



ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Mutual Ventures & Rochdale Borough Council

PossAbilities – a community-based organisation thriving in the adult social care market

Mutual Ventures, with support from fellow CCIN Affiliate Member Bates Wells, supported Rochdale Borough Council to create a Public Service Mutual for its adult social care day services in April 2014. That organisation, PossAbilities, is a thriving and growing organisation, evidencing that staff-led organisations that are ingrained in their local community can deliver high-quality and sustainable public services.

As part of the Council, Rochdale Adult Social Care team delivered a range of services for the local community, primarily for people with Learning Disabilities and Older People. However, with budgets under pressure the Council, in collaboration with the staff, decided there were a number of compelling reasons to create a Public Service Mutual, which was community-based and staff-owned, including:

- giving staff the empowerment to innovate in service delivery;
- enabling staff and service users to lead the service and determine how it is run;
- allowing any surplus to be reinvested for the benefit of the community; and,
- safeguarding jobs and the future of the service by allowing the organisation to grow.

Since 'spinning-out' as a staff-owned Public Service Mutual PossAbilities has trebled in size; achieved and retained an 'outstanding' CQC rating and is now delivering high-quality and person-centred services across the North West.

Mutual Ventures and Bates Wells have supporting Rochdale Borough Council and PossAbilities throughout its journey. They developed the robust five-year business plan and financial model to test the viability of the service as an independent social enterprise and developed a detailed transition plan. Since go-live they've supported the company develop and grow.

PossAbilities is one example of community-based Public Service Mutuals, co-operatives or social enterprises that Mutual Ventures have supported councils to create, from youth services, to libraries and countryside services. The setting up of services in a way that hard-wires staff and the community into decision-making can lead to successful and sustainable services for the long term. The also do so as one of two lead providers on the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's Mutual Support Programme, which has supported numerous councils to explore and create staff-led organisations.

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