

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 18 January 2023

Future Social Care Workforce Strategy



Councillor Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care said,

“People working across Staffordshire in both children and adults social care, do an amazing job protecting and supporting the most vulnerable people in the county and we are committed to working hard not only to attract the best staff, but to keep the best staff.

“We recognise that nationally we have seen unprecedented challenges in recruitment and our mission is to develop a more resilient care sector that enables more effective recruitment and retention of care staff.

“In developing this new strategy, we have worked together with partners including the NHS and the independent sector and staff themselves, to look at what matters most to them and how all employers can do their very best to recruit, retain and develop their own workforce.

“This includes encouraging more training and career progression opportunities as well as offering work placements and apprenticeships to attract more people starting out on their work life into the profession.”

Report Summary:

This report provides an update on the development of the partnership Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy, timescales for publication and the approach being taken to implement the key activities to achieve the outcomes. It is accompanied by the final draft strategy (Appendix 1).

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Endorse the Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy.
- b. Note the timescales for publication and launch and arrangements for implementation.

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Future Social Care Workforce Strategy

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Endorse the Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy.
- b. Note the timescales for launch and arrangements for implementation.

Local Member Interest: N/A

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

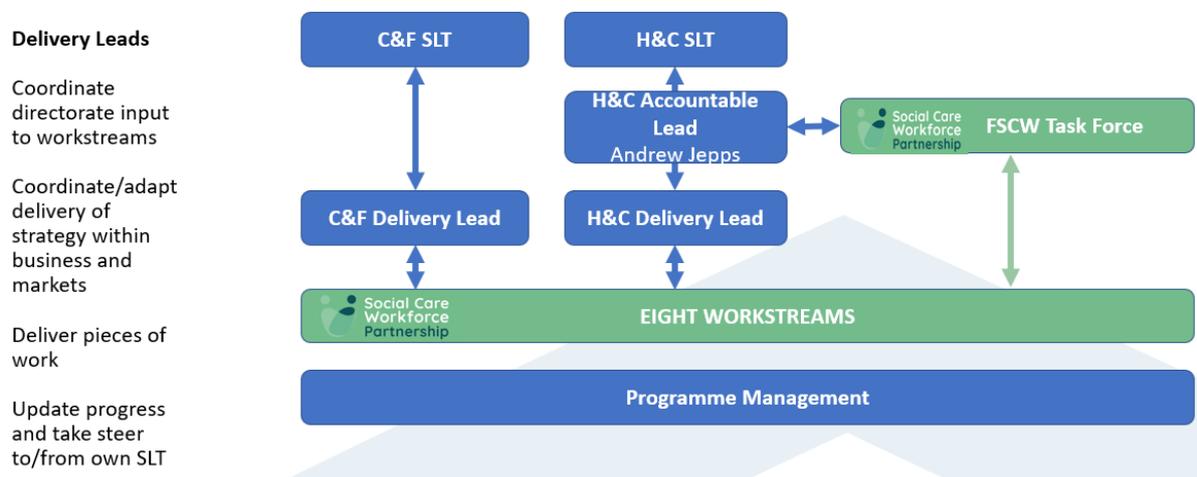
1. Social care is a major, and growing, economic sector in Staffordshire, with a workforce that aims to provide good quality care and support to people with a range of needs, from the youngest to the most elderly in our community.
2. Although most social care staff find it a fulfilling job, recruitment and retention has been challenging for a number of years, and there are now fewer people of working-age working in any type of job, alongside a record number of vacancies in the wider economy.
3. There are a range of issues that affect recruitment and retention: constrained funding for social care services has led to pay rates often lower than in competitor industries; the opportunities for career progression are sometimes limited, or not well understood; social care staff sometimes feel that their work is not valued.
4. To try and address these a Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy has been co-produced by the Council, NHS, Local Economic Partnership, Skills for Care, local providers and other partners. The Strategy will be amended as necessary in response to current and evolving issues.

Launch and implementation

5. The Strategy will be endorsed by individual partner organisations and then, subject to pre-publication amendments, will be published and launched in March 2023.
6. Plans are being developed to implement the key actions and achieve the outcomes outlined in the Strategy, along with metrics to enable progress to be monitored. These will be overseen by a 'Task Force' comprised of representative of partner organisations, with reporting to Health and Care and Children and Families Senior Leadership Teams within the Council.



FSCW SCC Programme Governance Structure



7. Where individual actions require more formal arrangements (as an example, we are currently scoping the potential for a Social Care Academy), these will be taken through normal governance processes.

Risks

8. There is a risk of raising expectations that the Strategy is unable to meet. This is mitigated through a stakeholder engagement plan to communicate approaches, successes, and constraints.
9. There is a risk that once the Strategy is adopted, planning is not adaptive enough to evolving issues. This will be mitigated through regularly reviewing progress and updating actions as necessary.

Legal Implications

10. There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

11. There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report. Improving recruitment and retention should help to mitigate price rises in the social care market.

Climate Change Implications

12. Climate change implications and how we can positively contribute towards the achievement of the Council's Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2050 were considered during development of the Strategy.
13. Transport has been highlighted as one of the primary issues facing the social care workforce, particularly the home care sector (supporting adults) – noting one of the primary issues faced in the current economic climate is the associated costs of transport to the employee and the employer. Considerations include:
 - a. Reducing the distance / number of journey's (subject to Commercial considerations).
 - b. How we can support the workforce to transition to low carbon alternative vehicles in the medium term, noting the changes to new vehicle purchase post 2030.
14. Any proposals will be considered as per the proposed Governance Structure detailed in point 6.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Final Draft Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy

Appendix 2 – Summary Document – Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy 2022 – 2027

Community Impact Assessment

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