



PRELIMINARY REVIEW REPORT

DISABILITY STOCKPORT LTD.

PRESENTED BY:
JONATHAN HÄSEN

HÄSEN GLOBAL CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT LTD.



MAR 2016

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

DISCLAIMER

This document contains content that is intended to give added perspective and stimulate forward-looking innovative thought on a range of issues that may add value or uncover alternative approaches for management considerations being made by **Disability Stockport Ltd.** at present or in the future. The report reflects the current views of **Häsen Global Concept Development Ltd.** with respect to observations made on the aforementioned dates.

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided; statements in this report are subject to findings made by a limited, time-constrained observation process and must be challenged and investigated thoroughly by the administration of **Disability Stockport Ltd.** before being implemented. This report is subject to risks and uncertainties that are beyond **Häsen Global Concept Development Ltd.'s** ability to control or estimate precisely. If any risks and uncertainties occur, or if the assumptions underlying any of the statements herein prove incorrect, then it must be acknowledged that actual results may be materially different from those expressed or implied herein.

This report has been prepared in good faith and only with **Disability Stockport Ltd.'s** best interests in mind. **Häsen Global Concept Development Ltd.** does not assume any obligation of responsibility for the decision of **Disability Stockport Ltd.** to accept, adhere to, observe or implement any of the given assumptions, observations, considerations, suggestions or recommendations presented in this report or in any other communications exchanged between the two parties. **Häsen Global Concept Development Ltd.** does not intend to or otherwise assume any obligation to update this report in the future or to reflect on events or circumstances relating to it after the date of these materials unless otherwise contracted separately to do so as agreed by both parties.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

01

This report is intended as a guide to:

- Identify problem areas
- Provide recommended solutions
- Demonstrate change processes
- Summarize improvable areas

02

The overall purpose of the report is to give a summary of areas to improve and propose beneficial changes to operational structures.

The report is broken down into 3 main sections.

Areas for change and problems are nested under subheadings in each section for convenience.

03

Where there are issues affecting multiple services simultaneously, a chart is included to demonstrate the crossover for easy reference.

At the end of each section, there are process flowcharts demonstrating how changes could be implemented.

There are also extra creative considerations in addition to the basic recommendations that may aid in reaching viable solutions.

PRECURSORY STATEMENT

Disability Stockport Ltd. has successfully created a warm and welcoming environment for people of all areas of the community to engage with the services they offer. For many individuals the centre not only provides a lifeline for accessing support services such as peer mentoring and life skills development but also functions as key social catalyst in developing the confidence and sense of independence that enables disabled people to live stronger, healthier more engaged lives.

The overall vision of Disability Stockport Ltd. is to create a haven of support and an instrument of personal development for people across the disability spectrum, where they can access services and assistance.

Observations at Disability Stockport Ltd. reveal an organization that is actively bringing together a community around their individual needs and although, as in all organizations, improvements can be made. The core belief underlying all operations is confidence in people, and willingness to adapt to meet their requirements. Unlike many services that have suffered at the hands of cuts imposed on community health and social care, Disability Stockport Ltd. has been able to retain the bulk of their services, due to their passion for high quality service provision and their innovative approaches to seeking funding.

Disability Stockport Ltd. is driven by the determination of a forward thinking senior management team who are welcoming of constructive criticism. They are actively involved in overseeing the services being offered and lead by example. Additionally, the organization has managed to collect a fantastic array of dedicated staff members and volunteers who seem to take the utmost pride and sense of achievement from their work.

Häsen Global Concept Development Ltd.'s visit to Disability Stockport Ltd. has been inspiring, and whereas this report is focused on the weaknesses currently affecting the organization, this is not to be viewed as a condemnation, but as a support for future development and growth. Disability Stockport Ltd. has achieved a great deal by putting their users at the heart of their services and welcoming support from external professionals to highlight their weaknesses and give them added perspective, as an organization they are clearly an example of an open, progressive twenty-first century community provider.

As an organization, Disability Stockport Ltd. clearly aspires to be a hub of community support and pillar of trust to members of the disabled community in and around the Stockport area. I foresee that the organization can not only achieve its targets but has the potential to set a new standard of excellence in disability support services regionally.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Häsen

AREAS THAT IMPACT THE USER EXPERIENCE



PRINCIPLE AREAS THAT CAN AFFECT USER EXPERIENCE

The interlinking requirements for overall service effectiveness. Each area is colour-coded for reference.

USER EXPERIENCE

In summary, user experience is an understanding of the direct and indirect impact of isolated or repeated interactions that take place between a service user and any given service. A positive user experience can vary in nature and is primarily defined by multiple factors such as; regulatory standards, cultural sensitivities, as well as market and service user expectations. Both the long-term strategy and values held by a service provider can be instrumental in shaping a user experience for their service users. It is also imperative to recognise the level of impact that inefficient management of technology, staffing and internal operations has on the ability of an organization to provide a seamless positive user experience.

Ultimately, the success or failure of an organization in providing a strong and robust user experience is not only the determining factor for active user engagement but also a key indicator of user satisfaction and service quality.

These charts contain questions to stimulate thought around the day to day individual needs of service users who may wish to use the service. The questions presented here are by no means exhaustive and are meant only as a thought-invoking exercise.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR STAFF AND SERVICE USERS	UTILIZATION OF SPACE	SAFETY AND SECURITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are all areas within the building wheelchair accessible? ▪ Is accessible parking made available for staff and service members who drive? ▪ Can a disabled service user or staff member access the facility easily without inconvenience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How much space within the premises is currently utilized to its potential? ▪ How do service users currently engage with the services provided? ▪ How does the space and layout of the centre impact on the behaviour of service users? ▪ How could space be better utilised for providing the types of services that the organization is aspiring to offer? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How secure are service users and staff members from external risks to their personal safety? ▪ Does the organization provide a sufficient level of security for user data? ▪ How many staff members are trained first-aiders? ▪ Who are the main points of contact in an emergency? ▪ Who and how can a vulnerable service user approach on a confidential matter that pertains to their personal safety?

DIRECT IMPACT ON AN EXPERIENCE

- Service users are offered a broad variety of choice in services.
- Service users can easily access a consistent flow of information about services offered.
- Services are relevant, cost-effective, engaging and serve their defined purpose.
- Service users understand how the services are managed and how to give feedback.
- Service users understand how their personal information is managed and shared.
- Staff conduct is professional and any sessions that are delivered are offered in an environment that encourages focused learning and development.
- Facilities and any equipment are maintained to a high standard. Premises are clean, presentable and clear of unnecessary clutter.

INDIRECT IMPACT ON AN EXPERIENCE

- Sensitive information on service users is maintained securely and responsibly whether digitally or paper based.
- Staff are trained and uphold the highest standards of privacy and confidentiality on behalf of service users.
- Standards for ensuring the security and safety of service users is given utmost consideration and regular risk assessments are conducted.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF PROBLEM AREAS

The following tables summarize key issues in all areas. They have been separated by colour for ease of reading, however, as there is significant overlap between all areas, the specific issues being addressed will have a copy of the relevant problem summary box before the breakdown. In this section, there is a full explanation of all issues concerning **Accessibility and Utilization of Space** beginning on **page 13**.

AREA AFFECTED	AREA DESCRIPTION
ACCESSIBILITY & UTILIZATION OF SPACE	Assessing accessibility of the building for both service users and staff members alike. Evaluating the current use of the building structure and the effect it has on the user-experience, service capabilities and effectiveness of staff.
SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Underutilized space throughout the building. ▪ Reception area is in need of improvement to deliver optimum security and service. ▪ Layout of user-facing areas can have a negative impact the quality of the user experience. ▪ Layout of office areas can impact the productivity and level of collaboration of service management staff. ▪ Not all areas of the building and facilities are wheelchair friendly. ▪ Car park is not easily accessible for wheelchair bound disabled staff or service users. ▪ Poor access to transport services for some disabled users. 	

AREA AFFECTED	AREA DESCRIPTION
SECURITY, EASE OF ACCESS & CONSISTENCY OF INFORMATION	The importance of creating a simple and consistent pathway into information on services.
SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The organization has aspirations to accomplish tasks but lacks written planning for proposed services, changes, etcetera. ▪ Inconsistent data record trail, data filed and saved in multiple locations and formats. ▪ Personal data and files occasionally leave the premises with staff without efficient safeguarding in place. ▪ Volunteer register compartmentalized and not shared throughout the organization, leaving lesser choice for volunteers. ▪ No regular charting of individual service user progress and development of members attending Primus. ▪ Community unaware of the resources that are available to them through Disability Stockport Ltd., as signposting is very poor for access into services. ▪ No central telephone communications line for all services. Numerous lines exist for each service and crossover of lines and support services due to goodwill of staff in wanting to help callers. 	

AREA AFFECTED	AREA DESCRIPTION
TECHNOLOGY, MAINTENANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE	How technology is being used and maintained, and how to identify appropriate use of technology in the future to facilitate better quality service delivery.
SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Computers being used by staff members are due an upgrade, and taking up unnecessary space . ▪ Desktop computers in the centre are slow and poorly maintained for purpose. ▪ Staff currently use multiple network drives with varying access rights that can be difficult to change in times of necessity without the presence of an external IT consultant, and assumedly at extra cost. ▪ Slow computer systems potentially have a negative impact on staff morale and overall confidence in the power of technology to transform services for the better. ▪ Potentially service-empowering information about service users is not being collected and stored digitally. 	

AREA AFFECTED	AREA DESCRIPTION
STAFF COHESION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	Understanding the impact that staff development and training has on the user-experience, service capabilities and effectiveness of the organization.
SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff members have highlighted their lack of trust in the capabilities of some of the service management team. ▪ Lack of regular social activities to build staff morale and cohesion. ▪ Lack of staff development plans that will allow management to maximise the potential of their workforce. ▪ Staff are not entirely informed or aware of the full extent of services taking place in the centre. ▪ Little definition in job roles thus the chain of accountability falls short of optimum staff potential and causes confusion among staff and a breakdown in the chain of responsibility. ▪ The paper trail of documents across the organization is inconsistent and very difficult to consolidate. Filing is highly dependent on the staff member's knowledge of the filing system they use. 	

AREA AFFECTED	AREA DESCRIPTION
DIVERSITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	Examining the inclusivity of services for members of the disabled community and identifying areas for diversification.
SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Services at Primus tend to be geared towards one cohort of disabled users (people with learning difficulties), this can lead to the exclusion of other cohorts of disabled users from actively engaging with the centre. 	

SECTION 1 – SECURITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF SPACE

GROUND FLOOR

Areas affected

- Entrance and reception area
- Reception back office
- Main PRIMUS hall
- Auxiliary rooms and kitchen areas

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- Reception desk is left unmanned on occasion and as such can become vulnerable to security breaches.
- The integrity of the front security doors can be compromised due to human error resulting from the lack of a permanently staffed reception; opening the centre up to risk on multiple levels.
- Throughout the ground floor area, space is not utilized effectively due to the open layout of the main PRIMUS hall.
- Certain groups of service users can easily become distracted when services are offered in large open spaces. The open layout throughout PRIMUS and lack of classroom enclosure can have a negative impact on service users.
- Auxiliary rooms on the ground floor level have a low capacity for accommodating larger groups of service users and can only accommodate a limited number of wheelchair users.
- Appropriate wheelchair access is not available from the ground floor to the basement parking area. See basement section for more details.

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A permanent reception desk is proposed to be installed in the reception area creating a formal face to face point of contact for anyone visiting the centre.
- The reception desk should be manned by paid staff members during all operational hours and can be supported by volunteers.
- It is recommended that the reception is managed by the proposed information and communication department, which is to be located in the reception back-office. This will ensure that reception staff are well informed and able to provide members of the public with a

consistent and accurate record of information on services.

- The reception area has the potential to act as a central hub of internal-external information and communication delivery.
- The reception area is a service-neutral environment and should be utilised to collect information from visitors to help empower both the service users themselves and offer important insights to service managers.
- It is proposed that a permanent classroom and learning space is created in the main PRIMUS hall. This will allow larger classes to be conducted without interference from other simultaneous activities. This room can also double up as a meeting room to engage local community groups.
- Another permanent partition to create a IT and media suite is also recommended. This will give more structure to the facilities on offer at the centre, and allow for attracting a more diverse array of disabled users. By creating a distinct area where IT and media classes can be held without experiencing interference and distractions from activities in the main hall area will add great value to the centre.

The **Observations and Considerations** box assesses the needs, accessibility, and utilization of space within the affected areas, for both service users and staff members alike.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- The reception area is the first point of contact for anyone using or otherwise visiting the centre. This may include potentially vulnerable service users, professional visitors, external organizations (e.g. transport and care providers) and other members of the public and it is at the reception area that each of these individuals have the opportunity to communicate with a representative of the organization in a service neutral environment.
- The reception, by acting as a neutral platform for the collection and sharing of user feedback, will be in a position to improve services around individual expectations, giving the organization an edge on any competition.
- The reception area is often manned by different volunteers on different days at different times, providing little consistency in staffing. Irregularity in staffing can leave individuals using the centre without a consistent service user-facing point of contact.
- Former service users volunteering to man reception means a great deal to them and as such I think it is imperative to keep a voluntary position open if only for the human value that it offers to service users wishing to give something back. This will be in addition to the staff member from the proposed Information and Communications department.
- By employing former service users as volunteers in running the reception area, other service users from amongst their peers may not feel comfortable approaching the reception area for assistance in matters of a confidential or otherwise sensitive nature.

- Over the observation period, the automated security door, which was locked at all times, ensured the centre was secure. A risk was identified whereby on a number of occasions service users were seen manually opening the security doors to unknown visitors whilst the reception was unmanned – potentially unable to assess whether or not they were authorised to gain entry.
- As unlikely as a security breach may be, it is important to consider the risks associated with an unmanned entrance, which essentially have an impact on the overall user-experience. Accurate recording of visitor entry and exit of the building can prove vital in the event of a fire other such emergency.
- Any security breaches not only pose a risk to the health and wellbeing of service users, but to that of the workforce and the assets and integrity of the wider organization. Aside from the obvious risk to persons and company assets, there is also a risk that a breach may compromise sensitive information and data pertaining to both staff and service users alike.
- In all working environments; the lighting, use of interior design, furniture and space has a direct impact on the way people perceive a service.

SECURITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF SPACE – FIRST FLOOR

Areas affected

- Main first floor hall
- Current PRIMUS management office
- Training room
- Auxiliary rooms
- Staff kitchen area

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- Underutilized space throughout the first floor area.
- First floor print/photocopier/server room is not accessible for disabled staff members.
- Staff tend to be very sparsely distributed due to the oversized desks and the small number of staff working at any one time in the main office area. A feeling of segregation between services can emerge when the office isn't distributed in a way that encourages interaction between staff and the services they represent.
- The current allocation of the front office on the first floor to Primus management segregates Primus services from others such as the newly formed peer support service and Connect. This seems to have resulted in each service developing a sense of independence from their counterparts. As such, this will negatively influence productivity levels and lead to poorer internal communication, less effective service user outcomes, and a generally lesser connected working environment.

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The training room provides ample space to function as the main office space for the upstairs staffing requirements. The training room is well lit and ideal to be used as the main office space.
- The use of smaller desks and the staff's closer proximity to one another in the current training room will help to create a better working environment and unlock a much larger space for expansion of services and/or alternative sources of income.
- Management of all services in one location allows for a busier working environment, helps prevent crossovers in services, and encourages staff to play a more active role in collaborating around comprehensive service delivery.
- In addition to the use of the main office space for any alternative purpose, the side offices could potentially be hired out or leased to tenants in the voluntary or charity sectors to generate additional income and add quantifiable value to the community.
- Primus management should be moved into the training room area with all the other services from the first floor, to create a more close-knit, connected working environment. This will improve communication between the services and make record keeping and sharing more centralised and thus easily accessible.
- Considerations for a new centralised filing system and a review of all internal and external movement of information needs to be made, see role of Information and Communications department.
- A wheelchair-friendly location should be found for the printer/photocopier.
- It is suggested that the current Primus office be re-purposed for the newly proposed department of HR and Finance. Details on this departmental change are explained further in this document.
- With the main upstairs floor space potentially freed up, a number of options present themselves as to how best the space could be utilized. Please see creative considerations at the end of this section.

The **Observations and Considerations** box assesses the needs, accessibility, and utilization of space within the affected areas, for both service users and staff members alike.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- The way the office is set up; from the size and layout of the desks to the type of lighting and the quality of facilities available to staff has a direct impact on the productivity and working environment within the organization.
- Instances of efforts being duplicated between Primus and other services were observed and as such it was recommended to bring all services together in close knit office area to encourage

better communication and collaboration.

- During the observation a disabled member of staff was seen depending on other staff members to collect printouts and photocopy documents on his behalf. This was because the printer/photocopier room is not wheelchair friendly. In an organization such as Disability Stockport Ltd., such experiences should never take place as they can have a detrimental effect on the confidence and independence of disabled staff members. This can be quite humiliating and in this regard the centre should be leading by example.
- During the observation period, there were a number of instances where some staff members had not shared resources with their colleagues from other services. This demonstrates the presence of a compartmentalised attitude towards the provision of services and the lack of a collective approach to responsibility. There is no question that all the staff members are driven by the same overall aspiration to support service users, but there is clearly room for improvement; creating a better working environment that enables and encourages collaboration and collective spirit has its role to play in that experience.

SECURITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF SPACE – BASEMENT

Areas affected

- Main parking area
- Storage facility

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- No wheelchair friendly lift from basement car parking level up to the ground floor thus rendering the car park not easily accessible for disabled staff or service users.
- No access to adequate transport services for disabled members of the community who may want to access services from Disability Stockport Ltd.
- There is little or no structure to storage on the basement level.
- A large stock of unused disability support equipment has accumulated in the basement area.

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The centre would benefit greatly from the Installation of a lift from the car park level to the ground floor to enable easier access for wheelchair users. This change would set a very strong precedent in making the centre fully accessible to all service users and members of staff regardless of the nature of their disability.
- The basement car park is currently being used for different types of storage purposes, as well as for staff and in some cases, service user parking. The storage facilities are not structured to their maximum potential. A review should be conducted to assess how space on the car parking level can be managed more efficiently, to give maximum benefit both from an accessibility and a storage perspective.
- Funding for a 24 hour (or extended hours) Stockport disabled transport service may be eligible for support from numerous sources (EU, Private Social Funding).
- Follow up the above campaign with a public campaign aimed at engaging large businesses in the local areas to become involved in the sponsorship of transport services for the disabled. It is important to see that this stage of the campaign also receives press coverage.
- PR campaigns in the local press should be managed by the proposed Information and Communications department, if the option to pursue external private funding for additional transport is chosen.
- Local press can be made aware of the transport problems in Stockport as part of a wider PR strategy to raise public awareness about the current day to day difficulties faced.
- It may also be possible for a transport service to be self-funded by service users on a secure monthly contract basis and only launched upon receipt of the necessary number of commitments.
- The maintenance lead should perform a review on how best to inventory the disability support equipment, and ensure items that can be used are up to standard or disposed of if not.
- Examine the cost-effectiveness and practicality of leasing outdoor parking spaces when the downstairs car park is underutilized, especially when the monies saved (£3000 p.a.) could help fund the installation of new lift.
- If outdoor parking space is deemed absolutely necessary, there is also the possibility of submitting a request for two on-street disabled parking bays to be installed on the locations below. You can find the application form at the following address:
www.stockport.gov.uk/doitonline/az/disabledparkingbay

First proposed location (highlighted in red):



Second proposed location (highlighted in red):



The **Observations and Considerations** box assesses the needs, accessibility, and utilization of space within the affected areas, for both service users and staff members alike.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Submitting an application for on-street disabled parking bays with the support of service users should give the request priority consideration. If applications are approved, disabled parking and access to the centre will be dramatically improved whilst still making a saving for the organization.
- Consider combining the roles of maintenance, cleaning and driving (if transport service is funded), there is human value to be gained by creating a position within the organization rather than funding external contractors.
- The car park, although mostly used by staff members, is also used by service users who can struggle walking up and down the stairs or ramp. Over the course of observation, a service user was seen struggling to walk down the stairs to an awaiting vehicle.

CREATIVE CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF SPACE

By repurposing numerous areas of the building and especially by using the first floor training room as the main office space for non-user facing service management, a great deal of space shall be freed up to allow for the expansion of the services. This move to will offer the centre an improved ability to control and run simultaneous activities for varying abilities and interests.

With the main upstairs floor space freed up a number of options present themselves; which we shall discuss below. It is useful to bear in mind, that by offering new creative facilities to the disabled community, alternative sources for finance will become available. Some considerations for the use of space can include:

WORKSPACES A creative co-working space for local start-ups working in social innovation. This would generate an essential, additional income stream and encourage more engagement within the community.	ARTS/THEATRE Amateur theatre space for developing drama and art groups for the disabled community.	CAFE Cafe area could potentially open up a new interface for dialogue with the public and generate additional income, and provide experience for service users in engaging with the public on a professional level.
AV SUITE An audio-visual library and IT training suite to engage and build staff and service user confidence in the power of media and technology to transform services/lifestyle.	SENSORY ROOM A sensory room for supporting service users with severe mental disabilities is highly recommended. It is proposed to repurpose the current television room for such use.	SIDE OFFICES In addition to the use of the main upstairs area for any alternative purposes, the side offices could potentially be hired out or leased to tenants in the voluntary and charity sectors.
GYM & FITNESS SUITE Disabled friendly wheelchair accessible gym and fitness suite to engage a wider audience and generate new income. Could include classes in yoga and meditation for improving overall wellbeing.	STAFF ROOM The upstairs staff room could be revitalised to provide staff with a peaceful escape to build workforce morale and encourage better in-work relationship building.	CRAFT MARKET A weekend craft market could likely be held in the car park area and be managed by volunteers providing the centre with much needed exposure and an additional revenue source.

SECTION 2 – TECHNOLOGY

Areas affected

- Main PRIMUS computer area
- Office areas on first floor

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- Desktop computers being used by staff and service users are extremely bulky, taking up unnecessary space and are poorly maintained for purpose.
- Slow computer systems potentially have a negative impact on staff morale and overall confidence in the power of technology to transform services for the better.
- Staff currently use multiple network drives with varying access rights that can be difficult to change without the presence of an external IT consultant, and assumedly at extra cost.
- Potentially service-empowering information about service users is not being collected nor stored digitally by frontline staff.

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- This report recommends a full internal review of the current use of technology within the organization. The purpose of the review will be to investigate how the systems can be managed more closely to ensure staff and service users alike are able to unlock the value that can be offered to them through good quality technology management.
- Appropriate security measures should be taken to ensure the protection of sensitive information being stored digitally across the organization. It is the role of the organization to know what they expect from their IT manager and to organise regular security and maintenance checks.
- A review of simple cost-effective upgrades to the current machines should be conducted following a detailed inventory of all machines and their specifications.
- Trial Linux Mint or other similar user-friendly Linux distribution that is well-suited for older computer systems with limited resources.
- It is recommended that regular maintenance schedules are set up to ensure all computers and mobile equipment are operating at optimum efficiency.

- It is proposed that the organization introduces a number of mobile devices (e.g. tablets) that will allow frontline staff to quickly and efficiently collect data about the day to day management of services, as well as present opportunities for experimental learning by service users.
- Maintenance of any technology within the organization should be the responsibility of the proposed maintenance lead although all software selection should be tightly regulated and overseen in association with the information and communications department.
- Precautions should be taken to ensure that all software being used by the organization from the operating systems to the auxiliary software packages are fully licensed, up to date and that appropriate security measures are in place to protect the integrity of sensitive information.
- The proposed information and communications department should be responsible for evaluating, trialling and subsequently administering an effective open-source CMS software package, thereafter cooperating with the HR department in ensuring staff training is up to date.
- Frontline staff should be encouraged to produce digital progress reports about service users thus permitting information to flow naturally upwards to support service improvement and provide users with a more comprehensive and personalised experience.
- Monitoring and regulation of standards for the use of technology should be enforced by the proposed information and communications department.
- This report recommends a full internal review of the current use of technology within the organization. The purpose of the review will be to investigate how the systems can be managed more closely to ensure staff and service users alike are able to unlock and access the value that can be offered to them through good quality technology.
- It is recommended that a detailed inventory of all machines and their specifications is drawn up to enable simple, cost-effective upgrades to be made to the current IT equipment.
- Maintenance of any technology within the organization should be the responsibility of the proposed maintenance and facilities lead, although software selection should be tightly regulated and overseen in association with the information and communications department.
- The proposed information and communications department should be responsible for evaluating, trialling and subsequently administering an effective open-source CMS software package, thereafter cooperating with the proposed HR lead in ensuring staff training is adequate up to date.
- All staff members whose duties require them to work outside of the centre should be allocated their own work phone and line which is maintained in accordance with strict data protection policy. Personal handsets should never be used for professional purposes.
- It is essential that the organization has a schedule of regular maintenance and security checks for all IT equipment and work-specific handheld devices on the premises as well as ensuring all software being used by the organization is fully licensed and up to date.

- Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the organization knows what they can expect from their IT manager and are able to organise regular maintenance and security checks.
- The proposed HR lead needs to work alongside the Information and Communications department to ensure adequate training for staff in the management of all digital services and communications.

The **Observations and Considerations** box assesses the needs and proposed solutions to the technology and maintenance issues within the organization, for both service users and staff members alike.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Current service support staff use desktop computers to access shared files on the local network, send emails, file records in network folders and prepare correspondence.
- Although a relationship currently exists with an IT service management provider, it is essential that all the organization's technology from the desktop computers to the network servers and mobile devices are maintained effectively and it is recommended to bring responsibility for this in-house.
- Slow computer systems will potentially have a negative impact on staff morale and overall confidence in the power of technology to transform services for the better.
- During the observation, basic testing of the computer systems revealed that some of the simplest of changes to resource management configuration on each device would result in a much speedier experience.
- Staff members who tend to be the closest to service users were not charged with filing any records of observations digitally.
- Observations revealed that some staff members were unaware of protocols for filing on the network drives.
- It is important to note that frontline staff who work regularly with service users are the most likely individuals to notice changes of character as well as identify potential risks to more vulnerable individuals. Staff can't be expected to welcome the transition from paper to digital if technology they are using is overcomplicated, unreliable or otherwise slower than conventional methods.

SECTION 3 – MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

PROPOSAL OF NEW DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

It is proposed that Disability Stockport Ltd. forms three new internal departments, each with their own allocated responsibilities to manage information flow, staff and day to day building maintenance of the premises. The table below summarizes the suggested changes to organizational structure and the duties of each new department.

DEPARTMENT	RESPONSIBILITIES
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Manning reception area and ensuring building security is effective.▪ Ensuring Data Protection Act compliance across the organization; evaluating how information is stored, moved around and shared.▪ Overseeing consistent standards for the management of digital and paper filing systems throughout all services at the centre.▪ Manage and administer access rights to network folders containing personal data and sensitive records.▪ Consider and assess the potential risks posed by the absence of efficient internal data management standards and the lack of a centralized data control.▪ Monitoring and regulation of standards for the use of technology internally.▪ Review of roles, responsibilities and chain of accountability in information and communications.▪ Perform a bi-monthly review to assess organizational progress and address problem areas in the area of information and communications.▪ To perform user advocacy on behalf of all external to internal communications ensuring queries are responded to quickly and effectively, regardless of which service they are directed at.▪ Regulation of information and data flow within the organization and between internal services and external parties.▪ Ensuring information is kept up to date, accessible and appropriate to staff and properly utilized in a manner that will improve service outcomes for centre users.▪ This department shall act as the informed communication network of the organization, and as such will guide all content that is used for marketing

	<p>purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage all types of external to internal communications, regardless of the vehicle for that communication (e.g. telephone, email, web, social media, face to face etc.)
<p>HUMAN RESOURCES & FINANCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The department will deal with all staff recruitment, training, support and development issues and will be accessible to staff throughout the building. ▪ Perform a basic staff induction review to align all staff members with a common understanding on the direction and values of the organization. ▪ Perform regular staff career management and developmental reviews. ▪ Perform a workforce training and skills gap review. ▪ The implementation of the departmental responsibilities must be carefully designed to ensure maximum effectiveness: a regular bi-monthly review to assess progress and problem areas. ▪ Define more rigorous HR management practices, creating staff records, documenting previous experience and qualifications as well as planning for future development. ▪ Leading a culture change so as to encourage building internal staff confidence and skillsets as opposed to sourcing highly-paid external professionals. ▪ Creating stronger bonds between staff, increasing morale whilst establishing important culture change in pro-active self-development and the importance of team building. ▪ Realising the negative impact of irregular salary packages on staff morale and creating a standard pay plan to increase staff morale and improve productivity. ▪ Realising the potential and the power of reciprocity through external partners and contacts in sourcing staff training and development. ▪ Planning and budgeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The creation of an organizational budget model. ▪ Budget preparation. ▪ Budget monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Variance, calculation, and analysis ▪ Providing recommendations on findings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upholding the fundamental three 'E' principles across the organization. ▪ Bookkeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recording expenditure and revenue ▪ Fundraising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing current financial sources. ▪ Searching for new finance opportunities based on the organizations wider strategy and planning.
<p>MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring premises are regularly cleaned to a high standard. ▪ Management of all storage of equipment and maintenance throughout the building. ▪ The day to day responsibilities of a building caretaker/handyman. ▪ Computer hardware equipment installation and management. ▪ Maintenance and upkeep of print room and supplies. ▪ Perform annual fire safety review and building risk assessment, and ensure all building health and safety regulations are met (e.g. gas safety, electrical PAT testing etc).

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

This is a broad outline of the ways in which this new department can assist with the functioning of the organization. To build relationships through a single communications department allows all information to be vetted for accuracy, transmitted consistently, it also gives staff the confidence of knowing they can refer external partners through centralized organizational representation.

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- It is the responsibility of the department to explore the potential risks posed by the absence of efficient internal data management standards and the lack of a centralized data control.
- Currently, when individual services at Disability Stockport Ltd. interact with external contacts they are only able to represent their service as opposed to the wider organization. Centralized communications will allow for much improved communication experience.
- Staff from different services are crossing over in their roles. E.g.: the peer-mentoring of volunteers working with one staff member or other projects such as peer mentoring at Stroke Units through another staff member.
- Staff are often unaware of up to date information on other services, or the nature of different roles within the broader organization.
- Some staff members strive to occupy specific roles for which they have a passion, and yet in doing so they can overstep into another service's remit of responsibility.
- Due to the lack of clearly defined roles, crossovers of responsibility can be endorsed by various levels of management thus undermining the little structure already present and leading to confusion.
- Communication to and from management needs to be carried in a series of simple processes from a service-neutral department to maximize efficiency and ensure consistency of communication.
- Access rights on shared server drives are difficult to navigate for cross-service information (e.g. emergency contact list, medications list etc.), information sharing inconsistent and not always up to date across multiple drives.
- Welcome pack is basic and potentially inefficient to produce.
- Information given in the welcome pack appears to come from different organizations, and can be perceived to come from different organizations and could confuse individuals not aware of the layout of the organization. Conversely, professionally printing one brochure for Disability Stockport Ltd. would be much more user-friendly, clear and robust.
- Service management and staff members alike spoke in detail over the course of the observations about their intended actions, but few had concrete timetables or accountable means of ensuring their intended updates, actions, and changes are followed through.

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is proposed that a number of part-time roles and responsibilities are combined into one centralized information and communications department which would ideally be located in the office to the rear of the reception area but would retain the responsibility for manning the reception.
- It is provisionally encouraged that at least two full-time members of staff are allocated the responsibilities of the department which shall in summary include; the regulation of information and data within the organization both between services, management and external parties.
- The department will also be responsible for overseeing consistent standards for the management of digital and paper filing systems across the centre. This shall ensure that information kept at the centre whether digital or otherwise is DPA compliant and is easily accessible and properly utilized in a manner that will improve service outcomes for the centre users.
- See <http://www.out-law.com/page-409> for a good guide to managing DPA compliance.
- Responsible for evaluating, trialling and subsequently administering an effective open-source CMS software package, thereafter cooperating with the HR department in ensuring staff training is up to date.
- A primary review process is recommended to allow the department to be supervised during its initial formation to ensure it is effectively able to coordinate and manage “internal to internal” and “internal to external” communications regardless of whether that communication takes place by telephone, email, internal messaging or face to face interaction.
- Being the informed communication network of the organization the department will aptly be in a position to accurately follow up the intended projects and aspirations of each service and ensure a level of accountability and provide senior management with a level of traceability.
- Being in a position of access to information on all services across the centre the information and communications department is ideally positioned to guide the content that is used for marketing purposes.
- Departmental responsibilities must be carefully staggered to ensure maximum effectiveness, it is encouraged that the department produces a regular bi-monthly review to assess progress and identify any problem areas that arise.
- The department should perform internal reviews and independent assessments to ensure all service staff are confidently able to meet the expected standards in regard to information and communication management.
- Medical forms in the welcome pack should be replaced with a digital summary care record.
- It will be the responsibility of the Information and Communications department as proposed to work with HR lead to ensure documents and filing mechanisms across the organization are consistent and easy to consolidate.

- Implementing effective feedback mechanisms for staff, service users and members of the public to give feedback and outline potential initiative and scope for future development. Create a staff noticeboard where suggestions can be raised and reviewed anonymously.
- Centralize a single telecommunication line for all services that is routed through proposed info and communications area in reception. All calls must have a trail of accountability and info and communications will responsible for user advocacy in all calls received.
- The importance of implementing effective feedback mechanisms for staff, service users and members of the public to give insights into current practices, concerns and outline potential initiative and scope for future development.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- From a user experience perspective, whether for that of the service user, staff members, or the higher management; accessing information on a service, or communicating information to a service becomes far less complicated and is much better use of resources when centred through a single point of contact – namely the department of information and communications. The practicalities of this in the workplace must be reviewed before any implementation can start.
- The department will be in a position to support the higher management through chairing staff meetings and ensuring internal services are not overlapping. Their responsibility will be divided between serving the users who attend the centre through the reception area in addition to coordinating communication between the internal staff and management.
- It is important to investigate potential opportunities that are available through external relationships.
- The value of a centralized communications network on the service user-experience cannot be overstated.
- The responsibility of the proposed department of info and communications to manage volunteer resources and so all services can draw equally from a pool of volunteers.

DIVERSITY IN SERVICE PROVISION

AREA AFFECTED	AREA DESCRIPTION
DIVERSITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	Examining the inclusivity of services for members of the disabled community and identifying areas for diversification.
SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Services at Primus tend to be geared towards one cohort of disabled users (people with learning difficulties), this can lead to the exclusion of other cohorts of disabled users from actively engaging with the centre. 	
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand diversity across the scope of the disability spectrum and how individual needs vary according to the level and type of disability. ▪ Identify the nature of engagement for each cohort of potential service users and the common support mechanisms and activities they require. ▪ Perform consultations with local community workers and support organizations that advocate on behalf of different disabilities. ▪ Collaborate with support organizations and community workers to engage potential service users across the spectrum who may wish to help shape the future of service provision. ▪ Consider taking a different approach to timetabling services on offer, catering them to the needs of different cohorts of service users; i.e. people with complex developmental or learning impairment to attend the centre on different days to participate in activities personalized to their needs. 	

FINANCE

This report recommends a review of all expenditures performed by senior management. At this preliminary stage, this is just a general model for the overall responsibilities of the finance department review, to see what is successful, not a definitive suggestion for a budgetary model. The review will be based on the 'three E' principles, which are a common way of understanding the general financial objectives of organizations.



ECONOMY represents value for money and delivering the required service on budget, on time and within other resource constraints, as well as those working in them and those using the service.

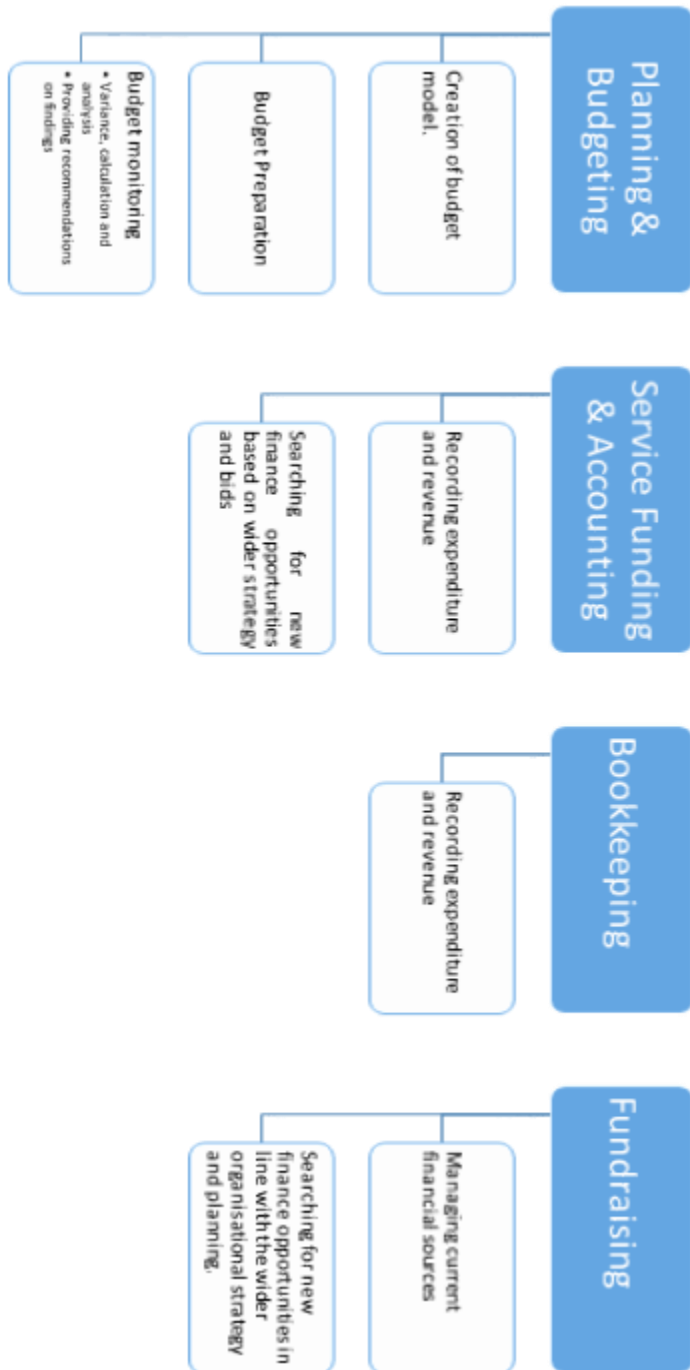


EFFICIENCY is concerned with getting an acceptable return on the money and resources invested in a service. Efficiency is defined as work output divided by work input and it is centred around getting as much out as possible from the amount put into a system.



EFFECTIVENESS describes the extent to which the organization delivers what it is intending to deliver.

OVERVIEW OF CORE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES



See this brief breakdown of the duties of the finance lead. The comprehensive role of the HR and finance department is explained in the sections below.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The HR lead has a duty to review and overcome potential difficulties among staff in regard to time management, morale, duties, payscales, and workload.

PROBLEMS

- Lack of trust in some service managers, this has sadly led to certain individuals becoming disenfranchised and holding very negative outlooks about their direct management. Some staff have highlighted that they no longer attempt to feedback their concerns or openly ask for help as they feel it will, from previous experience, have little or no effect.
- There is a dear lack of a standardized induction process for staff, as well as little or no team building activities.

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Development of rigorous HR practices through the newly proposed HR lead, including:
 - Documenting previous experience and qualifications.
 - Planning for future career progression routes.
 - Creating stronger bonds between staff members and building the workforce.
- Investing internally and building internal staff confidence and skillsets.
- The proposed HR lead will be responsible for ensuring that staff training will prepare staff to understand the correct practices for filing digitally or physically, and that training is up to date, accurate and strong.
- It will be the responsibility of the Info and Communications department as proposed above to work with the HR lead to ensure document and filing mechanism across the organization are consistent and easy to consolidate.
- The HR lead will be responsible for encouraging a culture of proactive self-development and emphasizing the importance of team and morale building activities to service managers.
- The department lead will deal with all staff recruitment, training, support and development issues, and will be accessible to all staff throughout the building due to its ideal location in the current PRIMUS management office.
- The department shall also make accountability of services much simpler and assist in filtering instructions between high level management and the services.

STAFF MANAGEMENT – PREVENTING OFFICE BURNOUT

Even the strongest teams in the most agile organizations can succumb to the pressures of a strenuous working environment, resulting in what is known as office burnout. Office burnout is the result of complicated working conditions that take their toll on the overall well-being of a workforce, resulting in both emotional and physical exhaustion. If left unaddressed, the effects of office burnout will begin to have a negative impact on the quality of work which staff members are producing, their satisfaction in the workplace, workplace relationships, and eventually their personal wellbeing both at work and at home.

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

During the observation period, staff members of varying levels of authority were privately interviewed to assess their personal well-being and understand their individual perspective on the day to day running of the organization.

- Unfortunately, signs of office burnout were present amongst all members of staff who were interviewed.
- Staff members talked in confidence of how they felt their work was unappreciated and how external support staff were given much better pay packages and much lighter workloads.
- All those interviewed, from management through to frontline service staff felt they had little scope to improve themselves with one of the key areas of concern being what they perceived to be an inequality of earnings and the lack of consistent and fair salary packages for all.
- Despite these concerns, all staff spoke with great passion about how invaluable they felt the work of the organization was, exhibiting just how determined the workforce is to providing good quality services. In all but one case everyone was optimistic about the potential for change, although bridging the need for openness of communication between high-level management and lower level staff was a concern for most.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Good management practice involves preparing for both an organization's short and long-term goals. On occasions we are required to look externally for individuals that possess the unique skillsets that we require. Bringing new talent into an organization can give added value by offering internal teams with much needed fresh perspective.
- It is important at all times for senior management to keep a watchful eye on their workforce to ensure that any signs of burnout are quickly addressed. It is important to ask questions such as:
 - Do staff members feel that they have little control over their work?
 - Have staff members stopped giving critical feedback to the relevant management?
 - Do staff feel that their contributions and work goes unrecognised and unappreciated?
 - Do staff members complain of a lack of time or heavy workloads?

- Do staff members feel that some individuals are doing far more or less than others?
- Are staff members increasingly tired at work, lacking optimism, or have a tendency to bicker...etc.?
- In one case, it was observed that an experienced member of staff and internal influencer had decided to resign from their position. Following an interview with the said employee, it is believed that office burnout was a significant contributor to this decision. It is imperative that no more staff are lost in this way, especially those with the experience needed to aid in developing the organization. It is important to note that for the most part everyone else who was interviewed was optimistic about the potential for change implying that there is still much that can be done to improve and action positive change.
- Encouraging an open culture that welcomes constructive criticism without challenging it is essential in building trust and a sense of appreciation for staff input. The question should not be; “Whose fault is it when something doesn’t go to plan but rather where did we not work well together and how can we improve in the future?”
- The observation period revealed that Disability Stockport Ltd. does not shy away from sourcing staffing externally, rather it could be said that more focus is placed on sourcing external talent than developing the skills and experience internally across the workforce.
- Investing in staff training is an essential part of gaining the trust of your workforce and offering them the opportunity to gain security in their employment and a means of personal development. Many staff who start at the organization begin with very few relevant qualifications, the level of loyalty and dedication that is often given to Disability Stockport Ltd. over the years by its staff is inspirational.
- It is important to cultivate the qualities and skills required by the staff internally to sustain, grow and lead the organization in years to come.
- If too much attention is given to bringing in external talent, many internal staff members can begin to feel that they are underappreciated and untrusted, or not valued enough to be seen as an asset worthy of investing in. This can have a negative spiralling effect on the confidence of the workforce, affecting their professional outlook on both themselves and their employers.

It is essential at this stage to start with an action plan to tackle the signs of burnout before it manifests in ways that cannot be contained. To do this, the organization needs to start with these important considerations:

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Begin opening dialogues with staff members, examining their behaviour and listening to what they say. The bulk of this approach should be conducted by the HR lead, however every senior member of staff should attend a training session on the importance of having genuine discourse with all staff members.

- All staff in management positions should be required to pass a robust induction course to understand the impact and nature of their role seeing leadership as a burden of responsibility and not a privilege.
- There is an abundance of resources available to be recommended in preparing a curriculum that will support management staff in their personal and professional development. An example of the type of content that staff can benefit from at no expense to the organization include the enlightening TED talk by Simon Sinek entitled, “Why good leaders make you feel safe” http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_why_good_leaders_make_you_feel_safe
- It is essential that both the proposed HR lead and all levels of management take a step back from focusing on services and their users and begin to address the internal concerns of staff and any conflicts that have arisen.
- It is important to create a secure environment and gain the confidence of the workforce, as this is key to resolving many of the issues that have been raised during the observation.
- A culture of collective resolution and values-led cohesion should be grown and rewarded from the ground up.
- By encouraging self-reflection and offering staff members the opportunity to identify and celebrate their own weaknesses (starting with the senior management). This will instil in everyone the belief that workplace cohesion should always be prioritized over individual opinions.
- Implement anonymous feedback mechanisms and open door policies to empower all staff members to feel confident in raising concerns and highlighting personal aspirations to HR and service management. It is important that all feedback is received through a formal process which every staff member should be informed of.
- Provide staff with easy access to support and resources enabling them keep up to date with their training and identify the key contacts within the organization for each area of responsibility.
- It is important to have a platform of communication where staff can become aware of key achievements, be given recognition and thanks, learn and discuss the organization’s core values, and raise issues for professional discussion with their peers. This can be anything from: a regular newsletter, email group/social media group, private online forum, or a combination of any of the above with a weekly staff meeting. Such a platform will also ensure that senior management are aware of the concerns of their staff and are able to investigate, implement safeguarding and address them if necessary.
- Identify the skills, qualifications, experience, aspirations and talent within the organization. This

will coincide with the proposed individual personal development plans also being prepared by the HR department.

- Begin to identify potential within the workforce. Try to recognize key qualities and personality traits within each staff member.
- Due to the satisfaction that is gained from engaging with service users, it is easy for service management staff to become distracted and engage in activities with service users. It is proposed as an essential component of staff development to keep satisfaction levels high in the workplace that a one hour “free period” is given to every staff member every day to use as they please. For example, finance lead could choose to spend one hour a day with service users supporting in session activities.
- Such an approach as mentioned above, will allow staff members to remain in touch with their overall purpose. It also acts as a preventative against office burnout and gives staff members a change of role for one hour during the day – at the time of their choice – which can increase motivation and productivity.
- Once the organization has more insight into the individuals that make up the workforce it becomes necessary to tally that information with their individual aspirations. Evaluating the strengths and abilities of each staff member within the organization alongside their individual aspirations gives us a better insight into how they can each fit into the long term vision of the company. Such a process will take time, but with the proposed dedicated HR lead, a clearer picture of the potential for growth and development internally will come to light and make staff far more effective, as well as increasing satisfaction which naturally has a positive knock on effect on the quality of their work.

CONCLUSION

When running an organisation such as Disability Stockport Ltd. it is essential to recognise the many areas that influence the quality of service provision and anticipate their impact in line with the wider organisational strategy. It can at times seem like a challenge to ensure all areas of the organisation are functioning in a manner that suits however it is a step by step procedure that requires flexibility in approach, open-mindedness, collective determination and a proactive attitude to change. For many years Disability Stockport Ltd. has provided service users with a warm and welcoming environment in line with the very values it holds so dearly. The organisation has significantly grown and moved into new premises opening up therewith much opportunity to enhance the offering and widening the remit of services offered. The summary of proposals contained in this document are aimed at supporting this transition by enabling clear accountability for each area of responsibility and ensuring standards of provision are kept at their highest both to guarantee the successful enhancement of the user experience on behalf of service users and to ensure that the organisation is able to instill confidence in a workforce who firmly believe in it. We look forward to the opportunity of working with Disability Stockport Ltd. to achieve its goals and thank you for your support and understanding throughout this process.