

DRIVING UP QUALITY CODE:

SELF-ASSESSMENT BY BOARD MEMBERS & MANAGERS THAT LEAD AND RUN THE ORGANISATION

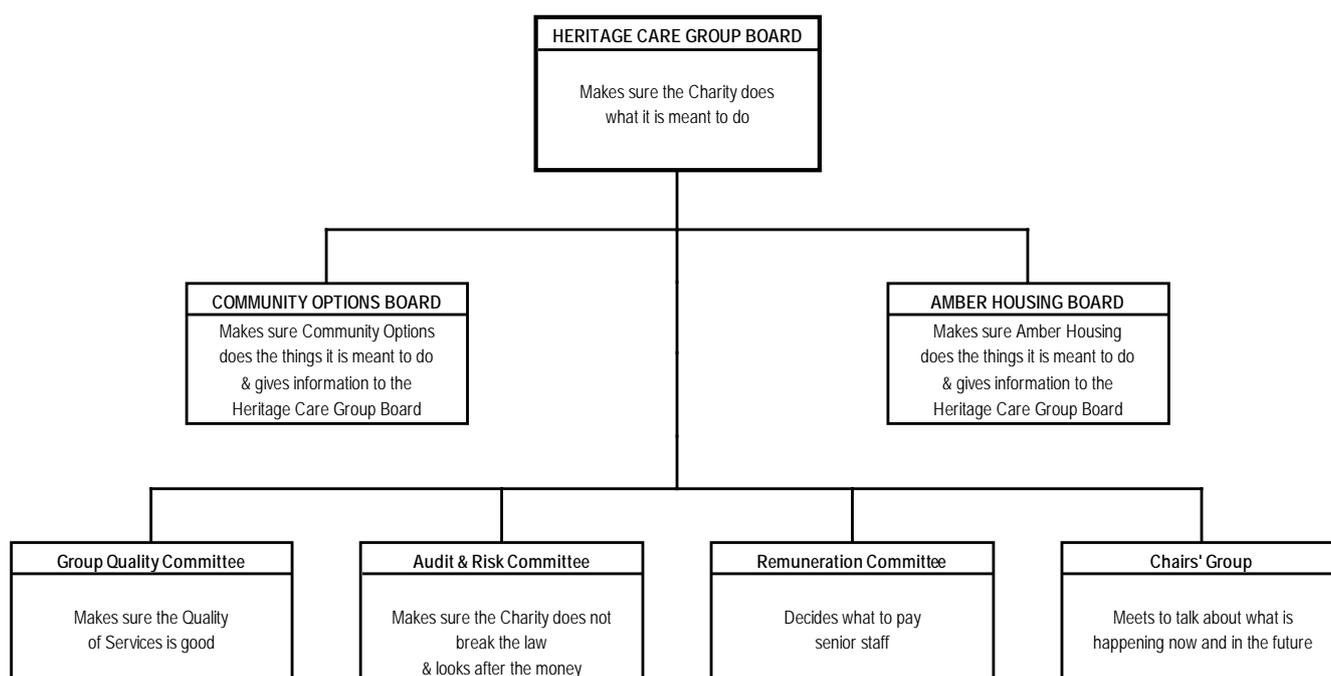
The Heritage Care Group Board and Executive Team met on 15 January to self-assess how well they lead and run the organisation.

A summary of the Driving Up Quality Code and 'Getting to Grips with the Human Factor – Strategic Actions for Safe Care' produced by the Clinical Human Factors Group:

http://chfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Learning-resource-for-Boards-FINAL-for-web-2013_10_01-1.pdf was used by trustees and managers to help them think and reflect about how they are fulfilling their role in making sure everything is working well, so that the people we support receive good care and support.

Jeanette Beer, trustee, & Kim Foo, Chief Executive, introduced trustees and managers to the [Driving Up Quality Code](#) and [Getting to Grips with the Human Factor](#).

The Board operates a committee structure as detailed below:



The group reflected in pairs on the following:

- *Am I confident that I/the Board have the right skills, knowledge & expertise to fulfil my/our responsibilities?*
- *Is the relationship between Board members & the Executive Team effective, balanced and appropriate?*
- *Am I confident that the Board makes good decisions most of the time?*

Then discussed in 3 groups the following:

1. *How much time do staff, people being supported and families spend with the Board? How accessible are you/the Board & how much time do you spend engaging with people and could you improve this?*

What we found:

Not all staff are aware of the Board, although it was agreed the senior team were generally known, particularly the Chief Executive. It was also recognised not all staff are interested in the Board.

All Board members visit services every year with the aim that all services are visited by a Board member at least every 2 years. Reviewing these visits not all services have been visited within the 2 years and with less than 15 Board members this is proving difficult to meet 1200 people we are supporting. Often visits felt formulaic and staged and some members found it difficult to balance conversations with staff and people using services on short visits. It was recognised that visiting registered services were easier than visiting people living in their own homes (this being the majority of our services). Trustees of Community Options have found it very useful to complete CUTA visits ('Comprehensive Unannounced Themed Assessments') with a senior manager and it was felt this process could be adopted for other services. The Chief Executive and the Director of Operational Services cannot visit all services as there are too many.

Whilst we publish easy read minutes of Board meetings we do not do this for committees.

What we are going to do:

We will use the staff survey to help us better understand what staff know about the Board.

We will use opportunities similar to the 20 year celebrations for Board members and senior managers to attend and take part, meeting people and their families and mixing socially.

Board members will visit those services that have not been visited over the two years as a priority when visiting schedules are being prepared.

The protocol for trustees visiting services and meeting people will be reviewed and consideration will be given to using the CUTA approach.

People's stories will be told at each Board meeting; this could be in person, video, or written. These should also include the difficulties people may be facing.

Regional presentations would enable Board members to better know about the services and give a chance for staff to talk to trustees.

Consideration will be given to Board members linking with a region and focusing on repeat visits so that they can see changes.

Consideration will be given to holding committee and Board meetings in regional locations to facilitate meeting staff and people being supported.

Consideration will be given to producing easy read summaries of committee meetings and better publicise the easy read Board minutes.

2. *What do the Board do to demonstrate that they live the values of the charity? How does the Board assure itself that it is achieving its mission? How could this be improved?*

What we found:

Heritage Care Group consists of 3 companies, Heritage Care (providing services for people with learning disabilities and older people); Community Options (providing specialist services to people with mental health issues); and Amber Housing (providing housing and facilities management). Although recognising the values were similar the 'mission' & 'vision' of the 3 were not completely aligned.

What we are going to do:

A workshop will be held for all trustees of all companies to reflect and review the vision and mission for the Group, making explicit the values that underpin the organisations.

3. *How does the Board drive up quality and ensure you have evidence of this? How might the Board improve and develop its decision making about quality & safety in Board meetings? How does the Board reflect on lessons learnt from safeguarding cases, complaints and quality concerns? How could this be improved?*

What we found:

The Board receives a lot of information about the things we are doing well and not so well along with a lot of quality assurance reports demonstrating the quality of the services we provide including reports from experts by experience (Quality Checkers). We also produce a lot of information for external bodies including councils and accreditation bodies to demonstrate we are achieving the required level of quality. CQC and council reports about our services are summarised for members and where we could do better actions are shared and agreed.

However, it was agreed this could be better presented and drawn together so that the inter-relations of activity, themes and trends, performance and lessons learnt could be better understood.

Trustees take safeguarding people very seriously and every time the Board meets safeguarding and serious incidents are reported and discussed. Themes and trends are looked at and management will let the Board know what they are doing about this. Board members will ask questions until they are satisfied that everything is being done or ask that other things are put into place. The Quality Committee further scrutinises the detail behind all safeguarding and serious incidents and reports back to the Board any concerns they may have. Trustees recognised that their knowledge of safeguarding policy might not be as up to date as it should be.

What we are going to do:

Key strategic documents will be produced with an over-arching Quality Strategy which will set key measurable outcomes.

Information will be produced in a dashboard to identify performance by regions and this will include quality indicators making it easier for the Board to see what is going on good and bad.

A workshop for all trustees will be arranged by our internal safeguarding trainers to bring all trustees up-to-date with current policy, regulations and legislation.