



# **PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY, 11 MARCH 2021**

**10.30 am, COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, LEWES**

**++ PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING WILL BE TAKING PLACE REMOTLEY ++**

MEMBERSHIP - Councillor Angharad Davies (Chair), Charles Clark, Michael Ensor, Kathryn Field, Roy Galley, Tom Liddiard, Laurie Loe, Jim Sheppard, John Ungar (Vice Chair), Trevor Webb and Francis Whetstone

Mr Trevor Cristin, Diocese of Chichester Representative  
Mr Simon Parr, Roman Catholic Diocese Representative  
Ms Nicola Boulter, Parent Governor Representative  
Mr Matthew Jones, Parent Governor Representative

## **A G E N D A**

- 1 Minutes of the previous meeting: 19 November 2020 (*Pages 3 - 6*)
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Disclosures of interests  
Disclosures by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- 4 Urgent items  
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgent.
- 5 East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) Annual Report (*Pages 7 - 36*)  
Report by the Independent Chair of East Sussex Safeguarding Partnership
- 6 Scrutiny Review of Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) - 12 month progress report (*Pages 37 - 66*)  
Report by the Director of Children's Services
- 7 Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) (*Pages 67 - 70*)  
Report by the Chair of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education
- 8 Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) (*Pages 71 - 74*)  
Report by the Assistant Chief Executive
- 9 People Scrutiny Committee Work programme (*Pages 75 - 88*)
- 10 Scrutiny Review of the Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care workforce - 12 month

progress report (*Pages 89 - 132*)  
Report by the Director of Adult Social Care

11 Any other items previously notified under agenda item 4

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3 March 2021

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## PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the People Scrutiny Committee held on 19 November 2020.

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- PRESENT:** Councillors Charles Clark, Angharad Davies (Chair), Michael Ensor, Kathryn Field, Roy Galley, Tom Liddiard, Laurie Loe, John Ungar (Vice Chair), Trevor Webb and Francis Whetstone.
- Lesley Hurst, Assistant Director of Education (Diocese of Chichester)
- LEAD MEMBERS:** Councillor Bob Standley, Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability  
Councillor Bill Bentley, Lead Member for Communities and Safety  
Councillor Nick Bennett, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources
- ALSO PRESENT:** Philip Baker, Assistant Chief Executive  
Stuart Gallimore, Director of Children's Services  
Mark Stainton, Director of Adult Social Care  
Mark Whiffin, Head of Finance  
Tom Hook, Assistant Director for Planning, Performance and Engagement Division  
Ben Brown, Consultant in Public Health  
Justine Armstrong-Smith, Safer Communities Manager  
Caz Kearton-Evans, Strategic Commissioning Manager – Substance Misuse  
Michaela Richards, Joint Strategic Commissioner for Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Services  
Kaveri Sharma, Equality and Inclusion Manager  
Stuart McKeown, Senior Democratic Services Adviser

### 74 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

74.1 Subject to the correction of a typographical error in paragraph 70.2, the Committee RESOLVED to agree the minutes as a correct record.

### 75 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

75.1 Apologies for absence were received from Trevor Cristin, Director of Education, Diocese of Chichester (Lesley Hurst, Assistant Director of Education attended as a substitute).

### 76 RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES (RPPR) 2021/22

76.1 Philip Baker, Assistant Chief Executive, introduced the report by providing an overview of the challenging context within which the RPPR process for 2021/22 is taking place. This included highlighting the ongoing uncertainty in relation to the level of demand that will be placed on services in the coming months and the level of resources available to support them. Members also heard that the government spending review will cover a one-year period, with details to be released on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November. Furthermore, the Council is also waiting for further detail about potential government initiatives regarding services provided by the Children's Services and Adult Social Care and Health Departments. This makes financial and budget planning and relatedly the role of scrutiny especially challenging this year.

76.2 Set out below is a summary of the key issues discussed by the Committee:

- The Committee discussed the impact of the pandemic on levels of income generation over recent months and asked for further detail on this. The Committee agreed that understanding the Council's projections for future levels of income would assist the People Scrutiny RPPR Board's discussion on 17 December.
- In response to a query, Stuart Gallimore, Director of Children's Services, confirmed that the additional funding identified in the previous year for the 'No Wrong Door' initiative would continue. Given the decision taken during the previous RPPR round to roll forward savings proposals relating to safeguarding and the key worker element of Early Help services, the Director also confirmed that he felt it would be prudent to defer those savings for a further year given the covid pressures families are facing.
- The Committee discussed the impact of Covid-19 on how services are delivered and how staff are interacting with the public. In particular Members asked for clarification about the steps being taken to embed new ways of working so as to ensure services continue to be effectively delivered. In response, Members were informed that Departments have adapted their working practices in a range of ways in the short term and have continue to seek to deliver face-to-face services wherever possible (in accordance with Public Health guidance). Members were also informed that a longer-term assessment of potential new ways of working is being undertaken. This assessment will seek to embed new working practices which improve customer service at the same time as potentially delivering efficiencies. Although Members also heard that whilst there is scope to develop technological solutions to help improve customer service, many services will continue to need to be delivered in person.

76.3 The Committee RESOLVED to request that additional detail about the impact of the pandemic on levels of income generation is available for the meeting of the People Scrutiny RPPR Board on 17 December 2020.

## 77 PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

### *School Exclusions.*

77.1 Due to the impact of COVID-19 and its effect on the availability of schools to contribute to further work on the review, the Committee agreed to continue to pause activity, with the intention to recommence it at a suitable future date.

### *Loneliness and Resilience Scoping Exercise.*

77.2 The Committee were informed that it is anticipated the Scoping Board will meet in January 2021, with the outcome of the meeting being reported to the March meeting of the Committee.

### *Elective Home Education*

77.3 The Committee discussed the list of potential scrutiny review topics set out on its work programme. With regard to the topic of elective home education, Members were informed that there has been an increase in the numbers of children and young people who are being home educated (with the majority of that total being home educated as a matter of choice). The Committee reaffirmed its interest in issues relating elective home education. As a result, Members agreed to retain the topic on its list of potential scrutiny reviews and to consider whether to undertake a scoping exercise when circumstances allow.

## *Educational Attainment and Performance Scrutiny Reference Group*

77.4 The Committee were informed that a meeting of the reference group is planned for early 2021.

### *Schools Coping with Change – the Way Forward*

77.5 The Committee acknowledged receipt of the update on progress with implementing the recommendations set out in the scrutiny review of 'Schools Coping with Change - the Way Forward'. Councillor Roy Galley, Chair of the Review Board, thanked the Children's Services Department for its support of the review and for the update on progress with implementation.

77.6 The Committee RESOLVED to retain on its work programme the items discussed in paragraphs 77.1 and 77.3.

## 78 ANNUAL REVIEW OF SAFER COMMUNITIES PERFORMANCE, PRIORITIES AND ISSUES

78.1 Tom Hook (Assistant Director for Planning, Performance and Engagement) introduced the item by providing an overview of some of the key issues set out in the report. Justine Armstrong-Smith (Safer Communities Manager), Caz Kearton-Evans, (Strategic Commissioning Manager – Substance Misuse) and Michaela Richards (Joint Strategic Commissioner for Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Services) were also in attendance and provided additional detail in response to queries raised by Members. A summary of the key issues discussed is set out below:

- **The Relationships Programme:** Members asked for clarification about how the Relationships Programme is delivered in primary schools (the programme aims to help young people and children build resilience and recognise when and how to ask for help and teaches basic techniques for resisting pressure to do something dangerous, unhealthy or which makes them uncomfortable). In response, and depending on the topic, the Committee were informed that sessions are delivered in partnership with Sussex Police and the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. The Committee also heard that the Department provides all schools in East Sussex with a directory of programmes. This enables individual schools to select sessions which are relevant to their circumstances.
- **Serious Violence Bill:** In response to a query about the Serious Violence Bill and its implications for East Sussex, the Committee heard that it sets out amendments to the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) and place duties on schools, police, councils and health authorities to prevent serious violence. In support of this aim the Bill will require the prevention of serious violence to become an explicit priority within Community Safety Partnerships and includes a focus on early intervention. At the time of the meeting no announcements had been made regarding funding to meet these priorities.
- **County Lines:** In response to a query about levels of County Lines related criminal activity, the Committee were informed that this had unfortunately continued in recent months, although it may have become more visible to Police during lockdown periods. Stopping County Lines activity continues to be a policing priority at both the regional and national levels. Accordingly, and as part of its work to reduce serious organised crime, the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership have listed County Lines as one its key priority areas in its Business Plan for 2020/23.
- **Homelessness and prison leavers:** The Committee discussed the relationship between the criminal justice system and homelessness. In particular, Members asked for more detail about the steps being taken to support prison leavers who are at risk of homelessness upon release. In response, the Committee were informed about initiatives such as the East Sussex Trailblazer project. This aims to minimise the number of prison leavers facing homelessness and in turn, reduce the risk of them re-offending. In support of this a part-time probation officer and a part-time community rehabilitation company officer have been embedded in the Rough Sleeper

Initiative Multi-Disciplinary Team (a team which is comprised of health, mental health, social care, substance dependency and housing specialists who provide direct access to support services).

- **Tackling extremist activity:** In response to a query regarding steps being taken to tackle far-right and other extremist activity in East Sussex, the Committee were informed about the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLTP) which identifies risks in East Sussex and the wider region. Members were also informed that there are currently a number of Channel cases in the county (Channel is part of the national Prevent strategy and is a multi-agency approach to identifying and providing support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism). The Committee also heard that the Council has strong partnership links with relevant agencies.

78.2 The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

## 79 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATION OF EAST SUSSEX AND STAFF

79.1 Tom Hook (Assistant Director for Planning, Performance and Engagement) and Kaveri Sharma (Quality and Inclusion Manager) introduced the report and responded to a number of questions asked by the Committee. A summary of the key issues discussed is set out below:

- **PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):** The Committee asked whether factors such as discrimination or stigma played any part in contributing towards a lack of access to PPE for Black, Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) care home workers. In response Members were informed that whilst these factors had been highlighted at the national level, the evidence suggests that in East Sussex any accessibility issues were primarily caused by initial problems with supply chains. Although the issue of supply has now been resolved and there are secure routes to access this provision.
- **Numbers of BAME Care Home workers in East Sussex:** Members asked whether more data was available on the number of BAME care home workers in East Sussex. In response the Committee were informed that whilst information is available for East Sussex County Council staff, the Department does not have access to data for independent care homes (as they are private businesses). However, based on evidence available at the national level, it is evident that a large percentage of care home workers are from BAME backgrounds. It is therefore an important task to examine the role that ethnic origin may have with regards to infection rates.
- **Evidence of Covid-19 impact on BAME staff:** The Committee asked the Department to comment on the impact of Covid-19 on BAME staff in East Sussex. In response Members heard that there is no robust local data available on infection and death rates linked to Covid-19. This is because death certificates do not include ethnicity, and more than a quarter of test results do not include ethnicity. At the national level, however, evidence indicates that BAME populations have suffered a disproportionate rate of infection and deaths. The reasons for this are not clear, but some initial research suggests that it may be partly because ethnic minority staff are more likely to work on the front line in lower graded roles, may be less likely to raise concerns and are more likely to be agency staff, or nightshift workers. Members were informed that further work is being undertaken to quantify what the impact has been locally and what can be done to help address it.

79.2 The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting ended at 12.25pm.

Councillor Angharad Davies  
Chair

**Report to:** People Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 11 March 2021

**By:** Reg Hooke, East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership  
Independent Chair

**Title:** East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report  
2019/20

**Purpose:** To advise Committee Members of the multi-agency arrangements in place to safeguard children in East Sussex

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to receive and consider the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for 2019-2020.**

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## **1. Background**

1.1 In July 2018 a revised and updated version of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) was published following the legislative changes made within the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Working Together 2018 sets out differing arrangements to strengthen cooperation between organisations and agencies to improve the wellbeing of children. This placed new duties on key agencies in a local area. Specifically, the police, clinical commissioning groups and the local authority who have a duty to make arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. The new arrangements to replace the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) with the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019. [East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements](#)

1.2 In order to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken by the Children's Safeguarding Partnership, Working Together 2018 sets out that the safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every 12-month period. The report must set out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

1.3 The ESSCP Annual Report for 2019/20 spans the transition from LSCB to ESSCP and the first six months of the ESSCP partnership arrangements. The intention for the 2020/21 ESSCP Annual report is to focus on the new partnership priorities and impact of the partnership on children and young people.

## **2. Supporting information**

2.1 The ESSCP Annual Report 2019/20 outlines the work undertaken by the partnership, highlighting key learning and achievements, which include:

- Development of new partnership framework and [ESSCP website](#)
- Successful transition of Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) responsibility from LSCB to a new Pan Sussex CDOP led by Public Health and CCGs
- Development of a safeguarding '[pledge](#)' to children and young people
- 4 audits and 2 multi-agency Rapid Reviews conducted, [1 Serious Case Review \(Child T\)](#) and [3 learning briefings](#) published

- Impact of learning from Child T Serious Case Review evident in positive outcome of Joint Targeted Area Inspection of services for children (February 2020)
- 963 multi-agency staff attended 54 training courses, with 94% of evaluations rated course as Excellent or Good
- Developed a local 'Contextual Safeguarding' response to children with multiple needs
- Supported County-wide roll out of Operation Encompass to ensure support for children experiencing domestic abuse

2.2 In February 2020 the East Sussex Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) took place on the theme of children's mental health. The [Inspection Letter](#) does not include an overall judgement, instead it sets out areas of strength across the partnership and areas for improvement. The letter noted that partnership arrangements in East Sussex are well established and effective and that *'The Safeguarding Children Partnership provides robust scrutiny of a wide range of safeguarding arrangements. The partnership's performance dashboard has a breadth of key indicators across a range of partners and includes indicators about children's well-being and mental health' 'The Safeguarding Children Partnership also supports the strategic focus on schools and the voluntary sector having the capacity and resilience to provide accessible emotional well-being support to children. This is supported through a comprehensive training offer for partners.'*

2.3 The ESSCP Annual Report 2019/20 has been published on the ESSCP website and a copy of the published report shared with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care as per chapter 3 of Working Together 2018.

2.4 A standalone document detailing the [Safeguarding Context in East Sussex](#), including key performance information for 2019/20 is also available on the ESSCP website.

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 An effective Safeguarding Children Partnership is in place in East Sussex.

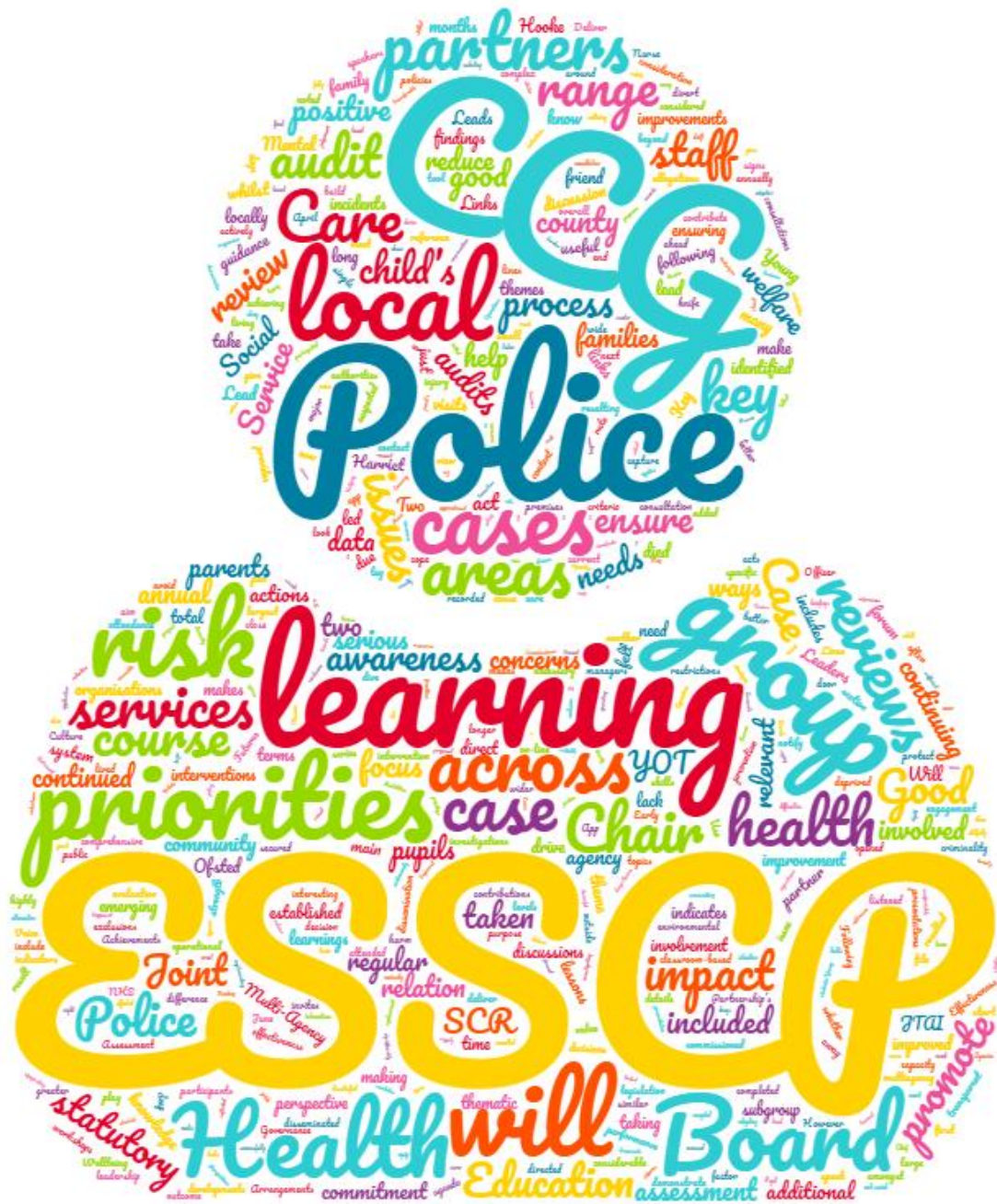
3.2 The People Scrutiny Committee is requested to receive and consider the ESSCP Annual Report 2019/20 and to note the new partnership priorities for 2020-2023:

- Education Safeguarding
- Child Exploitation
- Embedding a Learning Culture
- Safeguarding under 5s

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - ESSCP Annual Report 2019/20





# Annual Report 2019/20

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- 2.4 East Sussex Joint Targeted Area Inspection
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- 3.5 Learning & Development
- 3.6 Child Death Overview Panel
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## Foreword by Reg Hooke, East Sussex Safeguarding Partnership Independent Chair



It is my privilege to present to you the first annual report of the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) for the period 2019/20. The ESSCP replaced the previous statutory arrangements to safeguard children on 29th September 2019 and so this report overlaps with the transition to the new partnership.

It is the statutory responsibility of the local authority, police and health agencies to jointly oversee multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children in the county. As Independent Chair I assist the statutory agencies by providing independent challenge and scrutiny of those arrangements as well as helping to foment better multi-agency strategic

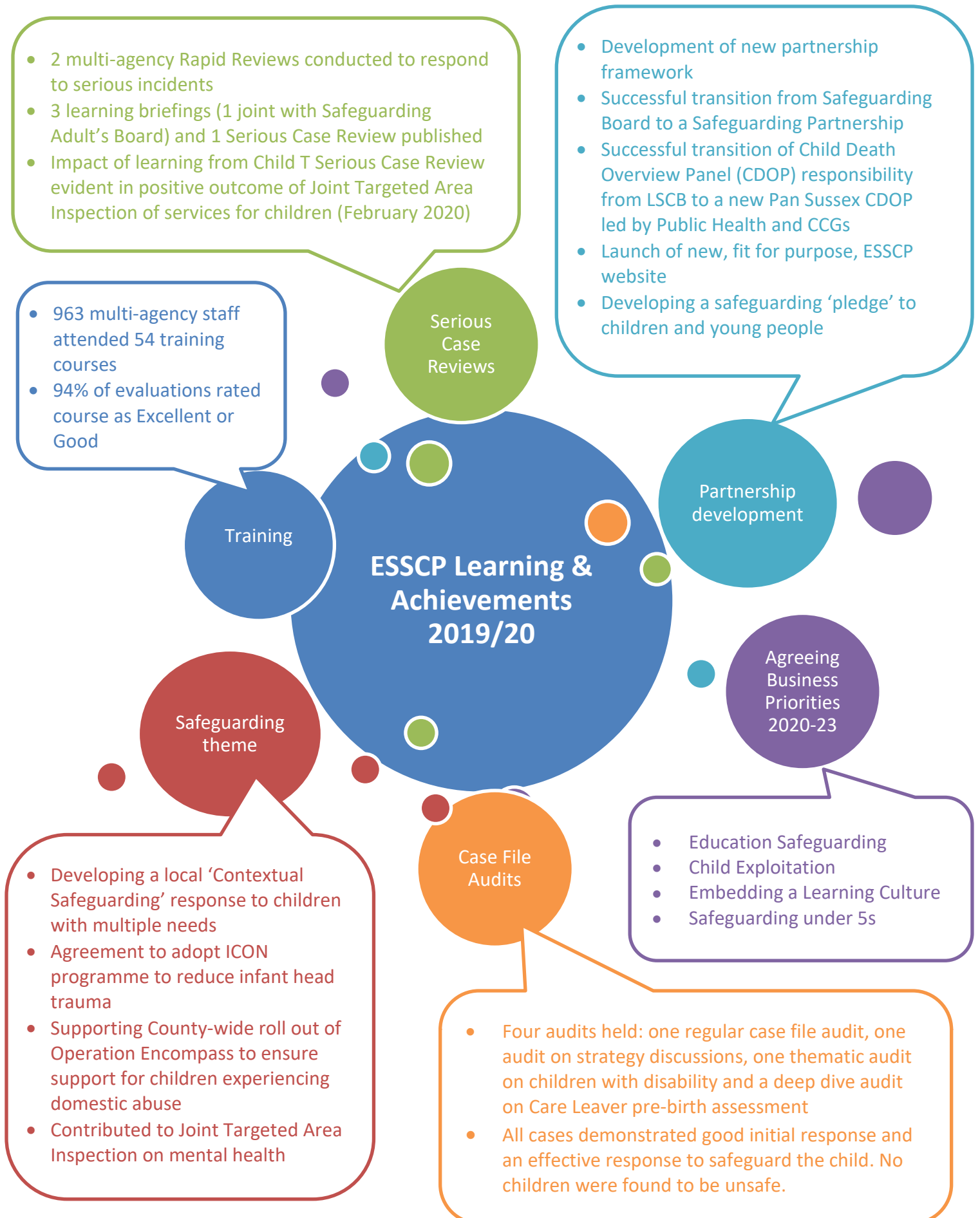
working to protect vulnerable children and young people and ensure positive outcomes for them. Following consultation with children, families and those engaged working with children, we set four partnership priorities for 2020 to 2023 where we believe maximum improvement can be made to safeguarding in East Sussex. These are: Child Exploitation, Education Safeguarding, Safeguarding Children Under 5 and Embedding a Learning Culture. Next year's report will focus heavily on the impact of this work.

We published one Serious Case Review this year, Child T, which produced significant learning for agencies both locally and nationally. This and other important documentation and reports can be found on our website [www.esscp.org.uk](http://www.esscp.org.uk)

As new arrangements bedded in, the last few months of the year provided totally unanticipated challenges as Covid-19 hit the UK. At the time of writing I can report that the impact on children and on the safeguarding system is substantial, creating additional risk groups and major challenges to those working on the safeguarding front line. Whilst the full impact on children and services will continue to emerge in the months ahead, what is clear is that local leadership and front line dedication has already shown that the county has a highly adaptive partnership with an admirable level of flexibility to meet the new challenges. Covid-19 is a long term and persistent issue for us and I want to acknowledge the great work done by so many in rising to the challenge of the global pandemic and continuing to do so.

The safeguarding arrangements for the diversity of children in East Sussex is a complex subject but the report has been structured and illustrated to help ease the reader through that complexity. I hope you find the report interesting and informative.

# 1. Key Learning & Achievements 2019/20

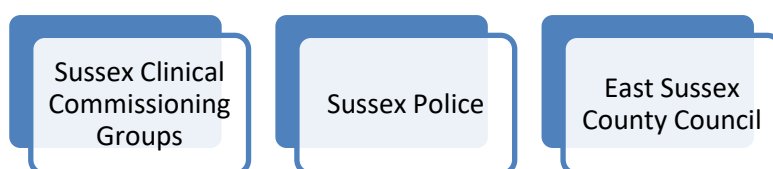


## 2. Governance Arrangements

### 2.1 Overview of the Partnership

In 2018/19 there were significant changes to the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), which created new duties for three key agencies, police, health and the local authority, to lead arrangements locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) outlined the replacement of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards with Local Safeguarding Partnerships, a number of changes to conducting serious case reviews, and significant changes to the child death review process.

The East Sussex Local Safeguarding Board formally moved to the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) on the 29 September 2019. For the first half of 2019/20 the ESSCP worked to prepare and implement the transitional arrangements, whilst ensuring that the major safeguarding functions continued. The three ESSCP safeguarding partners are:



The ESSCP acts as a forum for safeguarding partners to:

- agree on ways to coordinate safeguarding services in (the geographical local authority borders of) East Sussex;
- act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging other agencies across East Sussex; and
- implement local, regional and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

The Local Safeguarding Children's Board in East Sussex was well established and effective, as reflected in the Ofsted Inspection of East Sussex Children's Services (Sept 2018). Consultation with members resulted in minimal changes to the way the Safeguarding Board was run beyond the statutory requirements to make changes. This is because it works well, and it makes a difference to the children and young people in East Sussex.

### 2.2 Partnership Structure and Subgroups

The Board is chaired by an Independent Chair, meets four times a year and is made up of the statutory safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. The Independent Chair also chairs the ESSCP Steering Group which meets four times a year. The Independent Chair fulfils the role of the Independent Scrutineer and acts as a constructive critical friend to promote reflection to drive continuous improvement.



The main Board is supported by a range of subgroups that lead on areas of ESSCP business and are crucial in ensuring that the Partnership's priorities are delivered. These groups ensure that the Partnership really makes a difference to local practice and to the outcomes for children and young people. Each subgroup has a clear remit and a transparent mechanism for reporting to the ESSCP, and each subgroup's terms of reference and membership are reviewed annually.



The three ESSCP safeguarding partners and the Independent chair form the Planning Group, which also meets quarterly. The Planning Group discusses and agrees the short term agenda for the work of the partnership and addresses any emerging issues.

The Pan-Sussex Strategic Leaders Group membership consists of lead safeguarding partners across East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. The groups purpose is to focus on setting the 'road map' for future partnership development and identify shared safeguarding priorities and opportunities across the three areas.

## 2.3 Links to Other Partnerships

The Partnership has formal links with other East Sussex and Pan-Sussex strategic partnerships, namely the Health and Wellbeing Board; Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB); Safer Communities Partnership; West Sussex and Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnerships; Children and Young People Trust (CYPT) and Local Head Teacher Forums.

The ESSCP Independent Chair also maintains regular liaison with other key strategic leaders, for example, the Police and Crime Commissioner, neighbouring Safeguarding Children and Adult Partnership Chairs and Government inspection bodies.

The ESSCP produces an 'annual report' on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in East Sussex. The annual report will be presented to the East Sussex

County Council People Scrutiny Committee, East Sussex SAB, the Safer Communities Board and other ESSCP member organisations' senior management boards.

## 2.4 East Sussex Joint Targeted Area Inspection

In February 2020 the East Sussex Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) took place on the theme of children's mental health. The inspection was undertaken by Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (Health), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (Police) and Fire & Rescue Services and HMI Probation (YOT). This joint inspection included an evaluation of the 'front door' and how agencies identify and respond to the inspection theme of children's mental health.

The [Inspection Letter](#) does not include an overall judgement, instead it sets out areas of strength across the partnership and areas for improvement. The letter noted that;

- *'Partnership arrangements in East Sussex are well established and effective. Children's emotional well-being and mental health are a high priority in strategic planning. Service development directed through the East Sussex local transformation plan is delivering improving services for children and young people with mental health needs.'*
- *'Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to co-production with children and young people when implementing new or revised services. Leaders have continued to develop existing services to meet a greater range of children's emotional and well-being needs and have created new services to address emerging or lower levels of need. This work is supported by a highly effective Safeguarding Children Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board.'*

The letter goes on to reference the work of the ESSCP:

- *'The Safeguarding Children Partnership provides robust scrutiny of a wide range of safeguarding arrangements. The partnership's performance dashboard has a breadth of key indicators across a range of partners and includes indicators about children's well-being and mental health, such as numbers of referrals to CAMHS. This routine scrutiny informs well-targeted quality assurance work. The Safeguarding Children Partnership also supports the strategic focus on schools and the voluntary sector having the capacity and resilience to provide accessible emotional well-being support to children. This is supported through a comprehensive training offer for partners, which is adapted to respond to demand and emerging themes, such as responding to children who self-harm.'*

During the JTAI, inspectors found that some areas of multi-agency working could be further strengthened, such as information sharing and that the use of qualitative feedback to demonstrate the impact of agencies could be improved. They also noted that most of these areas are already a focus within strategic and operational plans to improve outcomes for children. A multi-agency action plan has been developed to address these areas which is overseen by the ESSCP Steering Group.

## 2.5 ESSCP Priorities for 2020/23

Since the formation of the ESSCP in September 2019, discussions have taken place to determine our priority areas of focus for the next three years. The partnership felt strongly that priorities should relate to key areas of child safeguarding; those identified as of highest risk in the county, where multi-agency working is essential and where significant change and/or commitment is necessary to reduce risk.

Priority development took place at the start of the year, with both the Steering Group and Board, and were agreed by the three safeguarding partners in May 2020. The agreed ESSCP Priorities for 2020-2023 are:

### **1. Education Safeguarding**

Lead: Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Assessment, Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service (SLES), Children's Services

### **2. Child Exploitation**

Joint Leads: Detective Chief Inspector, Safeguarding Investigation Unit, Sussex Police / Head Of Specialist Services, Children's Services

### **3. Embedding a Learning Culture**

Lead: Manager, East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

### **4. Safeguarding under 5s**

Joint Leads: Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children, Sussex CCG / Consultant in Public Health, Public Health

It is considered that the voice of the child and contextual safeguarding should be cross cutting over all the ESSCP priorities.



## 2.6 Safeguarding Context 2019/20



## 3. Impact of Partnership Activity during 2019/20

### 3.1 Voice of the Child

The ESSCP strongly believes that children and young people should have a say when decisions are made which may affect them. We also believe that children and young people should have the means and opportunities to be able to raise issues which are important to them, and ensure they are listened to. By doing so, we believe that this will create a stronger child protection system that is more responsive to the needs of our most vulnerable children.

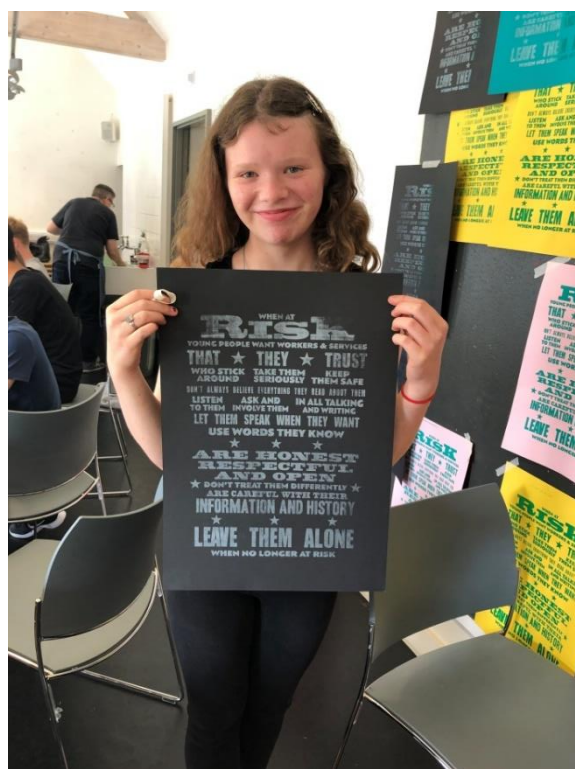
The ESSCP endeavours to ensure that children and young people are appropriately involved in the governance and decision making of the partnership. The ESSCP also challenges and holds partnership members to account on their engagement and involvement of children and young people within their own agencies, including through the section 11 audit process.

The ESSCP has continued to request that all reports presented at the Steering Group or main Board meetings contain a section on the 'voice of the child'. Agencies are required to consider how the voice of the child has impacted on the area of work. These contributions have provided a rich evidence base of how services are responding to children's voices in the day to day delivery of services and in longer term strategic work.

During 2019/20 the Partnership commissioned Priority 1-54 to work with young people from the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers to develop a Pledge, for how the ESSCP would work with and support children at risk. The wording and ideas were then presented to the East Sussex Youth Cabinet for further feedback and discussion on the potential legacy of the Pledge. The final pledge artworks were created at Ditchling Museum with Screen Printer Pea Crabtree in September 2019 alongside members of the Through Care Participation Group, a Lay Member of the ESSCP and staff and young people from the Children in Care Council.

The pledge artworks provide a written manifesto directed at all staff engaged with at-risk young people, the statements read as a series of requests and recommendations on how they would like to be treated when at risk and supported. The aim will then be to use the artwork as a communications campaign and possible benchmarking process for staff and managers working with at risk young people. This could help inform, guide and shape how they directly work with this cohort.

The Partnership are considering how they can use the Pledge to challenge agencies on how they listen and engage children at risk and this will be a key action for 2020/21.



## 3.2 Lay Members

Lay Members play a critical role in the partnership. They act as ambassadors for the community and for the ESSCP by building stronger ties between the two, making the work of the ESSCP more transparent. The Lay Members also act as a further independent insight on behalf of the public into the work of agencies and of the Partnership. Lay Members support the work of the Partnership by:

- Encouraging people living in East Sussex to become involved in child safety issues
- Helping people living in East Sussex to understand the work of the ESSCP
- Ensuring that plans and procedures put in place by the ESSCP are available to the public
- Assisting the development of links between the ESSCP and community groups in East Sussex

In June 2018, the ESSCP recruited two new Lay Members – Graham Cook and Harriet Martin. Graham and Harriet are now well established as Partnership Members. As well as acting as a critical friend at Board meetings, providing additional challenge and scrutiny, during 2019/20 the Lay Members have:

- Led on the development of a Children's Pledge through a series of art led workshops with a wide range of young people
- Participated in multi-agency workshops examining how agencies can respond to the problem of Modern Slavery, and identify and tackle county lines activity
- Attended a conference led by young people from across East Sussex where they talked about and proposed actions for their priority issues
- Become a standing member of the ESSCP Case Review Group

### Graham:

*This is my second year as a lay member, and I have continued to be impressed by the commitment and professionalism of all the staff I come in contact with. I had continued to attend Board meetings and other events until Covid-19 struck. This has had a considerable impact on how safeguarding work is carried out, but from my perspective all the agencies have risen to the challenge and found ways to continue to protect children and young people.*

### Harriet:

*This has been my second year as lay member for the ESSCP. In January 2020 I became a member of the Case Review Group which has taken up most of my time as a Lay Member. This working group looks at cases where children have come to significant harm. The focus of reviews is always on the potential learning that could come out of them to reduce the risk of another child being harmed in similar circumstances. I have been fully included in the group and have endeavoured to make a contribution and not just act as an observer. As I reported last year I have been impressed by the commitment of and cooperation between agencies. I see part of my role as being a 'critical friend'. It is worth noting that my experience on the Case Review Group is that generally all of the agencies have sufficient trust in each other to work together openly. I do not believe this is the case in many other authorities. I feel that it is partly because the ESSCP works so well that I am able to contribute. From my perspective the work is also very interesting. I look forward to continuing next year.*

### 3.3 Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance (QA) Subgroup is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the work carried out by partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to give advice on the ways this can be improved. It does this through regular scrutiny of multi-agency performance data and inspection reports, and through an annual programme of thematic and regular case file audits. The group meets six times per year and is made up of representatives from NHS organisations, Sussex Police and East Sussex Children's Services.

During 2019/20 the QA sub-group held four audits: one regular case file audit, one audit on strategy discussions, one thematic audit on children with disability and a deep dive audit on the assessment of Care Leavers about to become parents. Of the 18 cases audited and graded; 9 were graded Good; 8 cases were graded Requires Improvement and one case was graded Inadequate.

The deep dive audit on Care Leavers about to become parents looked at two cases in depth over a whole day. The cases were not graded, however the approach enabled auditors to capture a good understanding of the systemic and environmental challenges in achieving good outcomes for Care Leavers and their children.

The percentage of cases audited in 2019-2020 that were graded 'Good' was 50% and no children were found to be unsafe. The small number of cases audited does not necessarily reflect the overall picture of safeguarding practice in East Sussex, especially as the audits require complex cases to be chosen to enable better learning.

The majority of the cases graded Requires Improvement had evidence of very good practice but were graded as such as a result of specific individual gaps/weakness in practice.

Examples of concerns that led to the auditors grading cases as Requires Improvement included: a long delay in an assessment process; a lack of professional curiosity in a case; a long delay for the direct work to start due to a lack of suitably qualified staff and more delay at the end of the intervention; and lack of evidence in the records of direct work to improve the child's lived experience.

#### **In the majority of cases auditors found:**

- ✓ Good, quick identification and initial response to risk in all cases
- ✓ Good management oversight
- ✓ Good initial response and an effective response to safeguard the child
- ✓ Professionals looked beyond the immediate situation to identify the wider safeguarding context and risks
- ✓ The strategy discussion was held within timescales
- ✓ Good decision making and direct work with the child and family
- ✓ The voice of the child was carefully considered and reflected in child focused work.
- ✓ Good collaboration between different teams working with a child in Children's Services
- ✓ Excellent multi-agency working and record keeping

Findings from audits completed in 2019/20 included:

- Consideration should be given to inviting the relevant health professionals, including the GP, to all key multi-agency meetings.
- A child's school needs to be provided with up to date information about a child's status, the child's family situation and multi-agency decision making and activity to allow them to effectively support and safeguard that child.
- All actions in a Plan should be allocated with a clear timescale to be completed and details of what needs to change as a result of the actions.
- Social workers should capture the child's lived experience and the emotional impact upon them of their experiences when recording the voice of the child.
- The detail of what direct work is being delivered and by which agency should be clearly recorded on the child's record.
- The key role of effective and skilled communication with the care leaver in achieving good outcomes and positive change. Professionals skilfully used motivational interviewing techniques, ensured the Care Leaver was, and felt, listened to throughout, that they understood concerns professionals held and the difficulties that they would be facing. They felt that they owned the decisions and agreed with the practitioners.

With auditing such a relatively small sample of cases in a particular theme, auditors have to decide if findings could be representative of all cases, and present wider systemic issues, or an issue just within that single case.

For example, the children with disabilities audit prompted considerable discussion at the Partnership's Steering Group about learning identified in relation to joint visits and ABE interviews. The audit reports are not just useful in themselves, but useful to prompt single, and multi-agency, discussions about what may have happened in certain cases, and what action agencies are taking to strengthen practice.

### 3.4 Case Review Subgroup

The ESSCP Case Review Subgroup (CRG) meets every month and is a well-established multi-agency group which reviews cases and, using the guidance set out in Working Together, makes recommendations to the Independent Chair and Board about whether a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review is required. Cases considered by the group are referred in by group members or safeguarding professionals from partner agencies.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) Chapter 4 states that:

*"The purpose of reviews of serious child safeguarding cases, at both local and national level, is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Learning is relevant locally, but it has a wider importance for all practitioners working with children and families and for the government and policy-makers...Reviews should seek to prevent or reduce the risk of recurrence of similar incidents".*



Local authorities notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (“the Panel”) within 5 working days of any serious incident where they know or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected and the child has died or been seriously harmed. Co-ordinated by the CRG, Safeguarding partners undertake a rapid review of the case within fifteen working days to determine if the criteria for a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) has been met. The local authority must also notify the Secretary of State and Ofsted where a looked after child has died, whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

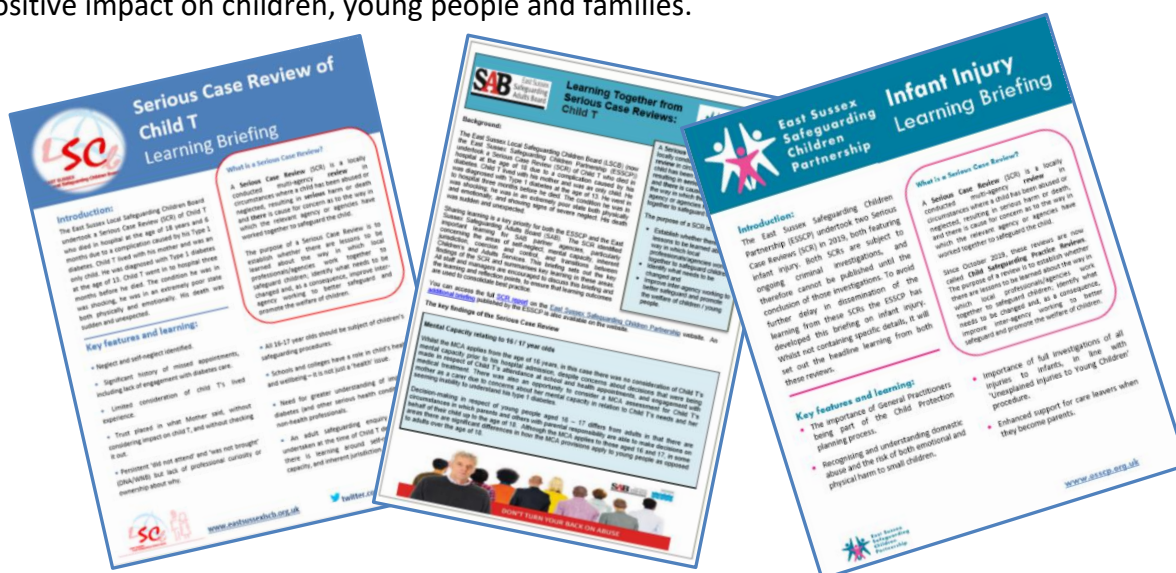
Two rapid reviews were undertaken in 2019/20. No new LCSPRs were initiated in 2019/20. Two of the Serious Case Reviews (SCR) initiated in 2018/19 both featured infant injury. Both SCR are currently subject to ongoing criminal investigations, and therefore cannot be published until the conclusion of those investigations. To avoid further delay in dissemination of the learning from these SCR the ESSCP developed a [learning briefing on infant injury](#). Whilst not containing specific details, it sets out the headline learning from both these reviews.

The third SCR initiated in 2018/19, Child T, was published on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Child T died in hospital aged 18 years and 6 months. His death was associated with his type 1 diabetes which he had developed as a child. This review highlights lessons learned about the way that agencies work together to safeguard children and vulnerable young adults in East Sussex.

- [East Sussex LSCB SCR – Child T – Overview Report](#)
- [East Sussex LSCB Child T SCR – Learning Briefing](#)
- [SAB/ESSCP Joint Child T Learning Briefing](#)

The learnings from the Child T SCR have been widely disseminated across multiagency partners, such as through the development of local procedures and the adaptation of training content. The impact of the learnings from the Child T SCR were evident in the positive outcome of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection of services for children that took place in February 2020.

Alongside the new referrals, rapid reviews, and continuing SCR, the CRG are also continuously reviewing actions plans from previous reviews, ensuring that improvements are embedded in practice and there is a positive impact on children, young people and families.



## 3.5 Learning & Development

The ESSCP Learning & Development (L&D) Subgroup meets quarterly to review the partnership training programme, analyse training data such as attendance and evaluation feedback, and to develop training themes. The Subgroup also includes consideration of ESSCP communications which links to training and learning, such as learning briefings about audit outcomes and serious case reviews. The Subgroup comprises of representatives from the ESSCP, Health, Children's Services, Police and Education. ESSCP multi-agency training can be accessed via the [East Sussex Learning Portal](#).

The ESSCP training offer is supported by a 'pool' of experienced practitioners who give their time and expertise as part of their continuing professional development at no additional cost to the ESSCP. Only two external trainers are currently commissioned to provide courses as subject experts. To support the training pool, three development sessions were held during 2019/20. These provided the opportunity to share knowledge and information through a range of presentations delivered by practitioners and representatives from local organisations. This ensures training is evidence based, practitioners have the opportunity to support the development of the training offer and the training pool is thanked for its contributions throughout the year.

As in previous years, a large majority of participants continue to rate courses as either Excellent (49%) or Good (45%). During 2019/20 54 training courses ran with 1200 available places. 963 participants from a range of agencies attended which equates to 80% attendance across the 54 courses. Due to Covid-19 restrictions classroom-based training ceased from March 18th, 2020, resulting in the cancellation of 10 courses before the end of this reporting year. There are numerous on-line courses available through partnership with the Children's Services Workforce Development team; some as pre-requisites to the classroom-based courses as well as for the harder to reach audiences such as the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector. There is now a large on-line training offer through the [East Sussex Learning Portal](#) and all the courses are currently free to access, but this may be subject to change in the future.

### Extracts from course evaluations during 2019/20:

The **Neglect: Using Tools to Assess Parents' Ability to Make Positive Changes for Their Children** course in Quarter 1 had 10 returns out of 22 attendees with 8 people rating the course as '**Excellent**' and 2 as '**Good**'. Two people said they would put their learning into practice by:

**'Use of toolkit to identify the extent to which neglect is a factor. Use of role play experience to apply to conversations/home visits where neglect is a possible/confirmed factor'**

**'Will disseminate key points to my team and suggest use of the neglect tool kit to inform referrals by other professionals when we close cases and they are dissatisfied with the outcome'**

One person commented in relation to learning improving outcomes for children:

**'Improved awareness of signs of neglect - being more confident to identify the signs and take these forward so they can be addressed, and thinking of ways to support the child in school with the personal, social and emotional development issues that are often caused by neglect'**

The **Mental Health: Perspectives on Children and Young People with Mental Health Issues -Professional Level Workshop** that ran in Quarter 2 had 10 returns out of 21 attendees with 6 people rating the course as **‘Excellent** **‘and 4 as **‘Good’****

One person said they would put their learning into practice by:

**“Now I have more knowledge of the subject it means I know what to look out for. I will be able to use what I learnt to have more effective conversations with parents and partners”**

One person commented in relation to learning improving outcomes for children:

**“This course has made me more aware of children's mental health and I feel more confident to support children with their emotional well-being. This will improve outcomes for children in a variety of ways. They will hopefully feel more comfortable knowing that there is somebody they can turn to who isn't their carer or close family member. Supporting them with their mental health will help them in other areas of their development and help them to feel more confident to take on the world”**

**The Young People and Substance Misuse Professional Level** course that ran in Quarter 3 had 9 returns out of 18 attendees with 4 people rating the course as **“Excellent”** and 5 as **‘Good’**

One person said they would put their learning into practice by:

**“The twenty minutes of information from the Clinical Nurse was the most useful. The information he provided would have made a more informative training session as too much focused on basic drug awareness. Will use the risk awareness from the main course with clients. Will use FRANK and good to know about Re-Boot. Was also good to have some clarification on the law regarding possession and supply”**

One person commented in relation to learning improving outcomes for children:

**“Being equipped with new skills and current information prepares you for new challenges and enables you to be familiar with current languages and trends amongst our young people today”**



The **Gangs, Youth Violence, Knives and Criminal Exploitation Awareness Training** course that ran in Quarter 4 had 21 attendees and 7 returns with 4 people rating the course as **'Excellent'** and 3 as **'Good'**

One person said they would put their learning into practice by:

**“Within my work it has opened my eyes to the very real risk to my vulnerable boys and girls who get excluded or do not attend school, it has enabled me to be able to speak confidently to them on this subject hoping to prevent their association with those who are actively looking for vulnerable students/Young People - Adults not in EET”**

One person commented in relation to learning improving outcomes for children:

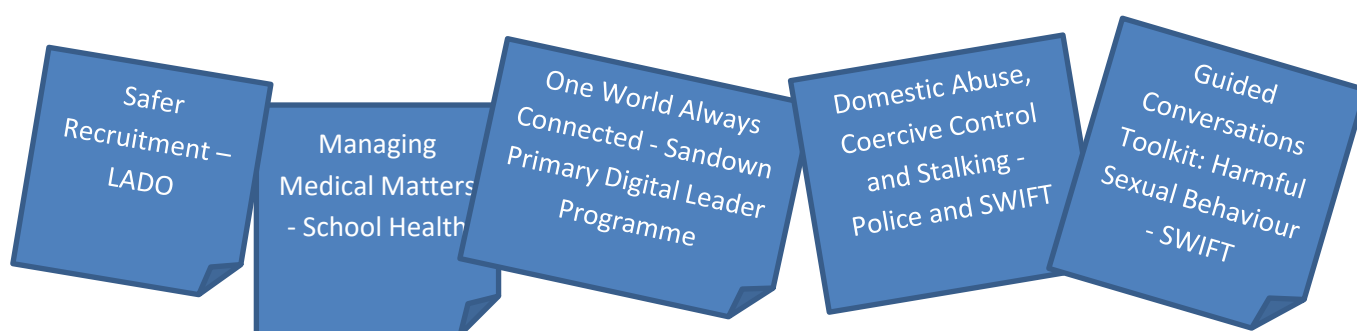
**“I will be able to respond more quickly and have the necessary tools to hand when I believe a young person is at risk. Early identification and referral may help safeguard and divert young people away from crime”**



Reference. The group will strengthen the consideration of pan-Sussex learning and communication opportunities, such as learning from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, procedural updates and national priorities. Pan-Sussex SCP working groups for communications and training are forming to support these themes. Alongside this, the Learning & Development Consultant will take forward with the development and delivery of virtual training sessions and resources to support distance learning and development.

### Annual Schools Conference – 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020

The Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service (SLES) hosted its annual Safeguarding Conference for over one hundred delegates from schools across the county, along with representatives from Health, Police, Social Care and the ESSCP. Reg Hooke, Independent Chair of the ESSCP opened the conference. Health colleagues gave the keynote speech ***‘Working together to manage medical needs in schools’***. This was followed by a question and answer panel representing various elements of the Health Service for a multiagency conversation around some of the challenges of safeguarding children within the context of health and medical conditions. A key topic was that of consent and how without it Health colleagues are often not able to share information with schools. This is an area of work which SLES are taking forward with local Health partners in 2020/21. Conference Workshops offered were:



The afternoon presentation topic was ***BBC Own It App***. The Head of Editorial Standards and Safeguarding at Children’s BBC presented on the recently launched Own It App. This innovative app is downloaded onto a child’s phone and will actively monitor the content of their social media interactions. This is not an app which allows parents to spy on their children or relay data to another device, instead it will prompt children to reconsider the use of harmful language in messages or provide signposting to support if a child indicates they are distressed. The conference received positive feedback from attendees and was a great opportunity for networking with other Designated Safeguarding Leads and safeguarding colleagues from other agencies.

## 3.6 Child Death Overview Panel

The Pan-Sussex Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is a function outside of the ESSCP that undertakes comprehensive reviews of child deaths (of children who usually reside within Sussex) in order to promote action that will reduce the risk of future child deaths occurring and support the inter-agency working to safeguard children and promote their welfare. During 2019 – 2020 the panel’s activity sought to drive improvements that would prevent child deaths, safeguard children and young people and improve care

and support for bereaved families and any affected communities. Every child death is reviewed to draw out any learning and to apply those lessons for the future.

Work has taken place to ensure that the panel is operating in line with the updated statutory requirements and that recommendations from the new National Child Death Review guidance on investigating and responding to child deaths are put in place and are working at a local level. The appointment of a dedicated nurse team has provided additional capacity alongside the Designated Doctor's for Child Deaths, adding the required strength to the review process. The new arrangements commenced in October 2019.

The CDOP Chair highlighted the following headlines from the CDOP Annual Report:

- The total number of deaths recorded during this year (1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020) is the second lowest during the 11-year period that CDOP's have been in operation.
- Mortality rate for children aged under 18 in Brighton & Hove and East Sussex combined is significantly higher in the most deprived 40% of areas compared to the least deprived areas – this is in line with the national picture.
- At both a national and Sussex level the largest cause of death is a perinatal/neonatal event (37% for Sussex, 33% for England).
- Cancers are the largest cause of death in children aged 1-17 years, accounting for 24% of deaths in East Sussex for this age group.

CDOP advised the ESSCP that Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) remains one of the leading causes of infant death in the community and in all of the cases reviewed by the panel, modifiable factors were identified regarding the infants sleeping environment. The ESSCP will continue to develop and embed its multi-agency response to safe sleep learning within the 2020-2023 priority area of Safeguarding Under 5's.

In addition CDOP highlighted the role of the ICON programme, which has recently been launched in East Sussex, to support parents and carers to understand and cope with infant crying with a view to reducing the risk of Abusive Head Trauma - [www.iconcope.org](http://www.iconcope.org)

### **3.7 Pan Sussex Procedures**

#### [Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual](#)

The Pan Sussex Procedures Group reviews, updates and develops safeguarding policies and procedures in response to local and national issues, changes in legislation, practice developments and learning from Local Safeguarding Children Reviews and audits. The procedures are a tool for professionals working with children and families across Sussex. The group meets four times a year and has a membership drawn from key agencies across the SCP's in East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Between December 2019 to March 2020, a drive to update the pan Sussex procedures was initiated, resulting in 26 policies being updated and published in this period by the group. To further build on this progress, a jointly funded Pan Sussex Policy Lead started in post from April 1 2020 to co-ordinate a consistent approach to the development and maintenance of the pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures. It is envisaged that this will provide an effective and timely response to reflect changes required to procedures from legislation updates or local and national learnings.

### 3.8 Local Safeguarding Children Liaison Groups

The ESSCP facilitates two 'Local Safeguarding Children Liaison Groups' (LSCLG) which cover the East and the West of the county. The groups provide a dynamic forum for sharing information (e.g. about thematic service developments or referral pathways), strengthens multi-agency working, disseminates learning, escalates practice issues, and promotes ESSCP multi-agency training courses relevant to topics discussed and group membership.

The group is very popular and is attended by a range of frontline practitioners and managers across partner agencies. In 2019/20 a total of 8 meetings were held. Unfortunately, the last 2 meetings of 2019/20 were cancelled due to the early Covid-19 lockdown period.

The group's aims include:

- To promote positive working relationships, effective communication, and information sharing between agencies.
- To ensure the ESSCP priorities and related action plans are implemented and learning from audits and reviews is disseminated across partner agencies.
- To allow a safe forum for professional challenge and case discussion in order to learn, develop and improve practice.

The group invites guest speakers, or speakers from within the group membership, and covers a diverse range of topics. Some of the highlights of the 2019/20 meetings were presentations from:

- Police colleagues regarding Operations Encompass – the process by which a key adult in education will be informed by police directly regarding a child who was involved in a Domestic Violence incident the previous night.
- Safer Communities colleagues outlining the work undertaken around the Modern Slavery agenda in both Adults and Children's Services.
- Public Health colleagues reporting on the statistics of accidents and preventable child injuries and safeguarding, plus the interventions for prevention.
- Children's Services colleagues advising regarding the changes to Early Help Services following consultation and the development of the integrated Single Point of Advice (SPOA) front door with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).
- ESSCP colleagues with regular training updates and opportunities and dissemination of learning and updates from the case review subgroup.

The Chair of the LSCLGs regularly invites feedback from group members to ensure the groups remain purposeful and relevant. The feedback received indicated how valued the groups are, and included the following comments:

- *“The value of the Liaison Group for the Education Futures Trust is that, as an independent charity we are able to keep abreast of child safeguarding policy and practice as it is made and carried out by our local Social Care and Health colleagues. For us, not to be ‘in the loop’ as it were, would allow the danger of our keywork and alternative education practices to drift from standard best practice. We also value the opportunity to contribute from the point of view of the independent sector.”*  
**Keywork Manager, Education Futures Trust**
- [What works well] *“Being able to hear from colleagues’ updates and pressures on systems and also being able to share that from my perspective. Getting advice and support and hearing about new services and incentives. We can discuss case related issues and challenges and plan in a joint working way. [Encourages] Good lines of communication and knowing that, because of this, I can speak to colleagues outside of the meeting also.”* **Manager, CAMHS, East Sussex FISS/LD and ADHD Services, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

### 3.9 Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Group

The overarching Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) priorities for the partnership in 19/20 were:

- A) Continue to raise awareness within the community and deliver preventative education to equip children and young people with the skills they need to make safe and healthy choices and avoid situations which put them at risk of being exploited.
- B) Deliver a holistic and effective response to children and young people referred to MACE, that reflects learning from previous case audit and service user feedback.
- C) Strengthen support and safeguarding arrangements for those young people who are reported Missing or who are referred to MACE.
- D) Deliver ‘disruption measures’ to divert children and young people away from being exploited and stop those engaging in exploiting children.

Key areas of work included:

- The Mace Operational Group delivered a multi-agency response to 82 children. During this period 61 children were discharged from the group with increased safety plans and 59 children were accepted as new referrals.
- The volume of referrals to MACE operational meetings had increased to a point that the process was struggling to cope with the demand. Plans to address this, whilst continuing to build greater awareness of exploitation amongst staff, were outlined to Inspectors in March 2020 as part of the JTAI and have since been successfully implemented.
- A Contextual Safeguarding assessment and response was delivered to the College Central pupil referral network through funding secured from the Violence Reduction Unit, to deliver targeted support to children at College Central.

- East Sussex professionals participated in a Sussex University research project – “What works in Criminal Exploitation”. The findings enabled a successful application to the Research in Practise Tackling Child Exploitation programme in order to improve local agency responses to Disruption.
- A contextual safeguarding approach was delivered in Hailsham and resulted in the co-ordination of a multi-agency plan to reduce environmental and peer group risks pertaining to Child Sexual Exploitation. The young women who were at the centre of concerns are no longer subject to MACE plans and local agencies have delivered a broad range of interventions, ranging from improved street lighting and CCTV to joint visits to licensed premises in order to raise awareness of child exploitation.

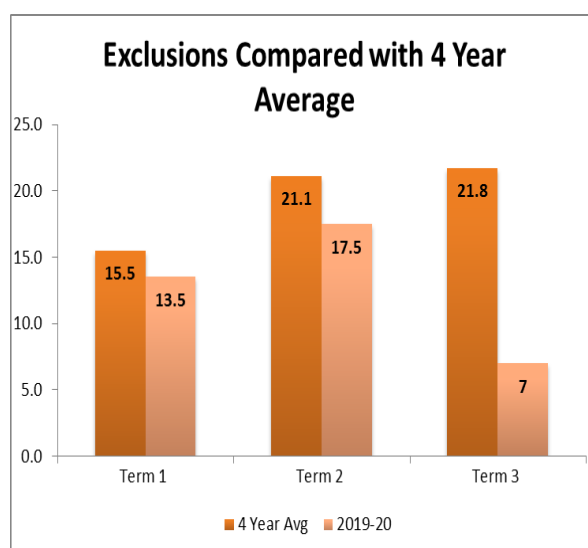
### Spotlight on Contextual Safeguarding Responses across a Pupil Referral Unit Network

Following concerns raised by Police and Education colleagues through the MACE strategic group about levels of reported criminality within College Central (the local pupil referral network), a contextual safeguarding assessment was undertaken. The assessment found that a number of pupils in 2 of the 4 units were suspected to be victims of Criminal Exploitation and to be involved in County Lines. However, the initial agency concerns regarding the exchange of drugs on premises proved to be unfounded and although children were linked to County Lines, there was no actual group of pupils involved. Assessment findings concluded that this cohort of pupils was over represented in Police reports and in other agency referrals for escalating anti social behaviour and that there were significant risks of exploitation.

Funding was secured through the Sussex Violence Reduction Unit and has enabled the co-location of YOT practitioner sessions across College Central sites. This provides targeted early intervention to the most vulnerable pupils with the aim of raising awareness of risks such as knife crime and exploitation, whilst preventing escalating anti-social behaviour and criminality through an individualised pupil and family engagement offer.

### Outcomes in Year 1

- Seven young people who attend College Central were discussed at MACE. Of those, none have had their risk rating increased. 29% of the College Central cohort was showing a reduction.
- No College Central pupils have been added to the MACE panel in the last 3 terms of the 2019/20 academic year
- All students have taken part in prevention interventions on knife crime
- Wider knowledge of criminal behaviour has allowed teaching staff to develop strategies for reducing risk of drugs/knives related incidents.
- All students have taken part in citizenship lessons on the criminal justice system
- 75% of students at KS4 took part in kick boxing sessions, a significant rise on participation in PE activities for this group



- Regular YOT work is taking place on site for those students with formal YOT involvement, this has removed the need to miss education during the school day
- Comparing the exclusions data for the three terms that the YOT workers have been at College Central with the average exclusion data for the previous four years shows that there have been fewer pupil exclusions in each term.

### 3.10 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO responds to allegations made about people who work with children. The statutory guidance Working Together 2018 sets out the requirements for all agencies providing services for children to have procedures in place for reporting and managing allegations against staff and volunteers. The criteria for LADO involvement applies when an individual working or volunteering with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

A further definition has been added to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, which many LADOs are adopting to provide clarity on transferable risk:

- Behaved or behave in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The work of the LADO and their team is set out in an Annual Report received by the ESSCP Board annually. The information below is taken from that report:

#### Activity and Demands on the LADO Service 2019-20

The number of contacts and referrals into the LADO service increased on the previous year, with 1,905 contacts, of which 940 were referrals. The contact total includes contacts classified as non-LADO, where advice was provided and signposted elsewhere. 965 were classed as consultations, which was a reduction on the number of consultations in 2018/19. The top 5 referrers into LADO were; Social Care (774), Education (430), Other (189), Residential (122), Health (100) with the most prevalent allegation types being Professional Conduct (305) and Physical Abuse (157). There is currently one full-time LADO and one Assistant LADO in East Sussex.

#### What Went Well?

- All referrals continued to receive an initial response within 24 hours, despite an increase in contacts and more complex referrals over the last year.
- Good communication with locality teams and partner agencies, ensuring that information on themes and trends for the year were clearly identified and responded to at an early stage.
- Ongoing review of processes and procedures has taken place building on the changes that have been made over the last year.
- 617 cases were concluded during the last year.

### What Difference Has It Made?

- A new referral and webpage went live in September 2019, making it easier for the LADO service to respond to referrals and obtain information required at an early stage.
- Training has been updated to reflect concerns identified around safer recruitment, including delivery of a workshop at the Early Years and School Safeguarding Conferences during October 2019 and January 2020 to raise awareness.
- Bespoke support and training have been offered to a number of settings, and an increase in support for organisations in their learning during investigations and at the end of a process with a view to improving policy and procedures and strengthening practice.



## 4. Appendices

### 4.A Board Membership

NAME	TITLE, ORGANISATION
<b>Reg Hooke (Chair)</b>	Independent East Sussex SCP Chair
<b>Sally Williams</b>	Manager, East Sussex SCP To Oct. 2019
<b>Louise MacQuire-Plows</b>	Manager, Est Sussex SCP From Jan. 2020
<b>Victoria Jones</b>	Manager, East Sussex SCP
<b>Graham Cook</b>	Lay Member, East Sussex SCP
<b>Harriet Martin</b>	Lay Member, East Sussex SCP
<b>Maxine Nankervis</b>	Admin Officer, East Sussex SCP

<b>Allison Cannon</b>	Chief Nurse, NHS Hastings & Rother Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
<b>Gareth Knowles</b>	Safeguarding Lead, SECAmb
<b>Catherine Scott</b>	Deputy Director for Safeguarding and Transforming Care East Surrey & Sussex CCGs To Jan. 2020
<b>Dee Harris</b>	Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children, East Sussex To Mar. 2020
<b>Domenica Basini</b>	Acting Head of Clinical Quality -Safeguarding NHS England
<b>Jayne Bruce</b>	Deputy Chief Nurse, Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT)
<b>Jeanette Waite</b>	Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children East Sussex To Jan. 2020
<b>Jessica Britton</b>	Chief Operating Officer, Sussex and East Surrey STP Commissioners
<b>Martin McAngus</b>	Acute Service Manager Coastal / AMHP Sussex Partnership
<b>Naomi Ellis</b>	Head of Safeguarding and Looked After Children, Sussex CCGs
<b>Sue Curties</b>	Head of Safeguarding, (Adults and Children) ESHT
<b>Tracey Ward (Dep. Chair)</b>	Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children, East Sussex
<b>Vikki Carruth</b>	Director of Nursing, ESHT

<b>Andrea Holtham</b>	Service Manager, Sussex CAFCASS
<b>David Kemp</b>	Head of Community Safety, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
<b>David Satchell</b>	Snr Probation Officer, National Probation Service, Sussex
<b>Lee Whitmore</b>	KSS, Assistant Chief Probation Officer
<b>Till Sanderson</b>	Acting D/Sup Sussex Police To Mar. 2020
<b>Jon Hull</b>	D/Sup Sussex Police

<b>Paul Juniper</b>	Bede's Senior School
<b>Kate Bishop</b>	Rotherfield Primary School
<b>Richard Green</b>	Deputy Head Teacher, Chailey Heritage School
<b>Richard Preece</b>	Executive Head teacher, Torfield & Saxon Mount Federation

<b>Catherine Dooley</b>	Senior Manager, Standards and Learning Effectiveness (5-19), Children's Services
<b>Delyth Shaw</b>	Safeguarding Adults Board Development Manager
<b>Douglas Sinclair</b>	Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Children's Services
<b>George Kouridis</b>	Head of Service Adult Safeguarding
<b>Justine Armstrong</b>	Safer Communities Manager
<b>Liz Rugg</b>	Assistant Director (Early Help & Social Care), Children's Services



<b>Rachel Doran</b>	Legal and Coroner Services Manager
<b>Stuart Gallimore</b>	Director of Children's Services
<b>Sylvia Tidy</b>	Lead Member for Children and Families
<b>Vicky Finnemore</b>	Head of Specialist Services, Children's Services
<b>Victoria Spencer-Hughes</b>	Consultant, Public Health To Jul. 2019
<b>Ben Brown</b>	Consultant, Public Health, ESCC

<b>Jeremy Leach</b>	Principal Policy Adviser, Wealden District Council
<b>Malcolm Johnston</b>	Executive Director for Resources, Rother District Council
<b>Oliver Jones</b>	Lewes DC + Eastbourne BC, Strategy and Partnerships Lead
<b>Seanne Sweaney</b>	Strategy and Corporate Projects Officer, Lewes DC and Eastbourne BC
<b>Verna Connolly</b>	Head of Personnel and Organisational Development, Hastings Borough Council

<b>Kate Lawrence</b>	Chief Executive Home-Start East Sussex
<b>Micky Richards</b>	Change Grow Live, Director Operations To Nov. 2019

## 4.B ESSCP Budget

### ESSCP – Actual Income and Expenditure 2019/20

Actual Income 2019/2020		Actual Expenditure 2019/2020	
Sussex Police	£23,750	Independent Chair	£24,789
National Probation Service	£717	Business Manager(s) 1.4 FTE	£62,339
Kent, Surrey and Sussex (KSS) CRC	£1,250	Administrator	£21,080
CAFCASS	£275	Administration	£1,138
CCGs	£46,698	Child Death Overview Panel	£24,488
Change Live Grow (CLG)	£375	Trainer	£52,284
East Sussex County Council (ESCC)	£146,000	Training Programme and Conference	£6,840
Training Income	£13,885	Projects	£22,300
B&H CC contribution for CDOP	£4,000	Pan Sussex Procedures	£3,066
LSCB brought forward from 18/19	£64,043	IT Software & Hardware	£6,297
		Serious Case Reviews	£17,861
		<i>Carry Forward (balancing fig)</i>	£58,511
<b>Total</b>	<b>£300,993</b>		<b>£300,993</b>

### Projected Income and Expenditure 2020/21

Projected Income 2020/21		Projected Expenditure 2020/21	
Sussex Police	£35,000	Independent Chair	£24,500
Sussex CCG	£53,400	Business Manager(s) 1.4 FTE and Administrator	£110,000
East Sussex County Council (ESCC)	£117,200	Administration	£1,400
Training Income	£7,500	Trainer	£55,900
LSCB brought forward from 19/20	£58,510	Training Programme and Conferences	£13,600
		Projects	£15,000
		Pan Sussex Procedures	£4,500
		IT Software & Hardware	£1,400
		Safeguarding Practice Reviews	£20,000
		<i>Carry Forward (balancing fig)</i>	£25,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>£271,610</b>		<b>£271,610</b>

## 4.C Links to other documents

### [East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(2016-19\)](#)

This strategy is a framework for the commissioning of health and wellbeing services in the County. The Health and Wellbeing Board will consider relevant commissioning strategies to ensure that they have taken into account the priorities and approaches set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The main priority is to protect and improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in East Sussex, the strategy focuses on: Accountable care; Improving access to services; Bringing together health and social care; Improving emergency and urgent care; Improving health and wellbeing; Improving mental health care; Improving primary care; Better use of medicines; Better community services.

### [Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner – Police and Crime Plan 2017-21](#)

The Commissioner has identified the following four policing and crime objectives:

- Strengthen local policing
- Work with local communities and partners to keep Sussex safe
- Protect our vulnerable and help victims cope and recover from crime and abuse
- Improve access to justice for victims and witnesses

### [East Sussex Safer Communities Partnerships' Business Plan \(2017-2020\)](#)

The East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership undertakes a strategic assessment of community safety every three years with an annual refresh in order to select work streams and plan activity for the year ahead.

Colleagues from the ESSCP and ESCC Children's Services work closely with the Safer Communities Partnership to respond to the broader threat of exploitation. Sustaining existing work within the partnership and developing new and existing relationships with partners is of particular importance to ensure that we are supporting vulnerable individuals within the community and helping them feel safe and confident in their everyday lives.

### [East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019-20](#)

The ESSCP works closely with the SAB on the overlapping themes of Modern Slavery, Domestic Abuse, transition and Cuckooing.

### [DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2020](#)

Updated statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015. Schools and colleges in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## 4.D Acronyms

<b>ABE</b>	Achieving Best Evidence
<b>AMH</b>	Adult Mental Health
<b>B&amp;H</b>	Brighton & Hove
<b>BC</b>	Borough Council
<b>CAFCASS</b>	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
<b>CC</b>	County Council
<b>CCG</b>	Clinical Commissioning Groups
<b>CDOP</b>	Child Death Overview Panel
<b>CLG</b>	Change Live Grow
<b>CQC</b>	Care Quality Commission
<b>CRG</b>	Case Review Subgroup
<b>CYPT</b>	Children and Young People Trust
<b>DC</b>	District Council
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education
<b>EET</b>	Education, Employment, or Training
<b>ESCC</b>	East Sussex County Council
<b>ESFRS</b>	East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
<b>ESHT</b>	East Sussex Health Trust
<b>ESSCP</b>	East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership
<b>GP</b>	General Practitioner
<b>JTAI</b>	Joint Targeted Area Inspection
<b>KSS</b>	Kent, Surrey and Sussex (KSS) CRC
<b>L&amp;D</b>	Learning & Development
<b>LADO</b>	Local Authority Designated Officer
<b>LCSPR</b>	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review
<b>LSCB</b>	Local Safeguarding Children Board
<b>LSCLG</b>	Local Safeguarding Children Liaison Groups
<b>MACE</b>	Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Group
<b>MASH</b>	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>SAB</b>	Safeguarding Adults Board
<b>SCP</b>	Safeguarding Children Partnership
<b>SCR</b>	Serious Case Reviews
<b>SECamb</b>	South East Coast Ambulance
<b>SLES</b>	Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service
<b>SPFT</b>	Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust
<b>SPOA</b>	Single Point of Advice
<b>STP</b>	Sustainability and Transformation Plan
<b>SUDI</b>	Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy
<b>SWIFT</b>	Specialist Family Services
<b>YOT</b>	Youth Offending Team

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>People Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 March 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Review of Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) – monitoring report</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an update on the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and other related developments</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the progress set out in the Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 and other related developments discussed in paragraph 2.1.

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## **1 Background**

1.1 The People Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting in September 2019 to refer on to Cabinet its scrutiny review regarding support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). The review report explores a range of issues relating to the challenges facing this especially vulnerable group of children and young people. It contains six recommendations which focus on a number of practical measures which are aimed at complementing the work already being undertaken by the Children's Services Department in this area.

1.2 When the report was presented to Cabinet in November 2019 it included an action plan provided by the Children's Services Department. The plan set out the department's views on the recommendations mentioned above and how they might be implemented. The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for the committee to be updated on progress since that time.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 The action plan is attached at Appendix 1 and has been updated with further comments from the department on progress with implementing the People Scrutiny Committee's recommendations. In addition to the comments contained in the action plan, there have been a number of other significant developments relating to support for UASC which will be of interest to the committee:

- In the last 12 months the UASC team has continued to grow and develop. For example, this has included the appointment of a Personal Advisor who provides support to Care Leavers and the provision of a placement for a Student Social Worker. A Newly Qualified Social Worker also finished her assessed and supported year in employment and has remained in the team.

- The last year has been challenging both as a result of the COVID pandemic and because of a sharp increase in the number of young people in the care of East Sussex County Council (ESCC). There were a number of spontaneous arrivals, many in small boats. The number of small boats arriving nationally was significant and as a result ESCC honoured a commitment to support colleagues in Kent and Portsmouth by taking a number of new arrivals via the National Transfer Scheme.
- The service is currently working with a total of 113 young people. This is comprised of 57 UASC and 56 Care Leavers aged over 18. In the last 12 months 43 young people came into the care of ESCC. Of those, 29 were spontaneous arrivals and 13 were accepted via the National Transfer Scheme. At present the UASC population in the care of ESCC totals 0.06% of the child population against a nationally agreed commitment of 0.07%.
- Ongoing work with the UK Borders Agency and Police colleagues to build awareness of newly arrived UASC as victims of smuggling and trafficking rather than as perpetrators of crime.
- Identifying a significant gap in provision for supporting the mental health of young people and exploring resources locally and nationally. This has included accessing independent therapeutic input. There is an emphasis on mental health at My Voice Matters reviews for young people in the care of ESCC to ensure any needs are identified early.
- There is also a shortage of resources locally to assess learning needs when a young person does not have English as their first language or has not been educated in a 'Eurocentric' way. Without expert assessment, it is difficult to advocate for and access specialist support for young people. This is being explored with colleagues in CAMHS (the acronym CAMHS stands for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and refers to NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties).
- Building links with colleagues in Adult Social Care to raise awareness of the continuing support needs of a small proportion of asylum-seeking young people who may have learning needs or mental health issues which impact on their capacity to live independently.
- Developing skills as a service in acknowledging and supporting the cultural needs of UASC. This includes developing a better knowledge of cultural differences, resources and of life in different parts of the world. It also means that the workers are better at having conversations with young people about what it is like for them to be living in East Sussex where there is less cultural diversity than in other parts of the country.
- The further development of links with Brighton and Hove City Council and West Sussex County Council UASC teams in support of sharing learning and knowledge.

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 Progress continues to be made on implementing the recommendations contained in the People Scrutiny Committee's review as evidenced in Appendix 1 and with regard to the developments discussed above. As a result, it is recommended that the Committee consider and comment on the progress made on implementing the recommendations and the developments set out in paragraph 2.1.

#### **STUART GALLIMORE**

Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care

Tel. no: 01273 481274

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### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Action Plan – commentary by the Children's Services Department on progress with implementing the recommendations

Appendix 2 - People Scrutiny Committee – Scrutiny Review of Support for UASC

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PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN (UASC) – ACTION PLAN				
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION		DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	UPDATE NOTES	TIMESCALE
R1	<p>The Children's Services Department to explore the potential for linking local UASC with the Hastings and Rother Buddy Project (HBRP) and, subject to the outcome of its work with the HRBP, to assess the feasibility of developing similar provision elsewhere within East Sussex in partnership with the voluntary sector.</p>	<p>The link with HBRP has been established following the Scrutiny Committee Review. Currently the project is only appropriate for young people aged 18 years or over. Children's Services will explore with HBRP how to use their experience, knowledge and resources in this field to develop something similar for younger children across East Sussex.</p>	<p>Children's Services have explored ways to replicate the support offered by HBRP.</p> <p>Links have been made with the ECIG (Eastbourne Cultural Involvement Group) to explore ways that young people in Eastbourne can be introduced to, and supported by, local community groups.</p> <p>Work has been undertaken with Diversity Resource International (DRI) who have been able to provide mentoring and one to one support to young people. This was funded by DRI themselves.</p> <p>Work has also been undertaken with older Care Leavers to act as mentors to young people who have had less time to establish support networks of their own in the UK. This has had mixed success largely as a result of the limited numbers of young people with the legal framework of Leave to Remain (just under half of the young people have been with East Sussex for less than a year).</p> <p>The UASC Social Group was developed to provide opportunities for</p>	Completed

			<p>young people to develop social networks and meet professionals who work within the community.</p> <p>There are plans to develop a young person's 'arrival video' which will feature current UASC speaking in their own language about what it means to be looked after in East Sussex.</p>	
R2	<p>The Children's Services Department to assess the feasibility of developing a social space for UASC in East Sussex where they can meet with their peers and build their confidence, support networks and social skills.</p>	<p>Throughout the summer period the UASC team piloted a 'drop in' group for young people. The 'drop in' provided a social space but was also attended by guest speakers including professionals from Health, Police and the Refugee Council. The Children's Service is now planning how to best roll the pilot out on a permanent basis.</p>	<p>The social group became a permanent group running once a month in Hastings. The group was well attended and valued by young people.</p> <p>UAS young people were also encouraged to attend other groups run by the Through Care Team and it was wonderful to see a number of young people attend the Through Care Christmas party in 2019.</p> <p>The group had to stop unfortunately as a result of COVID.</p> <p>During the summer, small groups were run in Alexander Park in Hastings, again offering social opportunities for young people. These were well received.</p> <p>In the early autumn, plans were made to re-establish a small group for UASC who had arrived during the pandemic. The premise of the group was to give advice and support about life in the UK with guest speakers however stricter COVID restrictions introduced in early</p>	Complete

			<p>winter prevented the group from being established.</p> <p>The Through Care Participation Worker is currently exploring “virtual” meetings for UASC and Care Leavers.</p>	
R3	<p>With a view to increasing the amount and diversity of accommodation provision, the Children’s Services Department is to further explore the options for raising awareness amongst local communities of the specific accommodation needs of UASC. This to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of advertising campaigns to include an element which highlights the specific needs of UASC.</li> <li>• Assisting Members to foster connections with different sections of their local communities.</li> <li>• More cultural awareness training for existing foster carers and supported accommodation providers which seeks to address this need.</li> </ul>	<p>The UASC team will work in partnership with fostering colleagues to review local recruitment processes and learn from other Fostering Services on how best to raise awareness of the needs of this specific group of young people.</p> <p>The service will develop a toolkit to assist Members locally.</p> <p>A training programme will be developed by the UASC team for supported accommodation providers.</p> <p>The UASC team will have a direct input to foster carer training and develop a bespoke programme to meet the local need. This will include some input from the young people already cared for by ESCC.</p>	<p>Training to foster carers has been developed and delivered by the UASC team.</p> <p>The response from foster carers highlighted some learning needs for carers and prompted a discussion with fostering colleagues about the best ways to raise awareness and address prejudices and fears about this group of young people. Review on actions is due in April 2021.</p> <p>Training is to be given to Supervising Social Workers who support foster carers and more information about UASC will be incorporated into the Skills to Foster Training.</p> <p>The UASC team are able to offer country specific advice about young people to foster carers with individual workers taking responsibility for being “experts” on different parts of the world (those areas where the most young people come from).</p> <p>Following discussion with the ECIG, a commitment was made by them to raise awareness of the need for more</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>To be Reviewed with Fostering April 2021</p> <p>April 21</p> <p>April 21</p>

			<p>diverse foster placements in East Sussex and this was taken back to their members to consider in Nov 2020.</p> <p>A written programme has been developed to support all accommodation providers to help the UAS young people to understand life in the UK. This covers topics including the Police in the UK, relationships and consent, how to look after your physical and mental health, keeping safe online and being safe around drugs and alcohol.</p> <p>There has been considerable work done with accommodation providers across the county to ensure that there is a good standard of accommodation available to young people. In addition to fostering, the following has taken place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explored Supported Lodgings with a specific speciality in supporting UASCs. One placement has been recruited.</li> <li>• Increased semi-independent provision across the county, particularly in Eastbourne, for those young people who struggle to live in family homes or for whom a family home is inappropriate.</li> <li>• The service has worked closely with a specialist therapeutic provider in Eastbourne to ensure those young people with</li> </ul>	Complete
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			<p>the most significant therapeutic needs are being looked after appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed a pathway to enable move on options for those young people who are over 18 and have not received a decision from the Home Office and therefore have no independent source of income. This enables young people to develop appropriate independent living skills, gives them the opportunity to feel they are progressing and reduces costs to ESCC by way of reduced support costs.</li> </ul>	
R4	<p>The Children's Services Department to explore the options for increasing access to work experience opportunities for UASC. This to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessing the potential for the Department to raise awareness of the work experience needs of UASC with schools and colleges and to review the current levels of work experience placements for UASC.</li> <li>Members to support this process by using their local leadership position to help raise</li> </ul>	<p>The UASC team has developed links with the work experience coordinator in order to offer wider opportunities to this group of young people. The experiences of the current UASC cohort will inform the offer going forward. This will better equip potential providers with the requirements of this particular group of young people, including issues such as the limitations imposed by their immigration status etc.</p> <p>The UASC team will include support to Members in the toolkit.</p>	<p>There has been limited uptake of work experience opportunities by young people. This seems primarily to be as a result of language barriers both on the part of young people and from work experience providers.</p> <p>COVID has also had an impact on the roll out of this and there are plans to revisit it once restrictions allow.</p>	ongoing

	awareness of the work experience needs of UASC and to help foster more work experience placements with public sector organisations and the voluntary sector.			
R5	<p>The Children's Services Department to explore how an increased early focus on English as an additional language could be provided to UASC. This to include a review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department's guidance to UASC and officers on this area; and</li> <li>• The potential feasibility of providing intensive language courses which could include commissioning accommodation providers to deliver intensive support packages within the first 4-6 weeks of arrival.</li> </ul>	<p>An Education Specialist has been appointed into the UASC team and will develop guidance which will focus on the provision of this support to young people.</p> <p>The UASC team has developed a close partnership with the East Sussex EALS service to deliver English language lessons to UASC where appropriate.</p> <p>The department has identified a charity called ETC who operate an English Language School in Hastings. Over the summer period they have been able to run small group sessions for UASC. The UASC team and ETC will collaborate and explore if there is any wider support that could be provided to young people, particularly in relation to spontaneous arrivals.</p>	<p>The Education Specialist in the team, has continued to offer support and guidance around the education of young people, building good working relationships with the East Sussex College Group and with BHASVIC in Brighton and Hove</p> <p>Part of the Education Specialist's work has been to support college staff to understand some of the barriers to learning that are specific to this group of young people. Their level of trauma and previous experiences had not previously been fully appreciated by college staff. This has also been particularly pertinent given the shift to online learning for young people who have not had previous experience of using this sort of technology.</p> <p>There are plans to develop training for the Safeguarding Partnership around this issue.</p> <p>The greatest demand for places is in the East Sussex College group and they are struggling to meet the needs of</p>	complete

		<p>A mini competition exercise will be instigated through a framework agreement for providers to deliver intensive packages of support via contractual arrangements.</p>	<p>the young people as a result of the sharp increase in numbers. The Education Specialist has worked with the colleges to explore options for offering English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at different sites across the county. Currently Hastings campus has a significantly more developed offer than the Eastbourne site.</p> <p>However, the college is able to offer a rolling programme where it is possible to enrol new students every 14 week. When young people arrive at a time when they are unable to enrol, the International College (part of the East Sussex College group) and an online education provider 'TLC Live', can provide bespoke education.</p> <p>A formal mini tendering exercise has still to be done.</p> <p>Working relationships with the English as an Additional Language Service have remained strong and the service has been very flexible in their approach to working with young people. They have been able to offer value for money and to provide lessons in a way that are accessible.</p>	
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R6	<p>To help expand the range of support available in East Sussex, the Children's Services Department is to develop a UASC toolkit for Members. The toolkit should provide guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The key challenges facing UASC such as accommodation needs, opportunities for social activities, access to work experience and English language support</li> <li>• What assistance is currently available for UASC</li> <li>• How Members can develop links with key organisations and communities.</li> <li>• The process for referring potential leads to the Department.</li> </ul>	<p>The UASC team will develop a toolkit for Members drawing on local expertise and the input of the Principal Social Worker for the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration.</p>	<p>A Draft version will be circulated for comment .</p>	
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# **Scrutiny Review Board**

## **Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children**

### **Report by the Review Board**

Councillor Kathryn Field (Chair)

Councillor Francis Whetstone

Councillor Trevor Webb

**People Scrutiny Committee – 19 September 2019**

**Cabinet – 12 November 2019**

**Full Council – 3 December 2019**

# **The report of the Scrutiny Review of Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)**

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## Recommendations

Recommendation	Page
1 The Children's Services Department to explore the potential for linking local UASC with the Hastings and Rother Buddy Project (HRBP) and, subject to the outcome of its work with the HRBP, to assess the feasibility of developing similar provision elsewhere within East Sussex in partnership with the voluntary sector.	9
2 The Children's Services Department to assess the feasibility of developing in East Sussex a social space for UASC where they can meet with their peers and build their confidence, support networks and social skills.	10
3 With a view to increasing both the amount and diversity of accommodation provision, the Children's Services Department to explore further the options for raising awareness amongst local communities of the specific accommodation needs of UASC. This to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing its advertising campaigns to include an element which highlights the specific needs of UASC.</li> <li>• assisting Members to foster connections with different sections of their local communities.</li> <li>• more cultural awareness training for existing foster carers and supported accommodation providers which seeks to address this need.</li> </ul>	11
4 The Children's Services Department to explore the options for increasing access to work experience opportunities for UASC. This to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessing the potential for the Department to raise awareness of the work experience needs of UASC with schools and colleges and to review the current levels of work experience placements for UASC.</li> <li>• Members to support this process by using their local leadership position to help raise awareness of the work experience needs of UASC and to help foster more work experience placements with public sector organisations and the voluntary sector.</li> </ul>	12
5 The Children's Services Department to explore how an increased early focus on English as an additional language could be provided to UASC. This to include a review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Department's guidance to UASC and officers on this area; and</li> <li>• the potential feasibility of providing intensive language courses which could include commissioning accommodation providers to deliver intensive support packages within the first 4-6 weeks of arrival.</li> </ul>	13
6 To help expand the range of support available in East Sussex, the Children's Services Department to develop a UASC toolkit for Members The toolkit to provide guidance on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the key challenges facing UASC – such as accommodation needs, opportunities for social activities, access to work experience and English language support;</li> <li>• what assistance is currently available for UASC;</li> <li>• how Members can develop links with key organisations and communities.</li> <li>• the process for referring potential leads to the Department.</li> </ul>	14

## Objectives and Scope of the Review

1. Supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) is a challenging area of responsibility for the Children's Services Department. The children and young people in this group are designated Looked After Children (LAC). They therefore have the same range of support needs as British-born children and the Council has the same range of obligations.
2. However, UASC also have an additional range of needs which makes supporting them an even more complex and challenging process. These challenges include often having little or no spoken English and needing specialist therapy (as they may have suffered trauma in their country of origin and/or during their journey to the United Kingdom). Very often UASC will also arrive with little background information.
3. In seeking to meet the specific needs of these children and young people, the department must also deal with a range of significant operational and financial challenges. For example, ensuring the council has sufficient capacity to cope with UASC arrivals is difficult as, by their very nature, such incidents can be highly unpredictable. Whilst some arrivals are known about in advance, (see the National Transfer Scheme in para 17), many are 'out of the blue' discoveries. A particular concern for the department in this respect is the impact of a discovery of a large group of UASC. Such spontaneous arrivals (as they usually referred to) have occurred in East Sussex. For example, in November 2018 11 Vietnamese UASC were discovered in a lorry at the port of Newhaven. Finding appropriate and immediate support for such a significant number of vulnerable young people at short notice was a major challenge for the Department.
4. Setting aside the operational challenges, spontaneous arrivals also create additional financial pressures for the department. This is because of a funding gap between the grant allocation from Government per young person and the actual cost that is required to support each UASC. Consequently, a sudden increase in UASC numbers could have significant financial implications for the authority and its ability to support these vulnerable children and young people.
5. Another area of challenge for the department is the current insufficient level of experienced providers of supported housing, supported lodgings and foster placements for UASC within the Council's provision. As a result, the council currently places a significant number of UASC in either 'out of county' provision or in other expensive in-county provision.
6. All these factors make assessing the needs of these children and young people and providing them with appropriate support especially challenging.
7. In the light of these and other challenges the People Scrutiny Committee agreed on 27 November 2018 to undertake a scrutiny review of support for UASC. The goal of the review would be to investigate the potential for developing realistic, practical recommendations that would assist with supporting UASC.
8. Following some initial scoping work, the Committee agreed to explore the following lines of enquiry:
  - **What scope is there for developing strategies that would help both increase and diversify the capacity and range of providers of accommodation for UASC in East Sussex?** Such an increase in capacity would have the benefit of leaving the department better placed to deal with a spontaneous arrival incident involving significant numbers of UASC. It would also increase the likelihood that UASC could be placed in accommodation which has a better fit to the individual's cultural background and help reduce the number of out of county placements. In looking at this area, the Committee were aware of the financial pressures on the service. However, given the fact that the overall financial package of support available to support UASC is driven by policy at the national level, the Committee agreed with the Scoping Board's suggestion that it would be more effective for the review to focus on capacity issues (as this in turn could help mitigate some of the financial pressures).
  - **What could be done to help deliver improved opportunities for social activities and mentoring support?** Improvements in these areas could help address some of the mental health and other emotional and wellbeing needs of UASC. Other important areas of support which the Board agreed to explore included the potential to further develop practical opportunities, such as work experience options and support with learning English.

- **The role of the local Member** was also considered. Members have a well-developed knowledge of their local communities and have a network of contacts which include local businesses, organisations and community groups. There is potential therefore for Members to help with raising awareness and support for UASC in their local communities.

9. The Board also received evidence relating to the legal restrictions placed on asylum-seekers regarding paid employment whilst their asylum claim is processed. The Board heard that these paid employment restrictions are often viewed negatively by UASC. The Board were also aware of a wider concern about the length of time it can take to process asylum claims and that there is a 'lift the ban' campaign. However, the Board recognise that this is ultimately an issue that affects the whole of the country and is not something the Council can directly influence and is also not part of the agreed lines of enquiry for the review. The Board therefore agreed to focus its attention on more local issues.

10. This report firstly provides an overview of the national and local context within which support for UASC is provided in East Sussex. It then outlines the findings and recommendations of the Review Board.

## Background

### *Definitions and responsibilities*

11. Asylum-seekers are people who have fled their home country and are seeking refuge in another country. They are referred to as asylum-seekers whilst their application is being determined. Children who are seeking asylum and who arrived without a family member or other responsible adult are usually referred to as Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).

12. The Home Office defines an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child as a person who, at the time of making the asylum application:

- is, or (if there is no documentary evidence) appears to be, under eighteen;
- is applying for asylum in his or her own right;
- has no adult relative or guardian to turn to in this country; and
- is fleeing persecution from their own country.

13. At the national government level, the Home Office is responsible for processing and making decisions on asylum applications. In terms of process, whilst an asylum claim is ongoing, UASC are given the status of "UASC Leave". With this immigration status the young person can participate in education but is not allowed to work. The Home Office decision about a young person's claim can result in an offer of either "Refugee Status" (for 5 years or until 17.5 years age) or Discretionary Leave until age 18. At 18 the young person must make a fresh claim to remain in the UK indefinitely (indefinite leave to remain).

14. At the level of local government, local authorities are responsible for the care of this vulnerable group. Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) imposes a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area and who are in need. Children seeking asylum who have no responsible adult to care for them (UASC) are considered to meet this 'in need' criterion. As UASC are LAC under Section 20 of the Children Act (1989) they are eligible for support in the same way as any other child in the care of the council. This duty of care remains in place until the young person is 21 and can be extended to 25 if the young person is in education.

15. With regard to local authorities, of particular importance is the role of elected Members. This report is the product of the work of the three Members drawn from the People Scrutiny Committee. The Members of this group have a keen interest in this area and have built up over time their experience and knowledge of many of the issues considered in this report. However, this report is highly relevant to all fifty Members of East Sussex County Council. This is because, when elected, all councillors take on the role of 'corporate parent' to children who are looked after by their local authority. This means all Members have a duty to take an interest in the wellbeing and development of all LAC, including UASC. For example, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 defines, for the first time in law, the role of Corporate Parents:

*(a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;*

*(b) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;*

*(c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;*

*(d) to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;*

*(e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;*

*(f) for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;*

*(g) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.*

*(Definition set out in Part 1 Chapter 1 'Corporate Parenting Principles' of the 2017 Act as cited in the Local Government Association's 'Corporate parenting resource pack')*

16. With the above in mind, the Review Board encourages all Members to engage with this report and have particular regard to the suggestions set out in Recommendation 6.

### ***How do UASC arrive in the UK?***

17. There are various routes by which unaccompanied children can arrive in the UK:

- **Spontaneous arrival:** Those young people who are discovered by Police or Border Force staff having arrived in the UK illegally (for example those found on lorries coming into Newhaven port). East Sussex County Council becomes responsible for these young people if they are found in the county.
- **Dublin iii regulation:** This EU law addresses where asylum should be claimed. If an unaccompanied minor has a family member in a member country, they can apply to join them and make their asylum claim in that country. A family member includes siblings.
- **Dubs amendment:** This relates to the UK's commitment to the resettlement of children in refugee camps in Europe.
- **Vulnerable children's resettlement scheme:** A scheme introduced in 2016 to resettle vulnerable children from the Middle East and North Africa in response to the Syrian Conflict.
- **National Transfer Scheme (NTS).** The location of UASC across the UK is not evenly spread and local authorities with "entry points" such as ports and airports have a disproportionate number of UASC in their areas. The NTS was set up to manage this with the aim of dispersing young people more evenly across the country. Local Authorities that signed up for the scheme agreed to take unaccompanied children up to 0.07% of the total child population.

### ***Why do UASC come to the United Kingdom?***

18. Many of the young people who come to the UK as unaccompanied minors are trying to escape conflict and persecution in their own country. In Eritrea, for example, many male children are forced into a brutal army regime. Conflicts in Afghanistan and Syria have resulted in many children being displaced and separated from their families. Some of these children will come to the UK as UASC.



19. Some children and young people are trafficked into the country by criminal gangs who intend to force them to work in places such as cannabis farms or nail bars; some are sold into sex work. A number of UASC report being “sold” to traffickers in their country of origin. Some children’s journeys are arranged by their families. The children and their families believe they are being smuggled into the UK to look for a better life, only to find that they need to “work” indefinitely to pay off the family’s debt. A small percentage of UASC come to escape poverty in their own country or because they believe they will have better life chances in the UK compared to their own country.

## ***The situation in East Sussex***

20. In East Sussex there is an estimated child population of 106,000 which means that the government figure for UASC that ESCC should care for is 74 (with regard to the NTS target discussed above in paragraph 17). At the time of producing this report, the Children’s Services Department provide support for 71 young people who have sought asylum and are either currently under 18 years of age or who are now designated as care leavers (former UASC).

21. Of the 71 young people, 40 are under 18-year olds, and distributed amongst the following two age groups:

- 11 young people aged 13-15
- 29 young people aged 16-17

The breakdown of placements for this group are as follows:

- 10 in foster care locally (mixture of agency and in house)
- 4 in foster care out of county
- 2 in supported lodgings placements
- 20 in Supported Living accommodation
- 4 are currently missing. To clarify, UASC are a group of young people who are at high risk of going missing from care. This can be due to a distrust of professionals as a result of experiences in their countries of origin. It can also be because individual UASC are threatened or coerced into leaving local authority care to go to work to pay the ‘debt’ owed for their travel (if they were trafficked into the UK).

22. Of the remaining 31 young people who are 18 years old and over, 22 have ‘leave to remain’ status and 9 have ‘without leave’ status. The young people in this group are living in the following range of accommodation options:

- 11 are in Supported Living (see paragraph 24 for more detail).
- 7 are in Supported Living outside of East Sussex.
- 2 are in foster care – under “staying put” guidance (staying put refers to the situation where young people are able to remain with their foster carers after the age of 18).
- 11 are in their own accommodation.

23. As the area of asylum and immigration is complex and requires specialised knowledge, the Children’s Services Department created a specialist service within the Through Care Service to focus specifically on UASC. This new service became fully operational at the end of November 2018. In the years prior to this new service, UASC were allocated a worker across the wider children’s social work service, which sometimes led to an inconsistent approach to supporting the children and young people.

## ***Types of placement***

24. As UASC are LAC they must be placed in accommodation accordance with section 22C of the Children Act 1989. There is also statutory guidance on the placement of LAC set out in the *Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review*. This guidance states that a range of placement options may be suitable, which include:

- **Residential Care Home:** This is a placement within an Ofsted registered children’s home.
- **Foster Care:** Foster care is a way for children to be cared for within a family setting when their own family is unable to care for them. It is considered temporary in that there is no legal split from the family (as with adoption), but can be long term where this is in the best interests of the child.

- **Supported Lodgings:** Supported Lodgings are a placement whereby a young person can live in a family home, but with a lower level of monitoring than in foster care. The young person will have their own room but will share the kitchen and bathroom facilities with the family or householder (referred to as 'host'). A host can be a family, couple or single person. The recruitment, scrutiny and approval of a host's accommodation is provided by the local authority or by an independent organisation.
- **Shared housing:** Shared housing is where a young person lives in a multiple occupancy house which is shared with other young people to provide peer support, with additional visiting support. This type of accommodation allows a young person to live with independence but usually with visiting support to provide that additional level of care and support.
- **Supported accommodation:** Supported accommodation is a shared living space with multiple rooms and facilities. Supported accommodation typically is staffed 24/7 and these staff are trained in providing support and care to vulnerable young people. The young people staying in supported accommodation have a large amount of independence and therefore cook, manage their own money, do laundry and come and go as they please.

25. In its *'What is a suitable placement for an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child?'* guidance document, the DfE advises local authorities that:

*"Good supported accommodation will provide a supportive environment in which unaccompanied asylum-seeking children can learn to develop and grow. This can serve to nurture a sense of belonging – strengthening their confidence and trust in adults – and providing them with the emotional stability needed to develop positive friendships and engage with their wider community. House meetings can provide an opportunity to encourage young people to eat together and share, whilst also providing them with a forum to air any frustrations within the community and to teach them resolution skills."*

## Findings and Recommendations

### **Mentoring Support**

26. The Review Board was informed that, even with expert support, the process of adapting to life in the UK will often be challenging and bewildering for UASC. On one level there are complex legal processes, such as the asylum process. However, UASC also face barriers which can prevent them from successfully participating in a range of everyday tasks and activities. For example, understanding how and where to shop and how to access services can be a daunting prospect for a potentially traumatised young person who is not familiar with UK customs and social expectations and who may speak little or no English.

27. The Children's Services Department informed the Board that all UASC are provided with support which aims to help them develop their knowledge and confidence levels with respect to the type of everyday activities discussed above. Expert support is also provided regarding more complex matters such as navigating the asylum process. However, the department also indicated to the Board that there is a need to further develop the mentoring support it offers to UASC. More specifically, the department wants new UASC to be able to access enhanced support from volunteers, not only on practical matters like how to access services and deal with processes, but also advice on how to engage with local people and participate in activities which are both fun and interesting. Such activities are important as they build knowledge and experience of life in the UK. Such support would be particularly valuable were it to be drawn from former refugees who have settled successfully in the UK.

28. The Board therefore explored how the goal of providing an enhanced mentoring offer of this kind could be delivered. Members were particularly interested therefore in the support being provided by an initiative called the 'Hastings and Rother Buddy Scheme'. The scheme is run by 'Hastings Community of Sanctuary', a community group which provides support to asylum-seekers. The primary aim of the project is to assist newly arrived asylum-seekers with their integration into local communities. This is achieved by pairing families with a 'buddy' who has experience navigating the asylum process and who can provide support, friendship and guidance. The Board was also informed of other schemes in the county which aim to provide similar support. As things stand, however, this support is only currently available to adult asylum-seekers.

29. Members considered this gap in provision and whether there is scope to expand the types of scheme discussed above to include an expanded mentoring offer. The department agreed that further improvements in this area would be beneficial as it would not only provide increased access to practical advice and guidance, it would also help address the emotional and wellbeing needs of UASC and aid their integration. However, officers also indicated that the following factors should be taken into account:

- That it would be prudent to first conduct a pilot scheme. The department would then be able to use the evidence generated by the pilot to help inform a decision as to whether to explore with other providers the potential for expanding their schemes to include a mentoring offer for UASC.
- That for such initiatives to flourish, support from the voluntary sector would be essential and that stronger links with communities from different cultural backgrounds would greatly assist with this goal.
- That the department would value the support of Members to help generate public understanding and interest in supporting the mentoring scheme.

30. With the above in mind therefore, the Board discussed Members' roles both as community leaders and corporate parents. The Board agreed that Members will often be better placed than officers to both help raise awareness of the needs of UASC in their local communities and to make introductions with organisations and individuals who might be interested in assisting. However, the Board also agreed that to enable them to effectively assist, Members would need some support from the Department. The Board discussed therefore the development of a UASC toolkit which Members could refer to as needed. The toolkit could include information relating to the mentoring role and detail about what provision is available in the local area. The support Members could potentially provide to UASC is discussed in more detail later in this report.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**The Children's Services Department to explore the potential for linking local UASC with the Hastings and Rother Buddy Project (HBRP) and, subject to the outcome of its work with the HBRP, to assess the feasibility of developing similar provision elsewhere within East Sussex in partnership with the voluntary sector.**

### ***Access to social activities and other opportunities that promote wellbeing***

31. UASC are provided with access to the same range of social activities as other LAC. However, and given their unique challenges, the Board heard that UASC can still experience feelings of loneliness and isolation. For example, compelling evidence was provided by two former UASC witnesses (referred to in this report as YP1 and YP2). YP2 discussed how he 'often feels lonely and that he misses his family and cries when he thinks about home'.

32. Findings regarding feelings of isolation and loneliness amongst UASC and its impact have also been identified at the national level. For example, in 'Children's Voices – a review of evidence on the subjective wellbeing of children subject to immigration control in England (2017)', the Children's Commissioner found that:

*"Establishing positive relationships in England was found to be a crucial determinant of migrant children's wellbeing, particularly for those who were on their own in the UK."*

33. The report then moves on to discuss how negative relationships were found to significantly undermine wellbeing, whereas positive relationships were viewed as important sources of support which strengthened self-esteem and enabled children and young people in this group to cope with stress and anxiety.

34. With the above in mind, the Board considered whether more could be done to help provide opportunities for UASC to form positive friendships with their peers and other young people from the local community. The department informed the Board that some local authorities have developed provision which aims to address this need. For example, the Board discussed a project based in Brighton called 'The Global Social Club', which is run by the refugee and asylum seeker support charity organisation, 'The Hummingbird Project'. The club, which was established in autumn 2017, is for 14-25 year olds and meets weekly. It provides a venue which allows young people from all backgrounds to meet and expand their social networks, increase their intercultural understanding, build their self-esteem, confidence, resilience and creative skills.

35. The club is run by a core group of six volunteers, although there are a significant number of other volunteers who, in addition to the club's central goal of providing a social space, also provide emotional, counselling and medical support, as well as legal advice. The club also offers a homework club whereby young people can receive educational support from a qualified teacher. Whilst the club is run by volunteers, some funding is provided by Brighton and Hove City Council. The Board also heard that, due to the trauma many of the attendees have faced, a key challenge for the club is to ensure that these young people feel comfortable and able to speak about their experiences (with there being no pressure to do so).

36. The Board explored the possibility of developing similar provision in East Sussex. Members agreed that providing a safe, nurturing environment where UASC would feel comfortable to meet and develop friendships would potentially help improve their emotional wellbeing. Such a venue could help UASC build their confidence and help them form connections with local sporting, cultural or community activities. The Board was informed that there are, for example, football clubs being set up across the region which welcome asylum-seekers.

37. Evidence from officers supported the view that the development of a hub which provides a safe social space for UASC to meet would potentially be beneficial and indicated that the department has some limited resource which would enable it to provide a venue for this where there is greatest need. However, the department also stated that, whilst it could potentially facilitate the development of provision of this kind, the delivery of the support at any venue(s) would be largely reliant on volunteers. Officers also indicated that the support of Members in helping to generate interest from volunteers from the local community and organisations would be welcome.

38. The Board agreed that there is scope for Members to assist with raising the profile of UASC and their needs and helping to identify volunteers who could help deliver support at social space of the kind discussed above. However, whilst it accepted that Members are well-placed to make connections with their local communities, the Board agreed that Members would need some minimal support from the Department. For example, with information about the agreed remit of the social space and how Members could refer potential volunteers on. As a result, the Board concluded that such information could also be added to the Member's toolkit which is discussed at Recommendation 6.

## **Recommendation 2**

**The Children's Services Department to assess the feasibility of developing in East Sussex a social space for UASC where they can meet with their peers and build their confidence, support networks and social skills.**

## ***Capacity and diversity of accommodation***

39. A major challenge for the department is ensuring it meets its duty to provide sufficient accommodation for *all* LAC. However, the group which is the most difficult to find appropriate accommodation for are adolescents and within that group, UASC are especially challenging. This is because, as set out in the Council's 'Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children 2017 to 2020':

- UASC sometimes require a very high level of supervision and liaison with a range of authorities in order to keep them safe and prevent them being exploited.
- For LAC who are not UASC, the department are normally able to provide potential carers with a detailed history and picture of their needs. This is not the case with many newly arrived UASC.

40. Officers informed the Board of the efforts made to secure placements that address the specific cultural and other needs of this group. However, and despite best efforts, children and young people in this group are much more likely to be placed outside of East Sussex than other LAC. The latest figures indicate that 35% of new placements of UASC were out of county compared to 11% of other LAC.

41. In the case of spontaneous arrivals, the challenge is even greater. The Board heard evidence from two UASC witnesses regarding their initial experience of the accommodation provided. Whilst YP2 was very positive about his current supported lodging, he felt the initial placement was not suitable for him. However, since living in his new supported lodgings, YP2 has become happier and feels that ‘..having a suitable living situation was important for the overall happiness of young people’.

42. In response, officers informed Members that although some young people may have some initial difficulties with their placements, the department must prioritise a young person’s safety and well-being over other factors. This is a particular issue where it is necessary to source a placement in the context of some UASC arriving without any prior warning and the department needing to secure a place as quickly as possible.

43. In terms of trying to increase the capacity within East Sussex, the department informed the Board that it had tried block-booking entire sections of accommodation to decrease costs. Unfortunately, this had only provided a minimal reduction and so was not an effective solution. The Board heard therefore that the key challenge is finding both value for money and experienced providers of supported housing.

44. Members also heard that supported accommodation is not Ofsted inspected. Instead providers are monitored by District and Borough Councils as they fall under the category of ‘houses of multiple occupancy’. There is also a geographic element to this challenge because most providers are situated in the urban coastal strip. There is a need therefore to develop further provision in other parts of the county which could help reduce the numbers of UASC placed out of county. Ultimately the department had tried a range of different tactics to increase its accommodation portfolio, but this had had mixed results.

45. The Board were concerned about the number of ‘out of county’ placements the council is forced to make and fully supported the aim of diversifying and increasing accommodation options. The Board therefore identified the potential for Members to assist by helping to forge links with different communities within their divisions. This could include conversations with voluntary groups, religious community leaders and the Black and Minority Ethnicity (BME) community to help raise awareness of the needs of UASC. This would not only potentially increase the number of accommodation options, it could also help deliver a more diverse range of accommodation that has a better chance of offering placements that more closely fit the faith and/or cultural background of individual UASC (if that is what they felt would help them). The Board also agreed that the department should review its approach to advertising for carers to see whether it could be adapted to better engage with the different communities discussed above. With a view to seeing if improvements could be made, the Board also concluded that the cultural training provided to existing foster carers and supported accommodation providers should be reviewed.

### **Recommendation 3**

**With a view to increasing both the amount and diversity of accommodation provision, the Children’s Services Department to explore further the options for raising awareness amongst local communities of the specific accommodation needs of UASC. This to include:**

- **reviewing its advertising campaigns to include an element which highlights the specific needs of UASC.**
- **assisting Members to foster connections with different sections of their local communities.**
- **more cultural awareness training for existing foster carers and supported accommodation providers which seeks to address this need.**

### ***Work experience***

46. Work experience provides young people with a valuable introduction to the work environment and it can help students decide on future career paths or study options. It can also help develop a young person’s employability skills which is consistently identified by employers as being a high priority.

47. However, arranging work experience for UASC is more complex than for other young people. This is because, apart from the issues relating to their unique background circumstances, there are legal duties that restrict the scope of such activities. For example, in its 'Permission to work and volunteering for asylum seekers', the Home Office states that *'Children under the age of 18 should not be given permission to take employment. However, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children or children dependent on their parents are entitled to secondary education whilst their claim is being considered. They are also able to take part in work experience placements or training if that forms part of their education'*. Furthermore, UASC are entitled to volunteer, but only for charities or public sector organisations, not private organisations.

48. With the above restrictions in mind the Board were informed that despite efforts to provide such opportunities, there is a need to identify further work experience options for UASC in East Sussex. As a result, the department were therefore seeking support from Members to help it identify such opportunities from within local communities.

49. In terms of the process of organising work experience, the Board were informed that placements can be organised by the schools and colleges themselves or they can purchase support via East Sussex County Council's Work Experience Service (WEX) traded service offer. The WEX service provides access to a range of work experience placements for pupils and includes a bespoke placement matching service for vulnerable learners which ensures they are placed in safe and appropriate work placements. Support is provided for both the learner and the employer. The Board heard that this service would be potentially applicable to UASC. The Board were also informed that the service is offered to schools and colleges who purchase the service for specific cohorts of pupils and it is a matter for individual schools and colleges to decide whether they want to purchase support for any UASC within their school population.

50. The Board accepted that the legal restrictions placed on UASC, together with their unique circumstances, makes delivering work experience a significant challenge. The Board also agreed that there is a role for local Members who could help make connections with public bodies and voluntary sector organisations who might be open to providing appropriate work experience placements.

51. The Board also noted that at the time of its consideration of the evidence for this area, no UASC were accessing a work experience placement via the WEX traded service offer. Furthermore, it was not clear to the Board whether any UASC had been offered work experience placements via schools who make their own arrangements. Given this finding, the Board recommended that the Department consider exploring whether more could be done to raise awareness of the work experience needs of UASC with schools and colleges, so that they are aware of the legal framework for work experience for this group and what support is available to them to help ensure placements are arranged.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**The Children's Services Department to explore the options for increasing access to work experience opportunities for UASC. This to include:**

- **assessing the potential for the Department to raise awareness of the work experience needs of UASC with schools and colleges and to review the current levels of work experience placements for UASC.**
- **Members to support this process by using their local leadership position to help raise awareness of the work experience needs of UASC and to help foster more work experience placements with public sector organisations and the voluntary sector.**

### ***English as an Additional Language support***

52. As discussed elsewhere in this report, UASC often arrive with little or no proficiency in English. In this context, the Board heard evidence about the importance of developing this fundamental skill. For example, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration states in its *'Integration not Demonisation'* report that:

*"The ability to understand and speak English to a reasonable standard is a prerequisite for meaningful engagement with most British people and the key to full participation in British society."*

53. Even those with language skills which are sufficient for everyday conversations will still find their progress inhibited if they do not become competent users of the language. For example, the Board were interested to hear about the experience of YP1.

54. This young person explained that when he first arrived in the UK, he was keen to start working and earning money as soon as possible. He had at that time only very basic English language skills, but these were sufficient to enable him to work as a labourer on construction sites in London. However, YP1 eventually became disillusioned and concluded that he would not be able to progress without developing his English. He therefore regretted not fully engaging with the English language support that was offered to him when he first arrived. In conclusion, YP1 informed the Board that he wished he had been more strongly encouraged to focus on learning English as an immediate priority. This view was shared by YP2.

55. The Board noted the negative practical consequences for YP1 of not developing his English language skills. For example, when he later decided to pursue a career, YP1 was unable to enrol on his preferred college course because his English was not of the required standard.

56. Officers informed the Board that all UASC are provided with English language support. However, they noted the comments of YP1 and undertook to review the approach to the advice provided to newly arrived UASC regarding the importance of an early focus on English tuition. The department also informed the Board that it is aware of local authorities where accommodation providers are commissioned to deliver intensive support packages during the first 4-6 weeks after arrival and that these packages of support include intensive English language tuition. Having said that, the department also stated that providing access to English language tuition is a further area of challenge, as there is a shortage of English as an Additional Language (EAL) teachers.

57. With regard to the situation at local educational institutions, the Board heard that whilst colleges are often helpful and do their best to accommodate individuals, if a new UASC arrives mid-term or the course is already at capacity, finding a suitable alternative can be difficult and expensive. With regard to compulsory school age children, the Board were informed that schools are entitled to use the Pupil Premium to fund EAL tuition. However, there is a particular challenge relating to UASC who are in Year 11. This is because integrating an asylum-seeking young person in these circumstances can be very challenging for the school, as the cohort they are joining is fully focused on their GCSE exams.

58. In response to the evidence received, the Board concluded that it is essential UASC prioritise developing their English language skills. The Board had particular regard to what could be done to focus on this need within the first six months of arrival. The Board agreed therefore that the feasibility of providing intensive language courses for newly arrived UASC should be explored. The Board also concluded that the department should review its guidance to officers and UASC on this area to see whether more could be done to encourage an early focus on developing proficiency in English. In reaching this conclusion, the Board noted the challenges facing the Department regarding the availability of EAL tutors. The Board agreed therefore that Members could potentially assist by helping to identify individuals and organisations in their local communities who would be able to provide EAL support for UASC.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The Children's Services Department to explore how an increased early focus on English as an additional language could be provided to UASC. This to include a review of:**

- **the Department's guidance to UASC and officers on this area; and**
- **the potential feasibility of providing intensive language courses which could include commissioning accommodation providers to deliver intensive support packages within the first 4-6 weeks of arrival.**



## **Member engagement and support for UASC**

59. The Board heard throughout this review that there is a need to raise awareness amongst the public and local organisations about the specific needs of UASC. The Board noted that there are 'mixed attitudes' towards asylum-seekers nationally and, as a result, this group can face discrimination. The Board agreed therefore that an increased public understanding of the specific needs of this vulnerable group might not only generate further support of the kind discussed in this report, it could also help combat some of the negative stereotypes UASC can sometimes face.

60. The Board therefore discussed the local leadership role of councillors and how this leaves Members well-placed to help raise the profile of UASC, make connections and generate new leads for the department. In support of this perspective, the Local Government Association states that:

*"..councillors are uniquely placed to develop strategies, shape thinking and take an active lead locally because they alone have been democratically elected to represents the interests of the people and the council. This gives them a legitimacy and a mandate no other local body or individual has, apart of course, from MPs" ('A councillor's workbook on community leadership').*

61. The Department agreed that Members have a unique role and that effectively utilizing this 'resource' could have a significant and positive impact on the range of support available to UASC in East Sussex. The Board therefore discussed the types of issues which Members could assist with. This included Members helping to:

- identify individuals or organisations that could provide more social opportunities, such as becoming involved in community events;
- make links with groups from diverse cultural backgrounds in the community who might be prepared to accommodate UASC specifically (groups which the department might otherwise struggle to engage with); and
- identify resources in their local communities that would be able and willing to support UASC through work experience placements or providing support with English language tuition and mentoring.

62. Whilst keen to find ways for Members to assist, the Board also asked for clarification as to what practical support might be provided by the department. Furthermore, whilst the Board accepted that each Member should seek to play an active role in supporting UASC (and other LAC), they agreed that many Members will need some updated guidance as to how they can fulfil this role. The Board therefore discussed the potential for developing a UASC toolkit for all Councillors, with consideration being given as to whether the toolkit could provide clear guidance on:

- helping Members to understand their role as a corporate parent;
- the key facts and issues relating to UASC (and other LAC);
- those areas where the Department would like Member assistance; and
- how Members should interact with UASC and how to refer them on for assistance.

63. Officers agreed that Member assistance could provide a significant boost to efforts to improve support for UASC. It was also agreed that there is scope to develop a practical toolkit that individual Members could use as a resource to help them generate interest in supporting UASC. With regard to its development, and to help produce a document that is tailored to the needs of Members, the Board also offered its assistance to the Department with drafting the toolkit.

### **Recommendation 6**

**To help expand the range of support available in East Sussex, the Children's Services Department to develop a UASC toolkit for Members The toolkit to provide guidance on:**

- **the key challenges facing UASC – such as accommodation needs, opportunities for social activities, access to work experience and English language support;**
- **what assistance is currently available for UASC;**
- **how Members can develop links with key organisations and communities.**
- **the process for referring potential leads to the Department.**

## Conclusions

64. The Board's primary goal throughout this review has been to identify what can be done to further assist with helping young asylum-seekers develop their confidence, skills and improve their emotional well-being as they build a new life in the United Kingdom. The Board concluded that the Children's Services Department have already developed a highly effective service which is well-attuned to addressing the needs of this especially vulnerable group of young people. However, and given the complex and evolving nature of the challenges facing the department, the Board have developed a number practical recommendations which it hopes will further complement the work already being undertaken in this area. The recommendations recognise the role of elected Members and how all councillors can play a role in supporting this group, the potential for the wider community to provide support and suggestions as to how the unique needs of UASC could be addressed.

## **Appendix: Terms of reference, membership and evidence**

### **Scope and terms of reference**

The People Scrutiny Committee appointed a Scrutiny Review Board to consider and make recommendations on matters relating to the support provided for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. The Board agreed it would focus on exploring the potential for:

- increasing and diversifying the capacity and range of providers of accommodation for UASC;
- delivering further opportunities that improve the wellbeing of UASC and provide more opportunities for social activities, access to mentoring, English language support and work experience.
- Members to help with raising awareness and support for UASC in their local communities, including generating more enquiries from a wider range of people interested in supporting UASC.

### **Board Membership and project support**

Review Board Members: Councillors Kathryn Field (Chair), Trevor Webb and Francis Whetstone.

The Project Manager was Stuart McKeown, Senior Democratic Services Adviser, with project support provided by Aaron Sams, Democratic Services Officer.

Sally Carnie, Head of Looked After Children Services, Children's Services Department, provided ongoing support to the Board throughout the review.

### **Witnesses providing evidence**

**The Board would like to thank all the witnesses who provided evidence in person:**

#### Young people

UASC Care Leaver 1

UASC Care Leaver 2

#### Community and voluntary sector

Rossana Leal – Founder and Director of The Hastings and Rother Buddy Project

Sarah Bennett – Service Manager of The Hummingbird Refugee Project

#### ESCC officers

Liz Rugg – Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care, Children's Services Department

Sally Carnie – Head of Looked After Children Services, Children's Services Department

Chelsea Walsh – Practice Manager, Children's Services Department

Peter Richards – Operations Manager, Looked After Children, Children's Services Department

Pamela Middleton – Personal Adviser, Children's Services Department

#### South East Strategic Partnership for Migration

Sarah Spain - Principal Social Worker for UASC, South East Strategic Partnership for Migration

## Review Board meeting dates

26 October 2018

17 January 2019

10 April 2019

24 July 2019

## Evidence papers

Item	Date considered
Seeking Support – a guide to the rights and entitlements of separated children (Coram Children's Charity)	12.10.18
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children – Corporate Parenting Panel report	19.10.18
Discussion document produced by Children's Services department	17.01.19
Global Social Club: 2018 Evaluation Document	22.05.19
Article on the Sussex Express website (published 15 May 2019) regarding a former UASC Care Leaver	05.06.19
Home Office guidance document - Permission to work and volunteering for asylum seekers	05.06.19
Notes from a telephone interview with Rossana Leal – Founder and Director of The Hastings and Rother Buddy Project	05.06.19
Notes from a telephone interview with Sarah Bennett – Service Manager of The Hummingbird Refugee Project	05.06.19

Contact officer for this review: Stuart McKeown, Senior Democratic Services Adviser and School Appeals Manager

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**Report to:** People Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 11 March 2021

**By:** The Chairperson of the East Sussex SACRE

**Title:** Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

**Purpose:** To update Members on the role and work of the East Sussex SACRE

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to comment on and note:

The work of SACRE in the implementation of the Local Agreed Syllabus, raising the profile and importance of religious education and supporting the high-quality teaching of Religious Education in East Sussex and academies.

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## **1 Background**

1.1 Since 1988 Local Authorities have had a statutory duty to establish a Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education. Further detail regarding the duties of SACRE and how it operates are set out below.

### ***The duties of SACRE***

1.2 It is the duty of SACRE to advise the Local Authority (LA) on matters relating to religious education, collective worship and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

1.3 It is the duty of the LA to provide a locally agreed syllabus for religious education which must be reviewed every five years. Religious Education is a statutory element of the curriculum for all pupils which is determined locally. Academies are not obliged to follow the agreed syllabus but must provide religious education that is compliant with legislation.

1.4 The Education Act 1996 requires SACRE each year to publish a report on the work of the board and standards in its schools and the actions taken during the year.

### ***How SACRE works***

1.5 SACRE meets each term and includes representatives from elected members who are appointed at the Annual Council meeting in May. Members places are currently allocated on a proportionate basis (3 Conservatives, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Labour).

1.6 SACRE currently has representatives from Christian denominations, including Orthodox, and other faith groups who represent the principal religions in the area. This includes the Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Baha'i traditions. We also have a Humanist observer. There is a councillors group, a teachers group, a Church of England group and a group for other religions and world views group that make up the total representation on SACRE.

1.7 SACRE also has a role in dealing with any complaints about the teaching of RE and a role for making determinations in relation to collective worship. Typically this would include a formal request from a school to allow collective worship to reflect the demographic of the school. For example, if a school had a population which was mainly Sikh they could apply for a determination for their collective worship to be aligned to the Sikh faith. East Sussex SACRE has not had any complaints or applications for determination this year.

1.8 The SACRE Budget allocated in 2020/21 was £7,500. This was supplemented by support for administration and by additional capacity for working with schools and SACRE funded by SLES (Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service). The budget funds a Religious Education specialist working with SACRE and with schools, network meetings for primary and secondary teachers' professional development and training costs. SACRE is directly funded by the Department for Education from the Central Schools Support Grant via East Sussex County Council.

## **2 Supporting Information**

### ***The National picture for RE***

2.1 In 2018 the Core Report - A Commission on Religious Education was published. The main recommendation was that SACREs should be reconstituted as Local Area Networks for Religious Education and Worldviews. This was subsequently adopted as policy by the Religious Education Council. The Government has indicated it has no plans to legislate on this proposed change and so SACREs continue to operate under current legislation. There is, however, considerable research and debate on worldviews and how this might impact on SACREs and on curriculum.

### ***Ofsted Inspections***

2.2 Ofsted inspections have been suspended in the light of the global pandemic and as yet there is no date as to when these may fully resume. Ofsted has conducted a number of remote visits about how schools have responded to the current context. Following a visit, the school then receives a letter but there is no judgement on the quality of education or on subjects and the curriculum.

### ***Religious education in East Sussex***

2.3 Schools are required to publish curriculum overview statements on their websites and update them annually. Most schools publish an overview of the curriculum as a whole as well as subject overviews which gives an indication about how the statutory teaching of RE is being met.

2.4 In relation to pupil outcomes there is no data for RE GCSE at either a national or local level for 2020 and the same will be true for GCSE in summer 2021.

2.5 SACRE has continued to meet virtually over the course of the last year. We have established a schools working group led by Barry Blakelock, Principal at Rye College, with representation from primary and secondary schools both at headteacher and teacher level and geographically spread across the county. This has enabled positive and robust discussions on how SACRE can work more closely with schools and leaders to promote high quality teaching in RE.

2.6 Up until this academic year SACRE has been supported by Lilian Weatherly as the specialist adviser. Lilian has now left this role and as a result SACRE wishes to express its thanks for her hard work over many years. Claire Ramalli who is a teacher of Ethics and RE at Ratton School and is an SLE (Specialist Leader of Education) for RE has taken on the role of specialist adviser to SACRE. She is supported by Carrie Beech representing SLES (Standards and Learning Effectiveness) adding capacity to the work of SACRE.

2.7 Claire Rivers as a Teaching School Director and a previous headteacher of a diocesan school has also joined SACRE to support the links with the local teaching schools and networks. This has been another positive addition to our work.

2.8 SACRE is working with the East Sussex Teaching Schools Network and has been able to appoint a further primary and secondary SLE, taking it to 3 secondary and 1 primary RE SLE with possible further SLE appointments before the end of the academic year. Many schools do not have specialist RE teachers and the deployment of SLEs will enable specialist school to school support.

## ***Networks and Professional Development***



2.9 Regular network meetings are held for primary and secondary schools and have continued to run this year virtually. There has been positive engagement in the network meetings and these meetings have been used as a vehicle for delivering professional development.

2.10 The primary conference in October 2020 had 38 teachers attending and this has a follow up training planned for March with approaching 200 teachers already signed up to engage with this opportunity. The focus of the training, which was led by Lat Blaylock from RE Today was on Understanding Christianity. The next session will look at world religions and support teachers with enhancing their subject knowledge and ideas for the classroom.

2.11 The secondary network facilitated a training event, also with Lat Blaylock, in January 2021 with a focus on world religions covering Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. This had 12 teachers representing 9 schools and we are seeking to build on this first event and extend the reach to more schools. Lockdown in January impacted on attendance at this event as teachers were delivering live lessons online which meant that cover for lessons was not available and so some teachers had to withdraw from this training day. There will be follow up sessions in March and June planned as twilight sessions with a focus on subject knowledge support for secondary teachers.

2.12 Resources and materials from the training sessions have been shared with schools. SACRE has pages on Czone where schools can also access a wide range of materials and resources to support the curriculum.

2.13 The schools group, through a colleague at Beacon Community College, have started a twitter account to share ideas and link people across schools, both primary and secondary and we also now have a Google Drive for teachers to share their resources, which is beginning to be accessed and used more frequently.

### ***Revising the Agreed Syllabus***

2.14 The main task for SACRE in the coming months is the revision of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Feedback has been given through the schools working group and primary and secondary networks on our current syllabus. As a result, SACRE are exploring options for working in partnership with either another LA or with a national organisation, RE Today, with a view to adopting a framework that is already in existence and adapting it to our context. This will allow us to bring in external support and additional resources to help schools implement a revised curriculum from September 2022.

2.15 The process for review is underway and there are planned sessions for engaging teachers and leaders in focus groups to explore the options and feedback to SACRE in June 2021. This will enable final decisions and writing to be completed by the end of term 2 in 2021/22 academic year and publication and launch events to take place in spring 2022 to allow time for preparing for teaching the new agreed syllabus from September 2022.

### ***School Visits***

2.16 Due to the pandemic school visits have not been possible but we hope to be able to reinstate them as soon as is reasonable. What we have been able to do during this time is extend the reach and engagement with schools across the county through the virtual networks and through the work of the schools group. Anecdotally we are hearing that many schools have continued to deliver RE through remote working, and some have even managed to continue with assemblies and acts of worship using online tools to facilitate such events.

### ***Links with other bodies***

2.17 Cllr Roy Galley as Chair of SACRE is also on the Executive Board of NASACRE (National Association of School Advisory Councils for Religious Education). Carrie Beech (SLES) and Claire Ramalli (SACRE specialist adviser) attend the South-Central meetings of SACREs to share practice and learn from other SACREs and are now associate members of AREIAC (Association for Religious Education Inspectors Advisers and Consultants). The focus is on sharing and learning from practice elsewhere.

## **Governors**

2.18 It is the intention of SACRE to be able to run some training for governors once the new Local Agreed Syllabus is in place. We also plan to encourage greater governor involvement and will seek a governor representative to join SACRE.

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 SACRE is legally obliged to produce an annual report and it is best practice for this to be considered by the County Council.

3.2 The People Scrutiny Committee is asked to support SACRE in its ongoing work to seek improvements to Religious Education provision.

**Councillor Roy Galley**  
**Chair of SACRE**

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>People Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 March 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To review scrutiny's input into the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process for the financial year 2021/22 and to consider related items for inclusion in the committee's work programme.</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1) Identify potential areas for inclusion in the committee's future work programme on services or issues within the Committee's remit;**
  - 2) Review the committee's input into the RPPR process; and**
  - 3) Consider any changes or improvements to the process from a scrutiny perspective.**
- 

## **1 Background**

1.1 Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR - i.e. aligning the Council's budget setting process with service delivery plans) has established an effective and transparent business planning process.

1.2 Scrutiny committees actively engage in the process, firstly to allow them to bring the experience they have gained through their work to bear and, secondly, to help inform their future work programmes.

## **2 Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources and scrutiny in East Sussex**

2.1 In September 2020 each scrutiny committee considered a range of information about the services within the remit of the committee to set the scene for the work on the RPPR process. This included extracts from the Savings Plans agreed by Council in February 2020, the current Portfolio Plans, extracts from the Financial Budget Summary for 2020/21 and the latest capital programme for the period 2020/21-2022/23 (extracts taken from the *State of the County* report considered by Cabinet in July 2020).

2.2 At the November meetings the committees considered an updated version of the Council's proposed Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and updated proposed savings schedules as set out in a report considered by Cabinet in October 2020. The scrutiny committees were also asked to identify any further work or information needed for consideration at the RPPR scrutiny board meetings.

2.3 The scrutiny committees established scrutiny boards to provide a more detailed input into the RPPR process. These met in December 2020 to consider and agree any recommendations on the draft 2021/22 Savings Plans and draft Portfolio Plans. The boards:

- considered any amendments to the draft Portfolio Plans and how priorities were reflected against the proposed key areas of budget spend for the coming year;
- assessed the potential impact of proposed savings on services provided to East Sussex County Council customers; and
- made comments and recommendations to Cabinet on the budget proposals for 2021/22.

2.4 Appendix 1 summarises the comments and recommendations made by the People Scrutiny Committee RPPR Board to Cabinet.

2.5 The Committee is invited to consider any areas it wishes to flag up to the incoming scrutiny committee as possible areas for future scrutiny work. A careful selection of topics will enable the Committee to be well-positioned to comment on the impact of service changes, future service delivery and budget proposals as part of the RPPR process.

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The Committee is recommended to review its input into the RPPR process and incorporate work into its future work programme that is likely to inform the future RPPR process.

**BECKY SHAW**  
**Chief Executive**

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### **LOCAL MEMBERS**

All

Appendix 1 – People Scrutiny Committee's Comments

## **People Scrutiny Committee - Summary of comments to Cabinet**

### Adult Social Care and Health

The Board welcome that no new savings are proposed for the coming year financial year but remain concerned that any further savings could lead to significant reductions in the services provided by the Adult Social Care and Health Department. The Board are also supportive of using the Adult Social Care 3% precept and recommend it is used over a two-year period and that the impact of the additional funding is closely monitored.

The Board also reviewed the contents of the Draft Adult Social Care and Health Portfolio Plan. Key discussion points included:

- the long-term impact of reduced access to face-to-face sexual health services (caused by the need to have in place Covid-19 service model restrictions). Given its concern, the Board requested further information about the support being provided.
- with regard to the Performance Measures and Targets section of the draft portfolio plan, and in response to a query about how targets are set, the Board were provided with clarification about the Department's approach to developing targets which are challenging and realistic in the context of the pandemic.
- the scale of food poverty in the county and how the Department gathers data which enables it to understand the level of need. Given its concern about the long-term impact of food poverty, the Board requested further information about the support being provided.
- the Board are keen that new ways of working are developed in response to the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Members therefore welcomed the department's ASCH Programme, an initiative that aims to build on the lessons learnt from responding to the pandemic and ensure new working practices which deliver improved customer service and efficiencies are embedded.

### Children's Services

The Board are particularly concerned about the potential impact of planned savings and the pandemic on services provided by the Children's Services Department. This includes a concern that there may be 'hidden impacts' which may only become apparent in the medium to long term. In particular, the Board are concerned about savings relating to elements of Early Help and Safeguarding Services. The Board therefore welcomed the proposal to defer for a further year savings relating to these areas of activity. However, Councillors Ungar and Webb requested that their opposition to any planned or other savings are noted in the comments to Cabinet.

The Board also reviewed the content of the draft Portfolio Plan for Children's Services and sought clarification regarding a number of issues. This included clarification about the department's approach to helping families with the most

complex needs and the reasons for considering whether to develop increased capacity at children's homes.

#### General comments

The Board expressed regret that it again had not been possible for the Council to develop budget proposals within the context of a three-year financial planning process. The Board also agreed to emphasise the importance of achieving a balanced budget which recognises the pressures on both the Adult Social Care and Health and Children's Services Departments.

In the context of the unprecedented challenges the pandemic has presented, the Board also agreed to report to Cabinet its acknowledgement of the high-quality nature and range of services provided by staff in both the Adult Social Care and Health and Children's Services Departments. The Board also commended the work of other partner organisations such as borough and district councils and the voluntary sector.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>People Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 March 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Assistant Chief Executive</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To review and agree items for the People Scrutiny Committee's future work programme.</b>

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## ***RECOMMENDATIONS:***

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) review and agree agenda items for future Committee meetings, including items listed in the work programme set out at Appendix 1;
  - 2) agree topics for Scrutiny Reviews to be included in the Committee's future work programme; and
  - 3) review upcoming items on East Sussex County Council's Forward Plan as set out at Appendix 2 and to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny.
- 

## **1 Background**

1.1 The work programme is an important tool in ensuring the correct focus and best use of the Committee's time in scrutinising topics that are of importance to the residents of East Sussex, and the efficient and effective working of the Council. It also provides clarity for those who may be requested to give evidence to the Committee on the issues under review, and the questions the Committee requires answers to.

1.2 Discussion of the work programme provides the Committee with the opportunity to consider topics that it may be of value to scrutinise, and to decide whether further scoping work is required. This provides a basis for deciding the best way of scrutinising a topic, the timescale, and who from the Committee will be involved in carrying out the review work. If there are a number of potential topics for review, Members can determine the priority of the work within the resources available to the Committee.

## **2 Supporting information**

### ***Work programme and future scrutiny reviews***

2.1 The Committee is asked to review and agree any amendments to the items set out in its work programme (attached at Appendix 1). This includes reviewing and agreeing the Committee's future agenda items, its list of potential future Scrutiny Reviews, the work of its Reference Groups and the subject matter for any reports for information.

2.2 When considering potential topics for inclusion in the work programme, the Committee is asked to consider a range of questions. These include:

- Is the topic relevant to the Council's Corporate Priorities?
- Is the issue of concern or of relevance to East Sussex residents?
- Can Scrutiny have an impact and add value by scrutinising this issue, service or policy?
- Is the issue one that the Committee can realistically influence?

- Are the resources needed to undertake the review available?

2.3 Any suggestions for potential Scrutiny Review topics should be discussed with the Chair, or the relevant Senior Democratic Services Adviser, in advance of the Committee meetings.

### ***Forward Plan***

2.4 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 March 2021 to 30 June 2021 is included at Appendix 2. The Committee is requested to review the forthcoming items on the Forward Plan to identify any issues within the remit of this Committee that may require more detailed scrutiny. The Forward Plan is revised and published on a monthly basis and Committee members should regularly review the Forward Plan.

## **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 An important part of managing the work of the People Scrutiny Committee is to have an agreed future work programme. This involves the Committee assessing its priorities, ensuring its ongoing reviews are completed in a timely fashion and identifying new areas for scrutiny.

**PHILIP BAKER**  
**Assistant Chief Executive**

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## People Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme

Current Scrutiny Reviews		
Title of Review	Detail	Proposed Completion Date
School Exclusions	<p>The Committee agreed in March 2020 to undertake a Scrutiny Review of issues related to school exclusions. The Committee agreed the Terms of Reference proposed by the Scoping Board and appointed a Review Board to undertake the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership of the Review Board: Cllrs Field, Liddiard, Loe and Mr Matthew Jones (Parent Governor Representative) (Chair) and Mrs Nicola Boulter (Parent Governor Representative).</li> <li>In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the availability of schools to contribute to further work on this review, it has been paused with the intention to recommence it at a suitable future date</li> </ul>	Review currently on hold due to pressures arising from COVID-19
Initial Scoping Reviews		
Subject area for initial scoping	Detail	Proposed Dates
Loneliness/resilience	<p>The Committee agreed in November 2019 to conduct an initial scoping exercise into issues relating to how the Council can incorporate addressing loneliness into its existing work, particularly the community resilience workstream. A briefing on the implications of the national Loneliness Strategy was circulated to the committee in April 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership of the Initial Scoping Board: Cllrs Clark, Galley, Ungar and Whetstone. The Committee agreed Councillor Ungar would act as Chair for the scoping exercise.</li> <li>The Scoping Board will consider the subject of loneliness and resilience for both older people and children and young people.</li> <li>In light of the impact of COVID-19 on the Public Health Team's ability to support the review, the Committee agreed to defer meeting until early 2021.</li> </ul>	The scoping board meeting took place on 1 February 2021, with an update to be provided to the Committee for its consideration on 11 March 2021.

## Suggested Potential Future Scrutiny Review Topics

Suggested Topic	Detail
Developing Care Markets/Bedded Care Strategy	Following an initial scoping exercise of issues relating to the developing care market and the Council's bedded care strategy, the Committee agreed on 14 November 2019 to postpone further scrutiny activity on this area for 18 months (to mid-2021). This will allow the Adult Social Care department to continue to develop its workstreams in relation to this area of work.
Elective Home Education	The Committee has noted issues relating to an increase in the numbers of children being home educated and that home education could increase further in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee was informed that a relevant Private Member's Bill has not yet completed its progress through Parliament. The expectation is that national guidance will follow in due course (although there is not a clear date for this). The Committee therefore agreed to revisit this subject once the Government has published its guidance.
COVID-19 response and implications	<p>A range of topics related to COVID-19 have been suggested for future scrutiny by Committee Members, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Health role – e.g. planning, resources, working with others.</li> <li>• The work of care staff during the pandemic and impact on recruitment and retention, including use of agency staff and experiences of BAME care workers.</li> <li>• Support to care homes, including health service input.</li> <li>• The experience of carers during the pandemic.</li> <li>• The impact of Covid-19 on Departments and the services they provide.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee will consider whether to undertake work on these topics at the appropriate time when capacity allows.</p>

## Scrutiny Reference Groups

Reference Group Title	Subject area	Meeting Dates
Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP) Reference Group	<p>The Committee agreed to establish a Reference Group to monitor progress of the East Sussex Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP) and identify areas for future scrutiny. It will review HASCIP progress reports provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and meet on an ad hoc basis as required to consider issues arising in more detail.</p> <p>The Reference Group last met on 28 October 2020.</p>	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>To be confirmed.</p> <p>Relevant Health and Wellbeing Board reports to be circulated to</p>

	Membership of the group: Cllrs Ungar (lead), Davies, Webb, Ensor and Clark.	the group as they become available
Strategic Commissioning Review of Early Help Scrutiny Reference Group	<p>The purpose of this Reference Group is to provide scrutiny input into the Children's Services Department review of Early Help services.</p> <p>It was agreed by the Committee on 25 June 2018 that following Members would sit on this group: Cllrs Davies, Galley, Field and Whetstone.</p> <p>The Reference Group requested an opportunity to review progress with the implementation of the revised Early Help strategy in spring 2021, but as some changes were postponed this may be subject to review.</p>	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>Further meeting TBC if appropriate</p>
Educational Attainment and Performance Scrutiny Reference Group	<p>Reference Group established following the discontinuation of the Education Performance Panel. It was agreed by the Committee on 25 June 2018 that this group would meet once per annum to review data on educational attainment in East Sussex and related issues.</p> <p>The disruption to school exams and attendance caused by the pandemic means that relevant performance figures will not be available in January 2021 as planned. With that in mind, the Committee welcomed the Director of Children's Services offer of a briefing session on the work being undertaken by the Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service (SLES) to help prepare for the anticipated exams that will take place in summer 2021.</p> <p>Membership: Cllrs Davies, Field, Galley and Cllr Whetstone and Matthew Jones and Nicola Boulter (Parent Governor Representatives).</p>	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>8 February 2021</p>
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	RPPR Board meeting to agree detailed comments and any recommendations on the emerging portfolio plans and savings proposals to be put to Cabinet on behalf of the scrutiny committee.	Next meeting: December 2021
<b>Reports for Information</b>		
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>
<b>Training and Development</b>		
<b>Title of Training/Briefing</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>
Briefing on ASC Green Paper	To gain a better understanding of the potential implications of the Government's Green Paper/Adult Social Care reforms once published.	Dependent on publication by Government

<b>Future Committee Agenda Items</b>		<b>Author</b>
<b>17 June 2021</b>		
Annual Review of Safer Communities Performance, Priorities and Issues	To update the Committee on performance in relation to Safer Communities in 2020/21 and the priorities and issues for 2021/22 that will be highlighted in the Partnership Business Plan.	Tom Hook, Assistant Director - Planning, Performance and Engagement
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Senior Democratic Services Adviser
<b>16 September 2021</b>		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) 2022/23	The Committee will begin the process of examining the Departmental Portfolio Plans and budget for the 2021/22 financial year.	Becky Shaw, Chief Executive
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Senior Democratic Services Adviser
Safeguarding Adults Board - Annual Report	The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report outlines the safeguarding activity and performance in East Sussex during the previous financial year, as well as some of the main developments in place to prevent abuse from occurring.	Chair, Safeguarding Adults Board
<b>18 November 2021</b>		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) 2022/23	The Committee will continue the process of examining the Departmental Portfolio Plans and budget for the 2022/23 financial year.	Becky Shaw, Chief Executive
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Senior Democratic Services Adviser

**March 2022**

Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) 2021/22	To provide the Committee with an opportunity to review its input into the RPPR process for 2022/23.	Becky Shaw, Chief Executive
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report	To update the Committee on the work of SACRE, with the report to include a further update on secondary school performance in relation to the requirements of the National Curriculum and Religious Education.	Roy Galley, Chairman of SACRE / Stuart Gallimore, Director of Children's Services
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Senior Democratic Services Adviser

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## EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN

The Leader of the County Council is required to publish a forward plan setting out matters which the Leader believes will be the subject of a key decision by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet member in the period covered by the Plan (the subsequent four months). The Council's Constitution states that a key decision is one that involves

- (a) expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the expenditure of the County Council's budget, namely above £500,000 per annum; or
- (b) is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions.

As a matter of good practice, the Council's Forward Plan includes other items in addition to key decisions that are to be considered by the Cabinet/individual members. This additional information is provided to inform local residents of all matters to be considered, with the exception of issues which are dealt with under the urgency provisions.

For each decision included on the Plan the following information is provided:

- Page 83
- the name of the individual or body that is to make the decision and the date of the meeting
  - the title of the report and decision to be considered
  - groups that will be consulted prior to the decision being taken
  - a list of other appropriate documents
  - the name and telephone number of the contact officer for each item.

The Plan is updated and published every month on the Council's website two weeks before the start of the period to be covered.

Meetings of the Cabinet/individual members are open to the public (with the exception of discussion regarding reports which contain exempt/confidential information). Copies of agenda and reports for meetings are available on the website in advance of meetings. For further details on the time of meetings and general information about the Plan please contact Andy Cottell at County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE, or telephone 01273 481955 or send an e-mail to [andy.cottell@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:andy.cottell@eastsussex.gov.uk).

For further detailed information regarding specific issues to be considered by the Cabinet/individual member please contact the named contact officer for the item concerned.

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL  
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE

For copies of reports or other documents please contact the officer listed on the Plan or phone 01273 335274.

**FORWARD PLAN – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (including Key Decisions) –1 March 2021 TO 30 June 2021**

Additional notices in relation to Key Decisions and/or private decisions are available on the [Council's website](#).

Cabinet membership:

Councillor Keith Glazier - Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development

Councillor Nick Bennett – Lead Member for Resources

Councillor Bill Bentley – Lead Member for Communities and Safety

Councillor Rupert Simmons – Lead Member for Economy

Councillor Claire Dowling – Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Councillor Carl Maynard – Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Councillor Sylvia Tidy – Lead Member for Children and Families

Councillor Bob Standley – Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability

Date for Decision	Decision Taker	Decision/Key Issue	Decision to be taken wholly or partly in private (P) or Key Decision (KD)	Consultation	List of Documents to be submitted to decision maker	Contact Officer
2 Mar 2021	Cabinet	Conservators of Ashdown Forest Budget 2021/22 To approve the draft Conservators of Ashdown Forest budget for the financial year 2021/22 and to consider the contribution from the Trust Fund.	<b>KD</b>		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell 01273 481399
2 Mar 2021	Cabinet	Council Monitoring: Quarter 3 2020/21 To consider the Council Monitoring report for the third quarter of the financial year 2020/21 as part of the Council's Reconciling			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Victoria Beard 07894 708914



		Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) budget monitoring process.				
4 Mar 2021	Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development	Local Growth Fund Covid Response Fund - updated grant agreements with Plumpton College; skills and business support for rural businesses post Brexit and Eastbourne Fisherman's Quay and infrastructure development phases 2 and 3 To approve East Sussex County Council (ESCC) entering into updated grant agreements to transfer additional Local Growth Fund (LGF) monies to 2 projects in East Sussex as allocated by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP Ltd).			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Marwa Al-Qadi 01273 336439
15 Mar 2021	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	Capital Programme for Transport Improvements 2021/22 To approve the list of transport schemes and associated expenditure in 2021/22 to be included in the programme	<b>KD</b>		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Andrew Keer, Chris Tree  01273 336682, 01273 482247
25 Mar 2021	Lead Member for Communities and Safety	Petition to reduce road traffic accidents on the B2100 Church Road/Rotherfield Road  To consider the petition's requests; 1. To reduce the 60mph speed limit to 40mph on the B2100 between Milk Lodge Farm, Rotherfield and Palesgate Lane, Jarvis Brook. 2. Plan safety improvements to enforce the proposed limit, either by speed camera, speed notification		<b>Local Members</b>	Report, other documents may also be submitted	Michael Higgs  01273 482106

		device or westbound restriction carriageway fence. 3. Removal of the solid obstructions from the fatal bend and reinstatement of reflectors.				
30 Mar 2021	Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources	Annual write off of debts 2020/21 Annual report to request formal approval to write-off debts over a certain value, as set out in the Council's financial procedures.	<b>P</b>		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Janyce Danielczyk  01273 481893
30 Mar 2021  Page 86	Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources	Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR&OD) Shared Service Review To present the Lead Member for Resources with the outcome of the recent review of the East Sussex County Council Human Resources & Organisational Development Shared Service	<b>KD</b>		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Sarah Mainwaring  01273 482060
14 Apr 2021	Lead Member for Resources	Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) - Preferred Solution Provider To approve the engagement of the preferred implementation and technical solution provider.	<b>P</b>  <b>KD</b>		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Richard Lundie-Sadd  07922 387668
20 Apr 2021	Cabinet	Annual Audit Letter 2019/20			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell  01273 481399
20 Apr 2021	Cabinet	External Audit Plan 2020/21 This report sets out in detail the work to be carried out by the Council's External			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell  01273 481399

		Auditors on the Council's accounts for financial year 2020/21.				
20 Apr 2021	Cabinet	Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2021/22 This report sets out the Council's Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan of internal audit work to be carried out during the financial year 2021/22 for approval by Cabinet.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Russell Banks 01273 481447
8 Jun 2021	Cabinet	Council Monitoring: Quarter 4 2020/21 - Year End To consider the Council Monitoring report for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2020/21 as part of the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) budget monitoring process.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Victoria Beard 07894 708914
29 Jun 2021	Cabinet	Ashdown Forest Trust Fund 2020/21 To consider the Ashdown Forest Trust Income and Expenditure Account and Balance sheet for 2020/21.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Jill Fisher 01273 482542
29 Jun 2021	Cabinet	East Sussex – Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan Endorsement of the plan to enable ESCC & their partners to utilise the document to secure funding.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Lisa Simmonds 01273 336515
29 Jun 2021	Cabinet	Highways Contract Re-procurement Project (DBC)	<b>P</b>		Report, other documents may	Phil McCorry

		To present the outcomes and recommendations from the Detailed Business Case for the Highway Contract Re-procurement Project (HCRP) for review and approval by Cabinet.	<b><i>KD</i></b>		also be submitted	01273 335993
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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>People Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 March 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Director of Adult Social Care</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Review of the Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care workforce</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress with implementing the recommendations set out in the Action Plan attached at Appendix 1</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the progress set out in the Action Plan attached at Appendix 1.

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## **1 Background**

1.1 In June 2018 the People Scrutiny Committee established a Scoping Board to look into a range of challenges facing the local care market. One of the key areas identified by the Scoping Board related to the developing workforce challenges facing social care providers. An Adult Social Care (ASC) Workforce Scrutiny Review Board was therefore appointed in March 2019. Following further exploration of the issues, it was agreed the review would focus on older people services and the recruitment and retention challenges facing the independent care sector.

1.2 The People Scrutiny Committee approved the final report of the Scrutiny Review Board at its meeting in September 2019 (report attached at Appendix 2). The review report was then presented to Cabinet in November 2019 at which time the Adult Social Care and Health Department produced an Action Plan which commented on how it would seek to implement the recommendations. The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for Members to be updated on the latest developments regarding progress with implementing the committee's recommendations.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 The action plan attached at Appendix 1 provides updated commentary on progress with implementation of the six recommendations approved by Cabinet. All actions have either been completed or are ongoing.

2.2 COVID has impacted on the implementation of some of the recommendations, but also the wider context within which the recommendations were made. The impact of COVID on the economy have changed the recruitment landscape, making some vacancies easier to fill. However, frontline care jobs are not to everyone's taste, especially during a pandemic, and as such challenges still remain. The Government has launched various initiatives over recent months to support recruitment into the care sector.

## **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 Progress continues to be made on implementing the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee's review as evidenced in Appendix 1. It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee consider and comment on the progress made on the recommendations contained in the review.

**MARK STANTON**

Director of Adult Social Care

Contact Officer: Tom Hook, Assistant Director Planning, Performance and Engagement Division

Tel. no: 07895 331141

Email: [tom.hook@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:tom.hook@eastsussex.gov.uk)

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Action Plan: commentary by the Adult Social Care and Health Department on progress with implementation of the People Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

Appendix 2 Scrutiny Review of the Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care workforce report

## ACTION PLAN

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Working document - last updated: TH 18/02/2021
Purpose	Action plan detail added to Cabinet report 12/11/19
Lead	Phil Crook, Head of Workforce Planning and Training ASC
Document owner	Jo Murfin, Project Manager Workforce Planning ASC

## PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE CHANGING CARE MARKET: ADULT SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE – ACTION PLAN

R1 - Explore the options for broadening engagement in the work of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group						
	Items from Cabinet report 12/11/19			Actions		
NO	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	TIMESCALE	DETAILED ACTION	PROGRESS	RATING
The Adult Social Care department and the Employability and Skills team to explore the options for broadening engagement in the work of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group, to include consideration of:						
1.1	Enhancing links between the ASC department and the work of the Employability and Skills Team.	ASC key staff and the Employability and Skills (E & S) Team will meet to review the membership of the Health and Social Care Task Group to ensure that it includes the right membership to best support links between the social care sector and the E&S Team.	November 2019 to January 2020	Membership has been reviewed and representatives added from the East Sussex Strategic Workforce Group, ASC&H Training Team, the home care sector and the Registered Care Association.	Action complete.	Complete
1.2	The pathways for independent sector views to feed into the Task Group and for the work of the Task Group to be promoted in	ASC representatives will be invited to attend the Skills East Sussex Health and Social Care Task Group.	January 2020	Task Group representatives confirmed as per 1.1 above.  Careers Campaign Group to involve reps from JCR, Learning Disability, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists.	Action Complete	Complete

	ongoing engagement with the sector.					
1.3	<b>The potential to expand the membership of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group to include representatives of the independent sector.</b>	Independent care providers, under guidance from ASC, will be invited and encouraged to attend the Health & Social Care Task Group.	Invitations November 2019 / next meeting January 2020	Representatives have been secured from the ICS, the home care sector and the Registered Care Association.	Action Complete.	Complete
1.4	<b>New item added 20/2/20</b>  20/2 Prince's Trust Task and Finish Group (sub group) to focus on developing the outline for a locally delivered proposal for the DWP funded Princes Trust programme. ASC rep from the Training Team.			The Princes Trust have worked to deliver the 'Onboarding Programme in East Sussex' the programme has been effective in running intensive short programmes with interviews to move people into careers in the sector. The Prince's Trust's second programme across Sussex was delivered on the 15 <sup>th</sup> October with 37 young people registered and 10 employers linked in to provide interviews and jobs.	Action Complete	Complete



R2 - Industry Champions and Open Doors						
NO	Items from Cabinet report 12/11/19			Actions		
	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	TIMESCALE	DETAILED ACTION	PROGRESS	RATING
2.1	<p><b>With a view to increasing the numbers of Industry Champions and Open Doors opportunities drawn from the independent sector, the Adult Social Care department and Employability and Skills Team to work together to identify ways to further develop the Careers Hub's approach to generating interest in these roles. The aim being to create a pool of participants which is more proportionate to the size of the care sector in East Sussex.</b></p>	<p>The Careers Hub Lead from the E &amp; S Team will seek opportunities to present information at the next Independent Care Group meeting. A communication plan will be developed with Independent Care Providers to promote and build the network of Industry Champions and Open Doors programmes.</p>	<p>November 2019 to February 2020</p>	<p>Add to the agenda for the next Health &amp; Social Care Task Group on 16<sup>th</sup> January. Work with the Task Group on how to promote within the Independent Care Sector.</p> <p>A communication plan will be developed by the Health &amp; Social Care Task Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are currently ten Health and Social Care companies/ organisations registered as Industry Champions with the Careers Hub, however, none of these are actively participating in events to promote careers in the sector to young people. There are three Enterprise Advisors actively engaged in the project.</li> <li>However, there are no representatives from Care Providers as such. This still needs to be actively promoted.</li> <li>Health Education England have taken on a key role in promoting Careers in the Sector to schools and have been working closely with the ESCC Careers Hub to stimulate additional employer engagement with the sector. Several online careers events have taken place with schools including a recent event which promoted careers and engaged 10,000 young people from across the county.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work has been delayed by Covid pandemic.</li> </ul>	
2.2	<b>All contracts of £100,000 or more issued to the Independent Care Sector by the Adult Social Care department to include social value skills targets that are facilitated by the Employability and Skills Team.</b>	<p>The E &amp; S Strategy Manager to attend the ASC Commissioning Group meeting to present information about the Council's approach to Skills in Social Value procurement and to identify ways in which the E &amp; S team can support this area of delivery.</p>	<p>November 2019 to January 2020</p>	<p>Encourage Independent Care Sector contractors to include Industry Champions and Open Doors as part of their contract agreement, engaging in three activities per year – via the Task Group.</p>	<p>The E &amp; S Strategy Manager attended the ASC Operational Commissioning Group (OCG) on 4 November 2019 and presented information about the approach to Skills in Social Value procurement.</p> <p>It was agreed that each contract has to be examined to determine if social value targets are applicable, as social value targets are not legally applicable where there is not a competitive contract framework in place (e.g. residential and nursing care).</p> <p>The specification, contract, terms and conditions for residential and nursing care are currently being re-written. Subsequent follow up meetings have been held with ASC contract managers to identify support / signposting.</p> <p>Three recent ASC commissioned specifications have now included Social Value offers:</p> <p><b>Example 1 – supplier committed to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business support offered to local SMEs - 4 x workshops.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Page 95					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 x local people supported to reach NVQ level 2 .</li> <li>• 6 x local people supported to reach NVQ level 3.</li> <li>• 8 x professional development opportunities offered to local people to reach level 3 equivalent (BTEC, City and Guilds)</li> <li>• 1x apprenticeship level 2 offered to a local person</li> <li>• 2x professional development opportunities level 4 offered to local people</li> <li>• 1 x work experience opportunity offered to a local person</li> <li>• 7 x employability support workshops offered to local groups</li> <li>• 7 x career awareness programmes offered to local schools</li> <li>• 2 x job opportunities offered to local long term unemployed</li> <li>• 2 x job opportunities offered to local people currently working less than 16 hours per week</li> <li>• 3 x job opportunities offered to local NEET (18-24)</li> <li>• 4 x job opportunities offered to local people with disabilities</li> <li>• 1 x job opportunity offered to local ex-offender</li> </ul>	
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Page 96					<p><b>Example 2 – supplier committed to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 work experience placements over 5 years</li> <li>• run a job club once per month</li> <li>• run 2 x 2hr sessions per year for businesses who need help working with hearing impaired</li> </ul> <p><b>Example 3 – supplier committed to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 210 x local people supported to achieve NVQ (Level 2) qualification</li> <li>• 10 x Full time job opportunities offered to local people currently working less than 16hrs p.wk</li> <li>• 10 x Job opportunities offered to local Ex-offenders</li> <li>• Commercial support offered to local voluntary and community groups (ETE Volunteers and ETE Coordinators engage and support local businesses via business forums/chambers of commerce etc. to provide support regarding recruiting/supporting service users.)</li> </ul> <p>In addition a new Social Value policy</p>	
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					and framework will be rolled out across ESCC in 2021. This new policy will ensure that SV measures are fully embedded in all ESCC procurements practice and will also create a system to monitor and track positive social value outcomes via a new ICT tracking system.	
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R3 – Apprenticeship Levy Funding						
	Items from Cabinet report 12/11/19			Actions		
NO	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	TIMESCALE	DETAILED ACTION	PROGRESS	RATING
Page 109 of 110	The Adult Social Care department to work with the Apprenticeship Team to assess the impact of levy funding in relation to care sector employers. This could include evaluating:					
	3.1 <b>The level of interest from the care sector and whether further promotion is needed.</b>	There is interest within the care sector to access funding for existing and new staff, however, there has been an issue in relation to social care employers following the process, laid down by the Education Skills Funding Agency, to access funding.	December 2019	Evaluate the level of interest.  The Apprenticeship Team will work with local providers, who will have responsibility for working directly with social care employers to go through the process required by the Education Skills Funding Agency to access funding. This should address previous issues employers faced when trying to go through the process themselves.	Complete.  The evaluation confirmed demand.	Complete

3.2	<b>The effectiveness of the process for identifying which providers are allocated the levy funding.</b>	The Apprentice Team (in accordance with Skills East Sussex) has identified priority areas for funding, where there are employment challenges within the county. Further work is needed to ensure these areas correlate with the experiences of ASC staff.	December 2019	Promotion of funding with training providers.  Updates to the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group.	Complete but ongoing.  Successful promotion of funding with training providers.	Ongoing
3.3	<b>Whether the funding successfully targeted those areas where the recruitment pressures are the most challenging.</b>	East Sussex College Group and Heathercroft Training have been engaged as providers to work primarily with care sector employers. The apprentice team has, to date, been reliant on providers to use networks of care based employers to utilise funding. This information will be shared with ASC to ensure that the breadth of employers being targeted is appropriate.	November 2019 to February 2020	Work with the Health & Social Care Task Group on how to use levy funds to support the careers campaign and 16-25 age group.	Links have been made with the Health & Social Care Task Group.  Since COVID the Government has announced a raft of new incentives for employers to take on Apprentices and ESCC has secured ESF provision to extend the Apprenticeship Levy to employers in a supported way. Both developments are now being promoted to H&SC providers alongside a programme of Apprenticeship Roadshow Events in 2021 targeting 16-25s.	Ongoing
3.4	<b>Whether vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children, have been identified by the</b>	Within ESCC a sub-committee has been set up to look at ways of supporting young people	November 2019 to February 2020	Work with the Health & Social Care Task Group.  Discussions regarding ways of using	Since COVID the government have also announced the Kickstart programme for 16-25s which offer six months of paid work. The H&SC	Ongoing

Page 99	<b>Apprenticeship team as requiring any additional support to access apprenticeships funded through the levy.</b>	to access apprenticeship opportunities, and in particular groups facing challenges such as: Looked After Children (LAC) and those not in education, employment or training (NEET). In terms of working with external employers in the county in doing this, the Apprenticeship Team has been focused primarily in allocating the funding. Further work will be undertaken by the team to prioritise employers who take on staff from recognised areas of need (LAC and NEET for example).		the 25% levy money to support some clients within supply chains. Liaison with borough and district Heads of Housing who agreed to provide a mid-January list of their contracts which required low-skilled labour, with a view to varying contracts to include required recruitment from the Supported Accommodation pool of previously homeless 16 year olds to adults, who are in need of employment to move on to private rented accommodation. Consideration as to which jobs might be appropriate for apprenticeships.	task group is exploring how this programme could be promoted to the sector, and to see whether Kickstart could lead into Apprenticeships for these young people.  The ESTA programme (Employability for Supported and Temporary Housing) project has just started – funded by ASC (Supported Housing) and Public Health (Temporary Housing) and positive outcomes for young people in these settings could be kickstart and apprenticeships in the H&SC sector. This will be explored further In 2021 as the project moves from development to delivery.	
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R4 - Raise awareness of the role of the Personal Assistant and the related advice and support available						
	Items from Cabinet report 12/11/19			Actions		
NO	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	TIMESCALE	DETAILED ACTION	PROGRESS	RATING
4.1	<b>All councillors, via their connections with local groups and organisations, to help raise awareness of</b>	Support from councillors, within naturally occurring opportunities, to raise awareness of the newer	Ongoing	Produce a briefing pack on Support With Confidence.	Briefing pack attached at <b>Appendix A</b>	Ongoing

	<b>the role of the Personal Assistant and the related advice and support available from the Support with Confidence team.</b>	models of social care support would be welcomed by the department. Information and guidance can be provided as required.				
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#### **R5 - Explore the feasibility and potential benefits of developing a bespoke website**

<b>Items from Cabinet report 12/11/19</b>				<b>Items from meetings December 2019</b>		
<b>NO</b>	<b>SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>DETAILED ACTION</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>RATING</b>
5.1 Page 100	<b>The Adult Social Care department to explore the feasibility and potential benefits of developing a bespoke website to provide information on jobs and careers in the East Sussex care sector.</b>	The department will explore the approach, methodology, costs and feasibility of the West Sussex website model, and/or alternatives to this model, to determine whether there is a cost-effective and achievable solution that can be recommended within the current constraints on the Council's budget and the Core Offer. This work will include engagement with representatives of the Independent Care Sector to understand what would be	October 2019 – March 2020	Complete feasibility study with ICT Services, Recruitment Support and ICS Service Development Manager.	Feasibility of the West Sussex website model explored and alternative approach recommended based on using existing East Sussex web presence and greater access for the ICS.	<b>Complete</b>



		of most benefit to the sector. Work will be undertaken to ensure that any developments make the most of the activity being undertaken within the Employability & Skills Team.				
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R6 - Continue to reinforce the national recruitment campaign						
Ref	Items from Cabinet report 12/11/19			Actions		
	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	TIMESCALE	DETAILED ACTION	PROGRESS	RATING
The Adult Social Care department to:						
6.1	<b>Continue to reinforce the national recruitment campaign locally via support from the East Sussex County Council's Communications Team.</b>	The department has sought support from the Communications team to reinforce stage two of the national recruitment campaign, including using the national campaign wording and images in our own media adverts; devising direct linkage to the Council's own recruitment branding and	October 2019 to January 2020	Continue to utilise the national campaign messaging and images to drive potential applicants to the ESCC ASC <a href="#">change your world and theirs</a> campaign recruitment web pages, film clips and vacancies.	ESCC ASC <a href="#">change your world and theirs</a> campaign marketing utilises national campaign messaging and images to drive potential applicants to vacancies advertised on the ESCC recruitment web pages. Recruitment leads in JCR/OP DPS and LD DPS load jobs directly onto DWP Jobs.  Complete	Ongoing

Page 102		<p>the potential to use the national campaign advert website to provide direct hyperlink access to our own job vacancies on the Council's website.</p> <p>The East Sussex County Council <a href="#">recruitment web pages</a>, are already well established, attract high volume visits through recruitment marketing, for example to the Adult Social Care '<a href="#">change your world and theirs</a>' campaign. An example of recent recruitment marketing success under this campaign is attached showing low cost, high reach of social media marketing with positive impact on web page views – attached as <b>Appendix B</b></p>	<p>Remind recruitment leads at the ASC Operations Workforce Group to load onto Department of Works &amp; Pensions (DWP) Jobs.</p> <p>The Independent Care Sector (ICS) now have their own free recruitment pages ("Join The Independent Care Sector") on the ESCC job website for them to advertise vacancies automatically via the DWP Find a Job and the national recruitment campaign websites (38 vacancies currently listed on 25/8/20).</p> <p>Daily (and now weekly) ICS Provider bulletins have been issued during the Covid19 pandemic and have included a "Top Recruitment Tips" bulletin, with fast track measures for DBS; Values Based Recruitment guidance; telephone references form and free ESCC online local training/induction for new ICS recruits and volunteers, provided by the ASC&amp;H training team.</p> <p>Online training for all ICS providers continues to be free to access through the ASC &amp; H training portal during the Covid19 pandemic. This includes Care Certificate, refresher and specialist courses. A new offer of Leadership and Management courses based on the CQC Well-Led Project domain is</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing offer</p> <p>Ongoing offer</p>	
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Page 103				<p>also available.</p> <p>In response to the Covid19 pandemic, there is a new national Recruitment Linking service called “Join Social Care” which enables members of the public to register an interest in paid job roles with the ICS via a database of interested candidate’s CVs. This has been included in several of the ICS Bulletins to encourage the sector to register with the site.</p> <p>Locally, a questionnaire has been sent to all providers asking them if they have registered with the scheme or not, and for reasons and comments. It also explores whether a local ASC&amp;H scheme would be positively used once the national scheme ceases.</p> <p>There will be an evaluation of the national scheme by Skills for Care in due course,which will also inform any local activity on this type of recruitment approach.</p>	<p>Ongoing offer</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		
	6.2	<b>Work with the Employability and Skills Team to ensure that this is integrated into the cross sectoral careers campaign</b>	The department will involve the Employability and Skills Team directly in this work, described above, to ensure that the Skills	October 2019 to May 2020	Link the Skills East Sussex (Careers East Sussex) and <a href="#">change your world and theirs</a> campaign recruitment web pages, film clips and vacancies – links on both websites and adopt key messages from the national	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Due to COVID the careers campaign has changed emphasis and the Employability</p>	Ongoing

	run by Skills East Sussex.	East Sussex campaign is able to access and utilise the linkages which can be achieved.		campaign on the marketing for both.	and Skills Team have created a new website :www.careerseastsussex.co.uk which has information about careers in the Health and Social Care sector on it. This links to the ASC Change your world and theirs campaign so that young people and the public can click through to ASC careers promotion.	
6.3 Page 104	<b>Work with the Employability and Skills Team to ensure that this is integrated into the cross sectoral careers campaign run by Skills East Sussex.</b>	ASC representatives to be invited to attend the first meeting of the Skills East Sussex Careers Campaign planning (21 <sup>st</sup> November) to identify how the national campaign can dovetail in with the local campaign, and to explore the sharing of resources relating to care sector roles.	Development of resources by May 2020.	<p>Careers Campaign Group to involve JCR, Learning Disability, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists as the focus for this sector is on care worker/support worker, social worker, occupational therapist and staff nurse based on national research data.</p> <p>The Careers Campaign Group will map out all careers events across the county and hold one event per sector to encourage adult unemployed (12% want to work/82% do not) and returners to work to apply for vacancies utilising the <a href="http://www.careerseastsussex.co.uk">careers East Sussex website</a>. Link to: -<a href="#">change your world and theirs</a> campaign recruitment web pages -BeReady (schools) The Careers Campaign Group will produce 30 second talking heads per career to</p>	<p>Representatives invited to attend the Careers East Sussex Campaign Group. The Campaign group has changed focus due to COVID, and is focusing on virtual provision and the development of resources for the <a href="http://www.careerseastsussex.co.uk">www.careerseastsussex.co.uk</a> website</p> <p>During Careers Week 2021, the Careers Campaign Group in partnership with the Health and social care task group will run a one hour virtual careers event for adults and young people. The event will include an</p>	In progress

				encourage adult unemployed (12% want to work/82% do not) and returners to work to apply for vacancies – HA will link with HF on the benefits of clients in the film clips and the refresh of the <a href="#">change your world and theirs</a> film and image permissions. 2020	infographic about careers in the sector, short talking heads (using existing ASC and HEE resources with any additional filmed in Jan 2021) and an interactive panel of reps from NHS, Care providers and ASC	
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## **Support with Confidence – Councillor Briefing Paper**

### **Background**

The Support With Confidence (SWC) scheme was set up by Oxfordshire County Council in 2009 and is currently run in 7 Local Authority areas: East Sussex, Bracknell Forest, Brighton and Hove, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Berkshire. The East Sussex SWC scheme started in 2010 and is run in partnership between Adult Social Care and Trading Standards.

Support With Confidence is an accreditation scheme which:

- approves local providers of care and support services in the community, the majority of which are not regulated by CQC. Members have been approved on to the scheme by demonstrating that they are committed to the highest level of quality, safety and training
- provides a directory of vetted and approved providers who offer care and support services for adults in East Sussex. Membership includes businesses and individuals (personal assistants ) who provide care and support services. Many of our scheme members are trained to support people with additional needs such as Dementia, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
- helps adults who wish to choose and organise the services they need to meet their social care and support needs, by offering local residents greater choice when choosing services

For more information on the SWC accreditation scheme please visit:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/support-to-stay-at-home/support-with-confidence/>

### **Membership approval process:**

All SWC members are required to complete the following to ensure that they offer a good quality service, which meet ESCC SWC accreditation standards:

- Background checks (including references, quality monitoring, financial, and complaints checks)
- An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Certificate (DBS.)
- Attend an interview
- Attend mandatory training courses in Business, Personal Assistant induction , Level 2 Food Hygiene, Level 2 Emergency First Aid, Medication training, Moving & Handling training, Equality and Diversity

Following approval, all members are required to renew their membership yearly, when it is checked their training and checks are still up to date.

### **Services available to people through the scheme:**

SWC Personal Assistant members offer 1:1 support to people in their homes, including services such as:

Personal care, Domestic duties, Medication assistance, Meal preparation, Daytime activities, Social engagement, Transportation.

SWC Business members offer a range of other services including:

Home maintenance, Gardeners, Independent Financial Advice, Transport Services, Pet Services, Complementary and Therapeutic Services, Coaching and Personal Development, Learning Support Day Centres, Sport and Leisure Facilities

### **Benefits the SWC scheme offers to local residents:**

- The scheme is available to all East Sussex residents who need care and support services, whether they are eligible for Adult Social Care financial assistance or not
- Offers a range of person centred services which can be informal support (for example; going on nights/days out) through to more intensive care and support arrangements
- Helps people maintain their own independence, by accessing services as active and engaged citizens
- People are able to select services from providers that have been vetted to meet a certain standard and offer a good quality service
- Minimises risk to the public, in particular to older people and adults with disabilities
- Provides people with support in the event of a complaint

### **Benefits the SWC scheme offers the wider Health and Social Care System:**

SWC plays an integral role in the whole system transformation of Health and Social Care

- supporting the Local Authority Care Act requirements by providing a diverse range of quality services and facilitating and promoting choice
- improving quality through a recognised quality mark
- assisting to upskill and improve the services offered by the unregulated care and provide support to the market
- developing the market for Personal Assistants, which increases consumer choice and protection and provide a more cost effective solution to meet care and support needs of ASC clients

### **Scheme developments in the last 2 years**

- **Increased membership** from 174 members in April 2017 to 244 SWC members in December 2019 – 196 Personal Assistants and 48 Businesses with a further 91 applications in process
- **A new expanded** training programme has been developed to enable applicants and members access to a broader training offer which now includes specialist training courses ( mental health, dementia, health related training.
- **Marketing campaign undertaken** to raise awareness of the scheme to the general public and recruit new members. Marketing resources have been improved including a PA marketing video, redesigned promotional materials
- **PA referral process implemented** for all Adult Social Care operational teams, assisting ASC workers to make suitable matches more quickly with successful results
- **A full review of all application processes and membership renewal processes** including an updated PA Employment Status Guidance, Code of Conduct and updated scheme policies
- **SWC webpages and directory** updated to ensure information across with 1Space and ESCIS teams

### **Future projects and development work**

The SWC team will focusing its attention on the following projects in 2020

- **Development of a PA on-call network**
- Offer the SWC accreditation process to **approval of commissioned day services** across East Sussex
- **Position SWC to deliver core services** that are used by funded clients with eligible needs
- Hold a **SWC members network event**
- **Undertake new targeted marketing campaigns in hard to place areas**

**For further information about the scheme and to receive a copy of the media pack for promoting the scheme within your communities, please contact**

Lyndsey Potts, SWC Service Manager

[lyndsey.potts@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:lyndsey.potts@eastsussex.gov.uk)



# Hookstead / The Ferns

A focused recruitment push – 14<sup>th</sup> September

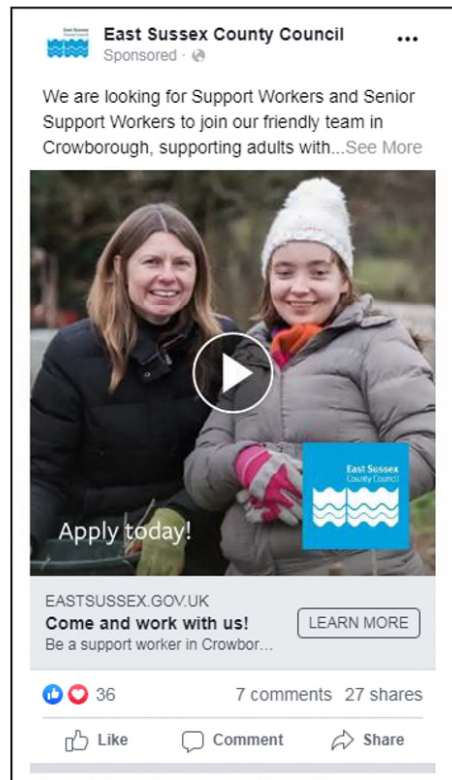


For the support worker roles at Hookstead and The Ferns, we put our efforts into three main streams:

1. Creating a targeted Facebook advert.
2. Connecting with relevant local groups in the Crowborough area.
3. Using our existing newsletter lead to push the roles.

## Hookstead / The Ferns

A focused recruitment push – 14<sup>th</sup> September



The Facebook ad: <https://www.facebook.com/248361861866323/posts/652543268600899>

We created a slideshow ad using several different pictures, including one of the Hookstead building, so that local people might recognise where it was.

The ad was 15 seconds long, ran for two weeks (Aug 30 – Sep 14) and we spent £300 in budget.

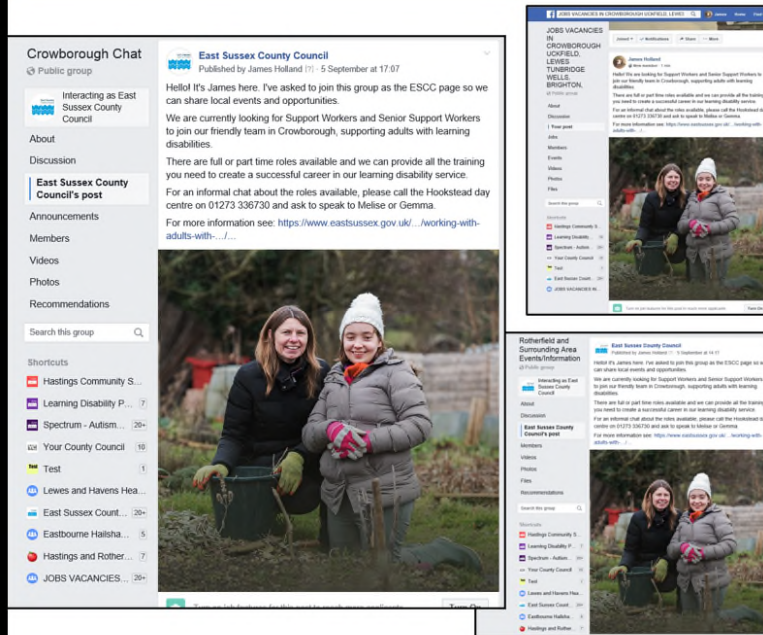
It resulted in **604** link clicks and cost **50p** per link click.

604 Results: Link Click ▾ 25,364 Reach ▾



# Hookstead / The Ferns

A focused recruitment push – 14<sup>th</sup> September



## Connecting with Facebook groups:

We contacted four groups in total, asking them to share our content.

The groups were:

- Jobs Vacancies in Crowborough, Uckfield, Lewes, Tunbridge Wells, Brighton (3,000)
- Crowborough community (3,500)
- Crowborough chat (753)
- Rotherfield and Surrounding Area Events/Information (1,735)

The groups had a combined total of **8,988** group members who could've possibly seen the posts. We had nine people go through to our web pages as a result of these posts, and one filled out an email form.



# Hookstead / The Ferns

A focused recruitment push – 14<sup>th</sup> September



5 Sep, 2019

## Recruiting now!

We are looking for Support Workers and Senior Support Workers to join our friendly team in Crowborough, supporting adults with learning disabilities. In either of these roles you would be providing practical support. This might include assistance with leisure activities like cooking or gardening, help with personal care and teaching people new skills.

You can [watch videos showing some of the things you might be doing here](#).

## What are we looking for?

There are full or part time roles available and these are split across two new services, Hookstead and The Ferns.

Hookstead is open 9am until 5pm, four days a week (they close on Wednesday). Whereas, The Ferns provides 24/7 accommodation and support, so a wider range of hours are available, including weekend work, which may be suitable if you have commitments Monday to Friday.

As with all our roles there are opportunities for development and career progression. We can provide all the training you need to create a successful career in our team.

If you have a can-do attitude and enjoy working with people and want to make a difference to someone's life, we would love to hear from you!

## Want to know more?

If you would like more information or an informal chat about the roles, please call Nicola Spencer on 01323 464470 or email [nicola.spencer@easussex.gov.uk](#)

## Using our existing newsletter:

We sent out a newsletter to our existing newsletter subscribers.

- It was sent to **626** people.
- There were **365** unique opens (59%)
- There were **100** total clicks, with **83** unique clicks (13%)
- Both of these numbers are higher than the previous two newsletters sent

Alternatively you can call the Hookstead day centre direct on 01273 336730 and ask to speak to Melise Bulcher or Gemma Wanstall, who will be happy to discuss vacancies with you.

## Apply now

If you're ready to go ahead and apply now, go for it using one of the links below:

- [Support worker – part time](#)
- [Support worker – full time](#)
- [Support worker – weekends only](#)
- [Senior Support Worker – full time](#)

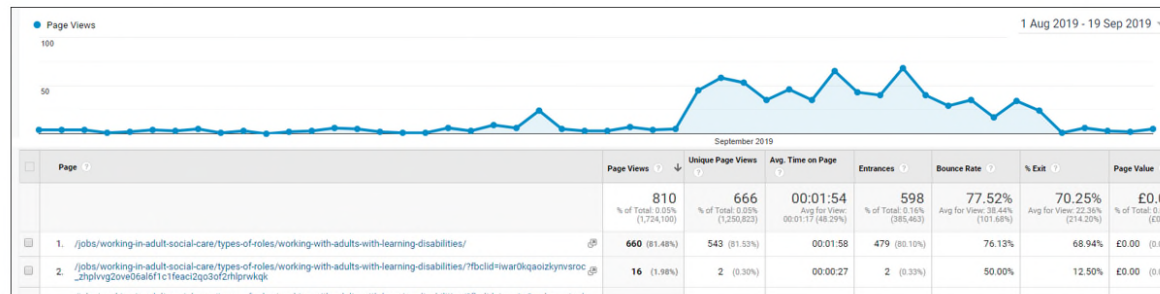


## Hookstead / The Ferns

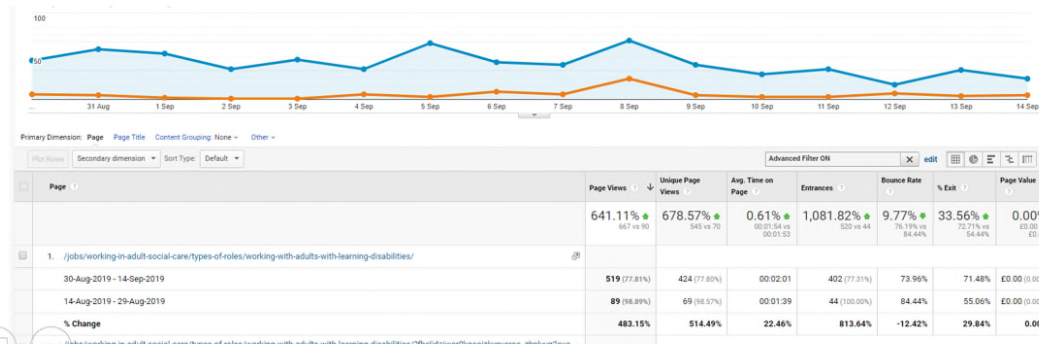
A focused recruitment push – 14<sup>th</sup> September

### The effect on web traffic:

You can see the spike in traffic to our web page during the time of promotion:



The website traffic to this page saw a **678%** increase in unique page views compared to the same time period the previous month.



# Hookstead / The Ferns

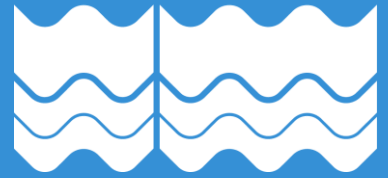
A focused recruitment push – 14<sup>th</sup> September

*“There has been a really good response to the Facebook ad. I have sent out 4 paper applications so far this week and others have said they will apply online. There has been more interest than we have ever had. One lady who enquired was so keen that she dropped her CV in before her application had arrived in the post!”*

**Melise Butcher**  
**Deputy Service Manager**  
Learning Disability Services

**As of 30/09/29 there have been 16 applicants shortlisted for interview. There are 12 positions available.**





# Scrutiny Review of the Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care Workforce.

## Report by the Review Board:

Councillor Trevor Webb (Chair)

Councillor Charles Clark

Councillor Michael Ensor

Councillor John Ungar

People Scrutiny Committee – 19 September 2019

Cabinet – 12 November 2019

Full Council – 3 December 2019

# The report of the Scrutiny Review of The Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care Workforce

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# Recommendations

Recommendation	Page
<p>1    <b>The Adult Social Care department and the Employability and Skills team to explore the options for broadening engagement in the work of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group, to include consideration of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhancing links between the ASC department and the work of the Employability and Skills Team;</li> <li>• the pathways for independent sector views to feed into the Task Group and for the work of the Task Group to be promoted in ongoing engagement with the sector; and</li> <li>• the potential to expand the membership of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group to include representatives of the independent sector.</li> </ul>	
<p>2    <b>With a view to increasing the numbers of Industry Champions and Open Doors opportunities drawn from the independent sector, the Adult Social Care department and Employability and Skills Team to work together to identify ways to further develop the Careers Hub's approach to generating interest in these roles. The aim being to create a pool of participants which is more proportionate to the size of the care sector in East Sussex.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All contracts of £100,000 or more issued to the Independent Care Sector by the Adult Social Care department to include social value skills targets that are facilitated by the Employability and Skills Team.</li> </ul>	
<p>3    <b>The Adult Social Care department to work with the Apprenticeship Team to assess the impact of levy funding in relation to care sector employers. This could include evaluating:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the level of interest from the care sector and whether further promotion is needed;</li> <li>• the effectiveness of the process for identifying which providers are allocated the levy funding;</li> <li>• whether the funding successfully targeted those areas where the recruitment pressures are the most challenging; and</li> <li>• whether vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children, have been identified by the Apprenticeship team as requiring any additional support to access apprenticeships funded through the levy.</li> </ul>	
<p>4    <b>All councillors, via their connections with local groups and organisations, to help raise awareness of the role of the Personal Assistant and the related advice and support available from the Support with Confidence team.</b></p>	
<p>5    <b>The Adult Social Care department to explore the feasibility and potential benefits of developing a bespoke website to provide information on jobs and careers in the East Sussex care sector.</b></p>	
<p>6    <b>The Adult Social Care department to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to reinforce the national recruitment campaign locally via support from the East Sussex County Council's Communications Team; and</li> <li>• work with the Employability and Skills Team to ensure that this is integrated into the cross sectoral careers campaign run by Skills East Sussex.</li> </ul>	

## Objectives and Scope of the Review

1. Members of the People Scrutiny Committee are aware of a range of challenges facing the local care market. Some of these were highlighted in the 2018 Care Quality Commission Local Area Review of East Sussex; others are well known locally and nationally and are linked to increased demand for services and resources which are declining in relative terms. The Committee established a Scoping Board to explore these challenges, with the aim of identifying specific areas which would benefit from additional scrutiny. The Scoping Board found that the Adult Social Care (ASC) and Health department has a range of initiatives in place to manage the immediate and short-term issues, particularly in terms of engagement with providers and the NHS to support the market and deliver appropriate and more integrated care. Work is also underway to address longer term challenges and this was the focus for scrutiny.

2. It was apparent to the Scoping Board that the care market will need to change significantly in the coming years to adapt to increasing demand, changing public expectations and the reduced resources available for statutory services. These challenges are particularly acute in East Sussex given the county's demographics. The Scoping Board identified four key areas for scrutiny:

- Public understanding and expectations of social care (subject of a completed scrutiny review)
- **Social care workforce challenges**
- Developing care markets
- Increasing community resilience, in particular addressing loneliness.

3. This review seeks to address aspects of the developing workforce challenges facing social care providers (the second bullet point above). The review is timely as the recruitment and retention challenges in this sector are stark. For example, Skills for Care (SfC) estimate that if the workforce continues to grow proportionally to the projected number of people aged 65 and over, then the number of adult social care jobs in the south east region will increase by 48% by 2035. Given the demographic profile of the county, the required increase in the size of the workforce in East Sussex is potentially even higher.

4. The Committee agreed three areas of focus for the review:

- **Older people's services:** It was agreed to focus on social care for older people as this is the biggest and the fastest growing area of demand for Adult Social Care.
- **Independent Care Sector:** It was agreed to focus on workforce issues within the independent sector (as opposed to the social care workforce directly employed by the ASC and Health department). This is because the independent sector is by far the largest employer of adult social care staff in the county.
- **Commissioned services:** It was agreed that the review should focus particularly on independent sector services commissioned by the ASC department.

5. The Committee also agreed that the review should consider the following two lines of enquiry which specifically relate to the Council's role:

- **Is the Council working effectively in partnership with others (e.g. schools and colleges) with regard to future workforce needs?**
- **Could the Council do more to support recruitment and retention in the independent sector?**

6. This report presents a summary of the Board's findings in relation to these questions and its recommendations. The Board focused on developing recommendations which are realistically achievable and within the Council's sphere of influence and available resources.

## Background

### ***Adult Social Care responsibilities***

7. Section 5 of the Care Act 2014 states that a local authority has a duty to 'promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs'. The aim of this duty includes helping to ensure that residents who wish to access care services in the local care market have a range of providers to choose from who (taken together) provide a variety of high quality services. The Act also states that in performing its duty to promote a diverse and high quality care market, the local authority must also have regard to the need to:

- ensure that it is aware of current and likely future demand for such services and to consider how providers might meet that demand; and
- the importance of fostering a workforce whose members are able to ensure the delivery of high quality services.

8. The above (and other associated) duties are often referred to as 'market shaping'. In line with national recommendations, the county council has produced a '[Market Position Statement](#)', designed to help the social care provider market to contribute and respond to emerging need, required service developments and pathway reconfiguration.

9. The position statement supports the development of the social care workforce by providing information about where demand is likely to increase and therefore where workforce capacity and skills will need to develop. It also sets out how the council supports the independent sector in terms of training and workforce development.

### ***The social care workforce***

#### **National context**

10. The number of adult social care jobs in England was estimated by Skills for Care at 1.6 million in 2017. Only 22% of the total workforce were employed by local authorities, by the NHS (who have employees who are classified as adult social care workers) or in support of direct payments (clients employing care workers themselves with funding provided by a local authority). This means that independent providers, with 78% of the total workforce, are by far the largest employers in the sector. Services within the independent sector include residential nursing homes, residential care homes, home care, and extra care (which includes sheltered housing). The social care workforce comprises: contracted staff; casual staff; agency staff; self-employed personal assistants; front line staff and managers.

#### **Local context**

11. In line with the national picture, the majority of the social care workforce in East Sussex is employed by small independent organisations in the private and voluntary sectors. The county council purchases (commissions) services from some of these independent providers for clients who are entitled to funded social care services from the council under the appropriate legislation. However, many older people in the county (or their relatives) purchase care services direct from these organisations and pay for them without the involvement of the council. These people are often called 'self-funders'.

12. Skills for Care (the sector skills council for adult social care which takes a strategic lead on workforce development) estimates that in East Sussex in 2017 there were an estimated 21,000 jobs in adult social care. These were split between local authorities (9%), independent sector providers (83%) and jobs for direct payment recipients (9%). The figures indicate that the majority (79%) of the workforce in East Sussex was female and the average age was 43 years old. Those aged 24 and under made up 10% of the workforce and those aged over 55 represented 25%. Given this age profile approximately 5,200 people will be reaching retirement age in the next 10 years.

13. Pay rates for social care occupations in East Sussex are generally lower than average rates in the south east region, although usually higher than average rates in England. For example, the average hourly rate of a care worker (in 2017/18) was £8.27 in the county, £8.37 in the south east, and £8.19 in England. Skills for Care estimates show that 50% of the workforce in East Sussex hold a relevant adult social care qualification (49% in the south east and 53% in England). Of those workers without a relevant adult social care qualification recorded, 56% had three or more years of experience in the adult social care sector, 64% had completed or were in the process of an induction and 31% had engaged with the Care Certificate.

## **Future trends and challenges**

14. **Demographic pressures:** The population in England aged 65 and above is projected to increase to 14.5 million by 2035 (from a population of 10 million in 2017). This necessitates a huge increase in the capacity of health and social care services, a challenge which will increasingly impact on all local authorities with social care responsibilities. Given the older than average age profile in East Sussex, the situation here is even more challenging. For example, assuming the workforce grows proportionally to the number of people aged 75 and over in the population, it is estimated that by 2030 the adult social care workforce in East Sussex will need to grow by 55% to meet the needs of the ageing population. This would result in an increased workforce total of 32,600 jobs in the social care sector in East Sussex (as opposed to the 2017 figure of 21,000). Whilst this figure includes those directly employed by the local authority and the NHS, the main impact of this potential increase in demand will be felt within the independent sector, given that over three quarters of care jobs are within that sector.

15. **New skills required:** As well as increased capacity in the social care workforce there is a need to develop the skills within that workforce to meet future needs. Health and social care services are becoming increasingly integrated, leading to new and different roles. The skills required of health and social care staff are undergoing significant changes as the roles increasingly require workers to enable people to manage their own health and care with support from technology. And, as people are supported to live independently at home for as long as possible, those needing residential or nursing home care are likely to have more complex needs requiring additional skills from staff. There is an increasing demand for newer roles such as Personal Assistant which require skills in managing a business as well as care and support.

16. **Recruitment and retention:** The scale of the recruitment and retention challenge in the sector is demonstrated by estimates from Skills for Care that in England in 2017/18 approximately 390,000 care workers left their job during the year and there were around 110,000 vacancies at any one time. The adult social care workforce within East Sussex has a vacancy rate of 8.6%, which equates to 1,700 vacancies at any one time. This vacancy rate is similar to the region average, at 8.7% and similar to England at 8.0%. The turnover rate in the workforce is high, at 31% overall and 36% for direct care roles. There is significant churn within the system with staff moving from one care role to another. However, whilst the turnover rate is relatively high, many staff are remaining within the care sector. National research suggests that it is difficult to attract workers because of relatively low pay and negative perceptions of the work. Compared to its neighbouring local authorities, East Sussex has the lowest rate of zero-hour contracts at 15%, compared to 26% in Kent, 24% in Brighton and Hove and 23% in West Sussex and Surrey.

17. **Future national policy:** There are significant uncertainties nationally regarding the direction of travel for adult social care policy. An anticipated Green Paper is still awaited and it is unclear if or how future government funding of adult social care will respond to demographic changes and the significant pressures on local authority budgets. In addition, there may be some impact on the social care workforce from Brexit as some staff working in the care sector in the UK are from EU countries. These factors contribute to a challenging backdrop for adult social care workforce planning and development.

## Findings and Recommendations

### *Workforce planning and development*

18. The Board heard that the Council works with Skills for Care to ensure a good understanding of future workforce needs both for the local authority itself and the independent sector. This includes projections of total future workforce needs and by type of role and service.

19. The Council's Market Position Statement provides an overview for the independent sector of where future demand is expected to fall, both geographically and by type of service, to inform the sector's plans for service development and the associated workforce requirements. The statement concludes that, if the current volumes of service provision and purchasing patterns are applied to the demographic data for East Sussex, there is an expectation that demand will continue to rise in the following areas:

- **Personal Assistants:** Given the trend for people to increasingly want to stay in their own homes, it is anticipated that the demand for Personal Assistants that can support more complex health and social care needs will continue to grow.
- **Home care:** Whilst in some areas of the county there is currently sufficient home care provision, there are locations in the county which have a shortfall of care options for clients.
- **Dementia residential care:** additional dementia residential care is needed in the west of the county.
- **Nursing care:** nursing and dementia nursing provision across the county which is able to cope with a clientele that has increasingly complex levels of need.

20. The Board was therefore satisfied that there is a good picture of future care and workforce needs available to both the ASC department and independent providers, and that this forms the basis of efforts to address workforce challenges. The Board went on to consider the work being undertaken by the council and its partners to develop the social care workforce and the effectiveness of these initiatives.

### **Skills development**

21. The Board was informed about the work of Skills East Sussex (SES), the county's recognised strategic body for employment and skills and the East Sussex sub-board of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Advisory Group. SES is made up of representatives from colleges, universities, secondary schools, business representatives, employment agencies (DWP, careers service) and other key stake holders.

22. The overarching goal of SES is to agree and set priorities and provide direction for the county's approach to employment and skills. The main responsibilities of SES include providing forums and spaces that enable businesses and providers to develop a common understanding of employment and skills needs and deliver joint actions to address these. The responsibilities also include developing a sustained dialogue with East Sussex employers to:

- Identify generic and sector-specific skills needs and develop effective strategies to address these;
- Promote employer investment in workforce skills; and
- Encourage employer involvement in activities to promote and develop skills amongst young people and vulnerable adults.

23. The work of SES is supported by the council's Employability and Skills Team. The team is uniquely positioned between the Communities, Economy and Transport department and the Children's Services department. The Employability and Skills Team aims to embed activities relating to employment and skills across all relevant areas of the council's activities. The team's activities include:

- Updating and publishing a Sector Skills Evidence Base which is used to inform strategies for developing the county's skills landscape and addressing skills gaps. (The details of the evidence bases for each sector, including Health and Social Care, are available via the Council's East Sussex in Figures service.)
- Overseeing and coordinating the work programme of six Sector Task Groups, including a Health and Social Care Sector Task Group.

24. The Review Board focused on the role of the above mentioned Health and Social Care Sector Task Group and its potential for improving links with the independent sector. The Board were informed that the membership of the group includes a wide variety of representatives from the health and social care sector (including Skills for Care, Health Education England and the NHS and the Adult Social Care and Health Department). The scope of the Group is to:

- Identify ways of promoting careers in the Health and Social care sector to those in education, returning to work, considering a change in career
- Explore ways of upskilling those in employment in the sector to ensure that East Sussex has a highly skilled Health and Social Care workforce
- Explore and develop new ways and models for supporting and delivering Health and Social care teaching and training (e.g. virtual and remote learning)
- Promote Apprenticeships within the sector and encourage young people to explore working in the sector
- Examine opportunities for encouraging more men to take up work in the health and social care sector.

25. The Board heard that the Group have developed a range of initiatives. These include, for example:

- HEE and ESCC ASC staff providing training for secondary school Careers Leaders/ Coordinators on pathways in to Health and Social Care in December 2018.
- In December 2018, East Sussex Healthcare Trust, with the support of ESCC, won a bid through the Pears#iwill Fund to develop a Youth Volunteer Manager post to develop opportunities for young people to volunteer within health and social care settings.

26. Whilst the Board welcomed the creation of the Task Group and the range of activities it is undertaking, Members heard that there is scope to improve awareness of its work within the ASC department, including the impact of its initiatives and whether more needs to be done to ensure that it is addressing the needs of the independent sector. For example, the Board discussed the provision of work experience and were informed that it can be difficult to find placements for under 18's in the care sector. This is because some providers are stricter about the type of experience they are able to offer. Despite some of these challenges, the Board were informed that significant numbers of placements are being made by the work experience team which is based within the Children's Services Department. For example, in the academic year 2018-2019 there were 158 placements within the care sector as a whole. Whilst welcoming the number of placements, the Board heard that there is scope for ASC to be more engaged with this programme of work experience.

27. The Board were also informed that there may be a lack of awareness amongst independent sector providers too. For example, the Registered Care Association for East Sussex were not aware of the work of the Task Group within the independent care sector itself. Given that one of the key goals of SES is to provide forums for employers to discuss the skills gaps in their sectors, the Board concluded there is potential to broaden engagement.

28. Evidence considered by the Board indicated that there is scope to develop a clearer pathway for independent provider views to feed into the Task Group, informed by the engagement work which is already undertaken by the ASC department. A clearer pathway of this kind could help the council's employment and skills strategy be informed by a more developed picture of the needs of the sector. Given the size and importance of the independent sector, the Board concluded that there is a need to more closely align the activities of the Employability and Skills Team with the work being undertaken within the ASC department and with the independent sector itself. This should include considering whether the membership of the Task Group could be expanded to incorporate independent sector representation. The Board also considered that given the scale of challenges facing the sector, that the Task Group should be reconvened as soon as practicable and that further steps should be taken to promote the work of the Task Group within the independent sector.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**The Adult Social Care department and the Employability and Skills team to explore the options for broadening engagement in the work of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group, to include consideration of:**

- **enhancing links between the Adult Social Care department and the work of the Employability and Skills Team;**
- **the pathways for independent sector views to feed into the Task Group and for the work of the Task Group to be promoted in ongoing engagement with the sector; and**
- **the potential to expand the membership of the Health and Social Care Sector Task Group to include representatives of the independent sector.**

### **Engagement with schools and colleges**

29. Given the need to attract additional workers into social care, and the older age profile of the current workforce, the Board investigated whether effective partnerships are in place with schools and colleges to promote care as a career to school and college students. Another key area of activity for the Employability and Skills Team relates to the Careers Hub East Sussex. Launched in September 2018, the Careers Hub works strategically with the senior leadership of all 40 secondary schools, special schools and colleges in the county to improve the quality of careers, employability and enterprise by meeting the eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Careers Guidance, as set out in the Department for Education's Careers Strategy (December 2017).

30. The Board were informed that the Careers Hub engages with educational institutions and businesses in initiatives such as:

- **Industry Champions:** These are individuals who are directly involved with delivering activities for young people in schools. The expectation is that the volunteers who perform this role will have an ability to present their role, experience and knowledge with a positive energy and strong understanding of their industry. They are expected to commit some time to careers and enterprise activities in schools such as giving talks at school/college events, mentoring young people, attending careers fairs, giving premises tours or offering work experience opportunities. Candidates can come from any level of work (CEOs, sole traders, freelancers, or apprentices), the key quality being that individuals must have an interest in sharing their experience of work and promoting their industry.
- **Open Doors:** This is a workplace-based project which offers school pupils across East Sussex an opportunity to visit workplaces and hear from employers about the range of jobs they offer and the career paths into their sector. This initiative aims to help pupils by providing essential knowledge and experience which can help inform decisions about their career path. It also benefits employers as it offers the opportunity to engage with young people who might be attracted to pursue careers in their industry.

31. The Board were informed that the goal is to expand the network of Industry Champions, particularly with regard to a priority sector like health and social care. The Board also heard that the Employability and Skills Team are looking to further develop initiatives that help stimulate workforce growth in the independent sector and its work in this area could be accelerated if contacts with organisations in the sector were expanded.

32. The Board welcomed the steps being taken by the Careers Hub, including the Industry Champions and Open Doors initiatives. However, they were also informed that in the context of a care market of hundreds of employers, only a small number of Champions are drawn from the independent sector. The Board concluded that this figure highlights the need to improve the sector's engagement as the current low number of champions will not provide enough opportunities to make a significant difference to the numbers of young people interested in pursuing a career in the sector which employs the majority of care staff. The Board agreed that it was especially important that this area should be developed ahead of the introduction in 2021 of the new T Level courses in social care. (T-levels are new technical qualifications aimed at putting vocational qualifications on an equal footing with academic ones and making access to the job market easier.)

33. The Board also discussed the ASC department's role as a major commissioner of independent care services and whether there is potential to use its commissioning position to secure commitments to workforce skills development from independent care contractors. In addition to the Industry Champions and Open Doors activities discussed above, a policy of this kind could also include asking contractors to commit to participation in:

- Offering work experience
- Offering apprenticeships
- Taking part in the Skills East Sussex H&SC task group

#### **Recommendation 2**

- **With a view to increasing the numbers of Industry Champions and Open Doors opportunities drawn from the independent sector, the Adult Social Care department and Employability and Skills Team to work together to identify ways to further develop the Careers Hub's approach to generating interest in these roles. The aim being to create a pool of participants which is more proportionate to the size of the care sector in East Sussex.**
- **All contracts of £100,000 or more issued to the Independent Care Sector by the Adult Social Care department to include social value skills targets that are facilitated by the Employability and Skills Team.**

34. A further avenue for the Council and care sector employers to work in partnership with colleges and universities is via apprenticeships. From April 2017, all employers with an overall paybill of £3m or more were required to pay into an apprenticeship levy, calculated at 0.5% of the paybill. For East Sussex County Council, this currently equates to a levy of approximately £1.1m per annum. Levy funds can only be used to fund apprenticeship training and are stored in a digital apprenticeship account. From April 2019 it was agreed that levy paying employers can use up to 25% of their annual levy pot to pass on to other employers to fund external apprenticeship activity.

35. Prior to the 25% optional external allocation coming into effect in April 2019, the council's Apprenticeship Team made contact with local colleges and universities to make them aware it was ESCC's intention to use the 25% funding to support primarily small and medium sized non-levy paying businesses in the county. This was in support of promoting apprenticeship opportunities in priority areas, including adult social care.



36. East Sussex County Council is now working closely with the Sussex College Group, Plumpton College and Brighton University to offer the opportunity of apprenticeship funding to the network of employers these organisations work with. In addition, this opportunity has been offered out via Procurement and the ASC department to their supply chain of care organisations. The Board was informed that there had been a very positive response from small and medium sized organisations within the county who wished to participate in the apprenticeship scheme. The scheme is proving popular as it supports a provider by organising staff training through colleges and universities which is paid for via the council. At the time of producing this report for example, and in partnership with local apprenticeship training providers, a commitment has been given to fund 29 x Care based apprenticeships at independent care homes within East Sussex. It is hoped to release more funds to support care-based apprenticeships at the end of September 2019. As this is the first year of funding apprenticeships through the 25% levy drawdown, officers will also have an opportunity to evaluate the scheme across all sectors. This will help inform the approach going forward.

37. Officers indicated that going forward it may be possible to more specifically pinpoint areas the council wants to concentrate on, for example to specify with apprenticeship training providers a desire to focus on promoting apprenticeships to those living in rural areas, or those in minority groups. The Board wished to ensure that vulnerable groups such as Looked After Children are able to benefit from the additional apprenticeship funding. Members were assured that the Employability and Skills Team work with under-represented and vulnerable groups, including Looked After Children, to promote social care as a career. The Board welcomed this approach but agreed that it would be helpful to assess whether any additional support is required for these groups to access apprenticeship funding, for example exploring the feasibility of including a requirement for schools and colleges to prioritise specific groups.

38. The Board welcomed the evidence of steps being taken to engage with small and medium size social care employers in the county with regard to apprenticeships. As the external levy funding scheme is new, and the council is learning how best to deploy the increased funds it can make available to support apprenticeships, the Board agreed that its impact in relation to social care should be assessed in due course.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Adult Social Care department to work with the Apprenticeship Team to assess the impact of levy funding in relation to care sector employers. This could include evaluating:**

- **the level of interest from the care sector and whether further promotion is needed;**
- **the effectiveness of the process for identifying which providers are allocated the levy funding;**
- **whether the funding successfully targeted those areas where the recruitment pressures are the most challenging; and**
- **whether vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children, have been identified by the Apprenticeship team as requiring any additional support to access apprenticeships funded through the levy.**

## ***Recruitment and retention***

### **Support for the independent care sector**

39. Independent sector care providers are independent businesses with individual responsibility for their own recruitment and retention of staff. However, the council's Care Act duties include a wider role in facilitating a diverse and quality care market and an appropriate workforce to deliver it. In this role the Council provides a range of support to the sector, aspects of which specifically relate to supporting recruitment and retention of the care workforce.

40. ESCC is also a significant commissioner of services from the local care market. In January 2018 the ASC department purchased approximately 1,660 beds from the independent sector, which equates to 24% of the overall market. ASC also commissions 51 independent sector agencies providing home care in East Sussex, delivering just over 19,500 hours of state funded care per week. The council therefore has a direct need to ensure appropriately staffed services are available to purchase for clients eligible for ASC funded care and has more ability to influence and work with providers of commissioned services.

41. The department's support to the independent sector includes:

- working in partnership with providers following a Care Quality Commission inspection to advise and support on areas for development.
- providing mandatory, bespoke and developmental training to registered managers, care staff and administrators working within the independent sector. This includes providing training to Personal Assistants. Between July 2017 and July 2018, 2529 staff attended training. The Council also offers free access to a range of e-learning modules relevant to social care staff.
- working with providers to enhance the level of service provided; and
- offering an accreditation for providers through Support with Confidence.

42. In addition to the support provided by the local authority, Skills for Care has developed materials to help employers recruit and retain staff. This includes supporting a national recruitment campaign, conducting research on what works well for employers and providing information on values-based recruitment. This approach to promoting careers in the sector places values and motivation at the heart of the recruitment process and enables candidates to demonstrate suitability through personal life experience, as well as qualifications and training. Research that supports this approach includes data provided by Skills for Care which indicates that for low turnover employers in the care sector "finding staff with the right values and behaviours is more important than finding staff who are already qualified; skills can be taught but personal attributes (kindness, compassion, reliability, honesty, etc.) cannot".

43. The Board considered the effectiveness of key aspects of the current support offered to providers in relation to recruitment and retention.

## **Support with Confidence/Personal Assistants**

44. The Support with Confidence scheme provides a directory of vetted and approved providers who offer a wide range of care and support services for adults in East Sussex. The range of services covered is diverse and the scheme is designed to support providers across the independent and voluntary sectors by offering accreditation and the resulting increased accessibility and assurance to potential clients. There is a particular focus on Personal Assistants, a role which is relatively new and where demand is likely to increase. Personal Assistants are not currently regulated by the Care Quality Commission, hence the scheme provides an important accreditation function for this section of the market.

45. A Personal Assistant (PA) is employed or engaged on a self-employment basis directly by a person who needs care and support, either with funding provided by the council (if eligible) or by self-funding. They can also be employed or engaged by a family member or representative. A PA works directly with the client in a person-centred way, supporting them to continue to live independently in their own home and community. The Board were informed that of the estimated 800 PAs operating within East Sussex, 180 had been accredited under Support with Confidence.

46. The Board were also informed that in terms of the support it provides to PAs and Business Members, the scheme aims to:

- upskill and improve the services offered by the unregulated care and support market
- accredit care and support providers that have been checked and vetted on the grounds of quality, safety and training
- provide a list of accredited providers to the public and ASC operational teams

- provide clients with choice beyond more 'traditional' care options, including by developing the market for Personal Assistants, which increases consumer choice and protection.
- help develop and support local ASC providers

47. With regard to PAs the ASC department informed the Board that, as well as anticipated future increase in demand, there continued to be challenges in the rural areas of the county where there are not enough PAs to support the existing demand.

48. The Board heard evidence that Support with Confidence provides a market shaping and developing effect. It helps to build, through training and accreditation, a workforce of PAs comprised of people who may not otherwise want to work for home care or care home companies. This helps to increase the overall social care workforce and work towards meeting the growing demand for social care, as well as providing greater consumer choice.

49. In terms of developing the numbers of PAs working in the county to meet increasing demand, the Board heard that there is a limited marketing resource available for Support with Confidence. This is targeted at areas where there is an identified gap in the PA market, including in specific areas such as rural communities where domiciliary care agencies find it hard to deliver care packages. The Board were supportive of the approach being taken to target relevant rural communities and encouraged the Department to continue with this focus and develop it further where possible. The Board were also informed of a number of other initiatives which the Department are planning to take forward in support of the PA market. These include:

- Streamlined referral processes for operational staff
- Exploration of PA on-call networks
- Further targeted marketing campaigns

50. The Board discussed how elected members interact with a range of different community groups and how via these connections, they could help raise awareness of the role and help signpost interested individuals to the Support with Confidence team. To assist with this, the Board suggest that Members should be provided with a briefing note which explains the role of the PA and the Support With Confidence scheme and how interested individuals should be signposted to advice and guidance on how to apply.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**All councillors, via their connections with local groups and organisations, to help raise awareness of the role of the Personal Assistant and the related advice and support available from the Support with Confidence team.**

### **Online support for recruitment and retention**

51. Evidence presented to the Board suggested that recruitment and retention are key issues for many providers. For example, the Registered Care Association for East Sussex indicated that the large number of small employers in the county makes it difficult to develop a strategic recruitment initiative across the sector (the RCA is an industry body which represents a range of providers of adult social care services in East Sussex).

52. The Board therefore considered evidence relating to the approaches adopted by other local authorities in support of their local independent care sector. Of particular interest to the Board was a West Sussex County Council initiative. This has involved the development of a recruitment website for independent care providers, which uses the campaign slogan 'Proud to Care' to advertise vacancies and promote careers in the sector. For example, visitors to the website are greeted with the following wording:

*"Thank you for visiting Proud to Care West Sussex, a one stop website where you can find and apply for a variety of [jobs in care across West Sussex](#) and get information about what it's really like to work in care. At Proud to Care West Sussex we know that [working in care](#) can be a hugely rewarding role where you have the opportunity to help*

53. In terms of support for providers, the website has an Employers Hub which allows employers to easily submit vacancies which are then advertised for free. The website also has sections on careers in care and apprenticeships. To be able to promote through the website, individual providers must clearly set out their employment terms and conditions. This supports the recruitment and retention process as it means job seekers can see which organisations are more likely to suit their own expectations and requirements. More fundamentally it also means individuals can easily find in one place a list of potential employers and other helpful guidance and advice. This means providers have a better chance of having higher numbers of applicants, as well helping to reinforce a positive message about the benefits of working in the adult care sector.

54. The Board noted that there is not similar provision in East Sussex and explored whether a similar online presence would potentially produce benefits for the independent sector in the county. Members also considered that developing a site of this kind in East Sussex could help demonstrate the council's commitment to the independent sector and could help provide a focus for the sector.

55. The Board were also informed that a key area of workforce recruitment strategy relates to engaging adults and **returners to work**. The Board noted an initiative being pursued by Chichester College to develop a web resource to engage this group of potential new recruits. The Board agreed that the potential for promoting this resource and signposting providers to the site should also be explored.

56. Although the Board could see potential benefits to a dedicated online resource such as that in West Sussex, this would require significant resource to implement. ASC officers advised that in East Sussex the independent sector is supported through the offer of a detailed and well-regarded training programme which is freely accessible to providers and individuals without charge. Each local authority has had to make decisions around its own priorities for expenditure on support for the independent sector. Currently it is understood that neighbouring authorities do not offer free training of the kind available locally.

57. The Board were informed that the ASC department recognises that the West Sussex model does produce tangible benefits for the sector and that, by extension, this helps relieve the pressure on the authority. However, given the continuing difficult funding context, the department would have to fully explore the costs associated with the development of a bespoke online facility and may need to seek external funding to create such a resource. The department would not, at this stage, support downgrading its training offer to release funds to create an offer of this kind.

58. That said, a website could include, for example, creating a one-stop hub for people interested in working in the East Sussex care sector by bringing together links to a range of existing information and would be developed in partnership with the Employability and Skills team. The website could information such as:

- Job vacancies across the County;
- The work of Skills East Sussex to promote opportunities that raise awareness of careers on Social Care.
- Support with Confidence;
- Initiatives such as Chichester College's work on the development of a web resource which seeks to engage adults and returners to work;
- Details of the ASC training offer;
- Information about the activity of the East Sussex Employability and Skills team to include, for example, initiatives such as the Careers Hub and any other relevant information;
- Details of apprenticeship schemes and opportunities;
- Links to relevant materials, for example the Skills for Care Staff Recruitment and Retention toolkit.

59. In addition to posting already available information, the website could also form the basis of information sharing about new initiatives that support recruitment and retention in the independent sector, for example:

- setting up of job fayres, in partnership with independent providers to create economies of scale;
- careers events, in partnership with local education providers.

60. However, such work requires further resource and would need to be fully considered and costed. This would include evaluating the success of other such schemes for example in West Sussex.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The Adult Social Care department to explore the feasibility and potential benefits of developing a bespoke website to provide information on jobs and careers in the East Sussex care sector.**

### **Recruitment campaigns**

61. The Board researched the Department of Health and Social Care's approach to the recruitment and retention challenges facing many providers of adult social care nationally. One key line of support provided is a national recruitment campaign which aims to drive applications into the adult social care sector. The first iteration of the campaign was launched in 2018 under the banner heading 'Every Day is Different'. The campaign used national and regional media engagement, as well as google, online, radio and social media advertising to promote a career in the industry. In support of the campaign, a toolkit and suite of partner materials were also made available for care providers to use to meet their local recruitment needs. The campaign website [www.everydayisdifferent.com](http://www.everydayisdifferent.com) remains live and includes information on different job roles, case studies, quizzes and a job search.

62. The Board were informed that following an evaluation by the Department of Health and Social Care, it was likely that funding would be approved for a second national wave of the campaign to run in 2019/20. The Board discussed the benefits of the national recruitment campaign and were supportive of the ASC department's development of materials that are in keeping with nationally delivered promotional material. The Board agreed that there is potential for further development of the local promotional work so that it is also suited to the needs of the independent sector. This could form part of the work undertaken in recommendation 5 and may involve, for example, consultation with key representatives of the sector about what they believe would help deliver an effective campaign and how providers can support it locally.

#### **Recommendation 6**

**The Adult Social Care department to:**

- **continue to reinforce the national recruitment campaign locally via support from the council's Communications Team; and**
- **work with the Employability and Skills Team to ensure that this is integrated into the cross sectoral careers campaign run by Skills East Sussex.**

### **Conclusions**

63. The Board were presented with a stark picture regarding the scale of the workforce challenges facing the independent adult social care sector. These challenges are not unique to East Sussex. Relevant local authorities and independent providers throughout the UK are concerned about the pressures discussed in this report (and given the demographic make-up of the county, it is clear that East Sussex is facing an especially difficult set of circumstances).

64. The Board agreed that whilst many of the challenges will require a national response, it welcomed the Adult Social Care and Health Department's well-developed local strategy for supporting the care market in East Sussex. However, and in the context of a complex and evolving situation, the Board identified a number of practical recommendations which it believes will further enhance the Department's strategy. These enhancements aim to both help more closely align the work of the Council's employment strategy with the needs of the independent sector, particularly the offer of training, and aid the promotion of careers in the sector.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Scope and terms of reference of the review**

The Review was established to consider and make recommendations on matters relating to the developing workforce challenges facing social care providers. More specifically the Committee agreed three areas of focus for the review:

- **Older people's services:** It was agreed to focus on social care for older people as this is the biggest and the fastest growing area of demand for Adult Social Care.
- **Independent Care Sector:** It was agreed to focus on workforce issues within the independent sector (as opposed to the social care workforce directly employed by the ASC and Health department). This is because the independent sector is by far the largest employer of adult social care staff in the county.
- **Commissioned services:** It was agreed that the review should focus particularly on independent sector services commissioned by the ASC department.

The Board also agreed it would focus on exploring responses to the following two key questions:

- **Is the Council working effectively in partnership with others (e.g. schools and colleges) with regard to future workforce needs?**
- **Could the Council do more to support recruitment and retention in the independent sector?**

### **Board Membership and project support**

Review Board Members: Councillors Charles Clark, Michael Ensor, John Ungar and Trevor Webb (Chair).

The Project Manager was Stuart McKeown, Senior Democratic Services Officer, with project support provided by Hannah Matthews, Democratic Services Officer.

Kay Holden, Assistant Director provided ongoing support to the Board throughout the review.

### **Review Board meeting dates**

First formal meeting – 15 April 2019

Second formal meeting – 7 May 2019

Third formal meeting – 24 May 2019

Fourth formal meeting – 22 July 2019

### **Witnesses providing evidence**

**The Board would like to thank all the witnesses who provided evidence in person:**

ESCC Officers.

Kay Holden, Assistant Director, Planning, Performance and Engagement.  
 Phil Crook, Head of ASC&H Workforce Planning & Training.  
 Caroline Bragg, East Sussex Employability and Skills Strategy Manager.  
 Martin Kelly, Apprenticeship Levy Strategy Manager.  
 Bianca Byrne, Head of Policy & Strategic Development  
 Lyndsey Potts, Scheme Manager: Support with Confidence  
Skills for Care  
 Karen Stevens, Locality Manager (London and South East).

Registered Care Association  
 Mike Derrick, Chair of RCA

Independent Care Sector  
 Maria Mapletoft, Care Home Operator  
 Anita Brett-Everest, Personal Assistant  
 GR, Client

## Evidence papers

Item	Date considered
Skills for Care – National Recruitment campaign	11 04 2019
Skills for Care - Recruitment and Retention in adult social care: secrets of success.	11 04 2019
Adult Social Care – Market overview presentation	15 04 2019
Distribution of Support with Confidence accredited PAs across the county	07 05 2019
Data on clients receiving Direct Payments	07 05 2019
Ratings - Adult Social Care	07 05 2019
Skills for Care - A summary of the adult social care sector and workforce in East Sussex 2017/18.	07 05 2019
Skills for Care - Individual employers and the personal assistant workforce, 2019 – survey research	07 05 2019
Employability and Skills report	07 05 2019
South East LEP Skills Strategy	07 05 2019
Briefing note - 25% Apprentice Levy funding to support apprenticeships within East Sussex	07 05 2019
Support with confidence – presentation	24 05 2019
Support with confidence - Code of Conduct	24 05 2019
Changing Care Market - Adult Social Care Workforce - Zero-hours contracts	24 05 2019
RCA Response to the Scrutiny Review of workforce in Older Peoples services	24 05 2019

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