

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 28 September 2023

By: Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Title: Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health – Observations on the Scrutiny Committee’s report

Purpose: To provide the Cabinet with the opportunity to comment on the response of the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1. note and welcome the report of the People Scrutiny Committee; and**
 - 2. advise the County Council that, in considering the report of the Scrutiny Committee, the Council be recommended to welcome the report and to agree the response of the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to the recommendations and their implementation as set out in the action plan attached as appendix 1 to this report.**
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1. Background

1.1 In July 2022 the People Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Review Board to undertake a Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health. The scope of the review encompassed exploring barriers for seldom heard communities and people in accessing ASCH services.

1.2 The review considered what are the barriers for people who we seldom hear from and made recommendations on how to ameliorate those barriers.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in ASCH is welcomed by the Department and in particular to ensure we improve staff knowledge, delivery and accessibility of our services.

2.2 It was considered by the Review Board that dissemination of findings of the report as well as ensuring continuous engagement with trusted partners and intermediaries is an important aspect of implementation of the recommendations. The Review Board stressed on ensuring we give feedback to our seldom heard people on how their feedback is utilised in the development of services and policies.

2.3 The Review Board recognised the cross-council approach needed to implement some of the recommendations and has asked the department to work with Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board to ensure consistency of approach.

2.4 The Department welcomed the feedback received and the positive response to the work both planned and underway. Officers involved in the review process found this to be an interesting, insightful and positive experience and would like to thank the Review Board members for their input, engagement and enthusiasm.

2.4 The Department's response to the Review Board's recommendations is set out in the action plan attached at appendix 1.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Scrutiny Review has highlighted a range of recommendations, many of which recognise the work already underway and the need to continue to build on that.

3.2 It was identified that we need to develop Community Engagement Framework to capture ways in which the Department conducts its engagement, acts on findings and shares those actions with communities who responded. The Department has laid out draft principles of this Framework in the action plan attached at appendix 1.

3.3 The Review Board also identified several areas where our communication mechanisms, service delivery and methods of engagement can improve so we can ameliorate barriers faced by those who we seldom hear from.

3.4 All of these recommendations are considered positive and reflective of the direction of travel for the Department, and the Department considers that the recommendations are realistic and achievable.

3.5 It is recommended that the Cabinet agrees to the implementation of the action plan as detailed in appendix 1.

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