

13th April 2016

HASC response to the presentation on the Recruitment and Retention of Adult social Care Workforce at 22nd March meeting

Dear Mike,

Many thanks to you and your staff for presenting a comprehensive picture of the challenges facing the local adult social care workforce and sharing an early draft summary of the workforce strategy at the HASC meeting on 22nd March 2016.

The areas of particular significance highlighted by Members during discussions were:

1. The importance of adult and children's social care HR and workforce development teams working together. It is clear there is much to learn from each other. One particular area of success both in terms of recruitment and retention was the 'grow your own' initiative in children's social care. This is seen as a key area to be replicated in adult social care. In addition Members raised questions as to whether the Bursary Schemes could be replicated in Adult Social Care Services.
2. Reducing workforce stress levels and promoting health and wellbeing. The Committee noted the high sickness levels of the workforce and did not feel that the present workforce strategy gave sufficient weight and clarity to tackling this via innovative health and wellbeing initiatives. HASC asks that HWB initiatives and mechanisms for how these will be communicated to the workforce are detailed in the Workforce Strategy.
3. Monitoring the reduction of sickness and absence levels. The Committee appreciates that there is a corporate Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It noted that the issue is greatest amongst senior social workers and that more focus and resources needs to be given to levels of supervision and support. HASC asks that monitoring mechanisms and targets for the reduction of sickness and absence are included in the Workforce strategy.



4. Working in partnership with District Councils and emphasising their role in offering affordable housing to social care workers as a mechanism to attract and retain the workforce in Buckinghamshire. This was regarded by HASC as timely given that District Councils are producing their Local Plans and would expect CHASC BU to be including affordable housing for social care staff as part of their consultation response.
5. Effectively delivering the strategy within current resource constraints. HASC recommends a business case linked to the strategy so that it is clear that the significant number of initiatives can be delivered within the resource envelope
6. Highlighting and learning from the innovative work of the Chesham Wellbeing Group as a mechanism for getting young people into social care employment
7. To explore the potential to set up an in-house social care agency with Members

I understand that the Workforce Strategy is due to be finalised by the end of April 2016. HASC would therefore like to see a copy of the Strategy by early May with its recommendations from points 2, 3 and 5 if accepted embedded.

If acceptable I would also suggest that HASC reviews the strategy in 6 months at its 18th October meeting.

King regards



Angela Macpherson, County Councillor
Chairman, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee



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