEMENT
PARTNERSHIP
ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES
PERSONAL POWER
INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP
LEADING OTHERS
EMPOWERMENT
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
ORGANISATIONAL PURPOSE and PRIORITIES
INNOVATION
EVIDENCE/IMPACT
INFLUENCE - External
How can you help people to understand your work? Is your story “better felt than tell-t”?  
Who are the influencers in your sphere of work?  
What are your sources of influence?  
Who else shares your view of the situation?  
Can you change the system while wanting to be part of it?  
How well do you connect with different relevant strategies?  
Is the current system in crisis? How can you help? Are there strong recurring issues that come up time and again?  
What other organisations or sectors can help?  
Might you have more people on your side/who share your view than you think?  
How much can you expect other people to give up or give away? How much of their control?  
You’re not going to please everyone. Will arguing for the greater good help?  
What can you do to change the language and ideas that prevail e.g. about ‘us and them’, hierarchical thinking, partnership?  
Can you facilitate or contribute to conversations - and be honest about challenges without assigning blame?  
How well do you understand the local area and its history?  
Have you got political support? International support?  
How can you use Scotland’s reputation for progressive policy making, accessible government and innovation? And the eyes of the world being on Scotland’s social care sector?

INFLUENCE – Internal
Can you be an internal consultant, a critical friend helping people to think and do differently?  
What do you want the organisation to do that it’s not doing?  
What do you want to do that you can’t currently?  
What is the culture of the organisation? Does the squeaky wheel get the grease – or does the nail that sticks up get hammered down?  
What kinds of views and people get taken seriously?  
How can you raise awareness of the risk of not changing?  
Can you make the business case for change in a way that appeals to other people’s view of what matters?  
Start by finding common ground - who are your allies?  
Where are the quick wins? Start by focusing on a small area for changing people’s understanding, e.g. test sites, trial basis  
How can you make best use of your access to decision makers?  
Identify what you can live with. And what is intolerable?  
Who else can have a say in what is happening? Customers, staff, partners etc?  
Who could be brought in to help strengthen your messages?  
Who could talk positively as a role model about having done the things you are proposing?  
How can you use your influence to create a body of connected and aligned people?  
How can you highlight any differences between the current environment and what’s needed by the new/emerging one?  
How can you help the organisation to acknowledge and own the stress (or distress) it is experiencing?
MANAGING CHANGE, RISK AND FEAR
Why do you think change is needed?
Do you need a change management plan?
How do you keep people engaged while managing a change in strategic direction?
How do you manage transitions between strategies? When does one stop and the other start? How clear are the lines between them?
How is the organisation preparing for change?
How can you help people to overcome aversion to risk?
How can you prove your organisation is safe and trustworthy?
How do you answer concerns about risk (e.g. from trustees, commissioners, regulators)?
How do you make it safe for other people to support your organisation’s innovations?
Do you understand where people’s vulnerabilities and risk aversion come from?
How have you moved beyond your own comfort zone?
How do you help people to accept the uncertainty that comes with change?
Is it helpful to maintain a productive level of distress, so people are in their ‘learning zone’ – but without going into their ‘panic zone’?
What are the organisational risks of the different scenarios you are considering?
Is a risk assessment being done for each possible scenario?
Has the business case for change been made? And for the status quo?
How and when does resistance to change manifest itself?
What are the behaviours that arise?
Changing culture and outlook takes time. What indicators of change can you look for along the way?
How likely is it that any resistance to change and lack of progress are unseen (or played out) by people in services?
At what point do you accept that your approach is not working?
In times of uncertainty, be like bamboo, swaying in the wind but not snapping.

INvolvement
Are you interested in involvement – or empowerment?
What does community mean to you? Is it about people? Or places? Is it wherever you are?
Do people-led campaigns have influence?
Do people-led campaigns fit current narratives of community empowerment and locality decision-making?
How do you give the community a voice and support them to move forward?
How can your organisation best be a catalyst for communities?
How can you help families’ voices to be heard through the complex bureaucracy of the existing system?
How much direct contact do you have with families as a manager?
PARTNERSHIP
Would a consortium approach help you to achieve your goals?
How well do you understand your local environment?
What do colleagues, communities, commissioners, partners and regulators need from you?
How strong are your different relationships?
Do people trust you?
Is there a strong Third Sector Interface locally?
Have you tested the water with collaborations?
Can you put resource into collaborative working – and collaborative learning?
Do funders and commissioners prefer relationships with service managers or business development people?
How can you help colleagues to let go of things they feel they need to do, but which other organisations could really help with?
What can other community organisations or resources offer and do?
How can you involve organisations from other sectors?
What resources could other organisations bring?
Would a multi-agency or cross-sector approach help?
What other third sector organisations are involved, or can be?
Is there a clear common purpose? Is the vision shared? And the passion?
Are partners clear on what they can offer, bring and do – and what they can't?

ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES
Do people understand that the voluntary sector isn’t free?
Do people understand how the voluntary sector works and is governed?
If money is drying up, how do you make the case for using it better and more sustainably?
How can you use your organisation’s assets as a catalyst for change?
Does your organisation invest in preventing and reducing demand? Or is it more interested in business and growth?
What would you like to be invested in your organisation?
What return could be expected?
How financially stable is your organisation?
Being interested in sustaining stability without being prepared to change is unsustainable in a changing world.
It can be hard to argue with the current business model of any organisation. It is only responding to what the contracts and opportunities are – why should it change?
How possible is 100% full cost recovery?
How does the organisation know if the risks and investments it has made have been worthwhile?
Are you costing your work accurately to include development costs?
Do funders value quality, e.g. pay for quality assurance like supervision?
PERSONAL POWER
What are you really trying to achieve?
Is your level of determination right for the goal you are trying to achieve?
What is it about this idea that excites you?
What is the core purpose of the vision you have?
What is your greatest fear?
How can you maximise your personal impact?
What is your core goal and purpose? Can you connect it with other people’s?
How do you balance your priorities with other people’s?
Can you keep your goals in focus without getting frustrated when they’re not achieved?
Do you lead by being self-critical and self-reflective?
Look at your commitments and ask ‘What would my successor do? What would they let go of?’
As an expensive and valuable resource, what’s the best use of you?
Where are you most comfortable? Looking in, down and back or up, out and ahead?
What are your ambitions? What preparation do you need now to put yourself in a position to achieve them?
Where are your knowledge and skills gaps as a manager? Can you start addressing them now?
Do people know of your contributions – or take them for granted?
Find the opportunities that come from people who give you strength. Keep on with your vision. Find allies.

INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP
What is your biggest challenge?
How do you manage and protect yourself - and your bravery?
What morals have guided you in your career - and in your current situation?
You can’t relax control while still sweating the small stuff.
How clear and consistent are the messages you give out?
How far from – or close – are you to being able to do things differently?
How well or fully do you model the ‘comfort with discomfort’ that you want to develop in other people?
How do you look after yourself when giving so much to others?
Does/can your boss make you feel uncomfortable, in a good way?
LEADING OTHERS
Is there a risk that you have staff that don’t feel valued?  
What’s your rule of thumb for how many people you can line manage?  
Should some of your staff report to someone else?  
Are peer support or group supervision options?  
What can you say ‘no’ to? And what can you comfortably say ‘yes’ to?  
Start with self: Can you be comfortable with taking on other people’s complexity and uncertainty as well as your own?  
Can you be comfortable with relaxing strict control?  
How do you gain trust when you don’t necessarily know where you’re going on what you’re doing?  
Is it healthy for your team to see your limits as an individual?  
Does the language you use reflect – or undermine – your intentions?  
Can your language inspire others by being different from the norm?  
How do you avoid becoming the ‘fixer’?  
What do your staff need from you? And what do they get?  
How do you balance encouraging your staff – and challenging them?  

EMPOWERMENT
How do you create permissive, empowering structures?  
How can you embed leadership at every level?  
How can you realign responsibility so other people take more on?  
How can you develop bravery in others?  
Are people achieving results to their fullest ability?  
What language and models can you use to replace concepts of ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’?  
Are there things your leadership team needs to be doing – or stop doing – for people to feel empowered?  
Does it take courage to see the equal value of staff and their ability to lead the organisation?  
How willing and enthusiastic are people to accept the self-agency you would like them to have?  
Can agency be promoted by giving people opportunities to stop and think about their motives?  
Do organisational policies, systems and bureaucracy support agency – or undermine it?  
What role do frontline service managers have in promoting agency, identifying changes, vulnerabilities and risks?  
Is it more productive to involve people in the distress of the situation - or buffer them from it?  
How staff-focused is your organisation? Are they sufficiently valued? Do they feel part of something?  
Can you always afford to be as participatory as you would like to be?
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Does your organisation view CPD as a personal responsibility or an organisational one?
How can you make CPD easy and accessible for all staff, including those who might struggle with core requirements?
How do you motivate your workforce towards the next stage of their development?
Does your organisation comply with CPD requirements – or exceed them?
Can you tailor different ways of learning for people?
How can you help people who might leave or be lost due to their fear of training or lack of ability?
How do you support people through post-registration learning?
Will the professionalisation of the social care workforce mean your organisation loses people – or attracts them?
How will you recruit and train people to replace any that leave?
Does your organisation develop future leaders from within?
Is it enough to invest in good people doing good things?
What staff perks exist and how well publicised are they?
How do you translate information to suit different learning styles and experiences at all levels of the organisation?
‘Proportionate universalism’ = might some people need more support to achieve the same outcomes?

ORGANISATIONAL PURPOSE and PRIORITIES
What is your organisation really trying to achieve?
How confident are you about the strength and quality of your organisation’s services?
How does your organisation act as a catalyst for communities and change?
How connected is your organisation to future commissioning plans?
If your organisation could develop the next big thing, what would its ambitions be?
Is your organisation over-dependent on one service for core activity and core funding?
What contingency and exit strategies does your organisation have in place?
How is your organisation’s legacy protected or preserved?
INNOVATION
What can you learn from other parts of the country, other models and services?
Are there other delivery models you could consider? Are there any ‘self-service’ options?
What can you learn from other innovative organisations that have achieved organisational openness?
If you are offering clients too much support, would a ‘just enough support’ programme work?
What creativity could be unlocked if you did things differently?
Is there a risk of going down a rabbit hole with your preferred option? What alternatives have been considered?
Is there confidence/knowledge to innovate?
Is there money that isn’t connected to a contract that can be used creatively, for innovation?
Can you support ideas from the front line to make the changes they’d like to make?
How else can you move things forward? And how else?
Has your organisation taken on exciting innovations rather than making sure core structures are safely in place?
Could you contract out any of your routine work? Can you bring in partnerships, expertise, or deliver in different ways?
How can you best use the learning from the innovative work and partnerships you’ve had?

EVIDENCE/IMPACT
Can the culture/practice of public scrutiny and targets be changed?
What kind of conversations and relationships do you have for communicating good news stories?
If people are setting targets on areas not relevant to people’s needs, how can the targets be changed?
Can you evidence prevention?
Can you demonstrate the impact of people not having the support you provide?
How can you reassure people about the value and quality of your sector?
What examples of good practice/good stuff can you share?
Can it be scaled up and replicated?
How do you demonstrate outcomes?
Would it be more realistic to show ‘contribution’ than ‘attribution’? How acceptable is this to funders?
How will you know that these have been successful?
What are the limits to the quality of what you provide?
What are you able to do within your capacity? And within the limits of quality and quantity?
Are you looking for new ways to say the same things?