

Minutes of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 20 March 2023

Present: Jeremy Pert (Chair)

Attendance

Patricia Ackroyd	Phil Hewitt
Charlotte Atkins	Dan Maycock
Philip Atkins, OBE	Bernard Peters
Richard Cox (Vice-Chair (Overview))	Janice Silvester-Hall
Ann Edgeller (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))	Mike Sutherland
Philippa Haden	Mike Wilcox

Also in attendance: Julia Jessel

Apologies: Keith Flunder, Lin Hingley, Jill Hood and Barbara Hughes

PART ONE

50. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ann Edgeller declared an interest as Staffordshire County Councils appointed Partner Governor at the Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT).

Councillor Bernard Peters declared an interest as Staffordshire County Councils Local Authority appointed Governor at University Hospital Derby and Burton (UHDB).

51. Minutes of the last meeting held on 13 February 2023

The Committee noted a duplication of "to help" on page 2 of the minutes and highlighted that Councillor Steve Norman was not recorded as having attended the Committee as a Substitute Member.

Resolved – That, subject to the amends stated above, the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

52. Social Care Workforce Update

Councillor Julia Jessel and Amy Duffy, Senior Commissioning Manager, presented the Social Care Workforce Update. The Committee were informed that the Strategy detailed key actions as a collective partnership to support the on-going challenges faced by the Staffordshire social care workforce. The Committee were also informed that the recruitment process had been refined to be more efficient. It was highlighted that the strategy had been formed for the whole of the social care industry and a number of organisations and partners had been consulted.

The Committee were advised that people enjoyed working within the care industry and the strategy was based around recruitment, training and retention. In 2021/22 there were 21,000 filled posts in adult social care in Staffordshire. There had been a downward turn in the overall number of person employed in the sector in comparison from 2020/21:

- 11,500 employees working in residential and nursing care settings (marking a reduction of approx. 500 staff),
- 7,200 providing home care (marking a reduction of approx. 700 staff)
- 950 working in community-based care (including day opportunities).
- 1,400 personal assistants (providing support to both children and adult, and on behalf of the NHS).

It was reported that by 2024 it was projected that a workforce of 23,983 would be required. Taking into account the staff required due to increase in demand and potential staff turnover would require 6,336 new staff. By 2027 the estimated number of new staff required was 16,463.

The Committee were advised that there were 8 key workstreams focussed on supporting the social care workforce:

- Data & intelligence
- Information Sharing
- Journey to work
- Learning and Development
- Valuing social care
- Digitalisation
- Recruitment and Retention
- Transport

The Committee noted the following comments and responses to questions:

- Details of new uplifted rates of pay were not yet known.
- The Cabinet Member highlighted the importance of social care workers in the industry adding that care workers needed to feel valued. There were the dignity in care awards to give care workers recognition and a second celebration event being considered.

- Gathering a collective intelligence through exit interviews was difficult as there were over 500 individual providers in Staffordshire however work was being undertaken to bring together the data in a more cohesive manner so that common trends could be identified and addressed.
- In 2021/22, the overall turnover rate of the workforce was reported as 32.2% with 59% of leavers remaining within the social care workforce. The overall vacancy rate in Staffordshire was 9.9%.
- Feedback which had been received highlighted levels of pay, learning and development opportunities and team support and ethos.
- Employee benefits were being explored, the County Council's employee benefits scheme had been extended to some care workers and the possibility in further extending the NHS employee benefits scheme was being considered.
- There is a high turnover rate within children's social care. The Committee requested a briefing note on this.
- Training, development and apprenticeships were discussed. The Committee were informed that increasing the number of apprenticeships was being explored. Working alongside other providers so that there was an employment opportunity at the end of the apprenticeship. It was highlighted that apprenticeships were available to people of all ages.
- There would be targeted and localised recruitment campaigns. The ICS have undertaken a pilot in five secondary schools to promote health and social care careers. The Committee were also informed that a virtual work experience opportunity with the ICS was being developed.
- There were a number of zero-hour contracts in the sector, and it was discussed that there was a need for them as they give flexibility for the employer and the employee, however a reduction in the number of zero-hour contracts would help with staff retention. Work-life balance was also discussed to retain staff.
- Individual providers had attempted cash incentives related to recruitment and retention, however feedback from these providers was mixed.
- Digital competences in the workforce were wide ranging. A national digital framework which would set out expectations and training requirements for the workforce was expected.
- Feedback from workforce had highlighted that feeling valued and celebrating good practice and achievement was important. The Council were looking at ways to recognise and reward the workforce. Qualifications were also discussed as a mechanism to give young people aspiration.

- Colleges and Universities had been involved in the creation of the strategy. There was a workstream which was looking to establish a local social care academy which would offer qualifications at a number of levels. The Committee agreed to hold a focussed session on social care education in colleges. In relation to the proposed social care academy as the government were looking to bring in T levels.
- The Committee requested that a report detailing the progress against the action plan be brought to Committee in 12 months.
- The Committee also requested the market sustainability plan which was due to be published at the end of March 2023 and that they be invited to the workforce event on 19 April 2023.
- The Committee agreed to host a round table discussion with care providers: The Staffordshire Association of Care Providers and Nexxus and one or two smaller providers to discuss the Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy and to seek their views on the strategy.

Resolved – That (a) the Committee noted the progress made by partners to date on the Staffordshire Social Care Workforce programme

(b) the Committee considered the on-going challenges faced by the social care workforce and the range of actions and initiatives identified by the programme to address these and continue to support the social care workforce.

(c) the following be shared with the Committee:

- A staffing update on the Childrens social care workforce.
- The Market Sustainability Plan
- An invite to the workforce event due to be held on 19 April 2023.

(d) the Committee hold a focussed session on social care education in colleges in relation to the proposed social care academy as the government were looking to bring in T Levels.

(e) a report detailing the progress against the action plan be brought the Committee in 12 months.

(f) the Committee host a round table discussion with care providers: The Staffordshire Association of Care Providers, Nexxus and one or two smaller providers to discuss the Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy to seek their views on the strategy.

53. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB update on 2023/24 Operational Plan

Paul Brown, Chief Finance Officer at Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board presented the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB update on 2023/24 Operational Plan to the Committee. The Committee were advised that the system was required to agree three planning documents:

- A plan for the financial year 2023/24 (reflecting local and national priorities)
- A five year 'Joint Forward Plan'
- A Strategy

The Committee were advised that the financial position had been challenging. Over COVID the ICB broke even and it was expected to break even this year (22/23). It was reported that four priorities had been identified in 2023/24:

- Urgent and emergency care
- Tackling backlogs
- General practice
- Complex individuals.

The Committee noted the following comments and responses to questions:

- The plan will have timelines against each of the objectives and will be sent to the Committee when completed.
- Integrated Care Hubs were enablers of the outcomes highlighted in the report. Which would reduce the number of trips to A&E and calls to 999 as patients could be treated elsewhere.
- The ICB were due to take on the responsibility of Dentistry on 1 April 2023. It was reported that the Dentistry contracts were underspent.
- There was a lack of dentist schools in Staffordshire. The Committee and the ICB discussed that Keele University could offer dentistry courses.
- There was a need for more GPs and workforce to strengthen existing practices and primary care to reduce emergency calls.
- There was a Mental Health investment standard in response to under investment in mental health. In funding terms, mental health was now prioritised over physical health.
- Improving Healthy life expectancy was the long-term focus. In the short term, four priorities had been identified and targets had been associated with them such as waiting times for ambulance category

2 and 3 calls. The Committee agreed to receive the first quarter performance against these targets at a future meeting alongside the Key Performance Indicators and the Operational Plan.

- 10% of the work the NHS does is in relation to diabetes. Long term investments were being made to reduce the number of people with diabetes.
- As a reward of breaking even, £6 million extra capital had been given to the ICB. There was a £300million legacy financial debt and if the ICB were to breakeven for two consecutive years the debt would be written off which would allow the ICB to make investments. Capital was limited but some could be spent on estate.
- The Operating plan was a work in progress, there was more focus detailed in the long term in the plan which would be shared with the Committee when completed.
- Contacts within the ICB related to the Women's Health Strategy working group was to be shared with the Committee when available.

Resolved – That (a) the Committee noted the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board's approach and current position in the development of the 2023/24 Operational Plan as set out by NHS England in the 2023/24 priorities and operational planning guidance.

(b) the Committee receive the first quarter performance against the targets in the Operating Plan at a future meeting alongside the Key Performance Indicators.

54. District and Borough Health Scrutiny Activity

The Committee received the District and Borough Health Scrutiny activity update report.

The Committee discussed the content of the report and that it was compliant with the Francis report. It was reported that the Code of Joint Working had been agreed by the Leaders Board. The Committee agreed a small working group to look in detail at the District and Borough Councils Work programmes.

Councillor Haden advised that she had attended a virtual ward at the Royal Wolverhampton Trust and the Committee agreed to attend the virtual ward.

Councillor Maycock advised that Tamworth Borough Council had received the Healthier Communities report and had requested Staffordshire Public Health to attend to go through the recommendations within the report.

Councillor Wilcox informed the Committee that Lichfield District Council has invited the ICB to talk about the George Bryan Centre and the Burton Health and Wellbeing Centre.

Resolved – That (a) the District and Borough Health Scrutiny Activity report be received and noted.

(b) a working group be convened to look in detail at the District and Borough Councils work programmes.

55. Work Programme 2022/23

The Chairman informed the Committee that the Work Programme for 2023/24 was being drafted.

Resolved – That the Work Programme be noted.

Chairman