

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **ADULTS AND LIFELONG LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 11 October 2018 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday, 13 February 2019.

**Elected Members:**

- \* Mrs Sinead Mooney (Chairman)
- \* Mrs Bernie Muir (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mr Bill Chapman
- \* Mrs Angela Goodwin
- Mr Ernest Mallett MBE
- \* Mr David Mansfield
- \* Dr Andrew Povey
- \* Mr Mark Nuti
- \* Mrs Rose Thorn
- \* Mrs Marsha Moseley
- Mr Nick Darby

**Substitute Members:**

Mr Nick Darby

**In attendance**

Andrew Baird, Democratic Services Officer

Lien Cross, Consultant – Organisational Development, Surrey County Council

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adults

Joy Hurman, Lead Consultant – Learning and Development, Surrey County Council

Joanna Klimera, Lead Consultant – Service Partner Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council

Alison Lawson, Practice Development Manager, Surrey County Council

Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for All Age Learning

Erica Lockhart, Chief Executive, Surrey Care Association

Alex Mackay, Workforce Strategy and Business Support Manager, Surrey County Council

Nick Markwick, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People

Luis Moore, Apprentice (Recruitment Team), Surrey County Council

Sonya Sellar, Area Director – Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Mr Ernest Mallett.

Mr Nick Darby acted as a substitute for Mr Ernest Mallett.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]**

There were none.

**3 QUESTIONS & PETITIONS [Item 3]**

There were none.

**4 RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 4]**

There were none.

**5 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY [Item 5]**

**Declarations of Interests:**

None

**Witnesses:**

Lien Cross, Consultant – Organisational Development, Surrey County Council

Joy Hurman, Lead Consultant – Learning and Development, Surrey County Council

Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for All Age Learning

Luis Moore, Apprentice (Recruitment Team), Surrey County Council

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. An introduction to the report was provided by officers who highlighted that apprenticeships would support Surrey County Council (the Council) to develop and retain a skilled and flexible workforce capable of responding to future changes in local authority service delivery. Apprenticeships also created opportunities for staff by providing a framework for the whole workforce to undertake relevant qualifications helping to raise knowledge and aspirations. Members were informed about the “Vision for Apprenticeships 2020” which outlined the UK Government’s aspirations to increase apprenticeships nationally through a 0.5% levy on all employers in the UK with an annual pay bill in excess of £3 million. As part of the Apprenticeship Reforms, the Council is required to pay £2,040,000 annually into the Levy and has a

target to employ over 600 apprentices per year across the Council and local authority maintained schools. The Committee was reminded that information contained within the report was orientated specifically towards the Council's internal apprenticeship recruitment.

*Rose Thorn arrived at the meeting at 10:10am*

2. The Committee heard that factors such as the recruitment freeze as well as the Council's Transformation Programme had impacted on the ability of services to recruit apprentices and that this would continue to cause challenges over the coming months. Members were informed, however, that it was important to ensure the right structures were in place to support recruitment and retention of apprentices by ensuring effective linkages between services within the Council and improving collaboration with external partners. An Apprenticeships Task Force had been convened to establish the structures required to ensure that the Council was in a position to recruit and retain apprenticeships once there was greater stability across services.
3. The Committee asked how the Council would measure success in delivering against its Apprenticeship Strategy. Officers highlighted that recouping the money committed to the Levy and delivering against the Council's Public Sector Target for annual apprenticeship starts would collectively provide a good barometer of success in delivery against the Council's Apprenticeships Strategy. Members heard that it was also important to ensure the Council was able to keep apprentices once they had completed their training to ensure that the skills and knowledge they had developed were retained in-house. The Council was in the process of gathering evidence to understand what made a good apprenticeship to inform its own training offer.
4. Clarity was sought by the Committee on the number of apprentices that were employed by the Council. Members were advised that the Council employed 371 apprentices who were each at different stages of their training. Members heard that funding drawn-down from the Levy could only be spent on training costs and not on salaries pre-apprenticeship programmes.
5. Members asked whether there was potential to collaborate with partner organisations through the Levy to establish apprenticeships. Officers indicated that 10% of the Council's Levy funding has been made available to partner organisations for the 2018/19 financial year and that this would be increased to 25% from next year. None of the funding which had been made available to partner organisations had been used, however, due to the fact that many were already struggling to spend their own allocation. Officers did, however, highlight a rotational apprenticeship pilot that the Council was undertaking with Virgin Care which had provided a blueprint for how the Council could work with other organisations to deliver training for apprentices.
6. Discussions turned to poor perceptions of apprenticeships and how attitudes could be changed to improve uptake of apprenticeship training qualifications. Officers stated that attitudes had begun to change regarding apprenticeships fuelled in part by the debt

associated with completing a degree and the fact that apprentices earned a salary during their training. Despite this there was still pressure to go to university which was a better known and more established route for young people to enter the labour market. Better advertising was required to build awareness of what apprenticeships could offer and create parity of esteem with university degrees.

7. The Committee asked about the role of Ofsted in promoting and encouraging apprentices as a career path for school leavers. Members were advised that the measures used by Ofsted to judge success acted as a disincentive for teachers to promote apprenticeships to students as Ofsted took into account the number of pupils that attended university when forming a judgement.
8. Further information was sought on how the Council ensured that its apprentices received high quality training from providers. Members heard that providers had to be evaluated by the Institute of Apprentices before they could offer qualifications funded through the Levy. The Council also had its own quality assurance processes in place which included quarterly review meetings with all of its training providers as well as mechanisms for both apprentices and providers to report problems to the Learning and Development Team for resolution.
9. Members asked whether there was an opportunity for the Council to offer apprenticeships for people living with learning disabilities. Officers stated that new criteria introduced by the Government which required all those who had their apprenticeship training funded through the Levy to have certain pre-existing English and Maths qualifications had put people with learning disabilities at a disadvantage but that extensive lobbying was taking place by a number of groups to rescind these requirements.
10. The Committee highlighted that there appeared to be a particular problem in recruiting and retaining staff within schools and asked whether the Levy could be an opportunity to address these challenges. Members were advised that schools had had challenges in engaging with the Apprenticeship Levy due to a lack of apprenticeship standards that were relevant to schools. This was a national problem which had been recognised by organisations such as the Local Government Association (LGA) who had highlighted the need for relevant apprenticeship standards to be introduced for schools.
11. Attention was drawn to references within the report which highlighted variation across services and directorates to the recruitment and training of apprentices. The Committee sought clarity on how the Council would seek to promote apprenticeships among managers and empower them to commit the time required to train apprentices. Members were informed that the attitude of managers was vital to the recruitment of apprentices. To this end the Learning and Development Team would shortly embark on an apprenticeship roadshow which aimed to highlight the benefit of apprentices and demonstrate how to conduct good training. The Committee also heard that there were

models of good practice within the Council such as in the Library Service as well as in the Surrey Adult Learning Team.

12. Members asked whether the Council had sought to identify and implement best practice from other local authorities. Officers highlighted that the Council went out to procurement jointly for training providers with Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council which had provided insights into how apprenticeship training is provided at other local authorities. Officers had also reviewed Hampshire County Council's apprenticeship training separately to identify and take forward best practise.
13. Members sought clarity on how the Apprenticeship Task Force would actually address the key challenges confronted by the Council in recruiting and retaining apprentices. Officers stated that the Task Force would produce an Action Plan that would be submitted for consideration by the Adults and Lifelong Learning Select Committee at its meeting on 13 February 2019.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Adults and Lifelong Learning Select Committee:

- i. welcomes the formation of an Apprenticeship Task Force and recommends that it produces an action plan which outlines specific steps that the Council will take to improve retention of qualified apprentices, enhance the perception of apprenticeships among residents and partners and embed higher apprenticeship Level standards across the Council **(Recommendation: R1/18)**;
- ii. requests that the Task Force submits its action plan to the Committee for consideration at its meeting on 13 February 2019 including an update on those specific areas identified in recommendation I **(Recommendation: R2/18)**;
- iii. supports the decision to exclude apprenticeship positions from the recruitment freeze currently in place at Surrey County Council; and recommends that the Cabinet Member writes to the Minister of State for School Standards to encourage Ofsted to include apprenticeships within their measures of success for assessing school performance **(Recommendation: R3/18)**.

**6 ADULT SOCIAL CARE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: WORKFORCE [Item 6]**

**Declarations of Interest:**

None

**Witnesses:**

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adults

Joanna Klimera, Lead Consultant – Service Partner Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council

Alison Lawson, Practice Development Manager, Surrey County Council

Erica Lockhart, Chief Executive, Surrey Care Association

Alex Mackay, Workforce Strategy and Business Support Manager, Surrey County Council

Nick Markwick, Director, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People

Sonya Sellar, Area Director – Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The report was introduced by witnesses who advised the Committee that recruitment and retention of adult social care staff was a national, regional and Surrey challenge. Across the country, poor image of social care and a perceived lack of prestige resulted in people not being attracted into a career in social care. The NHS had a more positive profile among the public and were perceived as offering staff clearer career pathways. Those considering a career in care were therefore more likely to apply for positions within the NHS. Members heard that recruitment and retention of staff was one of the most significant challenges in the care sector in Surrey and that the Council had introduced a number of initiatives to address this challenge including working with colleagues in the NHS and Health Education Kent, Surrey and Sussex (HEKSS). The Council was working with Surrey's independent care provider sector through a program of work that aimed to support quality, competency and capacity across the workforce. Within this program of work Surrey Care Association led on a Surrey-wide recruitment and retention initiative. Members also received an update on recruitment and retention challenges across the independent care sector in Surrey. The availability of affordable housing, perceptions of care workers as low skilled and a lack of career progression opportunities were also harming the capacity of independent care providers to recruit and retain staff.
2. Attention was drawn to the significant number of social care staff working in Surrey who were from the European Economic Area (EEA) particularly within the Independent Care Sector and clarity was sought by the Committee on the impact that the UK leaving the EU would have on the ability of providers to recruit and retain staff. Members heard that the independent care sector in Surrey had serious concerns about the impact that it will have, particularly those that employ large number of staff who are from the European Union (EU). The Committee was informed that there was a shortage of local people with the skills or inclination to become care workers which created problems for the entirety of the sector in Surrey. Concern was expressed that the incorrect perception of care workers as being low-skilled meant that national organisations had failed to grasp the potential impact that Brexit could have on the capacity of providers to recruit and retain social care staff.

3. Members expressed concern that 36% of posts within the Council's Reablement service were vacant and requested clarity on how many people it would be necessary to recruit to have a fully staffed Reablement service. The Committee heard that employees within the Reablement service were not recruited to a 36 hour a week contract due to the need to have flexibility. Staff within the service were, however, encouraged to join the internal bank so that additional reablement assistants could be brought in during busy periods. Members were further informed that in order to help with additional winter pressures last year, local systems funded additional home care and reablement capacity which helped to manage demand. Officers also highlighted that additional capacity had been created through the introduction of the new integrated rehabilitation positions.
4. Pay was identified as a major challenge for recruiting and retaining staff within the social care sector and Members asked whether any work had been done to assess recruitment costs against increasing salaries for those positions where it was difficult to recruit and retain staff. Officers stated that they had not done this work but that it might be a useful exercise for the Council to do.
5. Discussions took place regarding the need to improve public perceptions of the carer role to attract more people into the sector. Members suggested that there should be a national strategy to improve recruitment and retention within social care which drew on best practise from other countries to improve public perceptions of working within the sector. Members were advised that organisations such as the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) had taken the initiative to create national strategies aimed at improving recruitment and retention which the Council was actively contributing to. ADASS had signalled its intention to make the social care workforce one of its top priorities.
6. Officers highlighted the need to attract and recruit more young people into the care sector by encouraging schools to promote social care as a career for school leavers, changing parents' perceptions of care worker roles and more effective use of social media.
7. Attention was drawn to the impact of recruitment and retention challenges on those in receipt of social care support. This was particularly bad for those who received domiciliary care where high staff turnover meant that users often did not know the person that they were receiving social care from, while vacancies contributed staff to arrive late for appointments. The Committee heard that offering a competitive salary was fundamental to the capacity of social care providers to recruit and retain staff and that it was only by ensuring that people felt that they were paid fairly for the job that they were doing that the workforce challenges confronting the social care sector would be resolved. Increasing the availability of affordable housing within Surrey would also attract more people into the sector.
8. Discussions took place regarding the impact on carers of looking after a someone with a long term degenerative illness such as Dementia. Witnesses stated that both the Council and the Independent Care

Sector offered dedicated training to staff on how to care for someone with Dementia. Voluntary sector organisations were also contracted by the Council to provide resources and support networks for those looking after a loved one with Dementia.

9. The Committee heard about the Chance for Care initiative, a scheme which had been developed by the Council to support under-represented groups into employment within the care sector. The scheme involved working with organisations such as Employability, Surrey Choices, the Richmond Fellowship as well as care providers to create pre-employment programmes that would support people from all walks of life to become care workers. Members were informed that the aim was to have two pre-employment programmes of up to 30 participants each completed by the end of March 2019 with two further pre-employment programmes to be delivered by December 2019 and that the Council was targeting 70% of participants gaining employment within the care sector following the conclusion of the programme in March 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Adults and Lifelong Learning Select Committee:

- i. recognises and acknowledges the work being undertaken in the Service and with external partners such as HEKSS, Surrey Care Association, Skills for Care and the NHS that aims to address key challenges in the social care workforce across Surrey. The Committee also recommends that the Council creates an action plan for improving recruitment of young people into the adult social care workforce by challenging poor perceptions of care work among young people and their parents, increasing opportunities for work experience and using social media more effectively as a recruitment tool **(Recommendation R4/18)**;
- ii. recommends that the Health and Wellbeing Board reviews opportunities to establish clear career pathways between frontline care roles within the Council, NHS England and partner organisations as a matter of urgency and submits the outcomes of this review to the Select Committee ahead of its meeting on 13 February 2019 **(Recommendation: R5/18)**;
- iii. recommends that the Council prioritises investigating the potential of technology to support the workforce, improve productivity and promote residents to remain independent **(Recommendation R6/18)**;
- iv. recommends that the Council undertakes an exercise to consider the cost of recruitment against raising staff salaries **(Recommendation R7/18)**;
- v. notes the work underway in the Service and in partnership with Surrey Care Association that aims to address the Council's key challenges in the Adult Social Care independent care provider sector in Surrey; and



- vi. supports and endorses the work underway within Surrey, regionally and with other partners that aims to attract people into the sector and improve the image of social care sector in general.

## **7 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 7]**

### **Declarations of interest:**

None

### **Witnesses:**

Andrew Baird, Democratic Services Officer

### **Key points raised during the discussions:**

1. Members enquired about what opportunities the Select Committee would be given to scrutinise relevant aspects of the Council's Transformation Programme. Officers advised that scrutiny of the business cases that underpinned the Transformation Programme was held by the Corporate Overview Select Committee but that responsibility for scrutinising the Programme had been delegated to individual Select Committees. Specific approaches to how scrutiny of the Transformation Programme would be conducted was still being worked out by officers but Members were advised that they would be given more detail on this was forthcoming.
2. The conversation turned to an item that had previously been considered by the Adults and Health Select Committee regarding the amount of Adult Social Care debt that was owed to the Council. Officers stated that the Council's approach to recouping Adult Social Care debt had been considered by select committees on numerous occasions in the past but that little tangible benefit had been derived from this scrutiny. Given the need for the Select Committee to prioritise the areas that it scrutinise the Committee was asked to consider carefully whether Adult Social Care debt should be included on its Forward Work Programme. Members responded by highlighting that the Council was owed over £16 million in unpaid care fees which was significant given the financial challenges confronting the Council and it was agreed that an item on Adult Social Care debt would be included on the Committee's Forward Work Programme for its meeting on 13 February 2019.
3. Members enquired as to whether the Committee would be given the opportunity to scrutinise the budgets of the services within its remit. Officers stated that responsibility for scrutinising budgets remained the responsibility of the Corporate Overview Select Committee and that it was not known whether any aspect of budget scrutiny would be delegated down to individual Select Committees.

### **Actions/ further information to be provided:**

1. An item on Adult Social Care debt to be added to the Adults and Lifelong Learning Select Committee Forward Work Programme for its meeting on 13 February 2019.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Adults and Lifelong Select Committee reviewed items that it is due to consider at future meetings.

**8 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 8]**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Adults and Lifelong Learning Select Committee would take place on 13 February 2019.

Meeting ended at: 12.50 pm

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**Chairman**