

REPORT OF THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The People Scrutiny Committee met on 19 September 2019.

Present: Councillors Charles Clark, Angharad Davies (Chair), Michael Ensor, Kathryn Field, Tom Liddiard, Laurie Loe, Jim Sheppard, Bob Bowdler, Simon Parr (Catholic Diocese Representative) Matthew Jones (Parent Governor Representative)

Also Present: Councillor Sylvia Tidy, Lead Member for Children and Families
Councillor Bob Standley, Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability and Councillor Carl Maynard, Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

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

1.1 The People Scrutiny Committee has completed its Scrutiny Review of the Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care Workforce. A copy of the Committee's full report is attached at Appendix 1.

1.2 In June 2018 the People Scrutiny Committee established a Scoping Board to look into the 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.

1.3 The Scoping Board identified four key areas for further scrutiny:

- Public understanding and expectations of social care
- Social care workforce challenges
- Developing care markets
- Increasing community resilience, in particular addressing loneliness.

1.4 The Changing Care Market: Adult Social Care Workforce Scrutiny Review addressed the second of these areas, with a particular focus on the recruitment and retention challenges facing the independent social care sector (older people services).

1.5 The People Scrutiny Committee **recommends** to the County Council that –

1.5.1 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 ASC 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.

1.5.2 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.

1.5.3 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.

1.5.4 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.

1.5.5 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.

1.5.6 The Adult Social Care department to:

- continue to reinforce the national recruitment campaign locally via support from the East Sussex County 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.

[See also Report of the Cabinet – 12 November 2019]

2. Scrutiny Review of Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

2.1 The People Scrutiny Committee has completed its Scrutiny Review of Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. A copy of the Committee's full report is attached at Appendix 2.

2.2. In November 2018 the People Scrutiny Committee established a Scoping Board to explore issues relating to the support available for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. Members were particularly aware of the unique range of challenges this especially vulnerable group of children and young people present to the Children's Services Department. For example, individuals may require specialist therapy as a result of trauma they may have suffered in their country of origin and/or during their journey to the United Kingdom. With such factors in mind, Members were particularly keen to develop practical, achievable recommendations that would complement the work already being undertaken to support young asylum-seekers.

2.3 The People Scrutiny Committee **recommends** to the County Council that –

2.3.1 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 HRBP, to assess the feasibility of developing similar provision elsewhere within East Sussex in partnership with the voluntary sector.

2.3.2 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.

2.3.3 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.

2.3.4 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.

2.3.5 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.

2.3.6 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; and
- the process for referring potential leads to the Department.

[See also Report of the Cabinet – 12 November 2019]

