



Report to Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee 25th March 2022

Report of: Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee

Subject: Committee Findings and Advice – Draft for Approval

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Summary:

As part of Sheffield City Council's transition to a Committee System of governance from May 2022, Transitional Committees were introduced to provide an early opportunity for Councillors to work together on a cross party basis to advise the Executive, to trial new ways of working, and to feed into the Governance Committee as it develops the Committee model.

Transitional Committee Chairs and Executive Members worked together to identify areas in the Council's 'One Year Plan' that would benefit from cross party policy development work. For the Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee this has been improving the transition to adulthood for SEND learners, contributing to our One Year Plan priority to provide effective, person-centred SEND services; and improving home care services to ensure that people receive the right support to enable them to live independently at home as part of our One Year Plan commitment to enable adults to live the life that they want to live.

Since the Committee's first meeting in November 2021, it has carried out a range of activity to undertake this work. This report pulls together the findings and advice from the Committee's meetings over the past year and is set out in this report in four sections:

- Advice on ways of working in the Committee System post May 2022
- Advice on Council Priorities
- Advice on improving our support to adults to live independently at home, and live the life they want to live
- Advice on improving the transition to adulthood for more SEND learners

This advice relates to ongoing pieces of work, rather than decisions that will be taken this municipal year, and will be relevant to the Policy Committees as they develop their work plans for the 2022/23 municipal year. It is proposed therefore, that this report is passed to the appropriate Executive Members and

Directors for consideration, action where appropriate, and referral into the appropriate Committees post May.

The Transitional Committee is being asked to:

- Agree its findings and advice.
 - Agree that these are passed on to the appropriate Executive Members and Directors for consideration, action and referral into the appropriate Committees post-May.
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Background Papers:

Education, Health & Care Transitional Committee Meeting papers:

4th November 2021

2nd December 2021

3rd March 2022

Category of Report: OPEN

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Report of the Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee

Committee Findings and Advice

1. Introduction/Context

- 1.1 As part of Sheffield City Council's transition to a Committee System of governance from May 2022, Transitional Committees were introduced to provide an early opportunity for Councillors to work together on a cross party basis to advise the Executive, to trial new ways of working, and to feed into the Governance Committee as it develops the Committee model.

Transitional Committee Chairs and Executive Members worked together to identify areas in the Council's 'One Year Plan' that would benefit from cross party policy development work. For the Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee this has been improving the transition to adulthood for SEND learners, contributing to our One Year Plan priority to provide effective, person-centred SEND services; and improving home care services to ensure that people receive the right support to enable them to live independently at home as part of our One Year Plan commitment to enable adults to live the life that they want to live.

- 1.2 Since the Committee's first formal meeting in November 2022, Committee Members have carried out a range of activity including hearing from council officers, hearing from people who use and provide services and external partners. Drawing on these discussions, the Committee here sets out its findings and advice.

2. Advice on Ways of working in the Committee System 2022/23

- 2.1 Committee members recognised early on in the process that Education, Health and Care is an incredibly large remit for one Committee, and is pleased to note that current proposals for the Committee model split this area into two separate Committees. However, members also note the important links between these two areas of work – not least in areas such as transitions to adulthood, and all age disability services - but also beyond. We've noted the importance of adult social care working closely with housing and local area committees in the course of our work this year - and it is vital that the move to the Committee system does not lead to silo working. We must ensure that the new system helps rather than hinders a joined-up approach to policy and decision making in Education, Health and Care, and across all council services.
- 2.2 Members of the Committee also noted the likely heavy workload of the Adult Health & Social Care and Education, Children & Families Policy Committees, between them covering a significant proportion of the Council's spend, and the most challenging areas in terms of budget savings – and the need to ensure that Chairs and members of these Committees are adequately supported to be able to carry out their roles effectively.

2.3 Committee members were also concerned that responsibility for carrying out statutory health scrutiny duties would further increase the workload of the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee. The Committee is therefore pleased to note that current proposals for the post May 2022 system include a sub-committee to carry out the statutory health scrutiny function.

2.4 Whilst noting that there are legislative limitations to Committee Meetings taking place remotely, Committee members are keen to see hybrid and virtual options pursued where possible to make it as easy as possible for councillors and members of the public to participate in policy development and engage in decision making processes.

3 Advice on Council Priorities

3.1 Underpinning all of the Committee's discussions this year has been the recognition of the difficult decisions the Council has to make about where and how it uses its limited resources. The Committee believes that providing the right support for our most vulnerable residents should remain a priority for Sheffield City Council in policy and budgetary decisions; and we should continue to lobby central government to give important services such as social care and SEND the national profile and funding they deserve.

3.2 In the course of its work, the Committee started to discuss how adopting a 'Wellbeing Economy' model could help us to put the wellbeing of Sheffield people at the heart of the Council's decision making. Full Council picked this up and requested that *"the Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee, and its successor under the committee system, should look into how Sheffield Council and Sheffield can support our ambition for an Inclusive Economy in the One Year Plan with the wellbeing economy model, and in order to put Sheffield's health and well-being front and centre of our aims, decision making and expenditure."* It was not possible for the Committee to consider this in detail during the 2021/22 municipal year, so this request should be picked up by the appropriate Committee in 2022/23.

4 Enabling adults to live the life they want to live – improving home care services

4.1 Home Care Transformation Programme

4.1.1 The Committee received a [report](#) from officers detailing the Home Care Transformation Programme in December 2021. The Committee welcomed the honest assessment of the current service, and the actions and ambitions set out in the programme –

particularly around person centred care and the move away from time and task to a focus on outcomes for individuals.

- 4.1.2 The Committee highlighted issues around workforce – and the importance of improving recruitment and retention of home care staff if we are to achieve our goals; the importance of providing diverse and appropriate care for all communities; and the importance of adequately funding social care services.
- 4.1.2 The Committee recognised that we are currently mid-way through a long-term transformation programme, and that it will be important for the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee to be brought up to speed with the programme so it is able to monitor and review progress, and ensure that services are improving in the way that is intended. The evaluation being undertaken by the University of Sheffield’s School of Health and Related Research will be an important source for next year’s Committee in doing this.

4.2 Creating communities that support independent living

- 4.2.1 The Committee also recognised that while improving home care services is vital, and that ‘Home First’ policies are intended to keep people independent, home is not always the most appropriate option for individuals. Committee members heard examples of individuals who thrived in care home settings after unsatisfactory home care experiences, and the Committee was keen to explore how we can ensure that people have a range of options within their local community that enable them to live the lives they want to live.
- 4.2.2 To this end, the Committee thinks that there is a role for the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee in exploring and developing how adult social care works with Local Area Committees to ensure that we go beyond thinking about ‘models of care’ and into building communities in which people are able to access the support and services they need. Part of this might be mapping the assets that local areas have, and signposting people to the right services for them, or considering how we might use our assets differently.
- 4.2.3 The Committee recognises the important role that Care Homes play in this picture, and it was clear in [discussions with the Sheffield Care Association](#) that Care Homes are facing significant financial challenges on a range of fronts – from the level of fees paid by Sheffield City Council for beds – which the Sheffield Care Association believe should be higher; cost of maintaining buildings; increase in cost of living – food, fuel; and high staff turnover and recruitment challenges leading to high agency staff costs and recruitment costs. The Committee would like to see continued transparent and open engagement and consultation with care providers to ensure that our vision for what care looks like in Sheffield is viable and sustainable. This might involve thinking innovatively about the role that Care Homes could play in their

communities – for example using Care Homes to provide day care services etc.

- 4.2.4 Recognising that the current Older People’s Independent Living (OPIL) offer in Sheffield is currently narrow, and there is shortfall of this type of housing that will grow significantly in future, the Committee was keen to explore how expanding OPIL could contribute to our ambitions to help people stay independent and live the life they want to lead. The Committee held an [informative session](#) with officers from Housing and Social Care in March 2022 to understand this further.
- 4.2.5 The Committee heard that this kind of housing is more costly than general needs housing to deliver, however the Committee was interested to note the potential financial and wellbeing benefits OPIL can provide – in for example reducing the likelihood of entering long term care, reduced ambulance call-outs, GP and Community Nurse visits and the related impacts on social wellbeing.
- 4.2.6 The Committee is keen to see a wider piece of work on this prioritised by the appropriate Policy Committee/s next year – recognising that it will need a joint approach across housing and social care – that looks in detail at how OPIL schemes could deliver financial benefits; how we could develop relationships with partners across the NHS, VCF and private sector (including developers) to progress this agenda; explore options around using council-owned land to increase access to OPIL housing across the city; and engage with residents to understand needs, and ensure that our OPIL offer is appropriate for all of Sheffield’s diverse communities.

4.3 Working with the NHS on prevention

Committee members noted the development of Integrated Care Systems gives us an opportunity to work closer with colleagues in the NHS to reduce demand on social care services by keeping people independent during hospital stays, building their resilience and starting rehabilitation whilst on the ward – reducing care needs on discharge.

4.4 Summary of Advice

- The Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee should monitor and review progress on the Home Care Transformation Programme during 2022/23 and beyond, including the impact evaluation being carried out by SCHARR.
- The Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee should explore how Local Area Committees and Social Care can work together in communities to support people to live the lives they want to live.
- Transparent and open engagement and consultation should continue with care providers, particularly care homes, to ensure that care services in Sheffield are viable and sustainable

- Detailed work to understand how increasing Older People's Independent Living could contribute to a sustainable model of social care, and practicalities around delivering this should be prioritised by the appropriate Committees in 2022/23.
- Closer working with the NHS on the prevention agenda to reduce social care needs on discharge from hospital.

5. Improving the Transition to Adulthood for more SEND Learners.

5.1 Improvement Activity

5.1.1 In November 2021 the Committee received an [update report](#) from council officers on SEND services, with a focussed paper on the post-16 Transition to Adulthood. Issues around SEND Services following the 2018 Joint Area Ofsted inspection, and resulting Written Statement of Action are well documented. The Committee heard how a relatively new team, including an interim Head of SEND and a Post 16 SEND Officer had been in place since May 2021, who were accelerating work to address the issues identified in the inspection, and to achieve our One Year Plan ambition to build better relationships with parents, deliver EHCPs within timescales, increase SEND places across the city and improve the transition to adulthood for more learners – the latter of which was to be the main focus of the Committee's work.

5.1.2 The Committee welcomed the ambition and activity set out in the report, acknowledged the hard work of the new team – and noted that there should be a role for the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee next year in monitoring progress and ensuring that the activity being undertaken is resulting in improved outcomes. At the time of writing, we are awaiting the results of the Ofsted reinspection – which should influence areas of focus for the Policy Committee next year.

5.2 Hearing from SEND Learners

5.2.1 The Committee was keen to hear directly from SEND learners about their experiences, hopes and concerns about the transition to adulthood and met with learners from Bents Green School, Sheaf Training Centre, Seven Hills and Sheffield College in [January 2022](#).

5.2.2 Young People's Voice

A key message that came out of the session, which was taken away for action by the officers present, but worth mentioning here too, was around the importance of a young person's voice in decisions about their life. The young people told us they want to be involved in decisions about their futures, and to speak for themselves. Young people felt that too often, people are speaking for them. This is not helped by some processes – such as EHC Annual review meetings being confusing for young people – as they cover the past, present and future at the same time. Young people should be at the centre of all such discussions and processes.

5.2.3 Opportunities for meaningful employment

The Committee also heard a clear message about the importance of meaningful employment. We heard clearly that young people want to work after school and college – across a range of sectors - and really value opportunities for work experience and work placements. Education providers told us that demand for this exceeds supply, with providers 'knocking on the same doors' for supported employment opportunities.

5.3 Engaging with Employers

- 5.3.1 The Committee was keen to engage with Sheffield employers on this point, to understand how we as a city, can make the most of the skills and talents of all Sheffield people by developing a 'SEND informed' business community, that is able to offer appropriate opportunities for people with SEND. To this end, members of the Committee met with representatives from the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) in [February 2022](#). This highlighted a real willingness from employers to engage in this agenda, but a recognition that it can be harder for smaller businesses (of which there are many in Sheffield) to find the resources, capacity or confidence to support SEND learners into employment.
- 5.3.2 Committee members felt that there was more work to be done here, working with organisations such as SCCI to understand what support employers need, and how we can provide it in a streamlined way – through a 'hub' or single point of support for employers with resources, advice and signposting to specialist agencies; as well as a 'directory' or 'bank' of disability positive employers in the city that sets out what they can offer in terms of employment opportunities, support and experience.
- 5.3.3 The key messages from the session with the Chamber of Commerce have been shared with Council Officers to follow up, however Committee Members also felt that it would be useful for the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee to maintain a dialogue and continue to engage with the Chamber of Commerce on this agenda next year.
- 5.3.4 To demonstrate the impact that engaging with employers on this agenda can have – as a result of Committee Members making connections following these discussions, the University of Sheffield is working with the Council's SEND team to pilot an intern scheme providing work experience for 5 young SEND learners on the 2 days of the week they are not in training. This was fortunate – a result of knowing the right people to have the right conversation with – but if we can engage with employers across the city in a structured and systematic way, we increase the likelihood of finding more opportunities for SEND learners to access meaningful employment.

5.4 Engaging with Parents and Carers

5.4.1 The Committee had hoped to hear directly from parents and carers as part of this work, but in the end was unable to do so in the time available. Committee members recognise that the transition to independent living can be an extremely stressful time for parents and carers; and also that parents and carers in Sheffield have been raising the same issues over many years, and have felt that progress in addressing them has been slow. The Committee welcomes the One Year Plan commitment to build better relationships with parents and suggests that this should be an area of focus for the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee next year, particularly in relation to transitions to adulthood.

5.5 Summary of Advice

- The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee should monitor progress and ensure that actions being taken to improve the transition to adulthood for more SEND learners are working;
- We should ensure that our policies and processes put young people's voice at their core, and enable young people to be involved in decisions about their future.
- Ensuring we have adequate, meaningful employment opportunities for SEND learners should be a priority. Council officers, and the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee should continue to engage with the Chamber of Commerce to explore how we can support employers in the City to provide meaningful employment for SEND learners.
- The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee should monitor the One Year Plan commitment to build better relationships with parents and carers in relation to transitions to adulthood.

6 Recommendations

The Transitional Committee is being asked to:

- Agree its findings and advice.
- Agree that these are passed on to the appropriate Executive Members and Directors for consideration, action and referral into the appropriate Committees post-May.

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