**SESLIP Developing the Regional Quality Assurance Capacity**

**SCOPING EXERCISE**

1. **CONTEXT**

One common theme from the Triad Peer Challenge days was concern over the effectiveness of existing quality assurance activities and whether or not they help members, directors and management teams answer the “how do we know about the quality of our services” question. We will initiate a new project to support our joint working on improving quality assurance capacity and capability.

Initial outputs - Exploration of current practice across the region to be completed by December 2019; followed by recommendations for future work programme in spring 2020.

To help clarify the objectives and scope the project DCSs were asked the following questions:

What are the drivers?

What are the deliverables you are looking for?

What do you think are the biggest challenges?

Are there any quick wins you are looking or hoping for?

Clarification was also sought about the practice/service areas that fall within scope. Responses were received from 7 Local Authorities and these have been collated and grouped into emerging themes.

1. **SCOPE**
2. Practice covered by ILAC and JTAI frameworks - LA and multi- agency.
3. Case management QA across Early Help in LAs, s17 and s47
4. LAC case management
5. **DRIVERS**

**Vision of good practice and insight and understanding into the quality of practice**

1. Create a vision of quality practice in SE informed by, but not limited by, the OFSTED framework
2. Providing insight into quality of practice
3. Strengthening our understanding of baseline practice

**Effectiveness of QA systems and services to improve practice and quality of services across the region**

1. Allow us to have better informed conversations about how effective QA services improve quality of services across the SE
2. To ensure a proportionate balance between qualitative and quantitative auditing, including the level of time spent and how best to ensure an effective learning loop from outcomes of auditing and how this may best influence subsequent and future practice

**Opportunity for consistency of approach, shared language, consistency of components of QA system**

1. A one size fits all approach is unlikely, but some guidance on the elements of a QA programme that works should be helpful.
2. Consistency of approach to audit

**Shared learning and support – opportunity to maximise capacity through a shared approach**

1. Allow us to reliably target regional sector led- support at area of greatest collective or individual LA need through a common language of QA
2. Allow sector -led intelligence and intervention help ”catch” LAs in difficulty before they fall into an Ofsted category through reliable QA info
3. There is mixed practice here and for those LAs that receive an inadequate inspection this is typically a key area of weakness identified in the Ofsted report.
4. Capacity management
5. Reassurance
6. Shared learning
7. Identification of local themes
8. Potential for shared responses across LAs,
9. Opportunity to think differently about QA processes
10. QA practice will depend on local capacity, but also the culture of the organisation
11. **DELIVERABLES**

**Data**

1. Reliable comparative data about quality of practice across SE
2. Improved benchmarking and trend analysis – performance data
3. A more consistent view on the Performance Indicators that are best considered to evidence quality of performance and method examples that may be able to be utilised by services

**Shared components of a QA System and examples**

1. Commonality and moderation of QA systems and info across SE region
2. Shared understanding about the components of an effective Quality Assurance Framework
3. Some guidance on what a quality assurance framework could include
4. Refinement of QA framework to support inspection readiness
5. Sharing audit processes, particularly for larger more complex areas of work, such as prevention
6. Some good practice examples

**Mechanisms for** **demonstrating impact**

1. Improved triangulation of intelligence to measure impact and outcomes,
2. Mechanisms to allow swift and well-informed sector led support to LAs in difficulty before they “fall”
3. Proposals about demonstrating impact of QA activity – closing the loop
4. Shared understanding of the impact of specific practice models
5. Development opportunities for auditors – know what good looks like
6. **POTENTIAL QUICK WINS**

**Common approach**

1. Agreement on basic components of effective QA systems that can be common to those used across all 17 SE LAs
2. Agreement of common approach to QA info and data in Triads

**Exemplars**

1. Some examples of scorecards/audit tools that may be helpful to adopt
2. Examples of good practice
3. Improved audit tool

**Moderation**

1. Shared process for moderation
2. External moderation of quality/outcomes,

**Shared learning**

1. Shared learning (both re QA framework and thematic learning)
2. **CHALLENGES**

**Data**

1. Making sure information is “real time” and up to date
2. Spotting emerging trends before they become major problems

**Information sharing**

1. Creating confidence to share sensitive QA data in the context of Ofsted etc
2. Agreement on information sharing and role of Members in this

**Consistency and common approach**

1. Culture and capacity across different LAs and what different areas understand QA to be – it’s not just auditing
2. Creating a common language and comparability across a wide range of QA systems and data
3. Bringing an increased level of consistency and understanding of what ‘Good’ looks like in the context of such a diverse range of local authorities, e.g. size, unitary v shire, capacity and capability of individual performance services, etc.

**Overarching**

1. Consistency of QA activity

**Demonstrating impact**

1. Establishing clear links between audit, practice improvement, learning and development
2. Engagement of children, young people and families in QA activity
3. Capacity
4. **SUMMARY OF THEMES**

**Drivers**

* Vision of good practice and insight and understanding into the quality of practice
* Effectiveness of QA systems and services to improve practice and quality of services across the region
* Opportunity for consistency of approach, shared language, consistency of components of QA system
* Shared learning and support – opportunity to maximise capacity through a shared approach

**Deliverables**

* Data
* Shared components of a QA System and examples
* Mechanisms for demonstrating impact

**Quick wins**

* Common approach
* Exemplars
* Moderation
* Shared learning

1. **NEXT STEPS**
2. Share the DCS feedback and triangulate with the ADs to try to reach consensus on scope, deliverables and a few potential quick wins
3. Discuss option of a workshop. In order for a workshop to happen I would like a steer on timing and content. Is October too optimistic?
4. Ask for nominations for a network/ reference group - different roles within LAs have the lead for QA so it would be good to have a contact list for this project
5. Work out with the ADs ideas for how to answer the questions about quality assurance

* what do you currently do?
* why do you do it?
* what impact does it have?....and how do you know?
* what are the barriers and challenges?
* what are the levers and drivers to make it work?

**Diane Williamson**

**SESLIP Consultant**

**Williamson Consultancy and Training**

[dianewilliamson27@gmail.com](mailto:dianewilliamson27@gmail.com)