

CARE WORK AS A CAREER PROGRESS REPORT

CORE PROJECT TEAM

Sponsor:	Assistant Director, People Commissioning
Business Lead:	Principal Social Worker
Project Support:	Project Manager
HR Representative:	Learning and Development Manager
Investment in Skills Team:	Investment and Skills Group Manager
Communications:	Communications Lead (Major Projects)

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 FEBRUARY to AUGUST 2021

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.*

- It has been possible to carry forward the unspent element of the £15,000 budget for communications from the financial year 2020/21. £4,137.80 of the budget remains available for use.
- CARE branding has been added to the Adult Social Care page on the County Council website. The use of the CARE brand will also be promoted in the next People Directorate newsletter in order to ensure that it is used widely and appropriately.
- The Investment and Skills Group Manager, working with Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) launched the Worcestershire Jobs portal in April 2021 with jobs and careers in social care highlighted on the portal from day one. Coinciding with the launch, the Council promoted Care Work as a Career on social media, local radio and through media relations, directing people to the portal and showcasing job opportunities in the county.
- Worcestershire County Council (the Council) through its Skills and Investment Team, whose remit is to support young people to understand the careers and employers of Worcestershire have started a programme of development to highlight care work as a future career for young people who are still in education. As part of this, the team has committed to creating a number of resources to highlight care and social work as employment options. The team also works with the LEP who identify care as a key cornerstone industry sector for the county and in April this year the LEP published its Local Skills report highlighting the work taking place in partnership with the Council as one of its key actions for the next few years. To date the team working on the agenda has: -

- Produced insight careers pieces for the Council/WLEP Careers YouTube site that are expected to launch in September 2021.
 - Are developing a series of assemblies for education across the Key Stages of education. The offer for Key stage 3 will be piloted into schools from September 2021.
 - Produced a number of resources that young people and education establishments can download that introduce the concept of care and social work as careers for use in careers lessons and as part of the wider health and social care curriculum.
 - Commissioned an intensive virtual work experience provision that as part of the programme of industries will have a care and social work offer which will be developed over 2022 for launch at the start of the new 2022/23 Academic year.
- One of the largest search criteria on Worcestershire Jobs since its launch has been both the Council and Care since April. Shortly there will be further, new phase of marketing for the portal and it will be possible to provide a focus on some of our critical care vacancies as we promote.
- The Worcestershire LEP local skills Report 2021 is provided at Annex 1.
- The Council sponsored the Worcestershire Health and Social Care Awards (the Care Hero Award). The awards covered 12 different categories (see below) and the Council's Assistant Director of People Commissioning and Assistant Director of Adult Social Care contributed to the judging. The virtual Award ceremony took place in May.

Worcestershire Health and Social Care Award Categories	
The Health Care Team Award	The Good Nurse Award
The Care Hero Award	Adolescent and Child Health Care Award
The Care Home Worker Award	The Dementia Carer Award
The Care Trainer Award	The Palliative/ End of Life Care Award
The Health Care Employer Award	The Mental Health Award
Domiciliary Care Worker Award	GP Practice of the Year Award

- As part of the Council's sponsorship package for the Worcestershire Health and Social Care Awards, the Council was able to capitalise on four half page adverts and four separate editorial pieces. Articles ran across various Newsquest titles including Worcester News, Malvern Gazette, Evesham Journal, Bromsgrove Advertiser, Redditch Advertiser and The Kidderminster Shuttle, and supporting content ran across Council and Newsquest social media channels. Some examples are provided in Annex 2.
- The Council's campaign from this event alone drew significant attention, for example, adverts were viewed for in excess of 300 hours, which is almost double the industry standard. A radio advertisement which specifically highlights Care Work as a Career, was created in conjunction with Free Radio Herefordshire and Worcestershire and ran for 10 days.

- During Shared Lives Week which ran from 14 - 20 June 2021, a series of press releases were issued to the local media focussing on individuals in a Shared Lives placement with the aim of promoting the role of Shared Lives provider. The Council also issued a number of social media posts across various channels including Facebook and Twitter which throughout the week reached a total of just under 10,000 people. The Council also focussed on its internal channels to share case studies to reach around 3,500 members of staff from the Council and WCF. The Shared Lives website was updated to include information for potential new providers with details of the role including the financial benefits and a case study of someone who is a new provider on the scheme.
- In August, the Council announced its support of the national Gold and Silver Adult Social Care Awards to recognise the contribution of those who work in Adult Social Care. The Awards recognise the dedication of staff across a wide range of areas such as clinical practice, education, research or leadership, with the Gold Award winners demonstrating outstanding achievements and performance in their area of work, with Silver award winners recognising performance that goes above and beyond the expectations of the everyday role that the staff member is expected to perform. Awards can be presented to either an individual or a team. The awards, managed via the Department of Health and Social Care will not be limited to registered nurses and will be extended to include all carers across all care settings, not only care homes.

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.*

- There are now 10 I Care Ambassadors registered for Worcestershire with experience across a range of services.
- A meeting with the LEP and I Care ambassadors to plan promotion of care work within schools took place in May.
- Training has been provided and contact has been made with local schools and colleges to advise that they are available, feedback has been positive.
- Ambassadors can also be contacted via West Midlands Care Association.
- Work is planned to develop resources providing information about working within Adult Social Care targeted at the different Key Stages, starting with Key Stage 3. These resources will be utilised by the Ambassadors when undertaking presentations within schools.

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.*

- Provider Service Managers have joined the Skills for Care Nominated Individual network meetings which are quarterly, with information then fed back to the wider pool of Registered Managers. The next meeting is due to take place on 14 September.
- Registered Managers also attend the Skills for Care Registered Managers Network meetings on a quarterly basis, and feedback sector wide themes and topics which the

Council then determines how they can reflect and update practice within services. The next meeting is due to take place in October.

- Learning and Development liaise regularly with Skills for Care.
- Regular meetings with commissioners have been proposed but has not yet been possible due to the pandemic.

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.

- A review of existing Blue Light card benefit has taken place. Blue Light benefits can be applicable to social work and social care staff. It has a cost to the individual of £5 for 2 years subscription www.bluelightcard.co.uk and provides discounts of between 10% - 40% of high street retailers as well as discounts on holidays and cinemas. The Blue Light scheme is already widely known amongst the Council's existing workforce and has been further promoted internally. Plans have also been put in place with Commissioners for the Blue Light card to be promoted to external providers. Further information is being gathered and a communication is prepared to send to all providers regarding this.
- At the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB), Members expressed concern about false advertising due to the impact of the hidden cost of travel expenses on the advertised wage. It has been confirmed that, for Council employees, pay is above the minimum wage, travel takes place within contracted hours and mileage is paid from their home address and that mileage would be paid for all journeys, including where there is a split shift.

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

- The refer a friend scheme to assist recruitment within the Council has been relaunched specifically to drive recruitment across Adult Social Care where there is a significant recruitment drive on-going. The scheme details which pop-up on screen periodically was launched via an article on the Council's internal SharePoint site MySpace and has also been included in the Chief Executive's staff messages.
- Some providers also offer similar schemes to the Council's refer a friend scheme. The examples provided in Annex 3 are from a domiciliary care provider.
- The on-going Council recruitment campaign internally was recently endorsed by Councillor Adrian Hardman, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care:

New recruitment opportunities available in the care sector

Do you have experience in the care sector, or are you looking for a new challenge?

There are a number of local companies who are keen to hear from people who are interested in helping to support people to remain independent within their own homes.

The vacancies across the County with a number of new opportunities in the Malvern, Upton and Tenbury areas of the county.

As part of the role, applicants would be expected to travel to people's homes and support the person in maintaining their independence and also activities of daily living, e.g. washing, dressing and meals. Some people may require help with personal care.

All new starters would also be given full training and receive money to cover travel expenses.

Councillor Adrian Hardman, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care said: Lots of people are now being supported at home following a period in hospital, and this is increasingly becoming the norm. We're committed to helping people remain independent for as long as possible, and our domiciliary care team are a huge helping hand in how we continue to make that happen across the county. If you think you may be interested, or know someone who may be, please encourage them to apply."

To see the jobs available, please visit the [WM Jobs website](#) or contact AdultServicesandHealthCommissioningUnit@worcestershire.gov.uk

Theme 2: 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.

- This remains on the programme of work but has not progressed at this point in time due to issues regarding the funding of Apprentices – whilst the levy could cover the training, the actual employment of the apprentice and creation of the funded roles remains the main issue to overcome.
- In terms of the Council's Apprenticeship Strategy (approved by Senior Leadership Team and launched in February 2020), the Apprenticeship team has now:
 - a) Increased organisational awareness and appetite for apprenticeships and traineeships through 3-week communication campaign.
 - b) Supported managers to understand the benefits and responsibilities for apprenticeships & traineeships.
 - c) Commenced work on reducing levy underspend.

- d) Introduced a Levy transfer policy to help boost local economy through apprenticeships.
 - e) Explored opportunities to improve uptake of Care Leavers into Apprenticeship Programmes.
 - f) Drafted a Social Value policy to encourage businesses in our supply chain to take on Care Leavers as apprentices or undertaking traineeships. This will be taken to procurement for onward discussion with third party providers.
 - g) Ensured the Council's Levy transfer policy criteria requires businesses to create apprenticeship opportunities with added social value for disadvantaged groups. For example, Care leavers; young people Not in Education, Employment of Training (NEET); individuals with disabilities; long-term unemployed.
- With regard to Care Leavers the team has met with key Worcestershire Children First (WCF) Care Leavers team and WCC stakeholders to share ideas for encouraging Care Leavers into work or skills programmes via apprenticeships or traineeships within the local authority and businesses within the supply chain.

The established process is:

- a) Recruitment Team and Apprenticeship Team forward all WCC/WCF apprenticeship opportunities with the WCF Care Leavers Team and the 16-19 NEET prevention team to identify any matches between young people/Care Leavers and available opportunities.
 - b) All young people/Care Leavers are provided with the offer advice and guidance to all young people/Care leavers wishing to apply for a WCF/WCC apprenticeship.
 - c) Any care leaver who applies for a WCF/WCC apprenticeship position and meets the minimum criteria is offered an interview.
- With regard to Apprentice Recruitment, the Apprenticeship Team and the Recruitment Team have overhauled all apprenticeship adverts to ensure best chance of encouraging applications for vacancies as they arise. All apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on the [Find an apprenticeship](#) government website, and the [Worcestershire Apprenticeships website](#) and offer a simple and quick application process.

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.

- Discussions with the Learning & Development (L&D) management team have taken place regarding resuming the training offer to preferred care providers. It is agreed that this forms a positive and collaborative approach. Decisions on when to resume L&D offer will be made in accordance with government and council guidance regarding the covid recovery plan.

- Some bespoke courses have been delivered remotely to internal and external care providers, mainly around safeguarding, safe administration of medication, Blood capillary testing, mental capacity and Infection Prevention.
- The L&D apprenticeships team were also involved in supporting the Clinical Commissioning Group to meet the government target of delivering PPE training to all care homes by end of July 2020 (in response to Covid). Social care qualified staff within the Apprenticeships Team were involved in this campaign.
- The L&D apprenticeships team have also produced and distributed a number of SWAYS and quizzes which are used as knowledge refresher/updates for staff. The Council has also developed new competency check documents for care services to use to give assurance of staff competence.
- Regarding the Levy Transfer and New hire incentive, 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.
- As at 12 August 2021, a total value of £373,000 has been transferred from the WCC levy to 33 local businesses (20 of which are adult care providers), to fund 111 apprenticeships (89 of which are adult social care apprenticeships).
- Local care providers have been given advice regarding the [New hire incentive](#). The Council's Provider social care services were able to recruit two apprentices where they had only planned to recruit one. The new hire incentive scheme was introduced in August 2020 by the Chancellor and applies to all new apprentices recruited before 30 September 2021. There is also the Apprenticeships Awards event, held usually in the Autumn. It is anticipated that this will take place this year.

Theme 3: 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.

- Notwithstanding the sponsorship of the Worcestershire Health and Social Care Awards (the Care Hero Award) reported earlier in this Appendix, the Council will be once again holding a virtual event Celebrating Social Work Week. This will commence on Monday 27 September and will be the fourth year that the Council has run the event.

Social workers and social care workers in Worcestershire make a difference to the lives of children, young people, and adults every day. During the coronavirus pandemic social workers and social care workers have continued to provide essential support. In recognition of this awards will be presented for outstanding achievement.

The draft programme at the time of writing this report, is outlined below and involves a wide range of participants:

Monday 27/09/2021	Tuesday- 28/09/2021	Wednesday – 29/09/2021	Thursday – 30/09/2021	Friday – 01/10/2021
Launch of Celebrating Social Workers 10 – 11.30am Live event	West Mercia Woman's Aid <u>Domestic Abuse and the role of Woman's Aid</u> 10:00-11:00	Louise McEvoy <u>Suicide Prevention- Awareness Raising Session</u> 10:00-11:30	Onside Advocacy <u>An overview of advocacy, community, and wellbeing support services</u> (10:00-11:30)	Heart of Worcestershire College <u>Use of self in Relationship based practice</u> 10:00-12:00
			Onside Advocacy <u>Mindfulness & Wellbeing session</u> 11:40-12:10	
Speaker – Waiting confirmation-	Celebrating Social work 2021 Chief Social workers- Adults Fran Leddra and Lyn Romeo <i>An update from the Chief Social Workers for Adults</i> 12 – 1pm	St Richard's Hospice <u>Working with bereavement and the role of hospice social work</u> 12:00-1pm	Research Practice <u>Children</u> Louise Johnstone <i>The Voice of the Child in Exploitation: A Reflective Session</i> 1 - 2:30pm	Social Work Academy <u>How can the academy support you: Briefing Session</u> 12.30- 1pm
	Social Work Advice Group <u>Perspectives on Relationship Based Practice Service users from How College</u> 2-3pm	University of Worcester <u>Incorporating Relationship Based Approaches into Practice Education and Professional Development</u> 2 – 3.30pm	Research in Practice Adults Claire Williams <i>A Lived Experience Perspective on Strengths Based Practice: A Reflective Session</i> 3.00 – 4.30pm	Jonathan Leadbeater Transgender Perspectives 2 – 3pm
		<u>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Social Work</u> 4 – 5pm Arif Sain		

Theme 4: 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.

- Learning & Development (L&D) strives to commission local training providers and colleges and higher education institutions to deliver programmes of learning / courses / apprenticeships.
- L&D does have links with Skills for Care and the West Midlands Care Association.
- The levy transfer policy also requires, where possible, that businesses receiving transferred funds, engage local training providers to deliver their apprenticeships.
- The Apprenticeships team and the wider Learning and Development Team have strong relationships with a number of local providers.
- Due to covid restrictions it has remained difficult to progress use of the 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 programme of

work is transferring from People Commissioning to Learning and Development from where it will be easier to work with training providers.

Theme 5: 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.

- Following the informal discussion in February 2021, the Care Work as a Career team were advised that implementation of "the Bridge" was much broader than the Care as a Career project and indeed the People Directorate. The Chair of the Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel wrote to the Council Leader and CEO requesting that the work on building the wider business intelligence continued as part of the Council's digital programme. As a result, all knowledge on the Bridge and details of contacts have been passed to the relevant teams.

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.