

The Challenge

A metropolitan borough council had recently embarked on a programme to improve the performance of its children's service. The service was in a state of flux, with a heavy reliance on agency staff, and with many posts unfilled.

Five months into the programme, the Council received an Ofsted report which rated the service as inadequate, raising 22 non-compliance issues.

Ameo was engaged to accelerate the programme, to provide leadership and governance, and to put staffing on a stable footing.

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The recent DfE and OFSTED reviews of the Directorate, in March 2017, were very complimentary, describing planning and governance as “the best they had ever seen”.

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The Outcome

Ameo delivered a governance document which brought together 28 ongoing change initiatives.

- Our team worked with SROs to develop programme plan templates for each of these initiatives, from initial set up to close down.
- We developed a new team structure and provided role descriptions to assist recruitment.
- We managed the Council's new delivery model, relocating 150 staff into a single building and reorganising workspace to fit a new 'pod' model.

Ofsted visited the Council towards the end of our engagement. They reported that our programme demonstrated the best governance and planning they had yet seen.

The Engagement

Ameo worked closely with the Directorate's transformation leader to deliver the accelerated programme. To ensure time was not wasted waiting for approvals, we brought together a group of half a dozen stakeholders to provide continuous scrutiny and refinement of our proposals.

The first few months saw a strong focus on recruitment. When we began our engagement, over half the workforce were agency staff, including the chief officer and all heads of service. We developed a new team structure and worked with HR to fill all available roles. By the time we left, all senior officers and team leaders were permanent. This represented a big cultural shift for the organisation. By the time the accelerated change programme got underway, our consultants were already known and trusted. This made for a smoother programme than we might otherwise have had.

With no admin support available, our team had to be very hands-on, fulfilling the roles of business analyst and administrator as well as change consultant. This was most noticeable when managing the new delivery model. As well as providing advice on the logistics of transferring staff and reorganising space, we also got involved in the practical business of ordering furniture and rerouting power supplies.