**SE DCS Peer Challenge 2018**

**Handbook**

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**SE DCS Peer Challenge 2018 - Handbook**

# Introduction

The SE DCS Peer Challenge 2018 differs from the topical peer challenge process that has been running across the SE in the following ways:

* The overall aim is to allow the DCS, together with CEx and Lead Member, to improve understanding of how leadership and management processes impact on service quality and service improvement
* It starts with a summary self-assessment and a data analysis provided by the SESLIP team
* The area for the challenge is selected through a dialogue between host, visitor and observer DCS’s to help the host DCS feel secure that the area chosen is the one that would most benefit from an in-depth external perspective
* The peer challenge team visit focuses both on developing insights which will secure operational improvement, and also on seeking insights to the way leadership and management might change to better support service delivery with improved outcomes
* Coproduction is built into the review in that solutions are always developed together at the end of the peer challenge process. Coproduction can also optionally be embedded into the challenge if the host authority wishes to put up its own small team to join the peer challenge team

# How it works

The SE DCS Peer Challenge 2018 has the following components:

* a self-assessment by the host authority. Each host local authority completes this. They may use their own format but, if desired, a proforma can be found here: <http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge>
* a review of benchmarking data by the SESLIP team, which is sent to each authority one month before the training event
* a training event for the triads taking part (please contact Anna Wright, details below for help with this)
* a process of peer challenge in DCS triads to establish lines of enquiry / an area of focus. Following feedback this year that this process required more time, this will be done at a specific half day meeting in early 2018 of the triad DCS’s and facilitated by a member of the SESLIP team
* a field-work visit to validate the lines of enquiry. This takes place over two days. The first day is spent in interviews with key stakeholders identified by the triads. The second day consists of three elements:
  + the peer challenge team spend the morning developing hypothesis and insights about what is happening in the interface between the service and its leadership.
  + Just before lunch, a short feedback meeting to the DCS
  + After lunch, a presentation is given to the host authority on the hypothesis and insights identified followed by a facilitated workshop to reflect on the presentation and develop some ideas on recommendation and possible solutions
* A follow up visit in 4 months’ time to review progress on the chosen actions
* An annual summit to review improvement priorities across the region and shape the work programme for the following year.

A memorandum of understanding is available on the SESLIP Website (<http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge>) which sets out the terms of reference and principles governing the process.

# Deciding whether to undertake a coproduced review

There is an element of coproduction built into the review, in that the process allows for the co-creation of recommendations and solutions for change, following feedback from the peer challenge team. This will be through facilitated workshops on the second day of the peer challenge visit.

There is also the option of fielding 2 officers from the host authority to work alongside the peer challenge team. The reasons for proposing this are that:

* it enables the host staff to see their authority through new eyes by working alongside the peer challenge team
* because they are involved in developing new insights, they are more likely to shift their perspectives and take ownership of change
* their presence during the period in which insights are generated may lead to a deeper understanding of the systems, culture and behaviours at play

However, there are also potential disadvantages: if the peer challenge team ‘go native’ because of the involvement of the host authority staff; or if the presence of host authority managers inhibits host staff from giving open feedback. It will be important to appoint a member of the external team whose role is to notice when the peer challenge team’s insights may be being lost due to the discourse in the host team. The proposal is that the peer challenge team will consist of 4 people, the host authority could add 2 people to this team if desired. Feedback from those taking part in 2016-17 was that when the host partners were from a different part of the Council, their presence was really helpful to the visiting team in orienting them to the LA. Host participants from children’s services did wonder if their presence sometimes stopped the visiting team from being totally honest!

# Choosing the area of focus and agreeing objectives

The host authority will produce the self-assessment at least a fortnight prior to the facilitated peer challenge meeting so that colleagues can consider this and the data analysis produced by the SE team. The host authority puts forward some ideas of its own about the areas that could be considered for review. A key aim of this meeting is to assist the DCS to find out things that they may not know about their service and, in particular, on the way their leadership impacts on it. So, it is helpful to consider areas where:

* performance is below that of similar authorities;
* performance has not shifted over time despite there being several interventions in place to improve outcomes;
* there isn’t sufficient data on outcomes for the DCS to be sure about service performance;
* The overall strategy for the LA is dependent on improved outcomes in a particular area and these are not improving fast enough;
* There is considerable political investment in improvement in this area and politicians are concerned about progress;
* Performance in an area has been good, but there are signs that it is weakening.

The initial half day meeting in early 2018 will be facilitated by a SESLIP representative. It will be attended by all 3 DCS’s. The revised peer challenge planning tool in Appendix 1 will be used as the agenda for this meeting. The visiting and observing DCS will seek to understand from the host authority DCS, the overall vision and strategy they are adopting to improve outcomes for children. They will look at the self- assessment and the data to consider the extent to which the strategy is having an impact on outcomes. The idea will be to understand the mechanisms being adopted to create change and the extent to which these are working. The observer and visitor authority DCS’s will also examine the key areas that are critical to the success of the strategy and the extent to which progress is being made in these. They are encouraged to challenge both the overall rationale for the strategy and the judgements being made as to its impact.

They should particularly concentrate on areas where:

* outcomes for vulnerable groups appear to be of concern; or
* expenditure and budget do not align;
* staff sickness, agency staffing and turnover is high;
* services do not appear to be aligned with the vision and direction.

Once an area has been chosen, the DCS should be asked to articulate what they would most like to get out of the review. What would it be most helpful for the visiting team to help them achieve? This would be recorded in Appendix 1 – Peer challenge planner

# Choosing stakeholders to interview

The next task is to identify the key stakeholders that should be interviewed about the area in question. Since the purpose of the peer challenge is to examine the way leadership is impacting on the delivery of good outcomes, the peer challenge will talk to staff and users at all levels in the system. This could include:

* Users e.g. children and families, foster carers, customers of services
* Front line staff
* Professionals from other external partner agencies whose staff work alongside the service staff at the front line and whose engagement is critical to success
* Internal staff who work alongside front-line staff to support their work e.g. ICT floor walkers, business support, data team staff
* Direct operational managers
* Practice leaders and advisers
* Service managers
* Managers who lead work which impacts on front line working e.g. quality assurance, IROs and review chairs, workforce development, IT strategy, HR, participation coordinators, capital development, regeneration
* Managers of partner services whose staff work alongside staff in this service
* The DCS and CEX
* Directors of other Council services with an impact or potential impact on the service
* Councillors or board level members

# The double diamond as a basis for the review

There are a number of tools to assist in reviews of service effectiveness. One such tool in the Double Diamond. The Double Diamond is a process model created by The Design Council in 2005.  The model provides a graphic representation of a design process. Its development was based on case studies gathered from the design departments at 11 global firms.

The model presents four main stages across two adjacent diamonds. The first diamond focuses on ensuring that there is a deep understanding of the issues. The second stage is focused on designing new solutions. The point of the two diamonds is that as much time needs to be spent on the first as the second. These stages are:

* Discover –identify, research and understand the initial issues.
* Define – limit and define a clear problem to be solved.
* Develop – focus on and develop a solution.
* Deliver – test and evaluate, ready the concept for production and launch.

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The reason for the diamond is to indicate the points at which thinking needs to broaden out and consider many possibilities and then focus down. Sometimes truly understanding the key issues that are most important in a service is the hardest part of any journey and design can play a central role in first asking the right questions. It is very common in local government practice for professionals to start in the middle of this diagram, with a belief the problem has been defined and a solution is ready for development.

The peer challenge process will start at the beginning of the double diamond as that will enable key assumptions to be tested. This will allow the visiting team to step back and really understand the issues facing the authority, and the way leadership is seeking to impact on these, by gaining different vantage points on the challenge, (using ethnography for example). This will enable the visiting team to test out basic assumptions about the way the service is being led and whether the leadership intervention strategies are working. This can lead to insights about the challenges that might indicate new ways of leading. Generating ideas for an understanding of the challenges and identifying a clear goal to focus on involves generating a mission statement for the leadership. This is at the middle of the double diamond.

The peer challenge process will also allow a collaborative opportunity for reflection on new solutions to address any issues identified.

# Roles of lead, host and observer DCS

All staff involved are asked to adhere to the values that SESLIP believe should underpin the reviews which are:

* Mutual respect, openness and honesty
* Non-judgemental feedback
* The need to diagnose and understand why things are like they are
* A practical focus on how outcomes for young people could be improved

**The host DCS** has the responsibility for:

* Completing the peer challenge self-assessment template or using a model of their own;
* Working with their peer DCS’s to identify an area for the peer challenge that will enable helpful learning for the service;
* Deciding whether to identify staff to coproduce the challenge;
* Providing agreed documentation to the peer challenge team 1 month before the visit;
* Appointing a lead officer to manage the process who will manage all the logistics of the peer challenge, including booking rooms, managing the timetable and attendance at interviews, inviting staff to workshops and booking accommodation for the peer review team;

Their role is to make the peer challenge team feel welcome, ensure the visit is well-organised and to be open to learning from the outcome

**The lead DCS** has the responsibility for:

* Leading the peer challenge team
* Teleconferencing with the team to explain the purpose of the review and to decide who will do which interviews
* Ensuring the team are able to distil their learning into a presentation by 12.00 on Day 2
* Leading the presentation on the insights to the host authority
* Ensuring effective facilitation of the workshop to develop solutions
* Arranging the four-month follow up visit

Their role is to ensure that the host DCS is happy with all the arrangements and that the approach to the review by the team is in accord with the values set out above.

**The observer DCS** has the responsibility for:

* Assisting with the identification of the area for the peer challenge
* Attending the peer review from 4.30 on Day 1. This was found to be helpful as it allows the lead the DCS to establish their team and themselves as the leader. It also means the observer does not have a complete picture on arrival and so is required to ask probing questions of the work completed so far which in turn can make the team reflect on their emerging findings.
* To act as a disinterested observer on the morning of Day 2, helping the team to ensure that its insights and hypotheses are based on evidence and linked to quotes from the interviews.

**It is very useful if the observer can:**

* Challenge statements or the framing of issues to ensure there is an evidence base and that any extrapolation is appropriate to level and depth of information gathered.
* Assist with the final day team meeting, including the production of slide deck, to allow the team to focus on the discussion and identify their key points.
* Highlight points that are emerging that are not clear or meaningful to people not immersed in the work of the review team.

The observer would not take part in the presentation but will fully participate in the workshop groups, e.g. to help the host staff to understand the findings and consider solutions.

# Timetable and logistics

**Timetable**

Once the key stakeholders are agreed it is the responsibility of the host LA to propose a timetable of interviews. It was suggested in 16-17 that two staff attend each interview - one to do the interviewing, the other to make a note of key quotes that illustrate significant insights and perspectives. However, the teams found that having only one interviewer also worked well. Notes should ideally be taken electronically. If there is a coproduced team joining the review, then the team can schedule three interviews at any one time

Day 1 of the peer challenge consists of interviews with stakeholders focusing on the *discover* phase of the double diamond. If there is no host team, there will be two teams of 2 interviewers or more if one interviewer is doing the interviews. If there is a host team, there will be three teams with the host authority staff each pairing with a peer challenge team member. An example timetable for a co-produced peer challenge of services to LAC is given below:

**DAY 1: Example timetable**

**Room requirements:** Three rooms suitable for small group interviews, preferably close together, with availability of refreshments for interviewees.

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|  | **All peer review team and host reviewers (6)** | | |
| 9.00 | Meeting senior leadership of host authority (DCS, AD, Head of Service, Lead Member)  Host authority gives 15-minute presentation on:  What are the expectations for good services for LAC?  What are the current strengths and weaknesses?  How are services being improved – key mechanisms and strategies?  What the host team want to get out of the review  Followed by questions | | |
|  | **Team 1** | **Team 2** | **Team 3** |
| 9.45 | Foster carers | Virtual school head and staff and 2-3 school teachers who lead on LAC support | Youth staff who work with LAC young offenders |
| 10.30 | Birth families who have contact with their children | School staff who work with LAC | LAC nurse and CAMHS representative |
| **11.15** | **Lunch and discussion** | | |
| 11.30 | Social workers who work with LAC | Staff who work with migrants and unaccompanied asylum seekers | Workforce development lead |
| 12.15 | LAC review chairs/ IROs | PAs /social workers who work with care leavers | Senior practitioners responsible for practice improvement |
| **13.00** | **Lunch and discussion sharing info across teams** | | |
| 14.00 | Team managers for LAC  and care leavers | Commissioning leads for LAC, foster care and residential support | IT system leads and performance data analysis/reporting leads |
| 14.45 | Director and heads of service, environment, transport regeneration | Director and heads of service adults and housing | Residential care staff |
| **15.30** | **Tea** | | |
| 15.45 | LAC and care leavers  Offer tea and cake | Member representatives of corporate parenting group | Corporate parenting lead |
| **16.30** | **Break** | | |
| 16.40 – 18.00 | **Peer challenge teams *Rose, Thorn, Buds* activity to start identifying themes.** | | |

4-5 participants will be fine for each session, unless there are fewer people in these roles.

**Day 2: Peer challenge visit structure and timetable**

Day 2 of the peer challenge is divided into three parts:

**Part 1:** (9.00 to 12.30) the peer challenge team (and host team if they are co-producing) have 3.5 hours to

**Develop insights:** work through the data they have gathered, building on the Rose, Thorn, Buds Activity focusing particularly on drawing out the themes and insights. This is the *define* part of the Double Diamond outlined above. These insights will be illustrated with key quotes that they have recorded during the interview process.

**Prepare the presentation:** Prepare a presentation back to the host authority which consists of the themes and insights with key quotes illustrating key points

**At 12.30 the visiting DCS shares the presentation with the host DCS in a one to one session**

**Part 2** (1.45 to 14.15): The peer challenge team present back their themes and insights to the host authority– the host authority determines who they wish to invite to this session, but this could include the CX, lead members, senior leaders, staff representatives at all levels and partners

**Part 3** (14:15 to 16:30): Facilitated workshops to develop a key mission and solutions to the same group of people

**Room requirements:** One room with space large enough for visiting team and any host staff to spread out and work, but which can also easily be configured for the presentation and workshops from 12.30. Wireless access is required for the team in the morning. PowerPoint projector, flipcharts and post-its need to be available

An example timetable for Day 2 of a peer challenge is given overleaf.

**DAY 2: Timetable**

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|  | **Activity** |  |
| **9.00 – 12.30** | **Analysis and development of insights**  The group review the flipcharts from the previous evening’s discussion. Individuals read through their notes to remind themselves of the content of yesterday’s interviews noting any extra Roses, Thorns or Buds on post its, but also highlighting quotes that link to the points identified  The group then convert these into themes and then into insights, illustrating them with key quotes and prepare a presentation for 12.15pm. For a full description of this process see the section headed **Analysis and development of insights** | **Peer challenge team including representatives from host authority if the review is co-produced** |
| **12.30** | **Lead Visiting DCS meeting with Host DCS to share findings before the presentation to the wider group** | **Lead DCS/ Host DCS** |
| **13.00** | **Lunch** |  |
| **13.45** | **Presentation by team to wider group from host authority** on key insights, followed by discussions on the 2- 3 key areas the authority would most like to focus on for developing solutions and action | **Peer challenge team, senior managers, lead member, middle managers and front-line staff from host authority** |
| **14.15** | **Workshop with same group:**  Initial reflections on the review and mission statement  Idea generation to develop solutions  Development of recommendations for action | **Peer challenge team, senior managers, lead member, middle managers and front-line staff from host authority** |
| **16.30** | **Finish** |  |

# The optional leadership of change survey

There is the option for the host authority to choose to do a leadership of change survey as part of the review. This short survey of 32 items, which was developed and piloted in Reading in 2008, identifies the key areas from research that foster a culture of learning and accountability across all levels of the service during change management. The survey items are shown in **Appendix 2.** This survey would take place before the review visit and the results would be made available to the host and visiting team to aid the review. The survey can produce results by team. Authorities that wish to include this option should email Anna Wright [annawright@me.com](mailto:annawright@me.com) to set it up one month before the peer challenge visit.

# Reviewing the discourse in key policies and strategies

A crucial part of a peer challenge is to review key policy documents and strategies that are sent to the team in advance. Part of the challenge planner involves a consideration of what the peer challenge team would like to see in advance to set the context for the area that they are reviewing. For example - a peer challenge of services to LAC might include the advance provision to the team of the following types of documents.

* overall vision and strategy for the service
* any document that describes the authority’s overall approach to social work practice
* any principal social worker reports on LAC practice
* copies of audit work on LAC care planning,
* guidance on care planning and criteria for a good care plan,
* guidance on how the voice of the child is included in care planning,
* commissioning strategy for LAC
* recruitment strategy for staff
* the IRO annual report,
* the pledge for LAC
* recent minutes of children in care council meetings
* recent performance reports with outcomes for LAC and care leavers
* some anonymised care plans for LAC/ care leavers with say 4 examples of what the service considers best practice and 4 examples they think could be improved
* cabinet reports and reports to corporate parenting group on LAC/care leavers

In looking at the policies and strategies, the team can gain advance information about what the service aspires to have in place so that it can look at the match between desired policy and policy in practice. It can also look more subtly at the discourse in key policies.

Discourse has multiple definitions in the literature, but in general it describes ways of talking and thinking which are political in the sense that they seek to define what is thought of as ‘true’ and ‘real’ in a way that benefits a particular power base. “Discourses structure, construct, and constitute, our perception of reality.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Discourse defines the way in which certain things are spoken about, and ensures that the interests of those who have helped to shape and define the discourse remain paramount.

Walton (2010) describes a method called policy archaeology as a way of examining the discourse in an area. He believes the real purpose of policies and strategies are to maintain a certain view of the world. Sometimes this view thwarts the outcomes that managers and staff would like to achieve. Policy archaeology allows an examination of the way in policies do this by asking questions about the language used in policies and strategies in place in the organisation.

It is helpful for the peer challenge team to establish whether the leadership discourse is inclusive of wider voices and empowering of staff and users. Key questions for the challenge team members to ask themselves when reading the documents are listed below:

* Whose voices are included in articulations of any problems in key policies and strategies?
* Who has decided how goals to resolve the stated problems are to be set and met?
* Who stated the terms of reference for the problems identified and on what evidence? Did this restrict a wider articulation of issues?
* Who is impacted by this policy and at what point has their voice been elicited?
* To what extent have ‘problems’ been identified by the predominantly educated white female middle class professional group in children’s services?
* Has consultation occurred within the narrowed frame of reference of this lens?
* Do policies and strategies locate problems in ‘at risk’ or ‘vulnerable’ individuals or problem staff rather than identifying strengths?

# Interview guidelines

The following guidelines are suggested for the interviews. The host authority will give a view on the approaches to questioning (see the section on **Tools to assist interviewing**) that they think will be most helpful in their authority to guide the selection of interview questions.

The visiting DCS has the responsibility for agreeing the interview timetable with the host authority three weeks in advance of the peer challenge onsite visit. They will also propose which members of the visiting team will conduct each interview. The person leading the interview should prepare the questions they wish to ask during that interview following the wishes of the host authority in the selection. It may be helpful to share questions with the rest of the peer challenge team so that key areas are not missed.

For officers who have not undertaken reviews of this kind before, this handbook provides best practice guidelines for interviewers in **Appendix 3.**

**The role of the note taker**

The note taker needs to show they are warmly interested in the speakers but also to record as much of the interview as possible, particularly noting key quotes as fully as possible, but not who said them. You cannot record all that is said, but quotes are a very powerful way of reporting back findings and so collecting quotes is an important part of this review.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to access a secure system to enable the team to share a drive on which to store notes. This means that peer reviewers will have to share notes of their interviews using their secure email systems and store them on their own drives. We are hoping to find a solution for the future. All the peer review templates can be found on the SESLIP website [at this link](at%20this%20link): (<http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge>)

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# Tools to assist interviewing

1. Transformational learning questions (see Appendix 4)

Sometimes during a peer challenge interview, interviewees can be asked questions which help them reflect, and this can stimulate new insights leading to ‘light bulb’ moments or ‘aha’ moments. This can be referred to as transformational learning, when there is a change in the structure of someone’s assumptions.[[2]](#footnote-2) This could involve both subjective reframing which involves critical self-reflection and objective reframing which involves critical reflection based on others’ perspectives.

With transformational learning, there is a connection to beliefs, assumptions, values and experiences that a person has and during interviewing sessions, there is an attempt to make sense of the information that is being asked for and given.

Questions you can ask interviewees that can stimulate elements of transformational learning are given in **Appendix 4.**

1. Ethnographic research (see Appendix 5)

One way of generating more profound insights into a service at the discover stage is to undertake mini-ethnographic research with those you are interviewing. This type of research based on anthropology enables peer challengers to get a picture of the lived experience of users, staff and managers. This often leads to deeper insights into what users, staff and managers experience, what their challenges are, and very importantly what their strengths are. **Appendix 5** provides examples of the process and the sorts of questions users can be asked. These questions enable a better picture of the lived experience of people delivering or receiving a service, as opposed to what people think is happening. Obtaining quotes is an important part of this research as this is often the best way of communicating the insights gathered.

1. Appreciative enquiry (see Appendix 6)

Appreciative inquiry (AI) enables the factors that underpin best practice to be explored and built upon. AI is a positive approach to change that focuses on organisations and services best practices and attributes. It stands in contrast to any culture's deficit-based view. Instead the process of AI concentrates on success factors; the positive core of a department /organisation /service and then aims to amplify that positive core throughout the organisation.

*‘AI refers to both a search for knowledge and a theory of intentional collective action which are designed to help evolve the normative vision and will of a group, organisation, or society as a whole’ (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987)[[3]](#footnote-3)*

This method can help bring about what people want more of, as opposed to the usual cultural focus on reducing what they want less of. AI allows a greater understanding of the collective knowledge, strategies, skills, capabilities, attitudes, and wisdom of the organisation and those it serves at its best. To do AI, interviews need to be designed to ascertain feedback on four key areas. Namely the ‘discovery’ of best practice, the ‘dreams’ of the individuals and the collective, and the ‘design’ and ‘destiny’ envisioned by all as follows:

Discover – Ascertain a sample of the service’s work with vulnerable children, young people and their families at its best, to reflect on its central success factors, strengths, talents, assets, values and ideals. These help you to know what the positive core is.

Dream – Exploration of what the future might be like if the positive core were more thoroughly enacted throughout the system and to examine, looking back from that vantage point, what must have happened for it to have reached such an optimal state.

Design & Destiny – Examination of how the system is organised and how to enable further enactment of the positive core statements to make the dreams a reality.

An example of the positive probes used in an AI interview, there are more in **Appendix 6**:

* What were your hopes and aspirations when you started your current role in the organisation?
* Describe a situation in the organisation when you were at a high point and felt energised to perform at your highest level? When was this? Who was involved? What made it memorable?
* If we asked three people what they valued about your team/ service, what would they say?
* What do you value about your team? …and organisation? …the individuals in your team? When do things work best? Who and what helped that happen?
* What is your dream for your team, your organisation? How do people act? How does that work in practice?
* How can this dream happen: what are the small steps? What larger steps? Who should be involved? What do they need to know?

Afterwards those conducting the interviews meet and share their thought on the following areas:

* Initial hopes & thoughts
* What were the best quotes that came out of the interview?
* What were the best stories that you heard?
* What were the best wishes or recommendations that you heard reflected in your conversation?

1. Solution focused questions (see Appendix 7)

The main principles of a solution focused approach are as follows:

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| **Problem Focus** | **Solutions Focus** |
| Talking about problems | Focus on what’s wanted |
| Complaints | Checking resources |
| Analysing what’s wrong | Noticing what’s working |
| Searching for causes of problems | Describing success |
| Identifying barriers | Identifying useful skills and qualities |
| Talk of deficits and resistance | Discussing and taking small actions |

There are six solution focused tools. Further detail on each is below with further examples of how they can be used in conversations in peer review questions in **Appendix 7**.

**Understanding the current situation:** What is the current situation? Listen to the person’s story and clues of what they might want. Here, acceptance and acknowledgement of the person’s situation and how they feel about it is important. By focusing on listening this can be achieved without getting drawn into negative and problem talk.

**Understanding the desired future**: Help the group to think about the future they would like.“Just suppose its 5 years from now. Where would you want to be? What might you have achieved? What would this look/feel like? How would you know that you had been successful? What would be different from now?”Ideally, statements would be positive not negative.

**Scaling questions:** On a scale of 1-10 how far are we towards achieving this?

Anything above 0 is positive. If someone says 3 but looks downhearted about this, you could ask them what is it that made them say 3 instead of 1 to draw out positives to build on.

If someone says 6, you could ask what is the first thing they would notice if they were at 7 to draw out what they think would be the key differences or actions to achieve one point up the scale?

**What and who might help:** This section exploreswhat resources are already in place to help the group get here? Skills, examples of experiences where they have been successful in the past, physical, emotional, financial, time, access to training and other resources.“What qualities would others say that you have in this service which could help you achieve your goals”?“Who can help your team with this”?

**Affirmation:** Is there anything that they have said when in the conversation that should be complimented? Is there anything about their work, attitude/resources that has impressed you? An accurate and sincere affirmation can be a powerful confidence boost.

**Small steps:** Small actions can be identified throughout a conversation.

“What small step forward could you take?”

“How would you notice that this small step would work?”

“What further change do you need”?

“When will you know you have made enough progress”?

# Analysis and development of insights

The day of interviews will have resulted in many pages of notes and quotes about the service being reviewed. Unfortunately we have not been able to arrange for a secure drive for the team to work in so that team members will need to send notes of interviews to each other. This is a very easy process and the SESLIP team will help with this.

The purpose of the analysis is to develop insights. Insights are statements or hypothesis, they are not framed as goals, they are framed as descriptions of what appears to be happening. Examples of insight statements are:

* The service is caring, warm and supportive to users
* It feels to other outsiders that the service is in a bubble that does not connect to them
* The vision and performance framework are not aligned
* The leadership is trusted and seen as visible
* Different parts of the service are following different visions
* Managers feel they are firefighting and not building for the future

Two windows of time have been identified for analysis and development of insights. The first is on day one at the end of the day between 4.40 and 6.00. This is an opportunity to produce an initial list of ideas. The following process is suggested for this:

**Day 1: First impressions: Roses, thorns, buds activity**

**Required materials: three colours of post-its, flip chart sheets and blue-tac**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 16.40: | All members of the peer challenge team and observer DCS  Each person reviews the notes that they have taken highlighting key quotes in their notes and write on post-its – chose a colour for each category:   * Roses - key strengths or bright spots identified * Thorns – pain points or key challenges identified * Buds – opportunities for change, or solutions identified |
| 17.15 | One person coordinates the placing of the post-its on three flipchart sheets on the wall taking the roses from each team member and reading them out while placing them in the flipchart, and then repeating the activity for the thorns and buds. At the same time one member of the group records all the ideas into a document.    At the end of the session the group will have produced three flipchart sheets like this.  There may be time for a short discussion of emerging themes which can be recorded.  One person needs to take responsibility for looking after the flip chart sheets overnight without losing any post-its as it is needed for sorting the ideas into themes the next day! |
| **18.00** | **Finish** |

**Day 2: Development of insights**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **9.00** | **Identify key themes:**  The first task is to examine the post-its from the previous evening and move them onto a new large flipchart area on the table or wall (the size of 3 flipchart sheets) and group them into themes as follows. Each theme needs to be given a clear heading. There may be quite a lot of discussion at this stage |
| **9.45** | **Turning themes into insights**  Themes become insights when you answer the question, “So what?”  Use the following questions to help you reframe themes into insights:   * What do these themes mean? * What has led them to be important? * What has caused them to occur? * What role has the leadership played in this? * What are the implications for the leadership of this service/LA?   When the team identifies a general statement that describes the implication of the theme on the service/LA, write it above the theme. This will serve as the insight statement for that theme. Keep going until your team has an insight statement for each theme you’ve uncovered.  By the end of analyzing, synthesizing, and interpreting your data, you should have a 4-6 insight statements that bring your peer challenge into focus. |
| **10.40** | The group then splits to do two tasks:   1. One half writes a short description of each insight, so someone outside the team would be able to understand the insight and its impact. 2. One half finds one or two quotes from the notes that illustrate each insight |
| **11.00** | The group then split again one group to focus on creating the PowerPoint, the other group to plan the workshop in the afternoon   1. **Creating the PowerPoint**   This group puts the key insights and quotes into a presentation which summarizes the themes, and turns them into insights.  The structure of the presentation is as follows – a PowerPoint template is provided on the SESLIP website here [at this link](http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge) as a basis for this.  What was the key aim of the review?  Who was interviewed?  What methodology was used  What key themes emerged (with quotes)?  What key insights were identified (with quotes)?   1. Planning the workshop   The other half of the team writes onto flip charts the key solution ideas from the buds post-its that they feel have value as an input to the workshop in the afternoon and plan who will facilitate the workshop using the timetable provided in SESLIP website -[at this link](http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge) (http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge) |
| 12.30 | Lead Visiting DCS meetings with Host DCS to share findings before the presentation to the wider group |
| 13.00 | Lunch |

# Presentation and workshops to facilitate the development of the mission and solutions

The final stage of the process is a presentation and facilitated workshops to assist the host authority to develop some recommended action and possible solutions for the future based on the key themes. It is for the host authority to decide who comes to the presentation and workshops but it is helpful for it to consist of several of the staff who were interviewed, at several levels in the organisation. The host authority may also want to invite partners and users as well to take part. An ideal size for the group is 16 -24 people. The peer challenge team should appoint 1 or 2 facilitators to lead this process.

The process suggested for the presentation a PowerPoint template is provided on the SESLIP website here [at this link](http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge) as a basis for this. A structure for the workshops is provided on a PowerPoint template on the SESLIP website [at this link](at%20this%20link) (<http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge)>. A timetable is also available.

The objective of the workshops is to:

1. Reflect on the key insights
2. Identify key goals that the organisation would like to achieve because of feedback from the review
3. Develop some ideas on recommendations or solutions that could help to address the challenges.

The workshop is structured in four parts to achieve this – see below

The visiting and observer review teams should participate fully in the workshops diving themselves between groups so that they can join in the process of discussing the insights and generating solutions

**Room requirements:** One room with space large enough for those attending workshop to sit cabaret style around tables. PowerPoint projector, flipcharts and post-its need to be available. Participants should be in at least 4 groups. A facilitator timetable and PowerPoint presentation to assist with this is saved in the SESLIP website [at this link](at%20this%20link) (<http://seslip.co.uk/se-dcs-peer-challenge>)

| **Time** | **Content** |
| --- | --- |
| 13.45 | **Presentation**  This consists of introductions followed by a presentation of the PowerPoint (10- 20 mins) and then questions from the group to the peer review team (20-30 mins) |
| 14.15 | **Objectives of the workshop** |
| 14.20 | **Reflecting on the key insights (key insights list and flip chart below on each table)**  Each table is given a set of the key insights listed on a sheet of paper, they are asked to tick those that they agree with, cross those they disagree with and add amendments / clarifications to the rest and add any new insights.  Each group then considers what goals they would most like to achieve in response to each insight.  They list on one side of the flipchart, the insights they agree with and on the other the goals they would like to achieve as a result in terms of outcomes. |
| 14.40 | Feedback from each group in turn on the response to the insights and the goals. The facilitator lists all the goals on the central flipchart. |
| **15.00** | **Tea** |
| **15.15** | **Idea generation (post-its and one blank flipchart sheet for each group)**  Each group is then asked to choose one of the **goals** and develop ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve them. They tick the goal they have chosen on the central flipchart, so that others do not work on the same issue. They are given the list of solutions that the peer review team put together earlier in the day with suggestions from staff. They are asked to write on post-its any recommendations or solutions that could address their **goal** and brainstorm additional solutions (rules for brainstorming are on the PowerPoint.) The post-its are then read out and grouped on the blank flipchart sheet on their table |
| **15.45** | Groups are asked to discuss their ideas and choose the three actions /solutions that they think will have the highest impact and are possible to implement |
| **15.55** | Each group feeds back their three best ideas for change |
| **16.15** | The host director reflects on the peer challenge and identifies the next steps the authority will take to respond to the ideas  The Visiting DCS asks the whole group   * What went well? * Even better if |
| **16.30** | **Finish** |

# Follow up visit

It is proposed that approximately 4 months after the peer challenge visit, there is a follow up visit where the three DCSs meet for feedback. The proposed agenda for this is:

* Feedback from the host authority on what they learnt from the peer challenge and the impact this has had on the local authority – e.g. what has changed?
* Feedback from the visiting DCS on what they learned from the process, and any impact this has had on their thinking
* Any wider learning, they feel that it is worth communicating to others in the region
* Feedback on the process of the review, what worked well and what could be improved for the next round

# Practical arrangements for the peer challenge

Once the dates have been agreed by the host and visiting authority, this is the proposed timetable for events leading up to the peer challenge

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Action needed** | **By whom** |
| Two weeks before set-up meeting | Self-assessment and data analysis competed and sent to all three participating DCS’s | Host and SESLIP lead |
| Jan-Feb 2018 | A set-up meeting of host, visitor and observer DCS to go through peer challenge planner. The focus of the visit and dates are set here | Host DCS with SESLIP lead |
| 12 weeks before | Advise Richard Tyndall [richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk](mailto:richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk) of dates for peer challenge and contact details for nominated host lead who will be responsible for arrangements for the peer challenge | Host DCS |
| 12 weeks before | Host lead to liaise with Richard Tyndall [richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk](mailto:richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk) about claiming the participation fee from SESLIP funds. All accommodation costs and meals during the visit will be met by the host. Travelling to and from the visit will be met by the delegate’s employer. | Host lead and RT |
| 10 weeks before | Book rooms for interviews on Day 1 and for presentations and workshops on Day 2 (see timetable pages 8-11)  Invite participants from host authority (and any partners) to:   1. presentation of results on Day 1 at 12:15 and 2. workshops on Day 1 at 14:00 | Host lead |
| 12- 8 weeks before | Peer challenge team members sought from the region | Richard Tyndall |
| 8 weeks  before | Advise Richard Tyndall [richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk](mailto:richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk) of 2 host authority team members if coproduced review is desired | Host lead |
| 6 weeks  before | Advise host and visiting DCS who is in peer challenge team | Richard Tyndall |
| 6 weeks before | Visiting DCS does a teleconference with peer challenge team, introduce team and explain goals of the review | Visiting DCS  (with peer challenge team) |
| 6 weeks before | Establish who needs overnight accommodation and book it. | Host lead |
| 5 weeks  before | Consult with team (by email or teleconference) and advise host DCS the proposed timetable showing who the team wish to interview on Day 1 | Visiting DCS |
| 3-5 weeks before | Invite managers/ staff/ users/ partners to the relevant interviews | Host lead |
| 4 weeks before | Send agreed documentation to visiting DCS | Host lead  RP |
| 4 weeks before | Advise Anna Wright if leadership of change survey is desired as part of the challenge [annawright@me.com](mailto:annawright@me.com) | Host lead |
| 3 weeks before | Send visiting DCS final timetable for interviews and ensure arrangement in place to do presentation on day 1 | Host lead |
| 2 weeks before | Visiting DCS arranges teleconference with peer challenge team to allocate team members to interviews and ask them to prepare questions on the interview proforma provided | Visiting DCS  Peer challenge team |
| 1 week before | All proposed interview questions to be prepared | Peer challenge team |
| 1 week before | Visiting DCS checks questions in place and checks with host DCS that all is in place for peer challenge | Visiting DCS |
| 1 day before | Peer challenge team meet at hotel for pre-briefing and final arrangements | Visiting DCS  With peer challenge team |
|  | Peer challenge takes place |  |
| 4 months afterwards | A meeting of the three DCS leads following the agenda set out on page 22. |  |

We are also proposing a session later in the year to share the learning with other colleagues in the SE region.

# Values and confidentiality

The ground rules are set out in the [SESLIP DCS Peer Challenge MoU](http://seslip.co.uk/download-file/467) which each participating authority will sign before joining the process. This section repeats and amplifies expectations. The proposed ground rules for the teams are as follows:

* The values underpinning the review are:
  + Mutual respect, openness and honesty
  + Non-judgemental feedback
  + The need to diagnose and understand why things are like they are
  + A practical focus on how outcomes for young people could be improved
* All interview content is non-attributable
* All records of the interviews will be deleted after the four-month follow up visit
* The only report on the review will be the PowerPoint presentation
* The visiting team members will observe “Chatham House” confidentiality: they may talk about their experiences during the visit, but only in a way which does not reveal that the experience was gained during a peer challenge visit: they should not identify the host authority nor any of the participants in the peer challenge visit.

# Appendix 1: Peer challenge planning tool

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of Local Authority** |  | | | |
| **Informed by:** | Completed SA | Yes/No | Data Set | Yes |
| **Challenge partners** | Visitor DCS | | Observer DCS | |

What is the overall vision for children’s services in the host LA? What led this vision to be chosen and what makes it particularly important for the area’s children and families?

How has the vision been promoted?

What is the culture that the DCS would like the team to see in the service. What values, beliefs and behaviours do they particularly want to see being enacted in their services?

What overall strategy they are adopting to achieve this vison and improve outcomes for children?

What specific mechanisms are being adopted to create change and to what extent does the data show these are working?

What are the areas of service/performance that the host local authority would like to examine more closely? Are there any other areas that the challenge partners would like to add to this?

List these below.

Discuss the pros and cons of focusing on each are in the list

After discussion please circle the preferred area of focus

What are the key leadership strategies for improving outcomes in this area, and what impact are these having?

Where changes required are about culture and approaches rather than services, how are these being addressed?

What are the 3 questions the host authority would most like the answers to?

To answer these questions who would the peer challenge team want to interview?

What sort of approaches to questioning (e.g. ethnographic, appreciative enquiry, solution focused) would the authority prefer?

What documentation will the team need in advance?

Do the host authority want to identify 2 officers to join the peer review team? Yes/No

Who will act as the lead officer to organise arrangements in the host and visiting authority?

What are the chosen dates for the visit (must be at least 12 weeks ahead)

# Appendix 2: Leadership culture survey

The survey is set up as a SurveyMonkey survey which can be viewed [here.](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SEpeerchallenge)  The feedback will indicate the extent to which the LA is tending more to the behaviours on the left or right side of the table for each question

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Score |  |
| Leaders and managers link change to improvements in children's lives so it feels worthwhile |  | Leaders outline pragmatically the key reasons why change is necessary |
| Leaders and managers communicate a compelling vision for the future which is inspiring |  | Leaders and managers communicate pessimism about the future |
| Leaders and managers clearly and openly communicate any crisis the organisation might be facing |  | Staff do not fully understand the challenges the organisation is facing |
| Leaders and managers express empathy with staff about the impact of change on them and users |  | Leaders and managers appear indifferent to the impact of change on staff and users |
| Staff are generally involved in discussions relating to decisions that directly affect their work |  | Staff are usually not involved in decisions that affect their work |
| All managers lead change |  | Most managers manage change led by others |
| Front line staff and users are involved in the governance of the change initiative |  | Senior leaders or politicians are mainly involved in the governance of the change initiative |
| Leaders and managers engage in an on-going two-way dialogue throughout the change process |  | Meetings are organised to communicate the change with little opportunity for dialogue Meetings are organised to communicate the change with little opportunity for dialogue |
| The dialogue allows the assumptions behind the current strategy to be exposed and tested |  | The communication meetings do not allow discussion of the assumptions underpinning change |
| Front line staff are helping to co-design the change |  | The change is designed by a specialist team with little involvement of front line staff |
| Leaders listen to staff concerns and show that they have understood them even if they do not agree with them |  | Leaders do not show they have understood staff concerns |
| Leaders and managers are encouraged to be open about change |  | Managers are told information in confidence and told that they cannot share it |
| People feel confident at having open dialogues. Managers welcome challenge |  | There is an inflexible defensive culture with managerial reluctance to be challenged |
| Leaders and managers are seen to make decisions fairly based on evidence |  | There is suspicion that some services are protected from change for political reasons |
| There is a clear transparent process showing how decisions are made and how people will be treated fairly through change |  | Decisions are not made in a transparent way |
| There is an analysis of the gap between the capability of staff and the requirements of new roles |  | There is no analysis of the extent to which staff will be able to perform changed roles |
| There is support for staff to learn new competencies, through formal training or informal coaching |  | There is an assumption that staff can move to new roles with minimal support |
| There is a belief that expertise and ability lie at all levels irrespective of status |  | There is a belief that expertise resides mainly in managers |
| There are safe opportunities for staff to express their feelings about change |  | There are no opportunities for staff to discuss feelings or those offered are not felt to be safe |
| There are a range of support options for staff experiencing change, and staff know how to access these |  | Staff are not clear about what support is available |
| Change is led by managers who have credibility in the organisation |  | Change is led by managers who lack credibility or who are not well known to staff |
| Managers leading change are helped to understand new concepts and processes so they can explain them to staff |  | There is no specific support offered to managers, so they do not always understand the change they are leading |
| Managers and staff leading change are provided with support to help them contain the emotions within their service |  | Managers and staff are expected to manage people's negative emotions without any extra support |
| Change is well-organised; the plans are clear and promised deadlines for information to staff are met |  | Change is not well-led and promised deadlines are missed |
| Change leaders are constantly communicating what is happening in detail |  | There are long periods of time without any information about the change |
| Any new roles have clear details on job descriptions, person specifications, and procedures / timescales for appointment |  | There are delays in providing information about roles and appointment processes |
| Staff at risk are provided with tangible support services to help them find new jobs, and assist them in transition |  | There is minimal support for staff at risk |
| Those leading the change are receiving regular feedback from those implementing it at the front line and learning from this |  | Those implementing the change at the front line are just left to get on with it and not asked for feedback |
| Leaders and managers clearly and openly communicate any crisis the organisation might be facing |  | Staff do not fully understand the challenges the organisation is facing |
| Where services need to work together, the change builds in structures and policies that enable cross service communication |  | There is little cross service communication |
| There is an open dialogue at all levels showing a willingness to learn from mistakes and reflect on the impact of change |  | Change leaders are often disinclined to openly learn from evidence or experience that challenges current views. |
| Partners and other teams affected by the change are fully engaged and involved in decisions |  | Partners and other teams are taken by surprise by the changes |

# Appendix 3: Best practice guidance for interviews

**Starting the interview:**

At the interview the lead interviewer will:

* Ensure introductions at the start
* explain the purpose of interview
* explain that you are not a judge or an auditor, you are a ‘critical friend’ or mentor
* specify how long the interview will take
* thank the interviewees for their time and willingness to participate
* explain that the process leads to a presentation not a report and although notes will be taken, feedback will be anonymous.
* that the full notes taken will be confidential to the team and deleted/destroyed after the review process is completed

**During the interview**

* Ask open questions, one question at a time
* Think about your posture, eye contact, your tone of voice. These should confirm to the interviewee that you are listening and warmly interested in what they are saying.
* Don’t add any information of your own
* Be an open and sensitive listener – the interviewees should not feel like they are undergoing a test
* Probe generalisations – ask for concrete examples
* Allow the interviewees to complete their story, don’t interrupt unless absolutely necessary
* Decide which questions are high priority if time runs short

**Closing the interview**

* Have a catch‐all question for the last question, e.g. “is there anything else we should have asked or you would like to add?”
* The person leading the interview should close the interview by thanking the interviewees warmly.

# Appendix 4: Transformational learning questions

Transformational learning questions that can be used in peer challenge interviews

* If the peer reviewer wants to challenge an assumption the person being interviewed is making about the service, or their ability to act or create change then a question that challenges the assumption is helpful - What if your assertion that x is y were not true, what would that mean?
* If there is an emotional response to a situation or issue respond with way of encouraging an informed and reflective decision to act – what would your wisest manager suggest the service did in this circumstance?
* Critical reflection on assumptions generally and the recognition of dysfunctional frames of reference – How would children and families see this situation?
* Reflection of the underlying dynamics – What is really going on in this situation, what is the crux of the issue?
* Identifying and targeting false preconceptions – You said at the start that this is true, but what if it wasn’t?
* Redefining problems from a different perspective – if you were looking back to now in 6 months what would you tell yourself?
* Distinguishing cognitive and emotional components – If we just focus on the rational elements here, what would we conclude. If we forget the rational and just focus on the emotional – what would we conclude?
* Distinguishing internal and external blocks to change. What is stopping the service from changing that comes from within in and what external factors are preventing change?

**And questions you can ask yourself while listening**

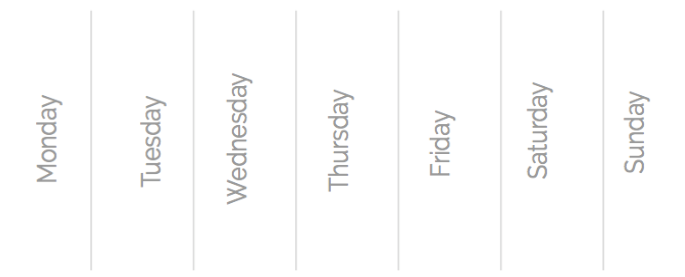
* + What are the basic assumptions behind the story being told here?
  + How do the interviewees define their own role in the situation and that of others?
  + What images or metaphors do the interviewees use? (Pay attention to the choice of words)
  + What does the interviewees judge as ‘good’ and ‘bad’?
  + Are the descriptions based on facts or interpretations?
  + To what extent do preconceptions or stereotypes play a role?
  + Do the interviewees highlight only negative aspects, or positive ones as well?
  + Are situations seen as static or dynamic?

# Appendix 5: Ethnographic interview questions

**Ethnographic questions for users**

* Tell me the story of (child’s name)’s special educational needs/ disabilities and the effect this has had on you and your family.
* Tell me the story of your family engagement with social care, when did it start and what happened. What have been the highs and lows?
* What are your high points and low points during the week?
* Map the highs and lows from Monday morning to Sunday night.

**High**



**Low**

* Tell me the story of what happens at the high and low points?
* Give me the story of what the routine is on a typical school day evening is for (child’s name)? What happens at each of these times? (present a pie chart with time segments in it).
* Write on post-its all the words that describe you and your family and then to choose the top three best things. (Use word sheet if needed).
* Then write on post-its all the words to describe your child that make you smile and choose the top three best things.
* If you think back over the last two years, tell me a time when you felt really under pressure in trying to support (child’s name). Tell me the story of what happened?
* If you think back over the last two years, tell me a time when you felt really supported by something that happened in relation to (child’s name). Tell me the story of what happened?
* Here I have a list of different people from services who may have been involved with you to support you/your family/child. Are there any more including friends or people from the voluntary sector – (write these on blank cards). Can you put these cards in order of who provided the most and least support? Talk me through the thinking behind the ranking.   
  If you had the opportunity to buy any additional support you could for you/ your child/family what would it be?
* Tell me a good story about contact with the service. What happened? (Include details of how easy that was, what happened exactly, what was the outcome?)
* Tell me a story of when you wanted to make contact but it wasn’t a good experience – what happened?
* Tell me a good story about when the service contacted you– what happened? (Include details of how, what happened exactly, what was the outcome?).
* Tell me a story of when the service made contact but it wasn’t a good experience – what happened?
* How often do you have contact with the service? E.g. daily, weekly, monthly and the reason for the contact.
* Overall on a rating scale from 0-10 where 0 is communication with the service is appalling and very difficult to 10, communication is always brilliant and very easy – what rating would you say?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 ☹ |  |  |  |  | 😐 |  |  |  |  | 10 ☺ |

* What took you to an x rather than x-2? What would make service 2 points higher?
* What would you most want to talk to the service about if you could? What gets in the way of better communication, if anything?
* When did you last attend a social care meeting?
* On a scale of 0 to 10, (0 being very low and 10 very good) please circle how you would rate the value of the meeting.

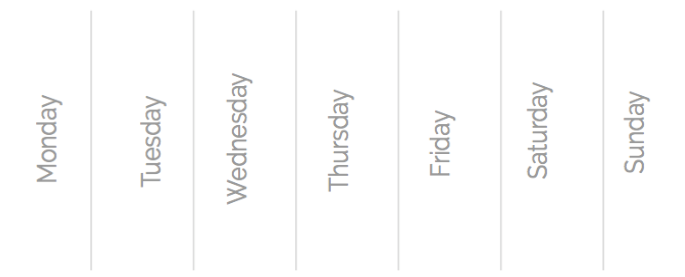
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 ☹ |  |  |  |  | 😐 |  |  |  |  | 10 ☺ |

* What would improve the experience?
* Where do you see your young person in 10 years’ time and what support do you think they need to get there?
* In the next 5 years, what are your greatest hopes and fears, for you and your family?
* Where do you think other people see (child’s name) in 10 years? E.g. Your wider family, your social worker, the school, others who know (child’s name) well.
* What leads them to have these views do you think?
* If there were one thing you would like to change in relation to the service what would it be?
* If there were something you thought the service/ school could do that would make a big difference what would it be?

**Ethnographic questions for staff**

* What brought you to work in this local authority?
* What do you do during a normal week? (take last week)  
  Where do you spend your time? Who do you see? Map out the highs and lows from Monday morning to Sunday night. Explore the reasons for the highs and lows.

**High**



**Low**

* What are the magic and miserable moments during your role?
* What are the main challenges of working here?
* What are the main benefits of working here?
* What was your perception of this service before you started working here? Has your perception of it changed since you started working here?
* How do you feel about the service now on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not very good at all and 10 is brilliant? Why was it an x rather than an x-2? What would make it 2 points higher?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 ☹ |  |  |  |  | 😐 |  |  |  |  | 10 ☺ |

* If you could describe your team/ service in 3 words, which words come to your mind?
* Can you tell me a story of when a piece of work you have done has gone really well?
* Can you tell me a story about a piece of work that was very challenging and difficult?
* If you were in control of the resources the service has, how would you spend them differently?
* What do you think is going to need to happen for outcomes to be improved within current resource constraints?
* What do you think might stand in the way? How do you think this might be overcome?
* Tell me a story about the impact of the leadership of the service on your role and outcomes you can achieve? Give an example of how your line manager has supported your work?
* If there was something else that you thought the leadership could do that would make a big difference to outcomes, what would it be?
* If there was something that you thought you could do that you make a big difference what would it be?
* Is there anything else we should have asked?

# Appendix 6: Appreciative inquiry

**Preamble:**

Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed as part of our look at the service. We will be doing "appreciative interviews", asking people to tell stories about times when they saw things working at their best. Usually we ask about things that are broken - the problems - so that we can fix them. In this case, we’re trying to look at things at their best -- the successes -- so that we can find out what works and do more of it. This should take about 45 minutes.

Before we start, do you have any questions?”

**Appreciative enquiry questions for users:**

* Please tell me a story about a time with your social worker or at meetings when you felt most excited and enthusiastic about the future? *(If necessary, ask What was happening? Who was involved? What were you doing?)*
* Can you please share a time here when you were involved with social care when you knew that you mattered and it helped build your confidence?
* Can you think of a story that demonstrates the caring atmosphere in social care?
* We believe people do their best when challenged to excel and are given the encouragement and support to do so. Will you tell me about a time here when you felt you were pushed to be your very best and knew you had support behind you?
* If you had three wishes for conferences/ review meetings which would make it an even better meeting to support you, what would they be?
* If you came to your next meeting with your social worker/ review meeting and one small thing had changed making the meeting better, what would it be?
* You have woken up 5 years from now and your area has changed in several ways in relation to social work with vulnerable young people and families. What are the three most positive ways it has changed? What is happening that's different and how do you know?

**Appreciative inquiry questions for staff about practice:**

* As you think back over your work with vulnerable young people and families, reflect on one moment that stands out as something of a high point where you delivered better outcomes, or involved users very positively (it could be something about how the work was managed or instigated). Please share a story about this experience
* If we asked people that you know well and ask them to share what they most value about the work your service does with vulnerable children and families - what would they say?
* When have you seen the work you do with vulnerable children and families at its best in your service - what was the story that led up to it?
* Can you recall a time when you took active responsibility to ensure better outcomes - what did you do and what happened?
* What in that situation did you value most about yourself and others around you? If someone were to ask the people who were around you what skills you contributed to the positive nature of the situation, what might they have said?
* Taking a helicopter view of the service/team at that time, what gave it the energy and vitality without which the high point would not have been possible?
* Can you think of a time when there was an extraordinary display of co-operation between diverse individuals or groups within the service to achieve better outcomes? What made such co-operation possible?
* You have woken up 5 years from now and your authority has changed in several ways in relation to vulnerable young people and families. What are the three most positive ways it has changed? What is happening that's different and how do you know?
* What were the *best wishes* or *recommendations* that arise from what you have told me?

**Appreciative inquiry questions for staff about support and leadership:**

* Think about the best experience of leadership you have had. Tell me about a time you had a brilliant experience of support.
* Please tell me a story about a time when you felt most supported and involved? *(If necessary, ask What was happening? Who was involved? What were you doing?)*
* Can you please share a time when you were interacting with your manager when you knew that you mattered and it helped build your confidence?
* We believe people do their best when challenged to excel and are given the encouragement and support to do so. Will you tell me about a time here when you felt you were pushed to be your very best and knew you had support behind you?
* If you had three wishes for leadership in your service which would make it an even better, what would they be?
* If you came to your next encounter with leaders in your service and one small thing had changed making the interaction better, what would it be?
* You have woken up 5 years from now and your service has changed in several ways in relation to leadership. What are the three most positive ways it has changed? What is happening that's different and how do you know?

# Appendix 7: Solution-focused peer challenge questions

**Understanding goals in the current situation:**

What is the current situation?

What are you hoping from this peer challenge?

What would you most like to change in the service to get better outcomes?

**Understanding the desired future**:

Just suppose its 5 years from now. Where would you want to be?

What might you have achieved?

What would this look/feel like?

How would you know that you had been successful? What would be different from now?

If your team found a way forward, how would you know, what would you see, what would be different?

How would you like the situation to become?

What will be the first small sign that will tell you that things are starting to move in the right direction?

**Scaling questions:** On a scale of 1-10 how far are we towards achieving this future?

What is it that made them say x instead of x-3?

What is the first thing they would notice if they were at x+1 rather than x?

**What and who might help?**

What resources, skills are already in place to help you get here?

Where have you been successful at something like this before?

Who might help the team with this if they could be brought on side?

How could they be brought on side?

What qualities would others say that you have in the service which could help you achieve this?

What has worked in the past or is working now?

That sounds like a tough situation – what are you doing to cope?

Are there occasions when your service has experienced this before and come through it?

**Small steps:**

What small step forward could you take?

How would you notice that this small step would work?

What further change do you need?

What small steps could the leadership take given the constraints on them?

When will you know you have made enough progress?

Where are you now on a scale of 1-10 towards achieving your goal.

Having identified what or who might help would you alter this figure now?

What small step(s) would move them one point up the scale?

1. Fairclough, N. (1992). Discourse and social change. Cambridge, England: Polity Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mezirow, J. 1997. “Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice.” New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education (74): 5–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cooperrider, D. L., & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative Inquiry In Organizational Life. In W. Pasmore & R. Woodman (Eds.), *Research In Organization Change and Development* (Vol. 1, pp. 129-169). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)