

Adults' Standing Overview Group

The Adults' Standing Overview Group (ASOG) of the People's Scrutiny Committee meets bi-monthly to review performance/service matters relating to adults' safeguarding and social care services respectively.

At the last session on 28 September 2016, with Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Biederman, Hosking and Randall Johnson in attendance, the following issues were raised:

Preparing for Adulthood and Transitions for Children & Young People with Disabilities

- The lack of clarity on the County Council's model of practice which is currently too focussed on dependency. Officers want to use the progression model, in future service re-design, which is already embedded in some part of the County. Need to work to support people's strengths and assets.
- Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Social Work (CSW) need to operate more closely with Health to improve consistency across Devon.
- Independent living needs to be encouraged from an earlier age to try to avoid the 'cliff edge' as young people move into ASC. Young people and their parents need to know what to expect as they make this transition with a consistent message from ASC, CSW, Education and Health.
- Housing is important to the progression model, and there needs to be a suitable range of provision available. Need to work with the city and district authorities to ensure a clear strategy across Devon.
- Trying to reduce the reliance on paid support, and develop the model of community based support.
- Those children supported through a Child Protection Plan / Children in Need who do not meet thresholds for ASC are a high risk group and among the likeliest to enter the criminal justice system.
- Placement stability for care leavers is still not good enough in Devon.
- The progression model should be the model for all children as they move into adulthood regardless of whether they have a learning disability or otherwise. CSW are trying to manage risk earlier, and are working with colleagues in Education using the progression model. There is now increased staffing in terms of support for care leavers with more personal advisors in post.
- For young people with a learning disability who also have medical needs, there is a significant transition to make at 18 as they will go from seeing one paediatrician to a range of clinicians.
- There are challenges for ASC when young people come through to them without a learning disability or assessed mental health need, and there is no legislative power to support them.
- Schools and colleges have not done well enough supporting young people with life skills for independent living.
- The summer period can be an issue for some young people finishing school / college. Children who have had involvement with the SENCO or who have been Children in Need are among those most likely to be at risk of 'getting lost' in the summer after their GCSEs.
- There is significant pressure on the system. More young people are surviving with complex needs with improvements to healthcare and diagnostics.
- Evidence suggests there are more children feeling less happy with low level anxiety issues as well as an increased number accessing additional support, CAMHS etc.
- The County Council needs to be less reactive and more proactive in its response.

- A risk stratification tool is being piloted in Exeter across 6 GP practices, using data to better understand problem areas and issues. This will help to look at the whole public sector system and the support that can be provided to people before they enter statutory services.
- There is an issue at 18 when a young person is in high cost residential provision, if conversations have not been taking place from 14.
- Nationally only 6% of people with a learning disability have a job. There needs to be more emphasis from the County Council in supporting employability, and taking the lead on this agenda. It is unclear whether any apprentices within the LA have a learning disability.
- There is an issue for young people with the national requirement of a GCSE C grade at Maths / English, which may prevent young people getting onto apprenticeships.

Agreed that

An invitation be sent to members inviting their involvement on the Learning Disability Partnership Board

Adult Social Care Performance Framework

- Delayed transfers of care is an issue given the fall in performance. Officers advised that this issue, relates more to Health than ASC, but remains a concern with a particular problem at the RDE.
- ASC is involved in a major piece of work to address the shortage of carers in some parts of the County. There is a particular issue with the Living Well at Home contract in East Devon.
- Analysis is taking place of the number of low / high value care packages, as it appears Devon may be more generous in its provision than its comparator authorities.
- Devon has approximately 100 more people in residential care than other LAs, many of whom have dementia. Too many people with dementia go from hospital to care home; a considerable number of whom will not go back to their home.
- Devon assesses far more people than a local authority of similar size, with over 1000 more cases than comparators. ASC is currently over involving itself in people's lives, which is symptomatic of not adopting a strength based approach but rather one that creates dependency. Too many people are being brought into the system at every level, creating a huge amount of work.
- Cuts in work funded by the Better Care Fund to support Dementia Friendly Communities. Members questioned whether it was a false economy to discontinue the Partnership Development Officer role, as in the region of £10,000 a year can be saved keeping a person with dementia in the community.
- The progression model is relevant across every aspect of the system. The 'Devon way' should underpin all work and be about an asset based, positive approach.
- Concern about the performance relating to staff supervision and appraisals. ASC needs to be the system leader in terms of the quality of practice, setting clear expectations to all partner agencies. Need to have the right quality framework, practice standards and supervision in place.
- People are being taken into care homes in Devon sooner when compared to other LAs.

Agreed that

People's Scrutiny to undertake a detailed piece of work on dementia care jointly with Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny.

Cllr Rob Hannaford
Chair