

# **The Ensuring Council: Transforming the Frontline**

**Developing a wholly owned company model for  
adult social care services**

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## Areas to cover:

About us and our history

What we have achieved

What we have learnt along the way

Responding to the challenge of an  
ageing population



## About Us

OCS is a limited Company formed in April 2012 with Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) as the sole shareholder.

- OCS deliver a broad range of services for adults that enhance and improve quality of life, independence and wellbeing, including:
  - Services in the home: reablement, equipment and homecare;
  - Support in the community: wellbeing centres, youth clubs, respite care and employment services;
  - A place to live: care homes, supported housing and shared lives.
- Forecast Turnover in 2014/15 of £31M;
- 91% NCC contracts, 9% NHS, DWP and private customers
- Supports over 10,000 customers a year;
- 1,200 team members.



## History

- OCS has developed from being a division of NCC's adult social care directorate.
- Established in the context of a growing older population, immature provider market, increased self or co-funding and the development of personal budgets.
- OCS was established to:
  - Increase choice and better meet community needs through ability to trade;
  - Give a stable and committed workforce a future;
  - Achieve efficiencies through direct management of the total business;
  - Increase the Council's profile and create an asset;
  - Reduce the Council's exposure to change with the introduction of personal budgets.

## Achievements: Benefits for customers

- Development and change of services previously part of NCC:
  - Greater scrutiny and focus on quality and safety;
  - Continuing move to more specialised services;
  - Increased capacity of services available for customers to purchase their own care;
  - Investing in the environment of care homes for older people;
  - Remodelled care home provision for younger adults to focus on transitions services;
  - Developed flexible short breaks options for adults with disabilities and their families.
- Started new services:
  - Partnership with housing association;
  - Youth hubs for young people with disabilities;
  - Partnership with primary health care to support more older people in a crisis;
  - 24 hr care response;
  - Step down services for people with dementia leaving hospital.



## Achievements: Benefits for team members

- Increased employee engagement and involvement;
- Set high standards of performance and tackled poor performance;
- Improved attendance at work;
- Increased training opportunities;
- Negotiated changes and amendments to Terms and Conditions for transferred staff;
- Introduced new Terms and Conditions for new employees;
- Improved recognition for success.

## Achievements: Benefits for the shareholder

- Responded quickly to put in place new services
- Supported with failing care services
- Changed/closed services with the support of customers
- Delivered financial benefits in contract reductions and dividends.

	2012/13	2013/14	2015/16
<b>Total shareholder financial return</b>	<b>£330K</b>	<b>£2,240M</b>	<b>£2,078K</b>



# What we have learnt along the way

Cultural change and efficiencies can be achieved whilst retaining the best of public services

- Importance of personal identification, a common core purpose and congruence between words and actions

The scale and extent of establishing appropriate governance, finance, risk management and business system

- Different knowledge and skills required
- Risks acceptable in Council are not acceptable to a Company

The importance of greater discipline, commercial awareness and customer focus

- Fully understanding what personal responsibility means
- Recognising that someone has to pay for everything we do

Better decisions made more quickly

- Decisions closer to the customer
- Clearer decision-making processes



## What we have learnt

Most business systems have to change

- Back office services provided by the public sector are different from Company requirements
- Change is time consuming and costly but essential

Operating surpluses (profit) are only possible in some areas

- Be clear about what you can and can't do
- Historical back office costs, wages and pensions and treating people fairly severely limit achieving surpluses (profit)

Importance of developing a partnership with the Council as shareholder

- Benefits are not always cashable
- Understand the competing interests
- Have mechanisms to achieve agreement



# A Changing and Ageing Population

We need to be clear on where we can make a difference at an affordable price.

Our plans:

- Supporting the health system and up skilling our team members
- Extending and promoting the use of telecare and telehealth
- Supporting people with more specialist needs
- Assessment and brokerage functions
- Above all, understand our customers and find solutions for them.