

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE BOARD 6 JANUARY 2021

UPDATE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CARE WORK AS A CAREER SCRUTINY REPORT

Summary

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (the Board) is to receive an update on the recommendations from the Care Work as a Career Scrutiny Report.
2. The Scrutiny Report (attached as Appendix 1) was approved by the Board on 22 June 2020 and considered by Cabinet on 25 June. Cabinet noted the Scrutiny Report's findings and recommendations and adopted the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility (CMR) (attached as Appendix 2) as the way forward.

Background

- 3 The Review had been initiated as a result of the perception that "intimate personal service and support that care workers provide to vulnerable individuals did not appear to be widely valued by members of the public. Clear career pathways and training opportunities to enable them to progress were limited and rewards and recognition were low".
4. The Scrutiny Report highlighted how the Council could "promote and improve recruitment and career prospects for front-line care workers and better support and celebrate the current care workforce".
5. Following the CMR's adoption of the recommendations in June, a Project Team was established to develop an approach to delivery. Unfortunately, due to the demands of COVID this was delayed and the Project Plan was finalised in November.

Progress to date

6. The People Directorate acknowledges that the Care Market is in no position to withstand the loss of good, motivated care workers.
7. The Task Group, in its report, put forward a series of 11 recommendations to address this, covering 6 key aspects:
 - Promotion of the Care Worker Role
 - Recruitment and Retention of Care Work Staff
 - Development of the Care Worker role
 - Supporting and Celebrating the Existing Workforce
 - Liaison with education and training providers
 - Evidence of what works well elsewhere

13. All except one of the recommendations were accepted by the CMR (on behalf of the Cabinet) and a Project Team mobilised.

14. The recommendation not accepted was that the CMR considers facilitating a County-wide body to represent care providers across the social care sector, this was on the basis that care providers have multiple trade associations and bodies which already represent them.

15. This report highlights progress to date and proposes further actions to address the concerns raised by the Task Group. An example of this is the development of the tender and specification for Domiciliary Care Providers that incorporates a commitment to learning and developing Carers. This was due for advertisement on 31 March 2020 but was put on hold as a result of COVID-19, as was working with well-performing residential and nursing homes to develop career pathways. This is now progressing once more.

16. Despite COVID, progress has been made, most particularly, but not limited to, the use of communications and publicity of the role of care workers. For example, the I Care Ambassador (which the Council has now signed up for), the opening of training and development opportunities to county providers and the establishment of a working group to develop apprenticeship pathways to care careers.

17. Further opportunities have been identified for each of the recommendations detailed at Appendix 3 and a presentation to aid the discussion is attached at Appendix 4.

18. Recommendation 10 which was around building links with Shropshire Council in relation to their Bridge Project is being considered as part of the wider Council Digital Transformation programme. In discussing this with the Assistant Director for IT and Digital, the use of data for this purpose fits directly with priority 4 of the Digital Strategy and, early in 2021, it is planned to launch a large project in respect of data management and insights. The Assistant Director has confirmed that this could be included as part of this work.

19. At the time of preparing this report, the Care Market in Worcestershire comprises 320 (Care Quality Commission regulated) care establishments and employs approximately 16,500 workers across the independent sector and the Council. There are also a further 1,000 jobs working for direct payment recipients. The largest percentage of these jobs (over 85%) are within the independent sector.

Purpose of the Meeting

20. Members are invited to consider:

- (a) the response to the recommendations made and actions to date;
- (b) comment on the specific project recommendation that development of links with Shropshire Council (Bridge Project) are considered in the wider context of Worcestershire's Digital Transformation Programme and Digital Strategy; and
- (c) agree whether any further information or scrutiny work is required at this stage.

Supporting Information

[Appendices 1 and 2](#) - Care Work as a Career Scrutiny Report and Cabinet Member with Responsibility Response

Appendix 3 - Care Work as a Career Progress Report

Appendix 4 – Care Work as Career Presentation

Contact Point for the Report

Rebecca Wassell, Interim Head of Service Development, People Directorate Tel: 01905 844308 Email: RWassell@worcestershire.gov.uk

Samantha Morris, Scrutiny Co-ordinator Tel: 01905 844963

Email: sjmorris@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director of Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and minutes of OSPB meetings on 28 March 2019 and 22 June 2020 – available [here](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website.](#)

APPENDIX 3**CARE WORK AS A CAREER PROGRESS REPORT****CORE PROJECT TEAM**

Sponsor: Interim Assistant Director Commissioning
Business Lead: Principal Social Worker
Project Support: Project Manager
Project Support: Programme Support Officer
HR representative: Learning and Development Manager
Other key individuals are drafted into support certain aspects of the activities required to address the Task Group recommendations on an as needs basis.

PROGRESS AS AT 18 DECEMBER 2020

Note: Where there are links and/or dependencies across the recommendations, these are picked up within the body of the appendix.

Theme 1: Recruitment and Retention of Care Work Staff

Recommendation 1: *That resources be identified to prioritise a publicity campaign aimed at promoting the work of Care Workers and increasing public understanding of the crucial role they carry out.*

Progress to date

- The Task Group was advised by the CMR that an additional budget of c£15-16k would be required for the Communications Team to provide a dedicated member of staff to be allocated to this task for at least a 3-month period, with some capacity for ongoing and legacy work.
- A budget of £15k from grant funding has been provided to the communications budget in-year, but, as yet, this has not been fully used. Consideration as to how these funds might be used to best effect are being discussed by the project group (see further opportunities, over page) and the plan is for it to be fully utilised in this area by the end of the year.
 - External media in use:
 - WCC Facebook - 16K audience. More women than men. We put most of our Corporate key messages out on Facebook. We also try to put more light-hearted content on Facebook as the audience want to see this on this channel.
 - WCC Twitter – 14.5K followers. About a 50/50 split between men and women. Again, we put most of our content/key messages out on this channel.
 - WCC LinkedIn – Mainly corporate news for a more professional audience or job adverts.
 - WCC Instagram – 2,750 followers, younger audience. Mainly visual but we have been putting key messages on this channel during Covid and more light-hearted content.
 - Local media – Paid for daily papers and free weeklies. They cover the whole of the County. We also send press releases to radio and TV such as BBC H&W and Midlands Today. We can pay for ads as well. Recent ads on Free Radio were about key Public Health messaging to a younger audience.

- WCC Website – pages are controlled by individual directorates. Content is uploaded by the Digital Designers – Jo Hilditch’s Team. Audience size is about 200K visits a month.
- Libraries social media channels (separate Twitter and Facebook). They share our messages and display their own messages about libraries services etc.
- Internal media in use:
 - OurSpace – internal channel for WCC staff. We get about 5,000 views of our news stories every month. Pages other than news carousel controlled by different directorates. FirstSpace is the same look but this is for WCF staff.
 - Yammer – internal social media channel (bit like Facebook). Mainly post important messages on here but also more light-hearted content. Audience is about 1,000 active users each month
- Several articles have been produced and published in line with this recommendation, and further opportunities are sought regularly through the project team, wider directorate and the directorate communications lead. Some examples are given below and range from:

Council support to West Midlands care recruitment campaigns



Support for Care heroes awards -

<https://www.malvern gazette.co.uk/news/18910632.worcestershire-county-council-proud-support-worcestershire-care-heroes-award/>

Videos relating to care provision during covid (Our Story, plus a compilation video for the website and other external channels).

- <https://worcestershirc.sharepoint.com/Lists/News/ArticleView.aspx?ID=1593>

- <https://worcestershirecc.sharepoint.com/Lists/News/ArticleView.aspx?ID=1581>
- <https://worcestershirecc.sharepoint.com/Lists/News/ArticleView.aspx?ID=1639>

Further opportunities/proposals

- To continue to use social media outlets, press, website and all other avenues to promote the value of care work as a career, in line with the examples above
- To use the remainder of the £15,000 budget to:
 - Produce re-useable materials for use at careers fairs etc
 - Develop videos and materials for use in recruitment, including stronger careers pages on the council website.
 - Dovetail with the funding agreed to promote the Shared Lives Carer role as a profession and ambition to recruit at least 22 more Shared Lives Carers next year
- To use developing relations with colleges and the university to bring real life inputs to the study arena.
- To use the Care branding as part of our recruitment/communications campaigns where appropriate – currently under discussion with marketing teams.
 - Within the council, for information, at the time of writing this report, the voluntary attrition rate for our care workers equates to 5.8% of a workforce of 357. 6 of these leavers had less than one year of service. although 66% of our care workers have remained employed by the Council for 5 years or more, and 88% are female. 67% of this workforce is aged 45 or over.
 - Understanding the dynamics of the workforce in more detail enables the council to target its campaigns most appropriately to ensure a steady flow of diverse applicants to building its workforce to meet future demands.

Recommendation 2: *That the Council should sign up to the 'I Care Ambassador' Scheme as an employer. The Council should then encourage and enable a minimum of six Council employees (one from each of the six district areas) to be supported to carry out the 'I Care Ambassador' role.*

Progress to date

- WCC has now become a member of the I Care Ambassador Scheme, and our Principal Social Worker is the key contact. The West Midlands Care Association manages the scheme for most of the West Midlands and holds contact details for ambassadors. Brand ambassadors promote care work as a sector of choice, discussing core values, career journey and opportunities and can be drawn from different services, roles and backgrounds. Ambassadors receive support and training; it aids development develop soft skills, builds confidence in presenting information, speak to different groups of people. There are resources and PowerPoint presentations available which can be branded as for WCC. This has strong links to Recommendation 1
- Schools, colleges and job centre plus all use I Care Ambassador as a search tool

Further opportunities/proposals

- As members, WCC is now successfully seeking interest from staff members, willing to become I Care Ambassadors.
- Time to undertake the duties of an Ambassador will need to be written into role descriptions/agreed ways of working

For both I Care and Skills for Care (recommendation 3) Worcestershire's Principal Social Worker is embracing the opportunities to strengthen links where possible, as Business Lead for the Care as a Career project.

Recommendation 3: *That the Council should seek to build a closer working relationship with Skills for Care and develop networking opportunities for the mutual benefit of both organisations.*

Progress to date:

- Councils Principal Social Worker met recently with the Locality Manager for Skills for Care (SfC). The Locality Manager has previously met with the Scrutiny Task and Finish group and provided a report. The Locality Manager believes that links can indeed be strengthened, and this could provide additional support to the Council. The report has been reviewed by the project team and does not provide additional opportunities to those listed below-
- WCC currently has several links with Skills for Care that are working well and some which could improve:
 - Principal Social Worker network – links in place and working well
 - SfC Registered Managers network – most attendees are care home managers; few are from the domiciliary care providers. The Locality Manager would like to promote and expand the network, especially for domiciliary care, supported living and extra care. A WhatsApp group is helping to build relationships and break down barriers. However, other networks are also in existence e.g. the West Midlands Care Association and Worcestershire Care Home Network and managers are reporting being overwhelmed with information and want a streamlined approach to how information is delivered.
 - Commissioning – Quality Assurance officers attend a quarterly network and the Lead Commissioners also link into the WMADASS Regional Commissioning Network which has close links with the Regional Workforce Network.
 - Provider Services – No links currently
 - STP – The Locality Manager sits on the STP People Board and subgroups – Organisational Development and Culture, Great Place to Work, Workforce which is reforming now. A representative from HR/OD will attend these meetings to represent Worcestershire County Council.
 - Other meetings – The Locality Manager also sits on a group that supports care homes with digital development, she will be joining the dementia partnership for STP.
 - Helpline - Care providers ring the SfC helpline and attend webinars that SfC run re Covid
 - Area of particular focus – engagement with domiciliary care providers.

Further opportunities/proposals

- It would be helpful to have an informal agreement on how information is distributed with a co-ordinated approach. Council will explore how it can assist in this regard.
- To explore the validity of quarterly meetings with the CCG, Commissioners and Quality Assurance as occurs in some (but not all) areas nationally
- To explore how the council might support the development of links with provider services particularly in relation to domiciliary care

Theme 2: Recruitment and Retention of Care Work Staff

Recommendation 4: *Whilst understanding the budgetary conditions faced by the Council, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Social Care explores what influence the Council is able to have to enhance the terms and conditions of Care Workers through its commissioning process.*

Progress to date

- Whilst our commercial, commissioned contracts do not contain specific requirements regarding terms and conditions of employment within providers, it is expected that providers are responsible for compliance with all aspects of employment legislation in this regard.
- Our contracts do specify elements of performance expectation, such as the training, skills and behaviours required to deliver contract to the appropriate standard. These elements are included in our service specifications to ensure quality of care and demonstrate skill of the care worker and some are provided below as an illustration:
 - For day care, in support of the professional development of staff:
 - A robust recruitment policy, which complies with any legislative requirements and with stipulations in contract, is in place and is followed for the recruitment of paid and unpaid staff.
 - All staff receive induction training that meets the requirements of the Care Certificate.
 - Staff are supported through supervisions, appraisal and regular team meetings.
 - The new domiciliary care specification refers to skills knowledge and behaviours require, and a distinction is made for the skills required for reablement.
 - In the new complex needs framework tender the hourly rates are enhanced to reflect the increased level of training required.
 - Care home contracts include detailed clauses outlining requirements upon the provider in respect of recruitment and employment of staff and the specification enables Quality Assurance Officers to assess their performance against outcomes for residents including:
 - I am valued and treated with dignity;
 - I receive care and support which is person centred;
 - My health and wellbeing are promoted and maximised;
 - My safety and security and maintained;
 - Staffing and management arrangements enable a high quality and safe service to be delivered to me.
 - all of which require providers to ensure their staff are well supported through effective and up-to-date training and support
- Council commissioners regularly review provider fees. It is not possible to confirm any outcomes for this activity at the time of this report.

Further opportunities/proposals

- It is difficult to amend current contracts to ensure enhanced T and Cs for workers at present and have already launched consultation in respect of 2021/2. The quality team within commissioning look at the training of staff and monitor against an agreed set of standards attached (as above). There is the potential to introduce annual staff survey to future contracts.

- Whilst too late for current consultation, further future potential options include a move towards the introduction of incentives/penalties for performance, safety, quality of services, responsiveness, customer feedback linked to National Occupational Standards for Health and Social Care, but such proposals would require significant investment for the council to operate. Less intensive, but of significant potential would be the opportunity to consider including a contractual request that providers incentivise behaviours of staff.

Recommendation 5: *That the Council considers introducing an employee referral scheme to incentivise staff to recommend friends or family for roles in social care.*

Progress to date:

- WCC does have an employee referral scheme, details of which are located in the staff handbook. It was written and approved in 2017 and reviewed in both 2018 and 2019. No review has taken place in 2020, essentially due to covid.
<https://worcestershireecc.sharepoint.com/WCCstaffhandbook/New%20Staff%20Handbook/Recommend%20a%20Friend%20Scheme%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%20Updated.pdf>
- It is anticipated that the scheme will be reviewed in 2021, when work to review current resourcing and onboarding commencing
- Claims against the scheme have only been made twice in the last 24 months, from support workers within Provider Services
- Broadly, the Council currently is not experiencing difficulty in sourcing suitable candidates for roles, or delays in filling vacancies. Current average timeframes are reported as: hire to employment check completion – 25 days; hire to start date - 36 days and application to Start Date - 40 days. This actual, and not working days.
- Few candidates withdrawn at offer, those that do cite personal reasons.

Further opportunities/proposals

- A request to consider a relaunch of the scheme has been made to the HR Business Partner (People Directorate).

Theme 3: Developing the care worker role

Recommendation 6: *The Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning and Adult Social Care are urged to consider scaling up the provision of care worker apprentices to flow into adult social care. This could be achieved with the development of a structured rolling programme of apprenticeships of 18 month's duration commencing every 6 months, centrally managed and coordinated. Care Worker apprentices would be of considerable benefit to social care teams by providing a regular source of newly qualified apprentices and would also help to make effective use of the Apprenticeship Levy.*

Progress to date:

- The Social Work Apprenticeship has formed part of our learning and development offer since its inception two years ago. Two apprentices started the programme on 25.9.20. Three apprentices commenced year two on 22.9.20 (plus 1 on maternity leave). In order to increase the number of social work apprentices we need to ensure that we have enough Practice Educators trained to support them. A group has been established to look at workforce planning to identify how many new social workers are likely to be required each year. Work can then be undertaken to ensure that we have enough Practice Educators.
- A project group has been established and is working on a career development pathway for social work. As part of this work it has been agreed that in order to be considered for a social work apprenticeship, applicants must have completed the Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care apprenticeship or have equivalent qualifications. This will provide a foundation and academic experience ensuring that staff are in the best position to take on the Social Work Apprenticeship. Other suitable Apprenticeships have also been mapped into the career development pathway, particularly for those hoping to move into management positions.
- A further project group has been established to consider workforce planning for those thinking about working in adult care and existing care workers working within Worcestershire County Council. It is proposed that a structure programme for entry level care workers is established utilising the Level 2 Adult Care Worker apprenticeship. A cohort of 12 apprentices would be recruited every six to twelve months and would be provided with experience across the different provider services, potentially including Worcestershire Children First. Vacancies due to staff turnover could be held until training was complete. Currently services consider on an ad hoc basis whether a vacancy that arises is suitable for an apprentice. Funding for entry level posts needs to be identified in order for a structured programme to be developed.
- It is also proposed that the group will build on the work already undertaken within the new reablement service where a personal development plan is agreed for each staff member. Each role within the service has an agreed skill set with training mapped against this to support staff to meet the competencies required for the role. Career progression will then be considered utilising options available for care workers i.e. Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker, Level 4 Lead practitioner in adult care, Level 3 Team leader. The group will support the implementation of this approach across other services. This will enable early discussion and workforce planning with staff who have the potential to move into supervisory, Registered Manager and other leadership roles.

See also Recommendation 7.

Further opportunities/proposals:

None identified at this point.

Recommendation 7: That in developing its best practice and aiming to be an exemplar of a care work employer, the Council should consider whether there would be economies of scale, by extending its existing training offer to preferred providers, to ensure standards and consistency.

Progress to date:

- Pre Covid training places not taken up by WCC staff were offered to the voluntary and Independent sector (VIPS), and, between April 2019 – March 2020, 208 places were attended by this group. The courses attended are listed below:

COURSE TITLE

First Aid at Work Certificate -
 Achieving positive outcomes for adults on the Autism Spectrum
 Moving and Handling Refresher
 Dementia Care 2-day course
 Emergency First Aid
 Managing Safe Handling and Administration of Medication
 Adult Safeguarding for Practitioners
 Empowering Choice for MCA & DOLS
 Mental Health First Aid
 Course bookings for Nineveh Ridge Care Farm
 MCA & DOLS Practitioners & Decision Makers
 Moving and Handling Key Person Risk Assessor
 Managing Safe Handling and Administration of Meds Update
 Adult Safeguarding Basic Awareness
 Adult Safeguarding, Recognising, Responding, Enquiry and Reporting
 First Aid at Work Certificate Re-Qualification (No Paediatrics)
 De-escalation and Prevention Strategies using MAPA techniques
 Participating Supervising Adults Safeguarding Enquire
 Fire Warden

- The Learning & Development Team evaluate WCC training sessions and pre covid the Learning and Development Manager attended Forums with Care Managers to understand the needs of their services and what we can offer them looking ahead and some bespoke sessions have been delivered to teams to ensure compliance. The meetings with care managers have continued throughout covid restrictions and we have been able to respond to training requests.
- Places have not been offered during covid, but:
 - WCC has offered help for care staff during lockdown via a mini fast track Induction to help their staff get up to speed as the Care Certificate was not available. Not all social care courses were delivered online prior to Covid, so when the pandemic required cancellation of all face to face courses, courses needed to be redesigned to enable online delivery - the Care certificate was one of these courses. It was suspended for three months and resumed in July. In the meantime, Learning and Development wrote and delivered the Fast Track induction to meet the training need for those who responded to the advert for temporary staff. Now, both the Fast Track induction, Care Certificate and Mandatory Training update programme are all running as planned as online sessions with the exception of the First Aid awareness and medication administration sessions – whereby approval was secured to deliver these as face to face due to competency requirements
 - WCC also offered external Care home managers the Resilience Bitesize sessions. 103 booked, 66 attended. Evaluation was received from 40 delegates all giving positive feedback on the sessions.
- As part of the HR, OD and Engagement transformation the current offer will be reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose and aligns with the requirements of the Council and services for our residents. This will also look at what could be offered to our wider partners including the voluntary and independent sector. We will also consider learnings/ways of delivery due to the impact of Covid.

- Since 2019, it has been possible for the Council to transfer up to 25% of apprenticeship levy funds to non-levy paying organisations or businesses. The paper embedded below details this, highlighting the transfer of some £63,000 of funds to providers of adult social care. This equates to 28% of the Council's total permitted allowance being transferred to our providers to support apprenticeships, with further applications under consideration.



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Further flexibilities on using the apprenticeship levy will follow on from the 2020 Autumn budget statement.

- The Learning & Development Team evaluate WCC training sessions and pre covid the Learning and Development Manager attended Forums with Care Managers to understand the needs of their services and what we can offer them looking ahead.

Theme 4: Supporting and Celebrating the Existing Workforce

Recommendation 8: *That the Council considers developing a package of measures to recognise, reward and celebrate the work of Care Workers, under the strap line of 'Worcestershire Cares', understanding that in exploring this, we will seek to work in unison and complement what already exists. Any scheme would need to be considered in light of the Council's requirement for equal pay for all its workforce and as such reward incentives may not be by means of additional financial recompense.*

Progress to date:

- This recommendation links with recommendations 1 and 2, which aim to promote the role of the care worker and celebrate services. Recommendation 1 will involve care staff, teams and organisations in sharing stories of successful practice where residents have been supported to be healthier, live longer, have a better quality of life and remain independent for as long as possible. In addition to raising the profile of care work, celebrating success will boost morale and reinforce best practice and the aims of the People Strategy. These stories can also be utilised by the 'I Care Ambassadors' in promoting care work.
- Skills for Care have an annual Accolades Awards which have been running for 16 years - <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Getting-involved/accolades/Accolades.aspx>. There are eight categories focusing on employment, leadership, collaboration and continuing professional development. We will explore how to support the Accolades by promoting them across Worcestershire. We will also explore how we can facilitate a collaborative approach to the Award for the 'Most effective collaborative approach to integrated new models of care'. For example, the new reablement pathway may provide an opportunity.

- The Social Work profession has annual national Social Worker of the Year Awards - <https://www.socialworkawards.com/> and Social Work England will be running Social Work Week starting in 2021 providing the opportunity to learn, connect and engage - <https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/news/call-for-contributions-to-social-work-week/>. We will explore how we can support these events. In addition, Worcestershire County Council have held an annual Celebrating Social Work event for the last 3 years - <https://worcestershirecc.sharepoint.com/socialworkacademy/Pages/Celebrating-Social-Workers.aspx> with Outstanding Achievement Awards and providing Continuing Professional Development opportunities for staff. Staff have engaged with the event and it appears to have had a positive impact on morale.
- Worcestershire County Council already have an internal Celebrating You monthly recognition scheme - <https://worcestershirecc.sharepoint.com/whatwedo/celebratingyou>, although this has been paused as part of the response to Covid-19. Moving forward, we will ensure that there are regular categories that apply to care work. In addition, we will consider how to celebrate success within the Directorate, again ensuring that this will be applicable to care work. We will also investigate whether partners would support an event to celebrate care work across Worcestershire.
- There is also the Apprenticeships Awards event, held usually in October – cancelled this year as per government guidance

Further opportunities/proposals

- Our commissioning leads spoke to one of the staff of a supported living service during the peak of COVID who wanted to raise a complaint. After talking to her for a while she said she was upset because people were going out and clapping for the NHS every week and she felt like no one valued her. Although assurance of her value was given, the project team recognises how acutely the need to recognition has been highlighted through the pandemic and sees the opportunity to provide such recognition through the various elements of this workstream, ensuring that all care workers feel valued and are seen as an important part of the health and social care system.
- The project team would like to explore whether the council might also include external (to the council) care workers in Celebrating social care week and/or whether the Celebrating you awards might also have a category for excellence within the wider care workforce.

Theme 5: Liaison with education and training providers

Recommendation 9: That the Council should develop a plan to co-ordinate and strengthen its relationships with education and training providers in the County.

Progress to date:

- Where possible, Learning & Development colleagues strive to commission local training providers and colleges and HEI's to deliver programmes of learning / courses / apprenticeships – often working in partnership with local training providers – but no formal plan exists to strengthen the relationships. Skills for Care have previously facilitated Training provider forum, but this was disbanded when the local Skills for Care Worcestershire franchise was closed. West Midlands Care Association
- invite training providers and WCC commissioners to their county meetings
- Council, largely through learning and development colleagues currently has good relationships with the following education training partners:

The West Midlands Teaching Partnership (TP) – 27 partners

University of Worcester

Heart of Worcestershire College

University of Birmingham - through TP

Social Work England

British Association of Social Work

Research in Practice.

Skills for Care

Association for Care, Training & Assessment Networks (ACTAN)

Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Aspiration Training

Cognet

EnSuda

First Response Training

Just Say Training

STARS Adult Day Centre

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

- Council's Learning and Development team is starting to liaise with education partners and increasingly with schools to promote careers in care. We have also established a working group to support care leavers into apprenticeships which includes opportunities in our care services.

- WCC has links to the LEP and Worcestershire Apprenticeships, and STP for apprenticeships – all of which involve promoting opportunities. In Spring 2020 Worcestershire County Council bid for – and was successful in gaining - a grant from Health Education England to support Nursing Associate development across Social Care settings in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP to support training and work placements in order to develop a pipeline of both employers and trainee nursing associates within social care settings (social care with nursing). This pilot scheme set out to develop:
 - A focussed period of 12 weeks to visit care homes (nursing) or other social care settings with nursing, within defined geographical areas for the purpose of raising awareness (including understanding of the funding opportunities), promoting the role, sharing good practice and preparing the workplaces as learning environments. It is envisaged there will be two WTE roles that will work in partnership with Health Education England, Approved Educational Institutions, Skills for Care, social care employers and the local authority.
 - Establishing a pipeline of employers ready and prepared to support tNA's in the practice setting (apprenticeships and self-funders) including supporting Registered Nursing staff to plan how to support students.
 - Establishing a pipeline of trainees ready to commence a tNA programme by commissioning a preparation programme across the geography:
 - a minimum of 25 'cadets' on each programme to start early in 2020
 - Academic and interview preparation
 - Literacy and numeracy preparation where appropriate
 - Social Care insight visits / placements
 - Supporting each 'cadet*' with a personal development plan in relation to next steps for employment, apprenticeship, self-funding programme or other

The aim was to complete the pilot by December 2020 but, due to covid, it has not been possible to do so due to restrictions on personnel entering care home settings, issues regarding attendance at colleges and other restrictions on attending insight visits etc. Working alongside West Midlands Care Association, who have an equivalent pilot scheme in areas of the West Midlands, it is apparent that an extension to this deadline is acceptable to HEE.

Further Opportunities/proposals

Learning & Development have always evaluated courses in terms of relevance and learning gain and are currently reviewing the evaluation framework. Colleagues confirm that there are three levels of evaluation, and that the new framework is due for implementation imminently. With a slight time delay while accurate data is collated, we will, in future, be able to report on quality of learning and upturn in productivity or performance as a result of the training in future.

Theme 6: Evidence of what works well elsewhere

Recommendation 10: That Council representatives are urged to keep abreast of the Bridge Project at Shropshire Council. This Project uses sophisticated primary data from local sources to predict future service need aiding early intervention alongside more clearly defining the commissioning need. The Task Group feel that there are opportunities for collaborative working and for savings to be made to help Worcestershire's care sector.

Progress to date:

- The Care as a Career Project Sponsor has contacted leads for the Bridge Project at Shropshire Council. Previously, visits to the Bridge have been made by Lead commissioners, the Assistant Director Adult Social Care and the Council's Market Management and Research Manager
- The Bridge has its origins as a research project, developed to meet the needs of Shropshire Council because there was no solution on the market that could meet their needs. In their view, this remains the case and is evidently a challenge shared by a number of other councils
- Shropshire have since developed capabilities for their fire department (fire safe and well check analysis) and are currently developing capabilities with public health (population health management: obesity and diabetes) and with their STP (admission avoidance and Delayed Transfers of Care)
- The Council has worked with private sector companies to incorporate satellite data to identify at risk communities using earth observation analysis.
- The Bridge project continues to develop, with other organisations (system partners essentially) able to request specific models to be developed as a one off (using their own data); to use the current Bridge model and apply their own data. Shropshire is also assisting some to develop their own in-house bridge.
- Some parties are looking to combine multiple options i.e. duplicate the existing bridge, add their data and develop additional enhanced capabilities as plug-ins, with a smaller number looking to take this last step a little further by connecting to their bridge to the Shropshire Bridge to increase the evidence base for the model and share development resources.
- It is possible to lift and shift the whole bridge to other locations. Those that have visited describe the Bridge as hugely impressive, bringing together data from multiple sources and representing it for analysis in a distinctly user-friendly format.

Further opportunities/proposals

- There are indeed opportunities for collaborative working between our councils to help improve the care sectors in Worcestershire and Shropshire, especially when it comes to a locality offer for care as a career.
- The Bridge could help by ensuring we have the right approaches, skills and resources, using predictive modelling to help make smarter long-term commissioning decisions by providing improved insight and evidence to better shape the market and influence providers through more informed/ data driven discussions. This then relates back to the skills and resource requirements to deliver.
- Joint working would be possible through one of the following routes and whilst this might help deliver some short-term benefit, the main benefit gain would be over multiple years. This could be advantageous if contracts have been recently negotiated, giving us the time to really think through this work to make it happen. Appropriate care regarding the protection of data would be necessary if Shropshire were to become a data processor for Worcestershire under GDPR.
 - Purchase storage space and modelling capability on the bridge
 - Duplicate the bridge for Worcestershire
 - A completely bespoke bridge built for Worcestershire by Shropshire
 - A completely bespoke bridge build for Worcestershire with Shropshire's assistance
 - A joint co design project between Worcestershire and Shropshire
 - A joint co-design with Worcestershire and other interested councils, perhaps Herefordshire as part of our STP

- However, Worcestershire County Council must first determine where the development of such a business intelligence tool fits within the overall digital strategy the timeframes (in line with any digital transformation) and how this fits with Affinity Works, currently being piloted and providing predictive intelligence. The investment required in (financial and staffing) will also need to be considered.
- In conclusion, whilst clear enthusiasm for improving data maturity and business intelligence for use in predictive analyses is evident from within Worcestershire, it is recommended that this element of the Care as a Career is considered by the digital teams as part of the whole digital transformation within Worcestershire. In the meantime, for the Council, the development of more strategic workforce planning, led by our Human Resource and Organisational Development colleagues will help us continue to improve our ability internally to resource services appropriately through a forward planning approach.

Recommendation 11: That the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care considers facilitating a County-wide body to represent care providers across the social care sector.

This recommendation was rejected by the CMR on the basis that Care providers have multiple trade associations and bodies which already represent them. No further action has been taken.