

# A board performance review built around team working and expert coaching

## Belong

### Individual team development and coaching

Dementia care specialist, Belong, is recognised as an early pioneer and innovator in the social care space. With a dedicated staff of 1150, the not-for-profit operates seven state-of-the-art care villages across the North West.

With two new villages planned for 2022 and a desire to continue to provide outstanding services, it was the perfect time to review the board's performance and understand how it could best meet the needs of the organisation as it continued to grow.

Chief Executive, Tracey Stakes, explains: "This was a board with an ambitious agenda. We wanted to build a high degree of trust and collective leadership amongst members. That meant developing a shared understanding of how to operate as a unitary board, with clarity around our own purpose as a team."

"When AOD put forward a review built around team working and expert coaching, we knew it was just what we were looking for," she adds.

### SUMMARY

#### Why this Team?

A board performance and development review using team-based working principles.

#### The Approach

Team development and one-to-one team member sessions facilitated by an AOD Team Consultant.

#### Outcomes

Increased potential for team effectiveness.

### Services and Tools

- AOD Individual Team Development
- Affina Team Performance Inventory



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### Tracey Stakes

Chief Executive  
Belong



## The Approach

The board needed a solution that provided fresh perspectives, established a structure in which to discuss any potential issues and made the most of the limited time available within the group's monthly meetings.

They recognised that an expert facilitator would provide the external objectivity they were looking for and, with AOD's Penny Cortvriend, they were in good hands.

Penny comments: “The board was functioning well but needed to re-focus and gain a renewed sense of purpose. They needed time to reflect and reconnect with one another after navigating the Covid-19 crisis and a number of other challenges.”

The Affina Team Performance Inventory (ATPI) – a powerful evidence-based assessment tool – was used to measure the team's potential to deliver effective performance. The ATPI report showed at a glance where the board's strengths were and where they needed to focus their development energies.

A bespoke approach to team coaching was co-created with the Chief Executive and Chair. Both were motivated by a desire to see the team flourish and were open-minded to the suggestions put forward to enable that to happen.

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As well as facilitating feedback from the ATPI, Penny held one-to-one and team sessions via Zoom, with both non-executives and the executive management.

The initial one-to-ones were diagnostic and designed to understand specifically the needs of the team from each team member's perspective. This exploratory approach resulted in a number of emergent themes which were fed back to the board during their first session together.

After four team coaching sessions, evaluative one-to-ones were run to demonstrate the positive outcomes experienced by the team.

It was clear throughout that this was a team which wanted to improve and their commitment to the process throughout was of huge value in helping the team to progress and become more effective.



*Belong's Nicola Brooks was named Social Care Chairperson of the Year (NW England) at CEO Monthly's Chairperson Awards 2021*

## Results

“Penny picked up all the relevant issues from the ATPI and created a safe space for everyone to be open and honest,” says Tracey Stakes. “What worked particularly well was having the opportunity to clarify our purpose and objectives as a team and separate them from the organisational objectives. In other words, to focus on what we as a board are here to do.”

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**“We are now ONE team – cohesive and appreciative”**  
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“We are now ONE team – cohesive and appreciative,” adds Chair of the Board, Nicola Brooks. “Thanks to Penny's knowledge and expertise we really are practising collective leadership – working closely together on our long-term goals of quality services and good governance”.

“There is still plenty of work to do, not least to continue on the same positive trajectory as membership of the board changes, but this short review has created strong foundations for success,” she adds.