

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

17 September 2019

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny

Venue Committee Room 3 - 3rd Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Val Evans (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Simon Bennett (Con)

Labour

Cllr Olivia Birch
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
Cllr Asha Mattu
Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman

Conservative

Cllr Sohail Khan

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

Information for the Public

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Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Declarations of Interest**
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting (11 June 2019)** (Pages 3 - 10)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]
- 4 **Matters arising**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5 **2019 Social Work Health Checks** (Pages 11 - 24)
[Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker, to present report]
- 6 **2019 Adult Social Care Workforce Health Check** (Pages 25 - 36)
[Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker, to present report]
- 7 **Principal Social Worker Annual Report** (Pages 37 - 56)
[Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker, to present report]
- 8 **Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel 2019 20 - Draft Work Programme** (Pages 57 - 60)
[Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, to present report.]

Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 3

Minutes - 11 June 2019

Attendance

Members of the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Simon Bennett (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Olivia Birch
Cllr Val Evans (Chair)
Cllr Sohail Khan
Cllr Asha Mattu
Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman

Employees

Martin Stevens (Scrutiny Officer) (Minutes)
John Denley (Director of Public Health)
David Watts (Director of Adult Services)
Louise Haughton (Principal Social Worker)
Jennifer Rogers (Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner)

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
The Portfolio Holder, Cllr Linda Leach sent her apologies.
- 2 **Declarations of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of previous meetings (26 March 2019)**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 26 March 2019 were approved as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Cllr Sohail Khan, declaration of a non-pecuniary interest as a Blue Badge Holder.
- 4 **Matters arising**
A Member of the Panel requested that the Scrutiny Officers ensure that a report be added to the Work Programme for the September meeting detailing progress in responding to the issues highlighted in the report received at the last meeting on blue

badges and specifically on changes to the eligibility criteria and delays in the assessment process.

5 **Update on File Audits: 2018-2019**

The Director of Adult Services in his opening remarks commented that not all local authorities in adult social care services carried out file audits. The Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner stated that in 2018-2019 there had been over 120 file audits in City of Wolverhampton Council's Adult Social Services Department. In addition to these there had also been two audit the Auditor checks, to check the quality and consistency of the bi-monthly file audits. Dip sampling audits had been carried out to measure quality or address specific issues as part of the implementation of the 3 Conversations approach. More than 50 dip samples had been carried out in 2018/19. There had also been two thematic audits completed during the year.

The Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner stated that file audits in adult social care in Wolverhampton took place every other month. The auditors ranged from front line managers all the way up to Director level. They measured files in terms of CQC ratings. There had been some fluctuation in the current year in quarter 2 and quarter 3. A new way of working had been introduced in July and they thought this may have helped to explain the dip in the results. However, they now believed it was down to overly optimistic previous ratings. In November work was undertaken with managers to discuss the findings of an audit the auditor audit carried out in July 2018, which may have led to a more critical approach being taken in November's audit in response to the feedback that some auditors were rating files as "good" when a lower rating would have been more appropriate.

The Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner commented that there had been some high performance in a number of areas. These areas included, Making Safeguarding Personal, Demonstrating Dignity and Respect, Timelessness and Responsiveness and Continuity of Support. Additional areas which had become strengths from quarter one in the current year included, effective multi-agency working, clear and detailed eligibility and involvement of family members/carers. She was particularly pleased that there had been a significant improvement in care assessments in quarter 4.

The Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner remarked that an area which required further improvement was in reflective and analytical thinking. Practitioners were not always recording their reflective discussions or thinking on people's files. A revised recording policy was disseminated to teams in January 2019 which contained a section on reflective recording to support practice and improve worker confidence. Another action to address the need for better recording of reflective practice included the introduction of a monthly manager support programme from April 2019 which would cover areas identified by audits. The aim was to support frontline managers improve quality and practice in their teams. Reflective recording would be the focus of the session in June 2019. They were keen to ensure the voice of the person was captured within files.

A Member of the Panel stated that he was aware of a very complicated case approximately two years ago where the legal guardianship had been taken away from a family who were looking after a sibling. A care bill of over 20,000 pounds had then been built up. She asked if financial management was one of the areas which

the social workers audited when going through the files. In response, the Director of Adults commented that financial matters should be included as part of the annual review. The management of finance was not a complaint which came up often in the complaints process. When they became aware of issues of finance with a particular person, the Council were able to offer the Appointeeship Service.

A Member of the Panel expressed surprise that some authorities did not complete social care file audits. She recommended that a report on this subject area in the future should have a glossary of terms due to the specialised language and phrases in social care. Whilst she thought the overall picture was good, she had two areas of concern which were highlighted within the report, these were risk assessment and analysis and reflective recording. She thought supervision on a six-week basis would help to resolve the two issues she had highlighted. A second member of the Panel echoed these views, adding that the risk assessment statistics in the last quarter had improved to 65%, but he was concerned this was still short of where the Council needed to be in an area of critical importance. He asked if there was going to be an ongoing programme of work or if the actions identified in the report to address the issues were one off action events. The Principal Social Worker responded to these comments by stating that there was an overall Workforce Development Plan. There were certain topics which would be revisited every year with risk, strength-based conversations and carers assessments falling in this category. In the current year they would be training a large number in the workforce on restorative approaches, which was about ensuring excellent strength-based relationship practice.

A Member of the Panel asked for how long the Council had been undertaking file audits in the adult social care service and how the latest statistics compared qualitatively to previous years. The Principal Social Worker responded that the Council had been carrying them out for the last three years. The report last year had shown more significant dramatic improvements from the year before. The current year had showed more continued gradual improvement across the areas highlighted within the report. She offered to include a comparison in next year's report from the previous year.

A Member of the Panel asked if the Adult Social Care service was being consistently challenged in particular areas across the years. In response the Principal Social Worker stated that one area they always struggled with was recording reflective practice. Social workers did not always find the time to record their reflective practice in the way that they would like. Such reflective practice had often been carried out but not formally recorded. In the present year they were changing the operating model and consequently had adjusted their recording forms. She hoped that this change would make a real difference to recording practices. Training, team meetings and reflective sessions were further ways of reminding staff about the importance of recording reflective practice. The Director of Adults Services echoed the Principal Social Worker's points regarding recording reflective practice. Next year he hoped to be able to incorporate some independent case file audit work from the work that was being done as part of the sector led improvement peer reviews in the West Midlands. Other authorities tended to struggle in the same areas as Wolverhampton.

A Member of the Panel referred to paragraph 3.2 in the report, which stated that almost 5% of people who received a service from Adult Social Care in

Wolverhampton had received some form of qualitative audit in 2018-2019. He asked for further information as to why it was at 5% and if there was any intention to increase the amount in the future. The Director of Adult Services responded that 5% was actually quite high compared to the authorities that did carry out file audits in social care. If more audits were carried out there would not be the time to ensure they were of a high standard and so some of the insights would be lost. The Principal Social Worker commented that often only a small sample was needed to pick up on patterns and themes quite quickly. When they went to other authorities to help with file audits, they would pick a maximum of 30 files.

A Member of the Panel asked who determined which files were chosen to audit. The Principal Social Worker responded that there was an Insight Performance Team who used a set criteria.

Resolved: That the report be noted by the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel and the Panel's comments be taken account of in future reports on Adult Social Care File Audits.

- 6 **Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel Draft Work Programme 2019-20**
Members requested that the Principal Social Worker Annual Report be added to the Work Plan for the meeting in September. They expressed concern that it was not being received at the current meeting as had been previously advised. The Director for Adults Services stated that the Labour Group had raised some issues about the report not containing much information on outcomes and individuals. A Member of the Panel added that they were concerned the report did not contain enough information about matters relating to equalities. They wanted the report to show which groups they had been working with on these issues and for the report to show comparative progress from previous years. The Director for Adults Services agreed to bring the Principal Social Worker Annual Report to the next meeting of the Panel, along with a covering note listing the changes which would be incorporated in future Principal Social Worker Annual Reports.
- 7 **Transforming Care - Annual Report 2019 (report to follow)**
The item on, Transforming Care Annual Report, was reported as having been deferred.
- 8 **Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Annual Report - Draft**
The Director for Public Health introduced the draft Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Annual Report 2018-2019. He said it was a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Report, which had to reflect the activities of the partnership and how its grant money had been spent. The strategy focussed on three core areas. These were reducing reoffending, reducing victimisation and violence prevention. He described the main highlights of the work the partnership had done in these areas as detailed within the report. The rough sleeper count within the City as of last week was only seven. He was particularly pleased with the work the Partnership had undertaken to reduce the number. There had been a 31% increase in hate crime reporting, which in many ways could be seen as a positive as it was important that the crime did not go unreported. He believed sustained funding was critical to ensuring the success of the partnership.

A Member of the Panel commented that he had visited Glasgow recently in his capacity as the Vice-Chair of the Council's Scrutiny Review Group into Violent Crime.

He agreed that sustained funding was critical to crime prevention work and this was clear from the Glasgow model. Their VRU (Violence Reduction Unit) had drastically decreased violent crime in Glasgow. He asked how effective the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership were at working collectively in the current format. The Director for Public Health responded that he did believe the Partnership were working effectively in relation to its established goals. No one was disengaging from the Partnership which showed that all the organisations felt it was worthwhile to work collectively.

A Member of the Panel commented that multi-agency working at its best was the gold standard. She felt it was important to distinguish between rough sleeping and aggressive begging. She had a general concern about new drugs emerging on the streets which she felt treatment providers struggled to know how best to address. She suggested that there should be more focus on the perpetrators of domestic violence and how best to get them into treatment programmes. The Director for Public Health agreed that it was important to distinguish between aggressive begging and rough sleeping. They would be launching a Substance Misuse Partnership in a few weeks' time, so there could be a collective approach on enforcement, communication, and vulnerability as opposed to just drug treatment. On the matter of domestic violence perpetrators, he agreed that the Public Health Team could do some additional work and provide a briefing back to the Panel at a future meeting.

A Panel Member asked who the intended audience was for the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Annual Report. She commented that any inward investors considering Wolverhampton would be reviewing the report, to assess whether they wished to invest in the City. She thought the report should highlight more strongly the positives. She said that the report was strong on the qualitative effects but could be enhanced on the quantitative effects of the strategies. More quantitative evidence in the report would show the Partnership were monitoring their goals effectively and would make it easier for the Scrutiny Panel to conduct their role. She suggested that the Partnership should address the question of how they monitored themselves, so the Council could better judge their effectiveness and where there needed to be improvement. The Director for Public Health agreed that data analysis was important, one of its values was it being able to show the disparity that sometimes existed between perception and reality of crime. As an example, he cited that there had been 268 incidences of recorded knife crime last year, where only 6% of the perpetrators were under the age of 25. Whereas 41% of the victims were under the age of 25. This data had helped to challenge the assumption that the majority of knife crime was committed by young people. When assumptions were challenged, it changed your approach as to how to address the problem.

A Member of the Panel commented that they felt it was important to understand how the work of the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership connected with the Council's own Younger People Strategy and the Wolves at Work Initiative. The Director for Public Health responded that they could show at a future meeting how it diagrammatically all linked together.

A Panel Member commented that agreed sustained funding would mean staff were more likely to be committed to the work of the Partnership and would attract high quality staff. They praised the Glasgow model. She commented that ex-offenders were re-settling to the City and asked if some data on this area could be submitted to

the Panel in the future. The Director for Public Health agreed that this could be provided.

A Member of the Panel stated that on the matter of hate crime it would be good to include in a future Annual Report a particular positive case study, which could encourage others to come forward in the future.

A Panel Member asked which areas in Wolverhampton were being targeted in terms of preventative work within Schools. The Director for Public Health responded that it was intelligence led and he could provide the exact information on the areas targeted outside of the meeting.

A Member of the Panel asked about the work being done to help and support the victims of hate crime and domestic abuse, given that the levels of reported crime had increased. They also commented that the voluntary sector should have more of a presence on the board of the Partnership. The Director for Public Health suggested that the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Action Plan and some supplementary documents could be brought before the Panel at a future meeting, which would show more detail about the steps being taken. He always welcomed suggestions on the membership of the Partnership Board, given the continuing changing tapestry of the City, he would relay this information back and give the Member a response.

Resolved: That the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel endorses, in principle, the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Annual report 2018-2019.

9 **Appointeeship Charging**

The Director of Adults Services introduced a report on Appointeeship charging. He explained that the item was being considered as pre-decision scrutiny as the report had not yet been received by the Cabinet. The financial challenges in Local Government had meant Officers had been tasked to review non-statutory services, to find ways to generate new income or to stop providing the service all together. Appointeeship was one of the areas identified which the Cabinet had agreed that the Council should explore the prospect of introducing a charge for providing the service. He was acutely aware that the issue would be contentious and that it would affect vulnerable people throughout the City. Members of his team over the last few months had been gathering information on how other Local Authorities managed the Appointeeship service, including the charging rates.

The Head of Community Financial Support stated that the Appointeeship service was offered to people in receipt of social security benefits who were unable to manage their own finances and had not got support from family and friends to appropriately manage their financial affairs. The proposals had the aim of the Appointeeship service working towards becoming a self-financing administrative system. There were a number of reasons that people would be referred under the Care Act Assessment 2014 for the Appointeeship service. An area of growing concern was from people suffering financial abuse from family or friends. Sometimes the family member or friend who had been given Appointeeship status, had been forced to relinquish the Appointeeship status when they had abused their position.

The Head of Community Financial Support commented that the Appointeeship service offered by the Council provided financial sustainability to the users of the

service by maximising benefit claims, providing relevant information to the benefit authorities, paying bills, managing outgoings and budgeting for unforeseen expenditure. Some people had quite substantial savings, an important part of the service was to maximise expenditure appropriately to ensure a greater quality of life and independence. If a person died when the Council was providing an Appointeeship service, the Council were required to find the next of kin and relatives to dispense with the person's estate, sometimes these could be the very people who had abused the person financially, which had led to the original Appointeeship.

The Head of Community Financial Support stated that the proposal was to introduce an Appointeeship charge for individuals who had a balance of more than £1,000 in their account following the deduction of their usual monthly expenditure. The charge would be £5.00 per week for a person living in the community and £3.00 per week for a person living in a care home. The rate was less for a person living in a care home because the administrative processes were simpler. There were currently approximately 200 people in the community who had an Appointeeship with the Council and approximately 300 people in care homes. Out of the 500 people there were currently 27 people who had savings of less than £1,000 and therefore wouldn't be impacted by the proposals. She felt it was an important service to maintain inhouse. Some Councils did contract out the service, which ultimately could cost individuals considerably more than the proposed levels within the report. Some Councils had contracted out the service and had then decided to bring it back inhouse. It was also true that some Councils did not charge for the service currently, but many others did, some of which were at higher rates than those contained in the proposals. She felt the charges proposed were fair and reasonable and would help the Appointeeship service to become financially self-sustaining in the future.

A Member of the Panel asked about the arrangements for neighbouring Local Authorities, Dudley and Sandwell. The Head of Community Financial Support responded that she believed one authority offered the service free of charge currently and the other contracted out the service. She endeavoured to clarify the exact arrangements for each authority for him.

A Member of the Panel asked for more details about how the Appointeeship service managed people's money in practice. The Head of Community Financial Support responded that an income and expenditure statement was undertaken. A pre-paid card was then issued to them, with an appropriate amount of benefit money available to spend on the card for a given length of time. Not all of the benefit money would be on the card as some was used to pay bills such as utility bills. The card acted like a bank card meaning that the individual could use the card to purchase items at shops and to draw out money from cash machines. All individuals in the Appointeeship had the support of a key worker or a social worker. If there was unforeseen additional expenditure, such as a special birthday, the social worker could contact the Appointeeship service and ask for extra money to be placed on the card.

A Member of the Panel asked how the proposed Appointeeship charge would be reviewed in the future. The Head of Community Financial Support responded that there would be a review in twelve months' time if the proposals were supported by Cabinet. There was a yearly review of all fees and charges and so it would fall within the remit for that review in the future. The Council were not able to profit from delivering the Appointeeship service.

A Member of the Panel expressed support for delivering the Appointeeship service inhouse and believed introducing a charge for the service was the correct approach in order for the service to continue. She believed there were benefits from delivering the service inhouse because the people would already be known by the Council's Social Services department.

A Member of the Panel commented that whilst the proposed charges would make many people feel uncomfortable, she believed it was the correct approach. She believed the Appointeeship service could be a great relief to the relatives of vulnerable people who were no longer able to effectively manage their finances. An Appointeeship could lift a heavy burden from relatives having to spend considerable time trying to manage a vulnerable person's finances and would reduce the risk of their money being abused. She believed the service was a good news story and that the Council should consider promoting and brokering the Service. Another Member of the Panel expressed support for this idea. The Head of Community Financial Support responded that it was worth considering and would form part of the Impact review after twelve months, it was however important to remember that the Council could not make an overall profit from the Appointeeship Service.

The meeting closed at 7:40pm.



Adult and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

17 September 2019

Report title	Adults Social Work Health Check 2019	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Linda Leach Cabinet Member for Adults	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	David Watts, Director of Adult Services	
Originating service	Adult Social Care	
Accountable employees	Louise Haughton	Principal Social Worker
	Tel	01902 555345
	Email	louise.haughton@wolverhampton.gov.uk
	Jennifer Rogers	Advanced Practitioner for Quality and Improvement
	Tel	01902 555704
	Email	jennifer.rogers@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Adult Services Management Team	9 July 2019
	Social Work Development Board	12 July 2019
	SEB	13 August 2019

Recommendation for action:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the findings of the Adults Social Work Health Check for 2019
2. Provide comment and challenge on proposed actions to improve the health of the social work workforce

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) undertakes a full Social Work Health Check every year to assess the “health” of its social workers and forms part of adult services’ ongoing self-assessment. This report presents an overview of the findings of this year’s survey and concludes with actions to address areas for improvement.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Good practice carried out by a “healthy” and motivated workforce can lead to improved outcomes for people and families as well as reduced demand and costs. This year a range of work has been undertaken to ensure that social work practice for adults is delivered in a timely way to promote resilience and increase independence. This includes the work currently being undertaken with 3 Conversations which has evidenced that less new people needed formal support because of the more relational and strengths-based approaches being used as people are better connected to their communities and other informal resources.
- 2.2 The Health Check survey has been particularly important this year because of the introduction of this new approach from May 2018. This new way of working replaces the default ‘contact, divert, triage, reablement, assessment for services’ process with a dynamic asset-based approach to listening to people, aimed at supporting independent lives, and reducing the need for dependence on formal services. It supports frontline employees to have three distinct and specific conversations which focus on people’s resources as well as that of their local community. Not only has this resulted in improved outcomes for people and families, but it has also had a positive impact on employee’s job satisfaction, whilst also increasing their productiveness. However, studies of organisational change indicate that change in the workplace can be difficult. Effective change management is essential in reducing the negative impact on employees. For this reason, all teams that have been testing out the new approach have received support and coaching. However, the findings of this year’s Health Check may reflect the uncertainty that can emerge as part of any organisational change.
- 2.3 The national Social Work Task Force final report, published in November 2009, recommended a framework to assist employers and practitioners to assess the “health” of their organisation on a range of issues affecting the workload of social workers and to support the implementation of a set of national Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework.
- 2.4 The framework identifies five key topics to support organisations to undertake a self-assessment to identify current strengths and areas that require improvement. The five key topics are:
- Effective workload management
 - Pro-active workflow management
 - Having the right tools for the job
 - A healthy workplace

- Effective service delivery

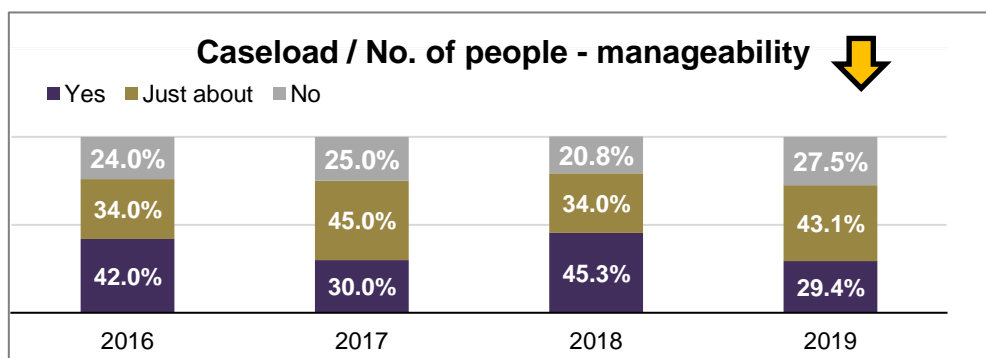
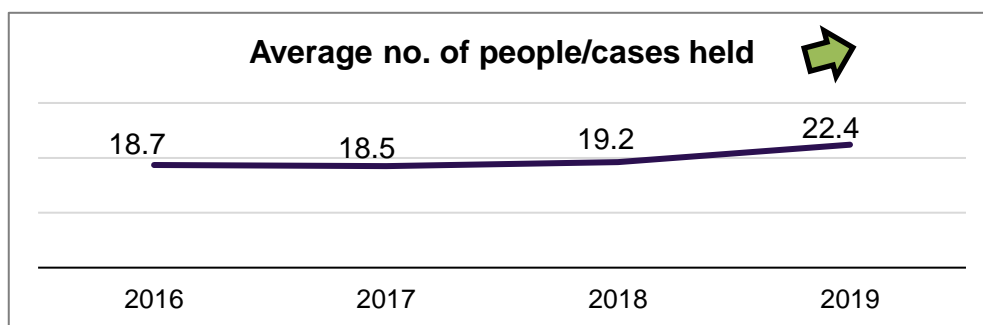
2.5 The Health Check was circulated via an online survey between 1 April and 15 May 2019. All registered social workers were invited to complete the online survey.

2.6 The survey was distributed to 118 registered adult social work staff. There were 77 respondents to the survey (65%). This is about the same as last year's response rate of 67%.

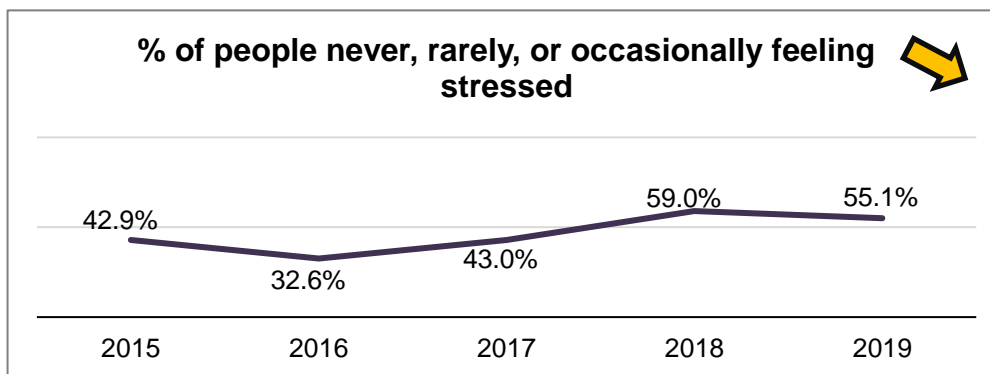
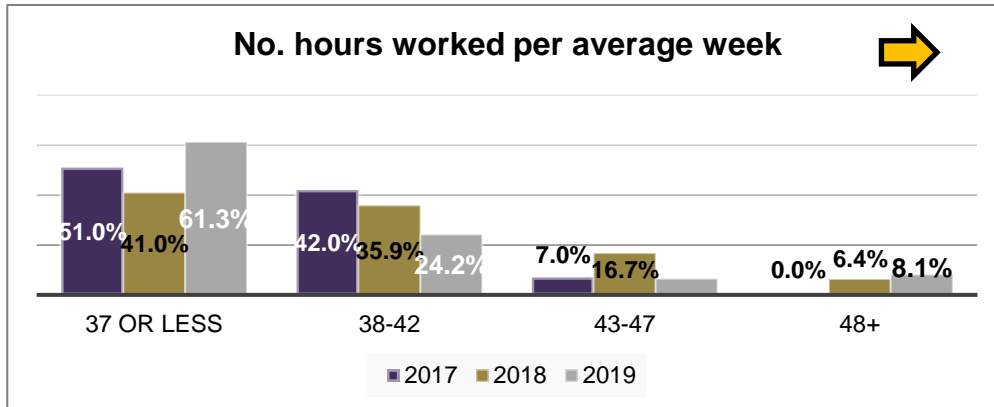
3.0 Overview and key findings

3.1 The findings indicate that while caseloads for full time social workers have increased slightly, it continues to be a reasonable average. It is important to acknowledge however that it is not just the number of cases that are important when considering caseloads, but also the complexity of each situation. This is always monitored during supervision and the skills / experience of workers taken into account.

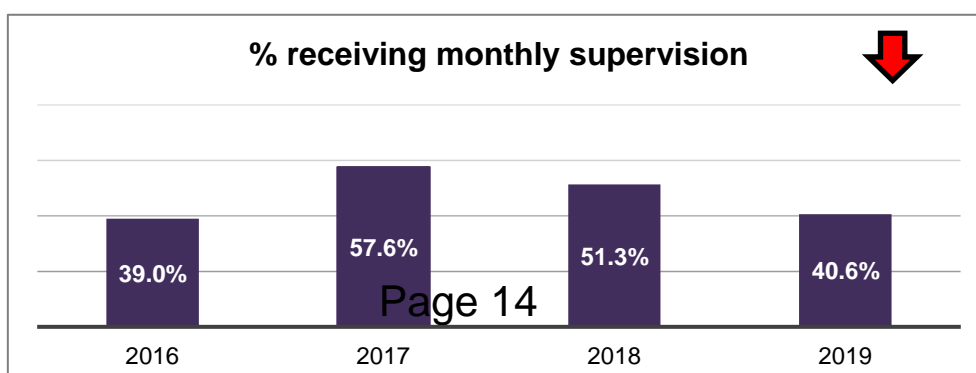
3.2 However there has been an increase this year in the number of social workers who said that their caseloads are not manageable and there has also been a rise in the number saying they are "just about" managing. In contrast no part time social workers said that their caseloads were not manageable, which is a positive change compared to last year when 20% said this was the case. The new way of working under 3 Conversations is faster paced due to the removal of waiting lists and allocation systems. This may have resulted in a perception that workloads are less manageable and could be part of the reason for this increase. More people with care and support needs have been seen in the new way of working compared to last year. Managers have reported that some employees have needed support to help them adapt to the change in pace and to refine skills such as time management.



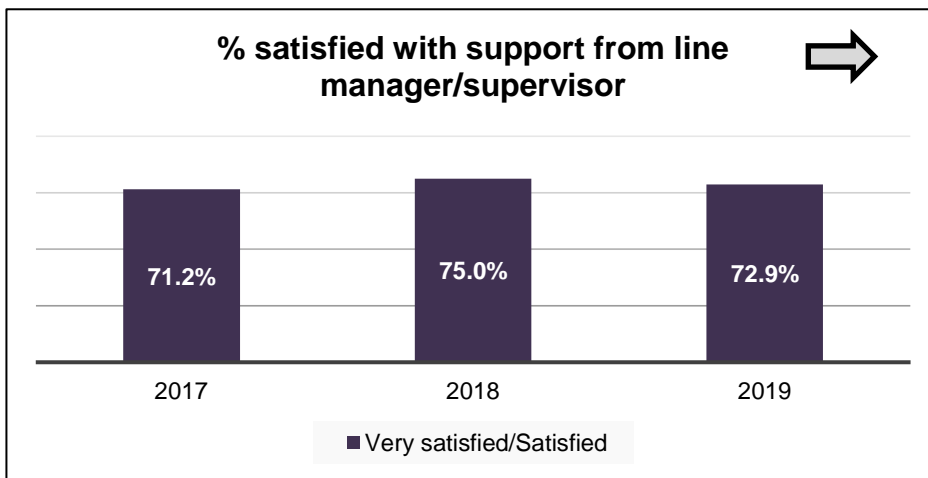
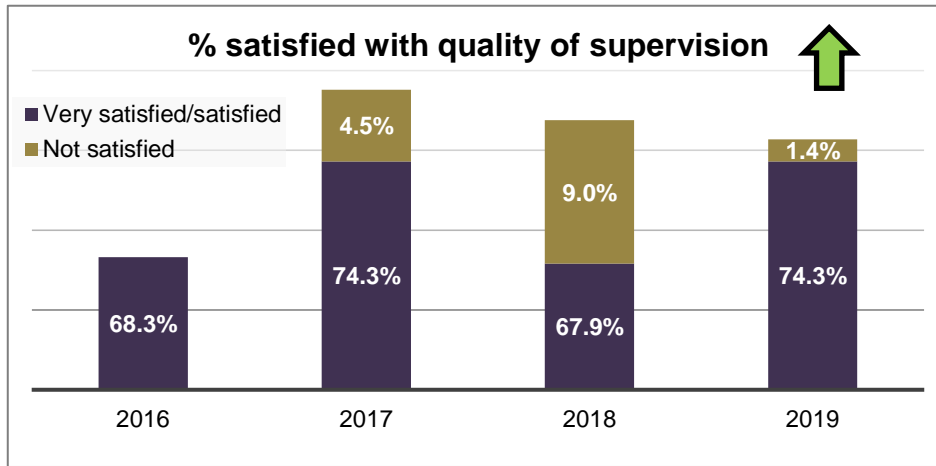
3.3 The survey reveals that there are less full-time social workers working between 38-47 hours compared to last year and more working 37 hours. Around 8% of social workers say they work 48 hours or more, but the general trend suggests that employees are working fewer hours over their contracted hours on average than last year. The number of respondents who never, rarely or occasionally feel stressed was 55% which is slightly less than last year, but still an improvement on previous years.



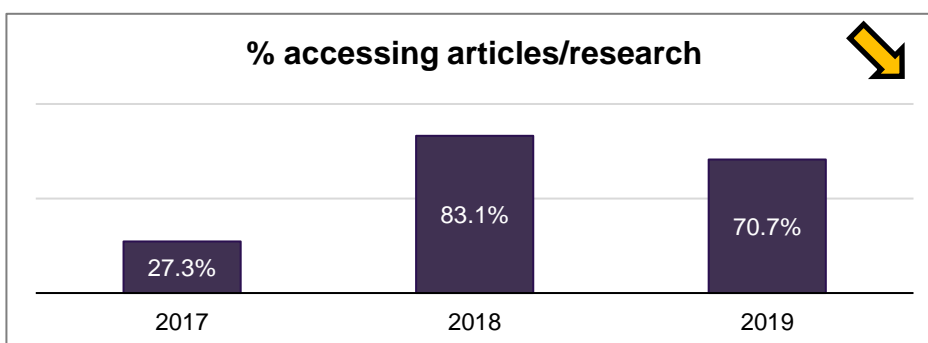
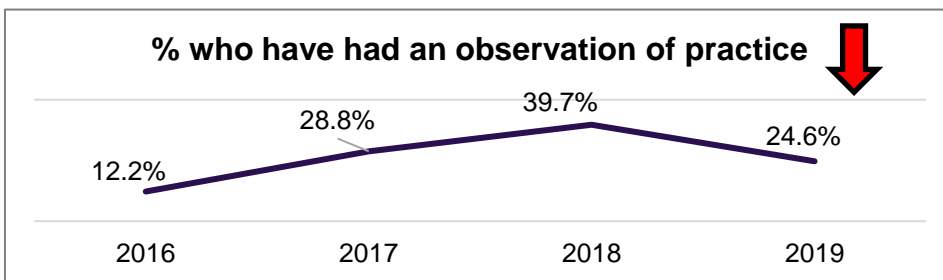
3.4 The number of respondents who receive monthly supervision has decreased in the last two years. However, the quality of supervision has improved and is high, with less than 2% stating they were very dissatisfied with supervision discussions. 73% were happy with the support they receive from their manager with complex pieces of work including risk and / or safeguarding. There has been an increase in the number of social workers this year saying they were able to access support to make an important decision when they needed to with 76% agreeing with this compared to 67% last year. This may suggest that while formal supervision may not be as regular as expected, there is still good access to management support and informal supervision when required. Consultation will take place with social workers at the next adult social work briefing to discuss these findings, particularly in regard to the frequency of supervision.



This report is PUBLIC
[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

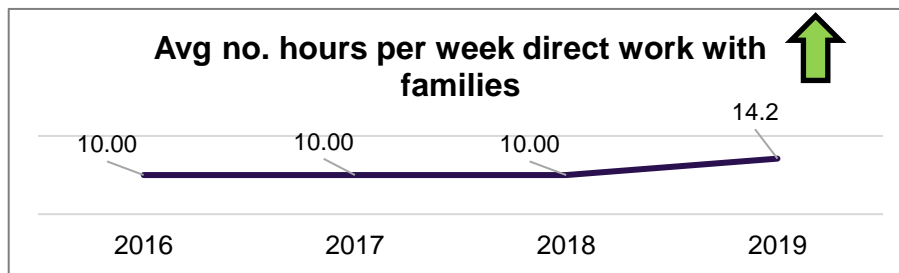


3.5 The number of respondents who have received an observation of practice this year has decreased, but senior managers have all spent time in 3 Conversations teams observing reflective discussions (huddles). Slightly fewer social workers have accessed articles and research this year, but the number is still high when compared with 2017 figures.

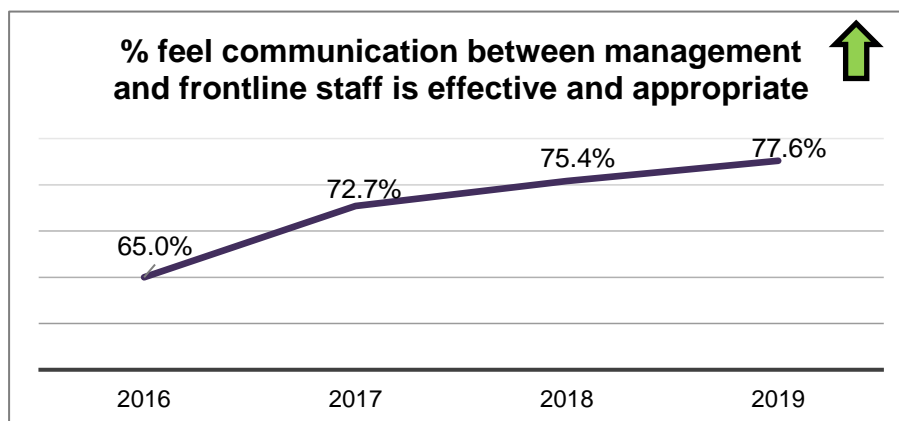


3.6 There has been an increase in the average number of hours social workers are spending working directly with people and families. They are now spending just over 14 hours a week compared to 10 hours. The findings also indicate that social workers are starting to spend less time inputting data onto systems, for instance 41% spent between 50-75% of their time on this task compared to just over half of respondents last year. These positive changes are likely to be attributed to the new way of working under 3 Conversations. When asked what they would change about their job if they could some common themes included:

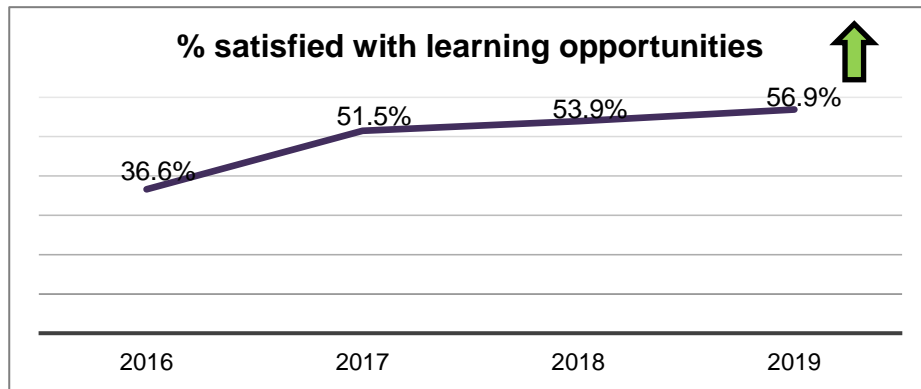
- Smaller workloads
- Less admin / paperwork
- Spending more time with people



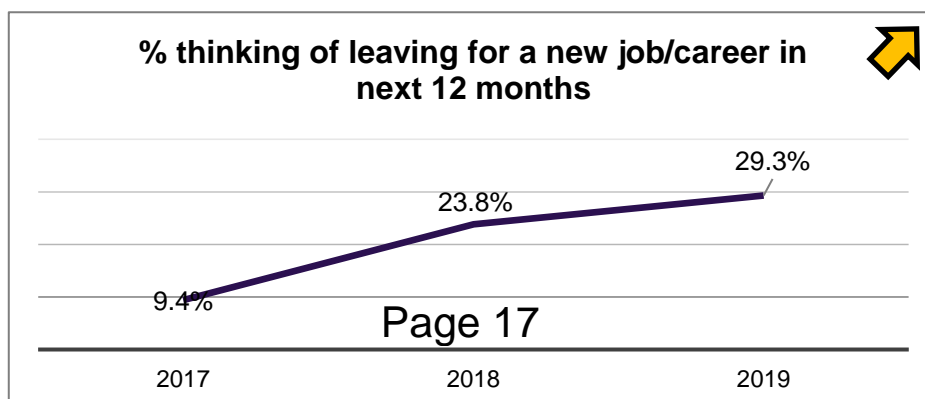
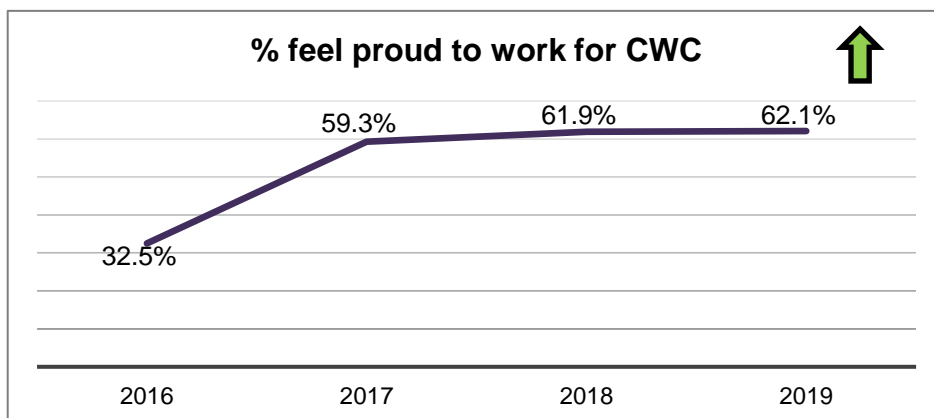
3.7 Communication in the organisation continues to be a key strength. The number who feel that communication between frontline staff and management is effective and appropriate has increased again this year. More people also knew who the senior managers were and could recognise them. 93% of respondents said that team meetings take place monthly, which is a significant improvement since last year when this figure was 75%. Almost all said they feel able to contribute to the agenda.



3.8 Most respondents felt that council is a learning organisation which has a positive learning culture and the majority were satisfied with the learning opportunities available. There were several comments about preferring face to face training rather than e-learning, which was also the case last year. The majority of social workers reported that their skills are being used effectively in their current role. However, team champions have only been accessed by a small number (17%) although the quality of advice / information from champions was high when they were used.



- 3.9 There continues to be a strong sense of pride about working for CWC. 66% feel enthusiastic about their job, which is similar to last year, with only 9% disagreeing with this statement. There are slightly more employees considering leaving CWC for a new job / career this year (29% compared to 23%), which is to be expected considering the major change programme that has been implemented in adult services this year, but the majority of people still plan to remain with the council for the next 12 months. Turnover of frontline adult social workers in Wolverhampton is 8%, which is lower than the national average (14%). The things that made respondents feel positive included:
- The introduction of 3 Conversations and being part of an innovation site
 - Learning and development opportunities
 - Supportive teams and managers
 - “The last joint social work conference made me feel proud to be working as a Wolverhampton employee”
 - “Communication, openness and inclusion between senior managers and the wider workforce has improved and approachability has positively changed”.



4.0 Recommendations and actions

4.1 An action plan has been completed as a result of this survey to address the key areas of improvement. The findings will also inform the workforce development plans for the coming year. The plan incorporates improvement actions including:

- Managers will offer stress risk assessments where appropriate to support social workers' wellbeing
- A discussion will take place with social workers at the next social work briefing in December 2019 to ascertain their views about the frequency of supervision and discuss how often they feel supervision should be taking place (four / six weekly). The supervision policy will be revised following this to provide consistency about the frequency of supervision as well as expectations about observations of practice and will support robust workload discussions to support employees who feel that their caseloads are not manageable
- The Workforce Development plan includes more face to face opportunities on specific areas of practice this year and covers the main areas social workers have identified (Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards etc)
- The Workforce Development team will develop a plan on a page of learning and development opportunities to better communicate what training is available
- The role of team champions will be revisited as part of a task and finish group by October 2019. The role has already been revised and relaunched for Mental Capacity Act champions following a thematic audit
- Support is being provided to managers and teams with culture change including three sessions on "coaching conversations" for managers that will take place by July 2019
- The roll out of a new way of working called 3 Conversations across all social work teams by the end of the year is expected to further reduce the amount of time social workers spend inputting onto forms and doing administrative tasks.

4.2 The findings and actions will be shared with teams as well as being discussed at the next social work briefing in December 2019.

4.3 The Health Check action plan will be reviewed quarterly at the Social Work Development Board.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 Good social work reduces demand and costs. The work currently being undertaken in implementing the Three Conversations© approach provides some evidence of financial efficiencies if this way of working was rolled out across the whole service. The evaluation of phase one and two in the main shows that although demand is increasing the number of new people going on to receive formal support has reduced and when support is put in place it is at a lower weekly cost to the council. This is likely due to the more relational and strengths-based approach being taken and people being better connected to their communities and preventative support.

5.2 Any costs involved with any actions directly resulting from this Health Check will be contained within the £61.8 million Adult Services Budget. [MI/13082019/F]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report. [TC/05072019/Y]

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 The adult social work workforce in Wolverhampton is largely representative of the diversity of the local community and the people currently being supported by adult social care.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no Human Resource implications arising out of this report.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 There are no specific Corporate landlord implications arising out of this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 Appendix A: Adult Social Work Health Check 2019 Dashboard

11.2 Link to Adult Social Work Health Check Survey full report 2019:

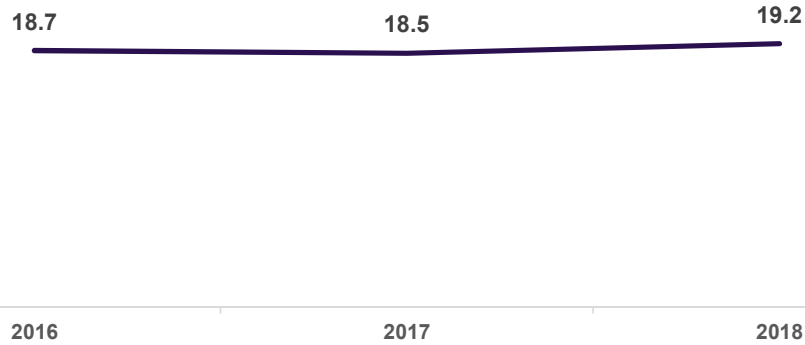


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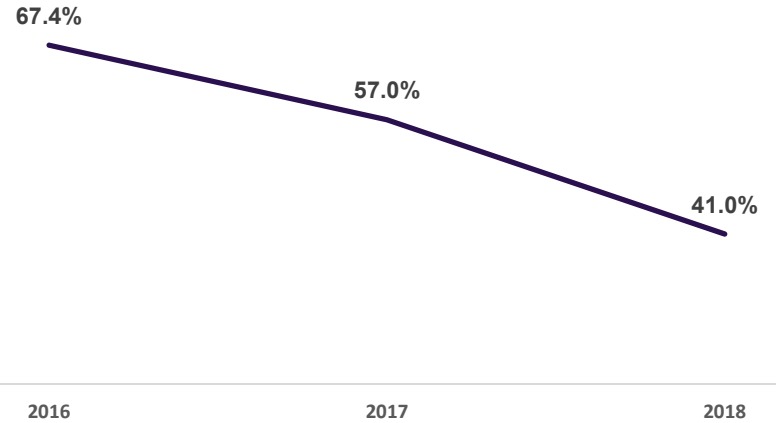
Adult Social Work Health Check 2018

Effective Workload Management

Average number of cases held 

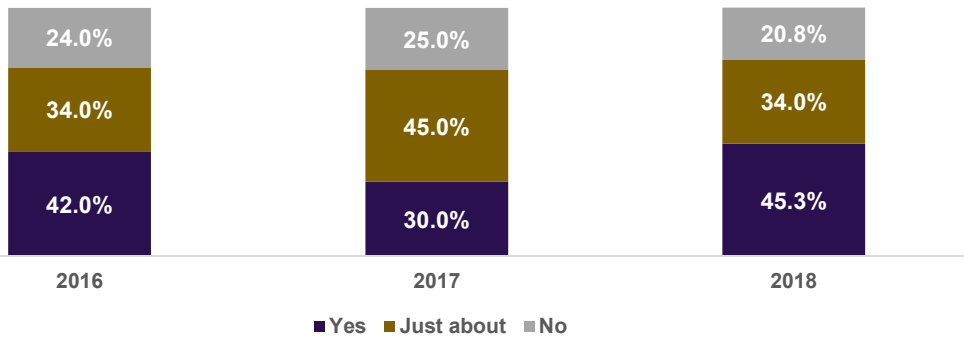


% of people always or often feeling stressed 

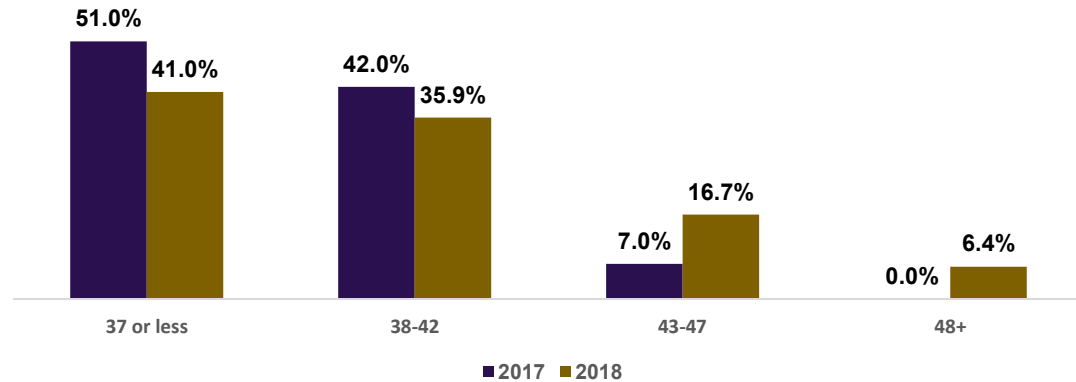


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Caseload Manageability 



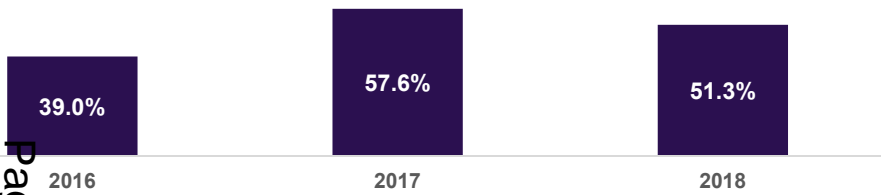
Number of hours worked per average week 



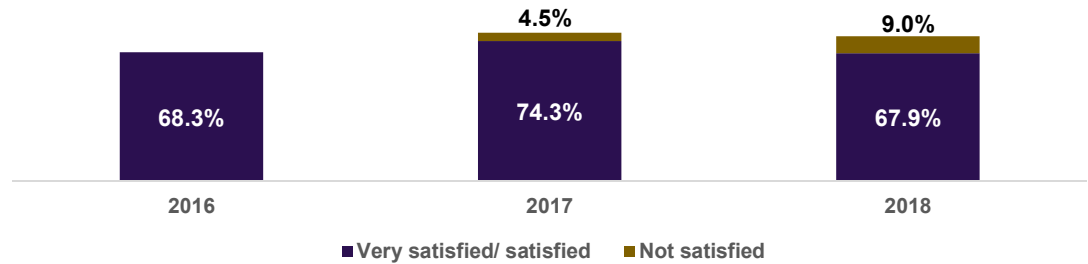
Adult Social Work Health Check 2018

Effective Workload Management / Having the Right Tools for the Job / Healthy Workplace

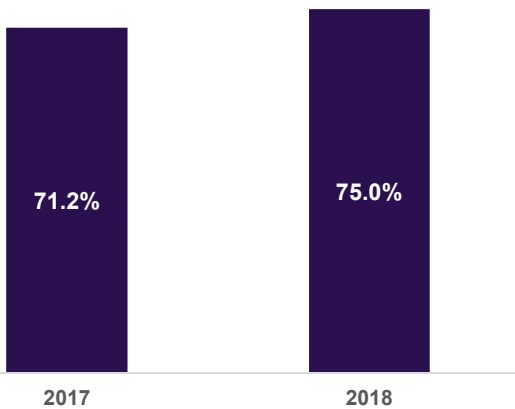
% Receiving monthly supervision



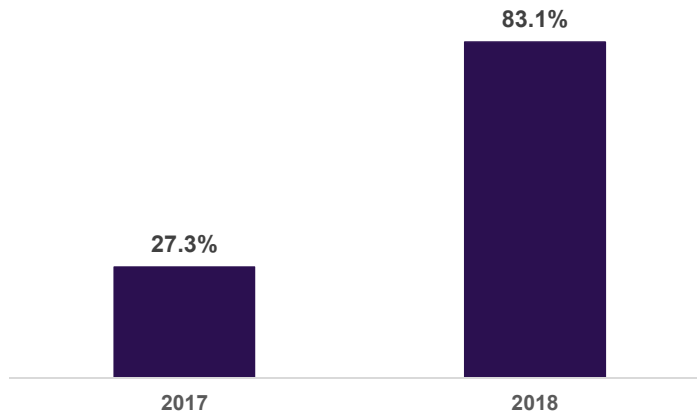
% satisfied with quality of supervision



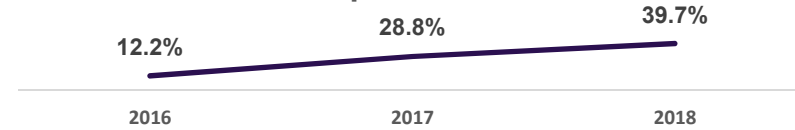
% satisfied with support from line manager/supervisor



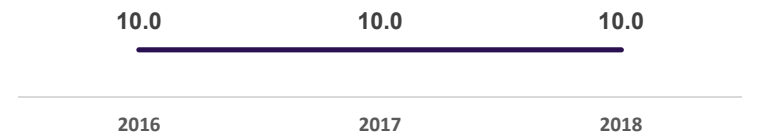
% accessing articles/research



% who have had an observation of practice



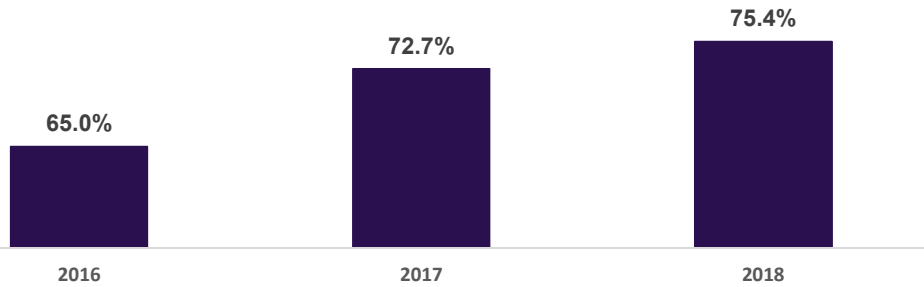
Avg. no. hours per week direct work with families



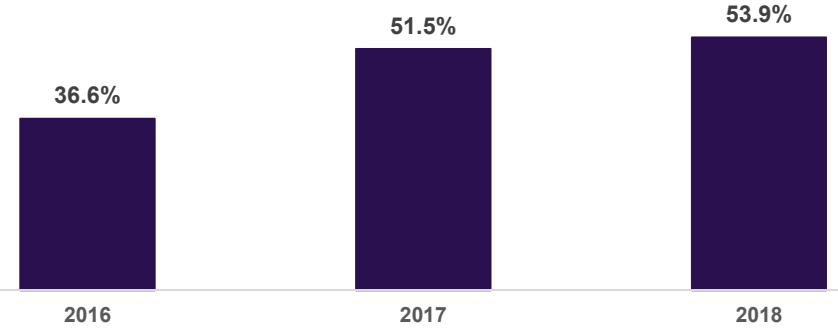
Adult Social Work Health Check 2018

Having the Right Tools for the Job / Effective Service Delivery

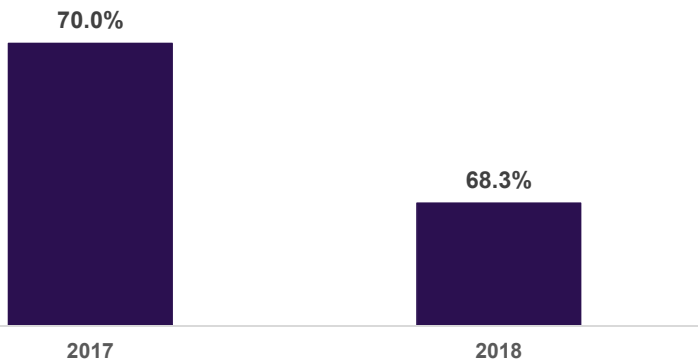
% feel communication between management and frontline staff effective and appropriate



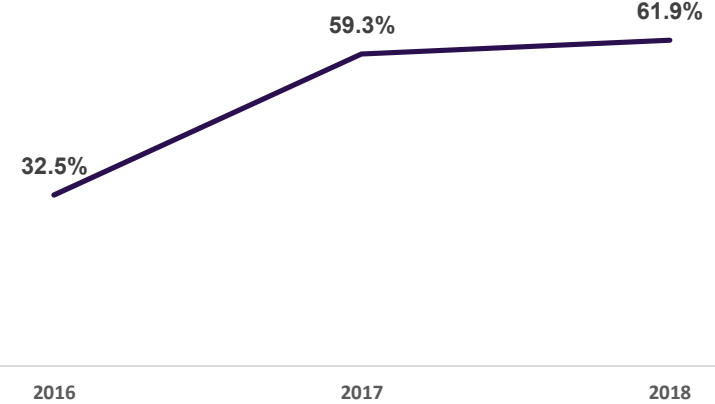
% satisfied with learning opportunities



% not thinking of leaving the council in next 12 months



% feel proud to work for CWC



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Adult and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

17 September 2019

Report title	Adults Workforce Health Check 2019	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Linda Leach, Cabinet Member for Adults	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	David Watts, Director of Adult Services	
Originating service	Adult Social Care	
Accountable employees	Louise Haughton Tel Email	Principal Social Worker 01902 555345 louise.haughton@wolverhampton.gov.uk
	Jennifer Rogers Tel Email	Advanced Practitioner for Quality and Improvement 01902 555704 Jennifer.rogers@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Adult Services Management Team Social Work Development Board SEB	9 July 2019 12 July 2019 13 August 2019

Recommendations for action:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the findings of the Adults Social Work Health Check for 2019
2. Provide comment and challenge on proposed actions to improve the health of the social work workforce

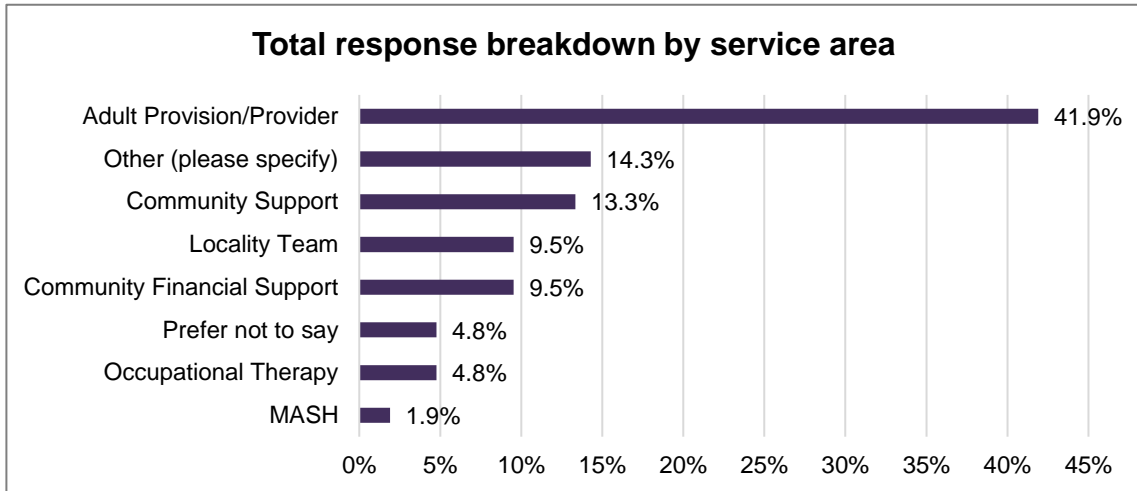
1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) carries out a survey each year to check the “health” of its social workers. This year the Health Check was extended to include the wider adult social care workforce. This report presents an overview of the findings of the wider workforce survey and concludes with actions to address areas for improvement.

2.0 Background

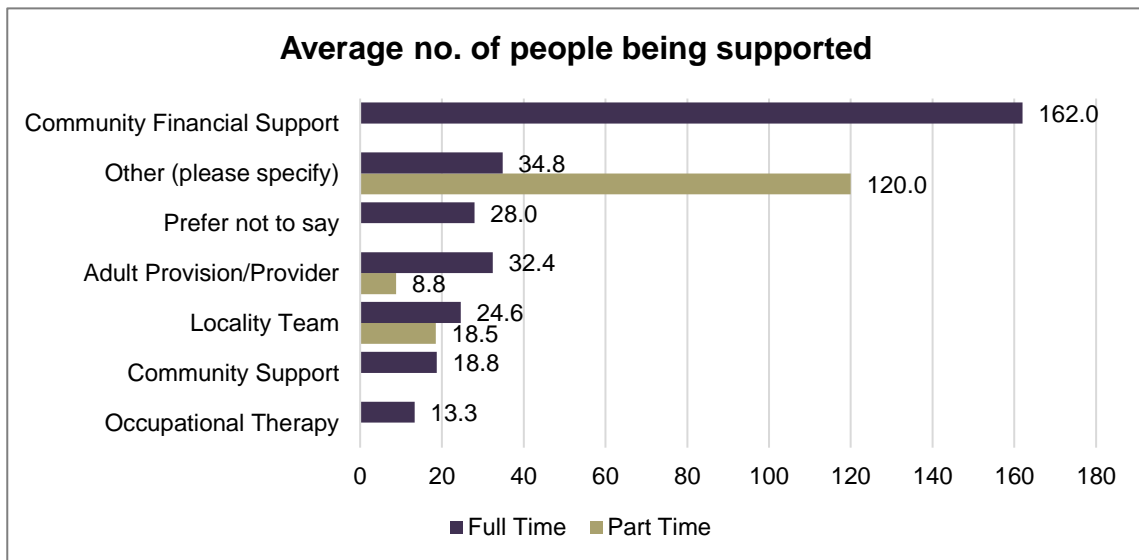
- 2.1 Good practice carried out by a “healthy” and motivated workforce can lead to improved outcomes for people and families as well as reduced demand and costs. This year a range of work has been undertaken to ensure that social care services for adults is delivered in a timely way to promote resilience and increase independence. The success of this work is evidenced by the increased number of people who have received reablement support this year (1057 by end of March 2019 compared to 965 by end of March 2018) and the strong performing Welfare Rights Service which has supported people to claim over £12.7 million in annualised benefits in 2018-2019 (actual gains).
- 2.2 The national Social Work Task Force final report, published in November 2009, recommended a framework to assist employers and practitioners to assess the “health” of their organisation on a range of issues and to support the implementation of a set of national Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework.
- 2.3 The framework identifies five key topics to support organisations to undertake a self-assessment to identify current strengths and areas that require improvement. The five key topics are:
- Effective workload management
 - Pro-active workflow management
 - Having the right tools for the job
 - A healthy workplace
 - Effective service delivery
- 2.4 The wider adult workforce health check was circulated to 279 employees via an online survey between 1 April 2019 and 15 May 2019. All grade five and six non-social work qualified staff were invited to complete the online survey. It was also sent out to three senior occupational therapists (grade seven). This is a very diverse workforce and is made up a variety of roles such as social care workers, day opportunities team leaders, re-ablement assistants, welfare rights officers, direct payments reviewing officers and occupational therapists.
- 2.5 A total of 105 responses were received (38%), although not every respondent answered every survey question.

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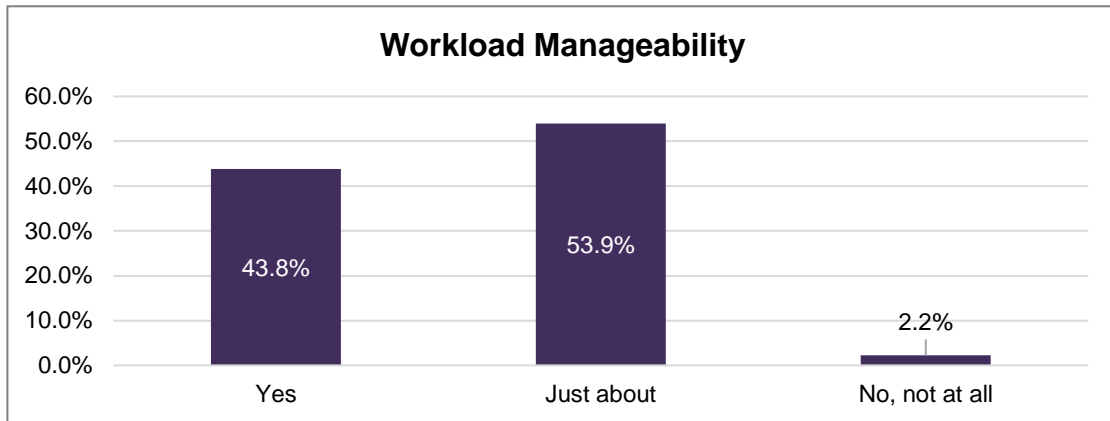
3.0 Overview and key findings

3.1 The average number of people being supported (caseload) varies because of the diversity of job roles. As this is the first survey of the non-social work qualified workforce this will provide a benchmark for monitoring future trends as it is not possible to draw comparisons between the different service areas. Those who said their service area was Community Financial Support work with the greatest average number of people with care and support needs. Although this average appears high over half of these people would not require active involvement and is reasonable for this team.

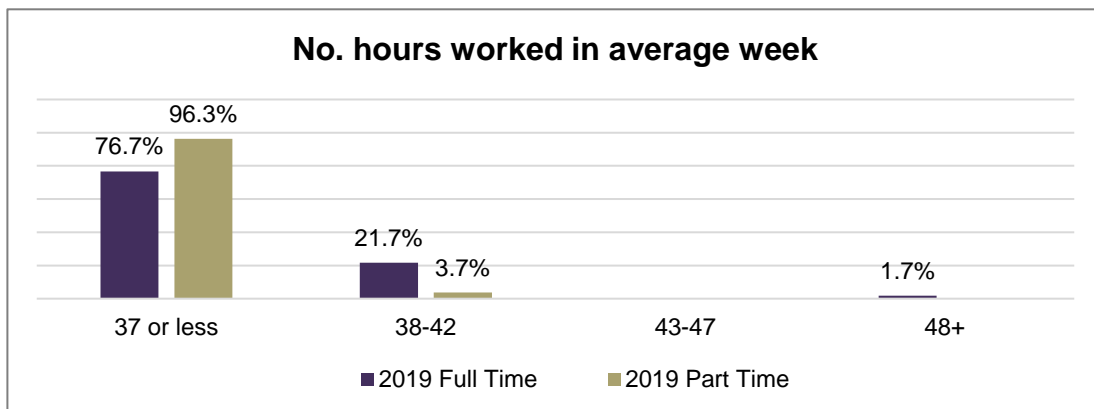


3.2 All respondents that work directly with people felt that their workload was manageable. The majority are not having to work in their own time or significantly more than their contracted hours. Of those respondents who said that they didn't support people directly (e.g. team leaders) only 2% said their workload was not manageable.

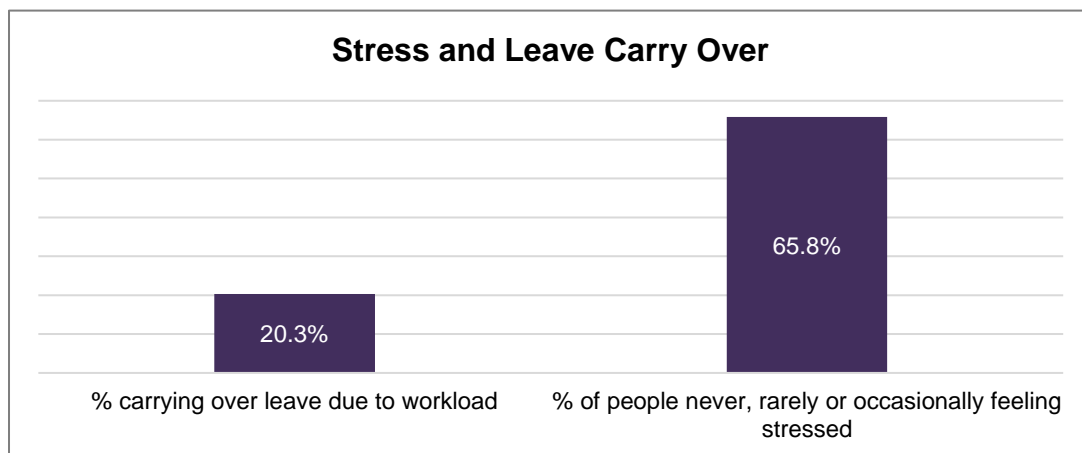
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[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]



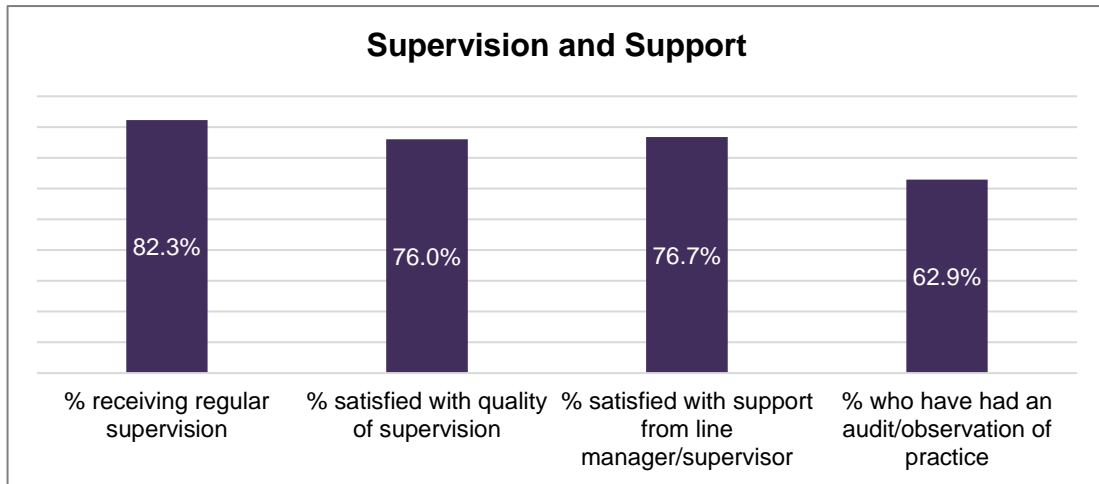
3.3 Most full-time employees work their contracted 37 hours, with 22% working between 38-42 hours and only 2% working more than 48 hours. 40% of part time employees said that they work 10 hours or more over contracted hours per week. However, there is some variety in answers from part time employees and it is possible that some misunderstood the question and responded with the total number of hours worked in a typical work, as opposed to the number over and above their contracted hours.



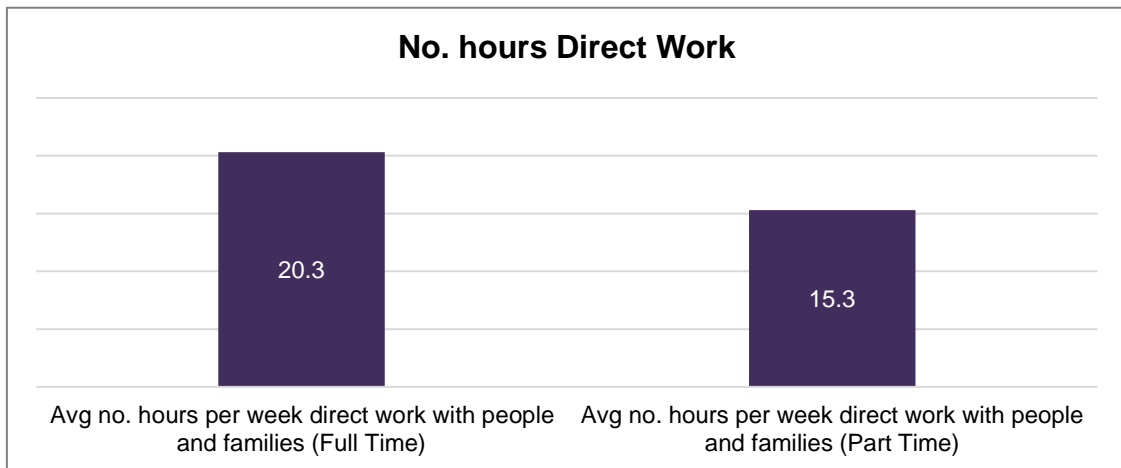
3.4 Most employees never, rarely or occasionally feel stressed and only 20% said they carried over annual leave because of workload this year.



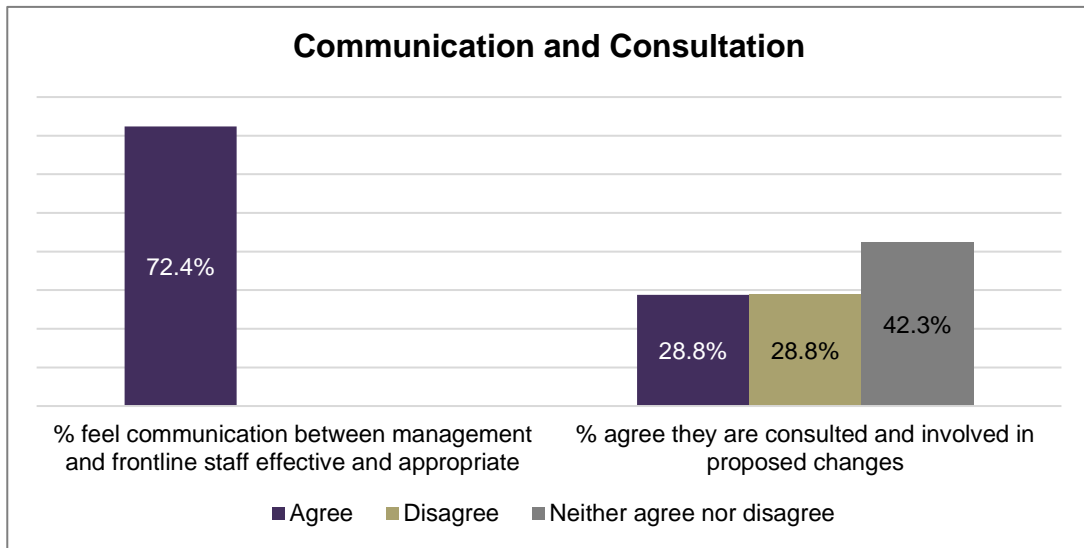
3.5 Over 80% of respondents said they receive regular formal supervision and a high number are satisfied with the quality of these discussions. Almost 90% have had an appraisal this year and over 60% have had an observation of their practice in the last six months. Most are satisfied with the support they receive from their manager / supervisor with only 7% stating they were dissatisfied.



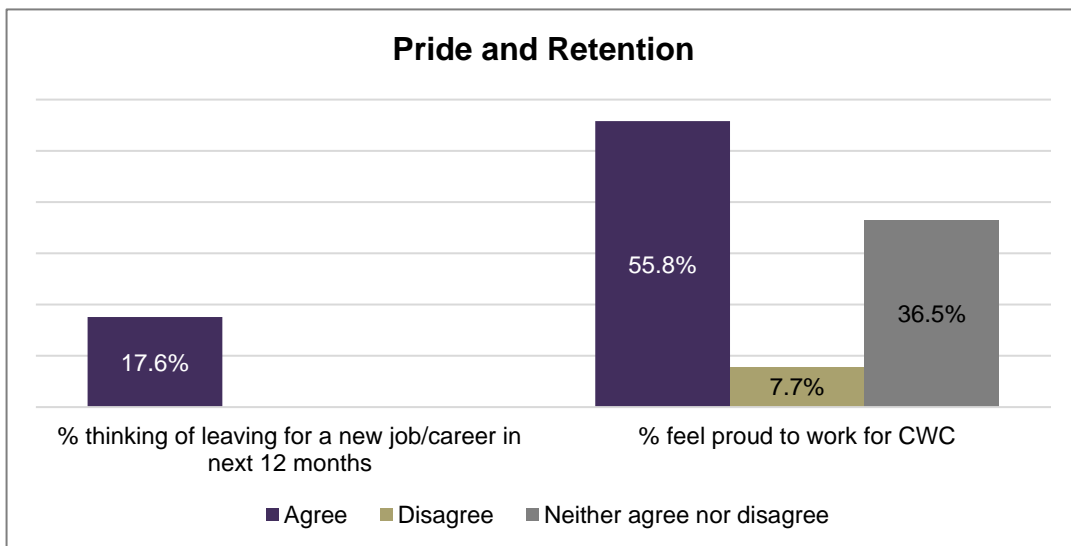
3.6 The average hours respondents said they spent carrying out direct work with people and families was 20 hours a week for full time employees and 15 hours for those who worked part time. Due to the variety of roles it is difficult to draw conclusions about these results but will provide a benchmark for future surveys.



3.7 The majority said that team meetings take place monthly and they feel able to contribute to the agenda. Communication in the organisation appears to be a key strength, particularly between management and frontline staff. However around 30% feel they are not involved in or consulted about proposed changes, although it is important to note that a significant number (42%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Two workforce briefings take place every year and these will continue but with more focus on learning and development / practice and communicating key changes to the workforce.

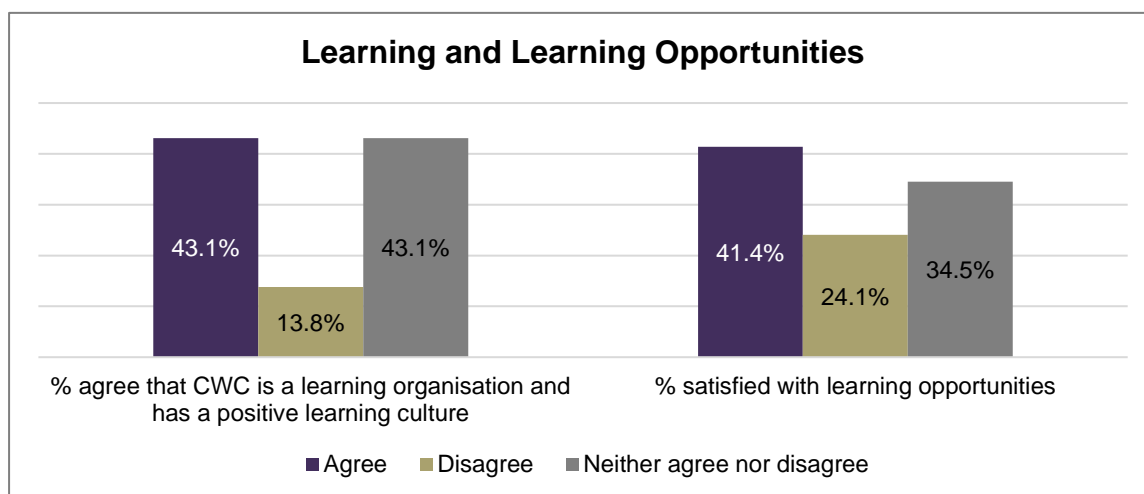


- 3.8 The majority of respondents plan to remain with CWC at least for the next 12 months, with only 17% thinking of leaving for a new job / career. Almost 56% feel proud to work for CWC, with only 8% disagreeing with this. When asked what they would change about their job, common themes were a better work life balance and less admin / paperwork. When asked what made them feel positive about their job responses included flexibility, supportive colleagues / managers and learning and development opportunities. Some notable comments were:
- “New leadership appears transparent and I feel involved through the regular briefings”
 - “Recognition of staff achievements in the regular newsletters”
 - “There is vision and forward planning”



- 3.9 Many respondents appear completely satisfied with the training and development opportunities on offer to them. However, a number would like greater opportunities and more time to undertake training and develop themselves. There are a number of face to face training opportunities available for the adult social care workforce this year, including recording and reporting, manual handling, positive behaviour support and management

leadership training. The social work apprenticeship programme was introduced this year and will offer an opportunity for non-social work qualified employees for progression and to gain a recognised qualification.



4.0 Recommendations and actions

4.1 An action plan has been completed as a result of this survey to address the key areas of improvement and incorporates the actions mentioned. The findings will also inform the workforce development plans for the coming year. The plan incorporates improvement actions including:

- Managers will offer stress risk assessments where appropriate to support employee wellbeing.
- The supervision policy will be updated by December 2019 to clarify expectations about the frequency and quality of supervision as well as observations of practice and will support robust workload discussions to support employees who feel that their caseloads are not manageable or just about manageable.
- The roll out of a new way of working called Three Conversations across adult social care by the end of the year is expected to reduce the amount of time spent inputting onto forms/systems and doing administrative tasks, which may also reduce stress amongst some of the workforce.
- Further work will take place between workforce development and Heads of Service to identify any other learning and development opportunities for the next year. The Workforce Development team will develop a plan on a page of learning and development opportunities to better communicate what training is available.
- The social work apprenticeship programme will continue to offer an opportunity for non-social work qualified employees to progress and gain a recognised qualification.
- There will be more focus on learning and development / practice and communicating key changes to the workforce as part of the six-monthly workforce briefings.
- Further work is needed to promote the Health Check before next year's survey to improve response rates.

4.2 The findings and actions will be shared with teams and also discussed at the next workforce briefing in October 2019.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 Good practice reduces demand and costs. The work currently being undertaken in implementing the Three Conversations© approach provides some evidence of financial efficiencies. The evaluation of phase one and two in the main shows that although demand is increasing the number of new people going on to receive formal support has reduced and when support is put in place it is at a lower weekly cost to the council. This is likely due to the more relational and strengths-based approach being taken and people being better connected to their communities and to preventative support such as that of the inhouse teams (Community Support team, reablement etc).
- 5.2 Any costs involved with any actions directly resulting from this Health Check will be contained within the £61.8 million Adult Services Budget. [MI/13082019/B]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report.
[TC/13082019/H]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 The Adult Social Care workforce in Wolverhampton is largely representative of the community and the people currently being supported by adult social care, with a slight over representation in regard to Black and Asian communities.

8.0 Environmental implications

- 8.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

- 9.1 There are no Human Resource implications arising out of this report.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 10.1 There are no specific Corporate landlord implications arising out of this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

- 11.1 Appendix A: Adult Workforce Health Check 2019 Dashboard
- 11.2 Link to Adult Workforce Health Check Survey full report 2019:



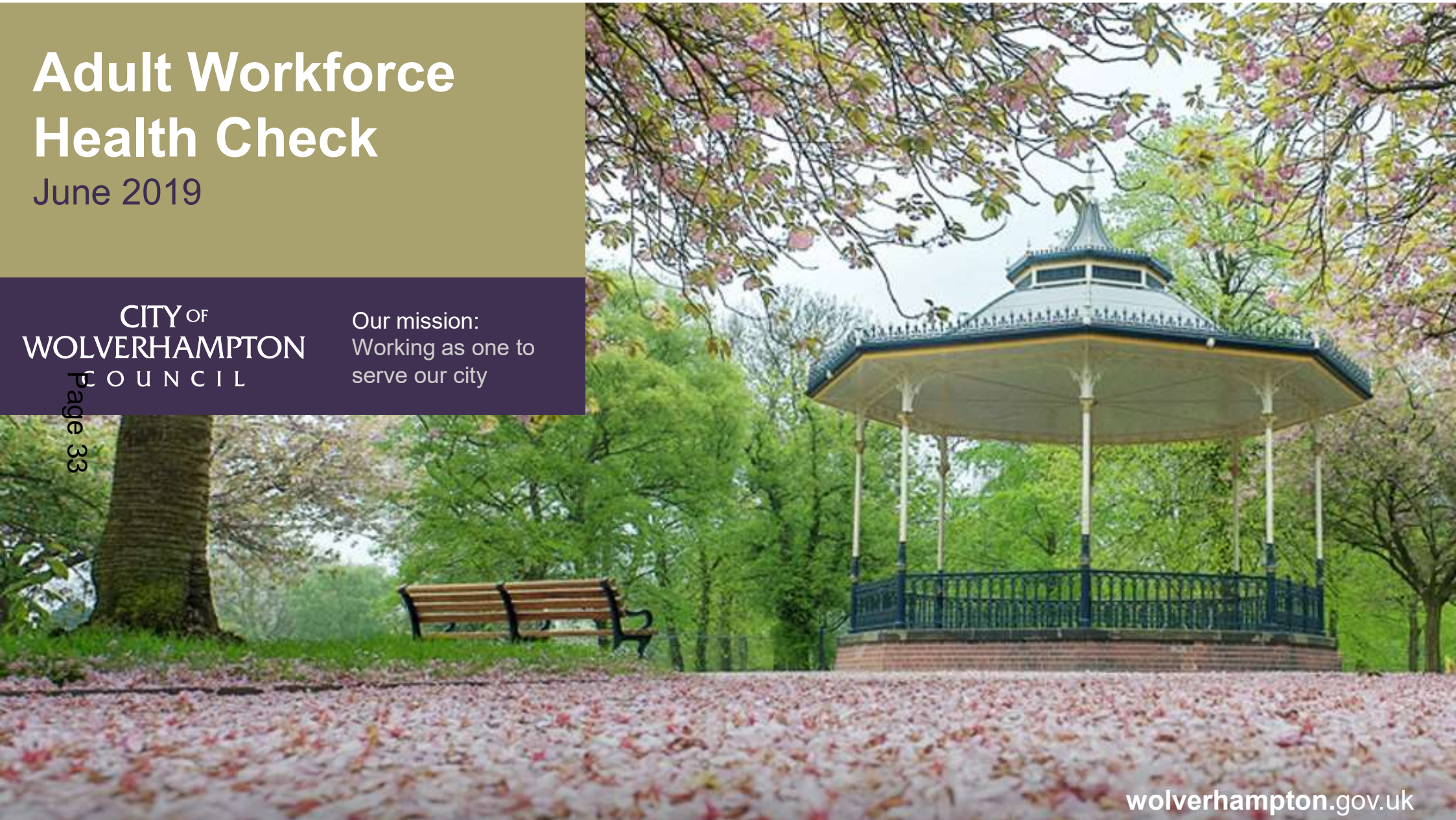
Adult Workforce Health Check

June 2019

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Our mission:
Working as one to
serve our city

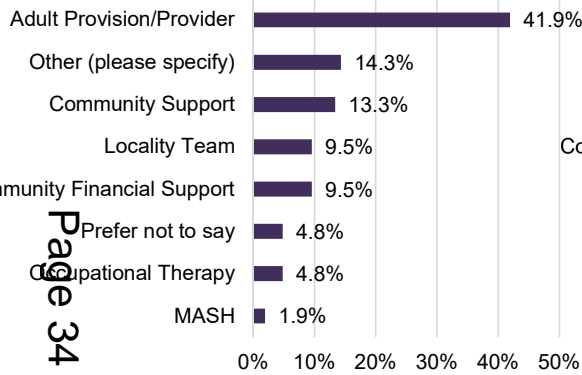
Page 33



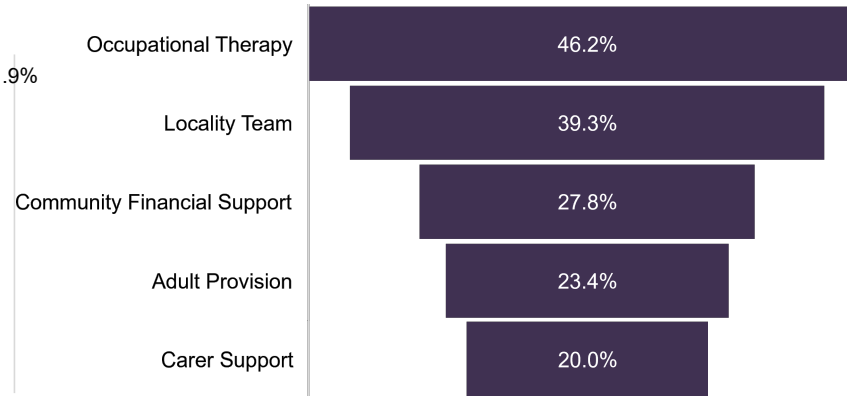
Adult Workforce Health Check 2019

Effective Workload Management

Total response breakdown by service area

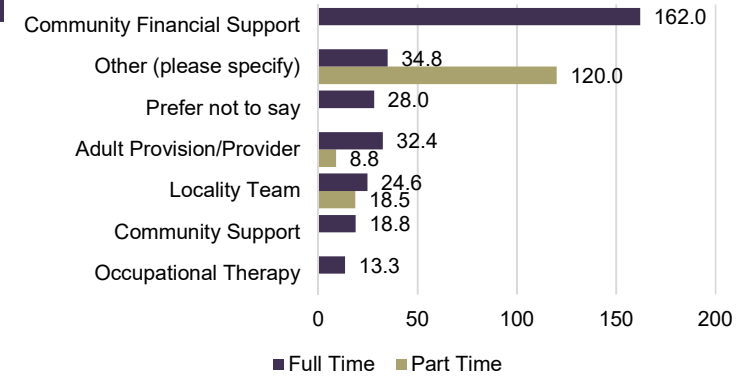


Response rate per service area*



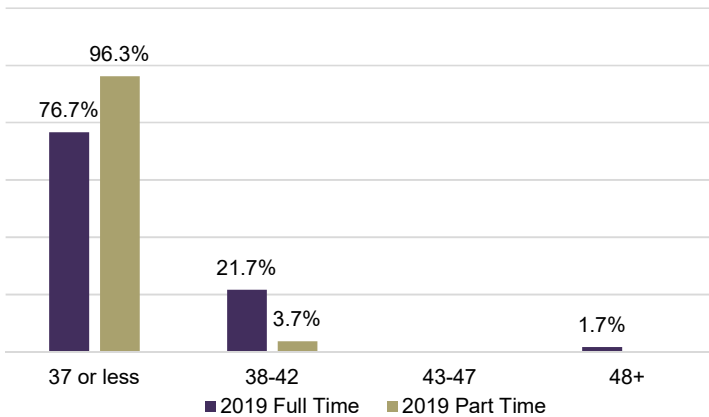
* There were 32 responses where either a service area was not specified or it was not clear which service area was being referred to.

Average no. of people being supported*



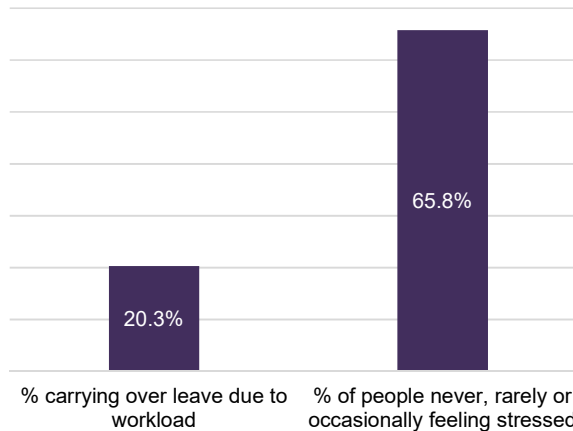
* This question refers to what would traditionally have been called a 'caseload'.

No. hours worked in average week*

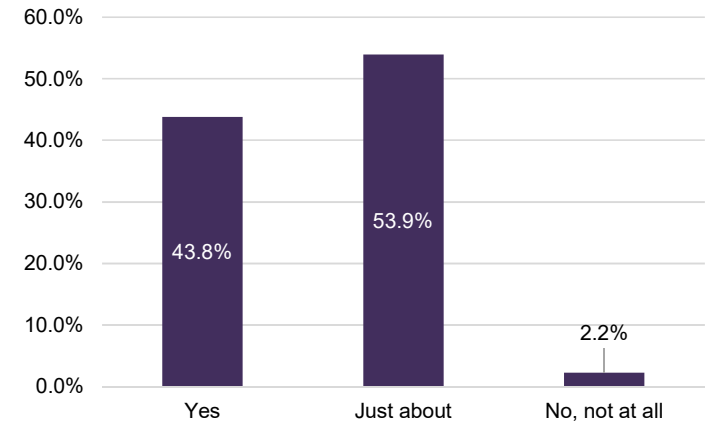


* Excludes suspected erroneous responses from 3 PT respondents

Stress and Leave Carry Over



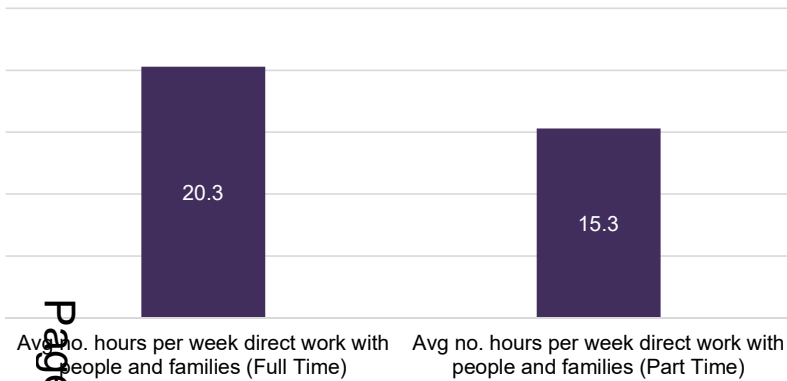
Workload Manageability



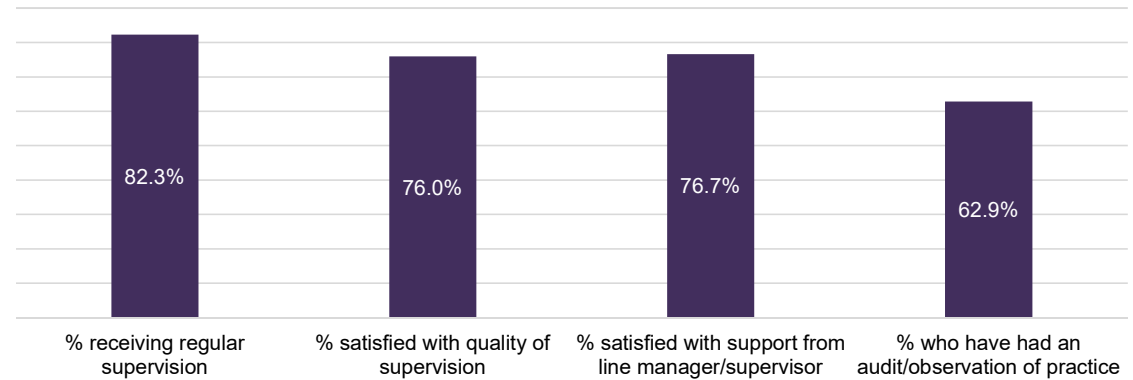
Adult Workforce Health Check 2019

Effective Workload Management / Having the Right Tools for the Job / Healthy Workplace

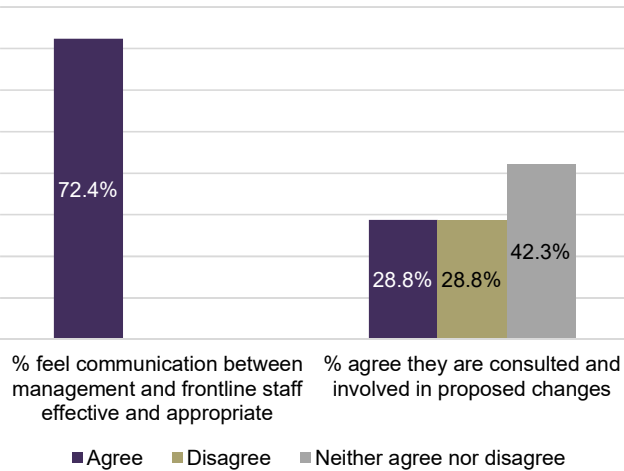
No. hours Direct Work



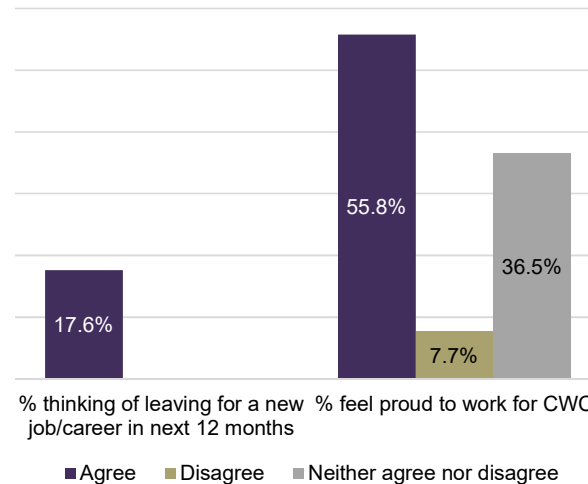
Supervision and Support



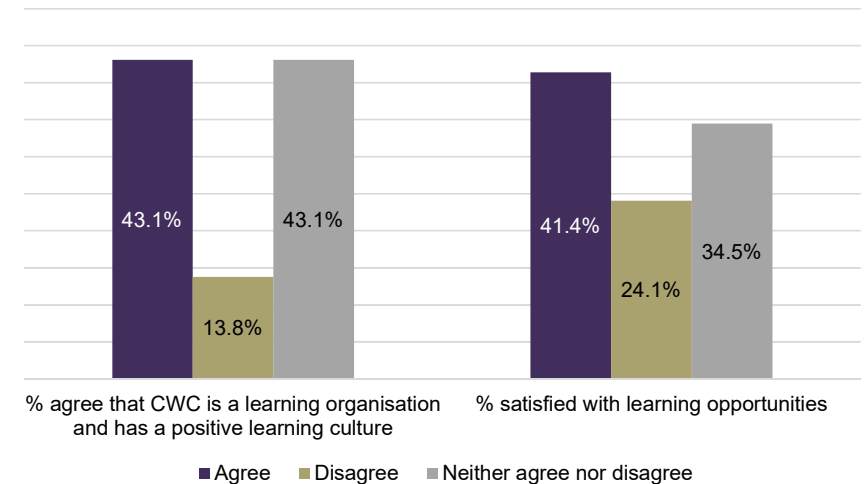
Communication and Consultation



Pride and Retention



Learning and Learning Opportunities



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Briefing Note

Title: Update on Principal Social Workers Report

Date: 17 September 2019

Prepared by: Louise Haughton

Job Title: Principal Social Worker

Intended Audience:

Internal

Partner organisation

Public

Confidential

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Adult's and Safer City Scrutiny Panel on the additional information about the impact of the work undertaken by the Principal Social worker that was shared with Cabinet on 5 June 2019. The report will also outline changes that will be made to future reports following feedback from members.
- 1.2 A copy of the report presented to Cabinet is attached for information.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Principal Social Worker report was presented to Cabinet on 5th June 2019. Prior to attendance, the Principal Social Worker was asked to consider the impact of the work outlined within the report and to expand further on the equalities section of the report. The additional information outlined below was shared with Cabinet members.

3.0 Discussion

- 3.1 To support workforce stability the Council has ensured that newly qualified social workers were properly supported. All were given protected time to take part in an Assessed Year in Practice programme that delivers practical training once a month for 12 months. In Children's Services newly qualified social workers have an allocated Advanced Practitioner to offer support with new and complex work. Both the Adult and Children's Senior Management teams have increased their visibility at social work briefings and provided more opportunities for social worker to share their experiences and raise concerns.
- 3.2 This has resulted in a significant reduction in turnover in Children's Social Care which has halved in the period November 2018 to March 2019 when compared with June 2018 to October 2018. The workforce within Adult Social Care is stable and consistently has low turnover rates compared with national averages. This in turn

had seen a reduction in the need for agency staff which in turn has also had a positive impact on the relevant budgets. A more stable workforce also results in greater consistency for the people supported by Adult and Children's Social Care and therefore better outcomes.

- 3.3 A range of work undertaken in Children's Services including embedding Restorative Practice and a focused workforce development offer has resulted in the number of children receiving formal support decreasing across all areas of Children's Social Care.
- 3.4 The number of children in care in Wolverhampton has been considerably higher than comparator authorities, over the last ten years. The rate increased annually from 2009 until 2014, reaching 807 at its peak. The number as at the end of March 2019 was 624.
- 3.5 The Principal Social Worker outlined the actual reduction in agency spend. In 2018/19 agency spend in Children's Services reduced by £136,746 from previous year.
- 3.6 The Principal Social worker drew cabinets attention to paragraph 3.26 and 3.27 of the report in which the impact of the Three Conversations approach is discussed. In adult's services the implementation of the Three Conversations initiative had seen a reduction in waiting lists to zero in participating sites. No person requiring support had waited more than three weeks for contact and the average waiting time for an initial conversation was two days. The workforce had reported that they felt happier and more fulfilled working under the new initiative and the feedback gained from people who had used services during the innovation phases was also positive.
- 3.7 The Principal Social Worker highlighted paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 of the report. This section discussed the national shortage of social workers and outlined how the City of Wolverhampton Council would be training 36 new social workers in 2020. This would be more than the number required in Wolverhampton and would therefore help to assist with the need for qualified social workers regionally.

4.0 Changes that will be made to the report 2019/20

- 4.1 The Principal Social Workers will be laid out differently and more succinctly outline the impact of work undertaken on the end user using graphs to compare progress with previous years.
- 4.2 The report will evaluate equalities information in more detail. It will seek to discuss how diverse groups who are accessing services reflect proportionally or not the demographic of the City. It will also incorporate information about the diversity of the workforce in order to analyse whether the workforce is adequately diverse to meet the needs of the population within the City.

4.3 The report will provide information where this is available on how people with protected characteristics have contributed to consultations and the development of services.

4.4 The report will outline any specific work that is undertaken in relation to enabling social workers to work effectively with people who have protected characteristics.

5.0 Questions for Scrutiny to consider

5.1 The priorities for 2019/20 have been set to enable continuous improvement in practice across both Adult's and Children's Social Care. The Principal Social Worker contributes to this by ensuring services are sufficiently staffed and the workforce is appropriately skilled and knowledgeable. Does Scrutiny feel that the priorities set reflect this outcome?

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 5 June 2019
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Report title	Principal Social Worker Annual Report 2018-2019	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor John Reynolds, Children and Young People Councillor Linda Leach, Adults	
Key decision	No	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	David Watts, Director of Adult Services Emma Bennet, Director of Children's Services	
Originating service	Adult Social Care/Children and Young People	
Accountable employee	Louise Haughton	Principal Social Worker
	Tel	01902 555534
	Email	louise.haughton@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Directorate Leadership Team	16 May 2019
	Strategic Executive Board	21 May 2019

Recommendation for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Approve the main priorities for the Principal Social Worker identified for 2019-2020.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a progress report on the work of the Principal Social Worker to promote and improve the quality of social work practice and outline priority areas of work to be undertaken in 2019-2020.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Designated Principal Social Workers (PSW) were first proposed by Professor Eileen Munro in her review of child protection in 2011, which identified the importance of better communication and understanding between social workers and senior management. Munro stated that Principal Social Workers should:

- Create a clear line of communication between frontline staff and senior management
- Champion best practice
- Encourage a “reflective approach” to social work
- Help to reduce bureaucracy and the amount of time spent on process-driven activities
- Support social workers to use their core skills and interventions which make a real difference to people.

- 2.2 Following this, the College of Social Work championed the extension of the role to include adult social work. As with the Children’s PSW, the role of the PSW for adults also takes a professional lead across the organisation.

- 2.3 The Care and Support Statutory Guidance update May 2016 provided further clarification around the role of the PSW for Adults. The Guidance states that the PSW should be visible across the organisation, from elected members and senior management, through to frontline social workers, people who use services and carers. PSW’s should also have a broad knowledge base on safeguarding and Making Safeguarding Personal. It also states that Local Authorities should make arrangements to have a qualified and registered social work professional practice lead in place to:

- Lead and oversee excellent social work practice
- Support and develop arrangements for excellent practice
- Lead the development of excellent social workers
- Support effective social work supervision and decision making
- Oversee quality assurance and improvement of social work practice
- Advise the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) and/or wider Council in complex or controversial cases and on cases or other law relating to social work practice
- Function at the strategic level of the “Professional Capabilities Framework”

- 2.4 The PSW for both Adults and Children and Young People was appointed in March 2016.

- 2.5 The decision to appoint one PSW for Adult's and Children's Services was informed by a commitment to promote and embed a whole family approach in Wolverhampton. A key function of the PSW role is to promote a "think whole family approach" that will enable better working together across services, inspire greater aspirations for children, families and adult's with additional needs as well as ensuring the concept of wellbeing features in all work undertaken by Social Care.
- 2.6 The PSW reports directly to a Director as per best practice guidance. The work of the PSW is overseen and prioritised by the Social Work Development Board supported by a wider Workforce Development Board for Children and Young People and for Adults that also informs the work of the PSW.
- 2.7 A degree of independence is required of the role in order to provide challenge within the organisation. Effectiveness is then supported by having a direct line of access to the Director of Adult Services and the Director of Children's Services.
- 2.8 The regional and national networks of PSWs also provide information to the Chief Social Workers for adults and children and regular consultations are held in respect of issues such as social worker health checks, knowledge and skill statements, accreditation, legislation, practice and learning developments.
- 2.9 In accordance with best practice an annual report is prepared and formally presented within the Council's governance arrangements.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 The PSW for Adults and Children in Wolverhampton has a key responsibility for Policies and Procedures and the Quality Assurance and Improvement team. The function of this unit is to implement and further develop the Quality Assurance Frameworks for Adult Social Care and Children and Young People, to support inspections and peer review work and support the sector led improvement programmes.
- 3.2 Highlights of the work undertaken by the PSW since April 2018 is outlined below:

Generic Work

- 3.3 This year issues around how children and adults with additional needs who might be at risk of gang related exploitation, trafficking, female genital mutilation and forced marriage are safeguarded have risen on the national agenda. These are all issues that often cut across generations and affect both children and adults. The fourth Annual Children and Adult's Social Work Conference took place in March 2019 with a theme of Human Rights and Exploitation. Adults and Children's social workers came together to increase their knowledge and improve their practice in relation to working with people affected by gang related activity, forced marriage, child sexual exploitation and people affected by drug and substance misuse.

- 3.4 Social workers heard a powerful keynote speech by Jasvinder Sanghera CBE, a survivor of forced marriage and the founder of Karma Nirvana, the award-winning charity that supports both men and women affected by honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
- 3.5 Chris Fox from West Midlands Police then spoke about County Lines and the crime of cuckooing, where drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person to use it as a base for drug dealing, before a series of workshops focused on child sexual exploitation, gangs and youth violence, substance misuse and modern slavery.
- 3.6 There was also the opportunity for social workers to share individual success stories about the work of the council's Children and Young People's (CYP) and Adult Social Care (ASC) services.
- 3.7 Many social workers stated in feedback that this was the best conference they had attended, they felt their knowledge around these issues had risen significantly, they found it helpful to hear more detail about the work undertaken by partner agencies in the City and felt inspired to continue their work in what can be a challenging profession.
- 3.8 The PSW arranges quarterly children's social work briefings and bi-annual adult's social work briefings that provide critical space for social workers to share their views with senior leaders and ensure important information is shared face to face with frontline social workers. The sessions also have a learning and development focus often chosen by social workers themselves. These have proved to be highly successful with social workers reporting that they are able to apply their learning to practice and generally state in feedback that everything presented is of use to their practice.
- 3.9 Nationally, children's social work is facing workforce challenges due to a range of pressures. Child and family social work is challenged by high turnover and vacancy rates and a heavy reliance on agency staff. The demand for permanent, experienced workers significantly outstrips supply (children's social work is on the national occupational shortage list).
- 3.10 A key function of the PSW role is to support the training of new social workers. There are now many routes into social work and it is important that the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) takes a mixed economy approach to supporting the training of social workers in order to not only meet its own sufficiency needs but also contribute to the needs of the region. Developments that have taken place this year will mean that over the next two years the CWC will support the training of approximately 36 social workers per year. This is above the Council's usual annual turnover and therefore will make a contribution to the regional shortage of qualified social workers.
- 3.11 There are now five main workstreams that contributed to this; the West Midlands Teaching Partnership, Step up to Social Work, Frontline and Degree social work Apprenticeships.

- 3.12 The West Midlands Teaching Partnership is in its first year of delivery following a strong recommendation from the Department for Education (DfE) and Department of Health and Social Care (DoH) that the region should have just one Teaching Partnership. The partnership is the largest in the country and is made up of 16 local authorities and trusts (this includes Cheshire East who were part of a previous teaching partnership in the north of the region) and nine Higher Education Institutes.
- 3.13 Social Work Teaching Partnerships (SWTPs) are a government funded initiative designed to: enhance partnership arrangements between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and employers; attract more able students; embed the knowledge and skills (post qualifying standards) into academic curricula and continuing professional development (CPD) for existing workers; and overall raise the quality of social work practice. CWC offers approximately 18 placements each year to students completing traditional undergraduate and post graduate degrees.
- 3.14 The Principal Social Worker sits on the strategic board for the partnership and ensures the Council is represented in all three workstreams.
- 3.15 Step up to Social Work and Frontline are post graduate fast track social work programmes for people interested in the profession who have a 2.1 Honours Degree or above. Step up to Social Work is co-ordinated regionally and is delivered in partnership with the University of Birmingham. It is a 14-month condensed course. This year CWC has joined the partnership and will provide placements for four students.
- 3.16 Frontline is a fast-track training scheme for social workers in child protection, which aims to attract outstanding graduates who may not previously have considered a career in social work. Participants complete most of their theoretical training whilst in social work placements, this allows them to transfer their learning into practice immediately. Participants are supported by a dedicated consultant social worker and a tutor who delivers theoretical training within the work place. The PSW has worked collaboratively with Frontline to establish two Frontline units each having four participants, one consultant social worker and one deputy consultant social worker. As a result, CWC will have supported the training of eight social workers through this programme.
- 3.17 The new level six Degree Apprenticeship Social Work Standards were agreed in December 2018. This new award provides an exciting opportunity for existing social care employees to undertake a social work degree whilst remaining in full time employment. Two universities within the region made plans to deliver the programme, The University of Warwick was the first to go live and it is expected the University of Wolverhampton will begin delivery of the programme in September 2019. CWC agreed to offer six placements to social care workers from both Adult's and Children's Social Care. Three places on the Warwick programme which began March 2019 and three on the Wolverhampton programme due to start September 2019.

- 3.18 The Social Work Health Check completed in June 2018 identified a number of key themes:
- The survey had a response rate of 48% in CYP services and 67% in Adult Social Care (ASC).
 - In the Adults Health Check workforce development was rated highly and most people felt that there were good opportunities for continuous professional development within the City.
 - Social work is a notoriously demanding profession and this also came through in both the Adult's and Children's survey with a high proportion of staff reporting some level of stress although the number of people feeling stressed had decreased in adult social care.
 - Social workers generally felt well supported by their line manager.
 - The number of people who felt proud to work for CWC had increased on previous years.
 - The Children and Young People's Service had experienced unusually high employee turnover at the time of the report and therefore saw a decrease in satisfaction across a few areas including workforce development and workload management.
- 3.19 Action plans were developed for both CYP and ASC with most actions now being completed. Senior Managers have increased their visibility and provided more opportunities for social workers to share their views about services. Turnover in the CYP Service has returned to normal levels and is now in line with national averages.
- 3.20 The Principal Social Workers team now lead on the publication of monthly Adults Social Care and Children and Young People Updates. These are short articles that celebrate good practice and stories of success, provide information about up-coming training and share a message from the respective Directors of Children's and Adult's Services. Employees have reported that they enjoy receiving the update and find the information useful.
- 3.21 The regional and national networks of Principal Child and Family Social Workers also provide information to the Chief Social Workers for children and adults. There are regular consultations with the network in respect of issues such as social worker health checks, workload, employer standards, practice and learning developments and policy developments.

Adults

- 3.22 A key piece of work undertaken by the PSW with the support of the workforce development team was the procurement of coaching in a strength based model (Three Conversations) that will help to transform culture and enable frontline practitioners to undertake good quality social care practice and support people to achieve good outcomes.
- 3.23 The Three Conversations approach is a new way of working that replaces the default 'contact, divert, triage, reablement, assessment for services' process with a dynamic strength-based approach to listening to people, aimed at supporting independent lives, and reducing the need for dependence on formal services. It supports frontline employees to have three distinct and specific conversations. These conversations focus on helping people live what they feel is a good life, by utilising their own resource, resources within their local community and receiving formal support when required.
- 3.24 Three Conversations was rolled out in the City of Wolverhampton Council in May 2018 with the creation of three innovations sites in ASC, two in the East locality and one in the Mental Health team. A further site was created in July 2018 to specifically work with people on waiting lists in the West and North localities.
- 3.25 The evaluation of this first phase concluded that the new way of working had resulted in improved outcomes for people and families and had a positive impact on employee job satisfaction whilst also increasing their productiveness. The views of some people who had accessed support under three conversations were sought as part of the evaluation. Overwhelmingly people reported that they received a timely response, felt informed and found the approach of the employee to be supportive and helpful.
- 3.26 One of the greatest success of the model was the reduction of waiting lists within Three Conversation sites. This has led to a timelier response to needs and as a result it appears that more families are able to avoid crisis situations which may, for example have resulted in the premature admittance of loved ones into residential care homes.
- 3.27 A second phase of innovation began in November which embedded the learning from phase one as well as exploring opportunities that could increase collaborative working between internal services. The phase two evaluation has confirmed that by placing a range of services in the same building, CWC can ensure people receive the right level of support at the right time and support employees to work together in a much more creative way. For example, the integration of community workers within teams has supported employees to connect more people with additional needs to clubs and groups within their communities. It is known that building friendships within communities can reduce social isolation and increase fulfilment and overall wellbeing.
- 3.28 It is anticipated that all locality teams will be operating in this way by the end of summer 2019.

- 3.29 An audit process for adult social care has been embedded as part of the People Quality Assurance Framework. The quality assurance framework also includes observation of practice and brings together the critical reflections of frontline practitioners to help promote a learning culture. 129 file audits carried out in 2018-2019 and a further 51 files were dip sampled as part of Three Conversations work. This means that 5% of files for people who receive a service from adult social care in Wolverhampton have had some form of qualitative audit in 2018-2019.
- 3.30 Many pieces of development work have taken place as a direct result of information gathered through audits. These include: undertaking good reviews, Mental Capacity Act assessment forms have been re-designed to support more proportionate and focused assessments, recording with care training has been provided and employees have increased their awareness of local services and community resources.
- 3.31 This information is reported to the Transformation of Adult Social Care Board quarterly ensuring senior managers have oversight of the quality of frontline practice and are able to use this information to inform improvement actions. CWC has implemented a robust quality assurance framework that is not common place in adult social care.
- 3.32 As part of the development of Three Conversations model the relationship between performance and quality assurance has been strengthened. Performance information is more visible and accessible for frontline managers and practitioners. This enables managers to identify areas of poorer performance quickly, undertake quality assurance activity to better understand any issues and then implement development actions with team members to improve performance. Improvements can then be monitored weekly using the live performance information that is available.

Children and Young People

- 3.33 Restorative Practice was selected as the overarching practice framework for the Children and Young People's Service and implementation began in November 2016. It is a strengths-based approach that is fundamentally about building, maintaining and repairing relationships. It supports a strong relational way to delivering services, working with children and families, identifying strengths but also having the sound relationship for challenge; enabling a 'high support/high challenge' approach to work with children and families to affect necessary change. Whilst this approach is not new to most qualified social workers it is powerful to have a unified way of working and a developing shared language amongst colleagues.
- 3.34 Two independent reviews have confirmed that the approach is well understood by employees and most areas are beginning to embed the approach. Areas that have experienced higher staff turnover have however, struggled to show consistent evidence of embedding the approach. This is to be expected and as teams continue to stabilise it is anticipated that the restorative approach will be further established within teams. Restorative approaches are well integrated within the CYP induction programme and frequently discussed at social work briefings and service wide management meetings.

- 3.35 The PSW has convened a multi-agency restorative steering group. The wider partnership has now committed to training all frontline practitioners within the City in the restorative approach. This is an exciting development as it will allow practitioners from a range of disciplines to develop a shared language and approach to the way in which CWC works with Children and Families across the City. Over 250 practitioners participated in a multi-agency launch event in October 2018. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and all agencies have nominated staff to become train the trainers in the approach.
- 3.36 Ofsted highlighted five areas of practice that required further improvement during their Focused Visit in September 2018. These related to the quality of assessment and planning, supervision, reducing caseloads and compliance in relation to quality assurance/audit. The Principal Social Worker has led a variety of work designed to improve these areas of practice;
- A new supervision tool has been designed which incorporates Restorative Practice into supervision.
 - New assessment, analysis and planning training has been procured and learning will be embedded through reflective practice sessions in teams.
 - The audit process has been overhauled with the introduction of Practice Weeks (see below).
- 3.37 Practice Weeks are an innovative approach to audit and quality assurance that can ensure senior managers know what practice looks like and have regular contact with frontline practitioners. They were introduced in CWC in November 2018 following a smaller scale pilot in September 2018. During Practice Weeks the Director of Children's services along with all Heads of Service, The PSW and Service Managers spend four days undertaking audits alongside practitioners, observing practice and sitting in teams. The advantages of this approach include being able to see practice rather than just read about it, being able to see and feel how teams are functioning and being able to offer social workers immediate feedback on their practice. Practice Weeks have been received well and employees report enjoying the immediate feedback and opportunity to talk about their work with senior managers.
- 3.38 Practice Weeks have enabled the senior management team to be assured around thresholds and management of risk whilst highlighting areas for improved practice like consistent use of direct work tools and activities with children and young people, and better engagement with fathers where issues of domestic violence are present. Action plans are developed following each practice week and improvements are monitored in subsequent audits.
- 3.39 The PSW has continued to provide leadership, mentoring and coaching to six full time equivalent advanced practitioners appointed in the CYP Service. Meetings have taken place fortnightly to monitor progression of action plans, share learning and good practice

and develop a shared understanding of what good social work practice looks like. Advanced practitioners are then able to model a consistent approach within teams.

- 3.40 Advanced practitioners have provided practical support to newly qualified social workers by attending complex meetings with them, modelling good practice and helping them write good assessment and plans. Advanced practitioners also run fortnightly drops in's, where support on a range of topics is available including pre-birth assessments, managing risk, sibling assessments and planning for permanence. Advanced practitioners have also delivered training on key themes linked to our improvement plan and strategic aims like understanding private and regulated family and friend's placements and annual workshops designed to build practitioner confidence at facilitating family meetings. This a key tool to help us embed restorative practice and help practitioners engage and work with families.
- 3.41 Ofsted noted that where assessments had been recently updated with the support of advanced practitioners, they were of good quality, there were clear insights into the lived experience of children, strengths and areas of concern were identified, they involved parents and used the local authority's restorative practice approach. These assessments were also informed by powerful use of direct work and very strong evidence from children about relationships and their emotional status.
- 3.42 FutureSocial is a regional DfE funded programme that has been created to develop an alternative delivery approach that transforms recruitment, retention, workforce development, quality and cost to create an autonomous, flexible, skilled and supported children's social care workforce within the region. The post holder has represented the regional Principal Social Work Network on the project group and contributed to all work undertaken by the team, most significantly the development of the detailed delivery plan.
- 3.43 Locally the recruitment and retention of social workers has been another key priority. The postholder leads a recruitment and retention group that incorporates Organisational Development, Human Resources and Communications. The group delivers a local recruitment and retention plan that is overseen by the Social Work Development Board.
- 3.44 The recruitment process has been strengthened and now includes a pre-interview assessment of candidate's abilities to work with children and young people, and the candidate's assessment and report writing skills. This helps to ensure that candidates employed by the CWC have sufficient skills and potential to become excellent social work practitioners.
- 3.45 The PSW has worked closely with the Director of Children's Services and Heads of Service to deliver a range of actions designed to support the retention of social workers. This has included creating opportunities for greater visibility of senior managers, improved comms around what is working well in the service and a restructure that has strengthened the role of the team manager and created more opportunities for progression. Turnover has halved in the period between November- March 2019 when compared with June - October 2018.

4.0 Priorities for work plan 2019-2020

Workforce Development

- 4.1 A particular role that will be undertaken by the PSW is to continue to ensure that the Children and Adult's Social Work Development plan incorporates a good development offer for social workers. It is imperative that social workers are highly skilled as it is known that good social work intervention can reduce the risk of children needing to be received into care and can enable adults with additional needs to remain or become as independent as possible. These are outcomes that are desirable for the children, families and adults who are in receipt of social care services. They also ensure that Council resources are being used appropriately and effectively.
- 4.2 The post holder will be responsible for the local delivery of the National Assessment and Accreditation Process (NAAS). The Children and Social Work Act 2017 gave the Education Secretary powers to set and assess practitioners against improvement standards. The NAAS is the primary programme linked to this section of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It involves the assessment of social workers against a set of standards set out in the Knowledge and Skills Statements for Children and Family Practitioners and The Knowledge and Skills Statement for Practice Supervisors and Practice Leaders (these are now known as the post qualifying standards). The assessments will take place at a local assessment centre and the test include three elements;
- Employee endorsement – the employer's assessment of the social worker or practice supervisor's skills.
 - A digital assessment based on the [child and family practitioner knowledge and skills statement](#) produced by the Chief Social Worker for Children.
 - A simulated practice observation using role play scenarios with actors. This will include a written assessment component.
- 4.3 The DfE met with the Directors of Children's Services within the region in November 2018 and asked directors to give consideration partnering with them to deliver the NAAS within the West Midlands region. There is a consensus amongst directors within the region that the NAAS could help to deliver improvements to the frontline practice of social workers. It is felt that taking a regional approach to the preparation of social workers will deliver an opportunity to increase consistency of practice across all Councils. The delivery of NAAS also aligns with the ambitions of FutureSocial
- 4.4 Implementing the Three Conversations model across ASC continues to be a significant priority for the service area. It must deliver the cultural change around strength based and relational practice resulting in improved customer experience. The post holder is the senior reporting officer for the project and will work closely with the project team and frontline practitioners to ensure the outcomes of the project are achieved.

- 4.5 The post holder will continue to play a key role in the embedding of restorative approaches within the CYP Service and across the children's partnership. All practitioners in ASC will also receive training in restorative approaches in order to further equip employees with strength-based skills that will compliment the Three Conversations model.
- 4.6 Working with regional partners to deliver the FutureSocial agenda will also continue to be a significant priority for the PSW. There are 14 councils within the region and most of them are in close proximity to one another. The workforce therefore naturally moves between councils for career progression opportunities or to experience different ways of working. It is therefore crucial that the region grasp this opportunity to take a regional approach to workforce planning for the future.
- 4.7 The PSW will continue to provide leadership, mentoring and coaching to the six (FTE) advanced social work practitioners to be appointed in the CYP Service. The focus of this work will be to support the ongoing transformation of children's services through the ongoing improvement of frontline social work practice. Advanced practitioners will assist with the establishment of consistently "Good" and "Outstanding" practice across CYP services.
- 4.8 The new Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) is now awaiting royal assent and will replace the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Legislation (DOLS). Implementation of the LPS's will require a whole workforce approach that will include a training update for those currently qualified to undertake DOLS work and a plan to ensure more social workers receive training in order to be able to undertake LPS assessments.

Recruitment and Retention

- 4.9 The post holder will continue to take a lead responsibility along with Human Resources and Workforce Development for the implementation of the recruitment and retention plan. This will include setting up a social work education steering group. The steering group will provide strategic governance for the five workstreams, provide strategic challenge and support to ensure social work education within the Council is of a good quality and ensure all work is effectively co-ordinated and aligned. As a result of this more highly skilled and knowledgeable social workers will be trained in order to help meet the local and regional demand for good quality social workers.

Social Work Voice at Strategic Level

- 4.10 Undertaking and analysing the annual Social Work Health Check is key to improving social work recruitment and retention. The Quality and Improvement team will continue to support a greater level of engagement with social workers about the findings and associated actions in order to ensure social workers know their feedback is welcomed and taken seriously by senior managers.

- 4.11 The post holder will continue to support a range of engagement activities between the Directors of Adult and Children's Services and the workforce by hosting social work briefings, facilitating face to face inductions, facilitating the Adults Social Care and Children and Young Peoples Update and arranging employee engagement sessions as and when required.
- 4.12 Attendance will continue by the PSW at the Children and Young People's and the Adults management team meetings on at least a monthly basis ensures operational engagement and oversight.

Local, Regional and National leadership

- 4.13 The PSW attends quarterly national principal social work network days facilitated by the Association of Directors of Children's Services. These meetings are learning and development opportunities. It provides opportunity for the national Chief Social Workers for adults and children to share the direction of travel, answer questions and receive feedback from PSW's. These events also provide opportunity for the sharing of good practice. Notes are shared with the appropriate leadership team following attendance at these events.
- 4.14 The PSW also attends regional network meetings on a bi-monthly basis. This allows regional work to take place as directed by the regional West Midlands Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Association of Directors of Adults Services.
- 4.15 The post holder also sits on the strategic board for the Regional Teaching Partnership and the project team for FutureSocial.
- 4.16 The PSW was successful in gaining a place on the Practice Leaders Development Programme. The programme is funded by the DfE and is a unique opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge needed within a practice leader role within children's social care. It focusses on the challenging nature of this role and offers support and assistance through a network of development coaches and colleagues within children's social care. As such the PSW is now invited to contribute to discussions about national policy with the Chief Social Worker for Children and Families and participate in ongoing development opportunities provided through the Programme.

5.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 5.1 This is an annual report produced in line with good practice as agreed by Cabinet at the time the role was created. As such no other options have been considered.

6.0 Reasons for decision

- 6.1 The role of the PSW contributes to a number of key priorities across CYP and ASC Services. The post holder is the senior reporting officer leading the culture change programmes in ASC and CYP Services. Restorative Practice in CYP and Three Conversations in ASC are approaches and models that enable social workers to build professional relationships with people who need services that help and promote a

strength based approach to their practice. These approaches will enable the workforce to strengthen families where children are at risk, promote the independence of older people and people with disabilities as well safeguarding people in vulnerable situations.

- 6.2 The PSW provides dedicated resource to the recruitment and retention strategy which in turn helps the Council reduce expenditure on agency staff. The role is also responsible for raising the profile of social work in the City which also contributes to making the City of Wolverhampton a social work employer of choice.
- 6.3 The role also provides the professional knowledge required to drive local and regional workforce development plan that will help develop good and outstanding

7.0 Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising directly from this report. Any costs arising from the actions in the workplan and priorities set by the PSW will be met from existing budgets.
- 7.2 Good social work reduces demand and costs. Relationship based social work is anticipated to reduce demand and whilst difficult to quantify could lead to potential efficiencies. The work currently being undertaken in the three ASC innovation sites may provide evidence of indicative financial efficiencies if the new ways of working was rolled out across the whole of the service.

[AJ/14052019/M]

8.0 Legal implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

[TC/17052019/P]

9.0 Equalities implications

- 9.1 The role of the Principal Social Work is a key one in our leadership arrangements to continually improve the quality of our social work practice. Social workers provide support to the whole community including the full range of diverse groups. Excellent quality social work practice will be more attuned to the equality issues experienced by individuals, families and communities. High quality social work will more competently deploy required skill in the practice situation. This annual report shows some of the ways being used to strengthen this aspect of social work practice e.g. updating and widening the influence of the social work Quality Assurance Framework.

10.0 Environmental implications

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

11.0 Human resources implications

11.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report. However, it is noted that close collaborative working has taken place over the last year on the implementation of the recruitment and retention strategy and action plan. This includes back office support and attendance at Social Worker interviews and recruitment campaigns.

12.0 Corporate landlord implications

12.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

13.0 Health and Wellbeing implications

13.1 Good social work practice will support the health and wellbeing of children, young people and adults who access services.

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Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel Draft Work Programme 2019 20

The Panel will have responsibility for scrutiny functions as they relate to: -

Older people assessment and care management, Financial support services, Community Safety, Libraries and community hubs, Independent living centre, Commissioning older people, Carers support and All age disabilities.

Date of Meeting	Item Description	Lead Report Author	Notes
24 September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) & Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report • Principal Social Worker Annual Report – update • Adult Social Care Workforce Health Check • 2019 Social Work Health Checks • Local Account 2018-2019 	<p>Victoria Bowles, Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board Manager</p> <p>Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker</p> <p>Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker</p> <p>David Watts, Director of Adults Services</p> <p>David Watts, Director of Adults Services</p>	<p>The purpose is to present a draft of the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Adult Board’s (WSAB) Annual Report to inform the panel of safeguarding activity and to update on progress made against the priorities for that period.</p> <p>Update and feedback from Cabinet report</p>
16 October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Jasbir Jaspal, Cabinet Member Health – briefing on priorities 	<p>David Watts, Director of Adults Services and John Denley, Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Briefing on key priorities and questions from the panel.</p>

<p>12 November 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Budget and Medium -Term Financial Strategy 2020 – 2021 • Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Annual Report 2018-2019 – background, what it does, who is on it etc. • Transforming Care – update on progress • Update on Alcohol and Drugs Strategy 	<p>Clair Nye, Director of Finance</p> <p>Mark Taylor Andy Beard Lynsey Kelly John Denley, Director of Public Health</p> <p>David Watts, Director of Adults Services</p> <p>John Denley, Director of Public Health</p>	
<p>28 January 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Dementia Strategy – Update • Adult Education Service • Blue Badge Scheme – update report 	<p>Joanne Keatley, Head of Adult Education</p> <p>Lisa Taylor, Head of Service Improvement (Customer Services)</p>	<p>Update on progress of annual strategy against original aims and performance targets</p> <p>Briefing on service priorities and progress against key performance targets.</p> <p>The Head of Customer Service to present a report detailing progress in responding to the issues highlighted in the report and specifically on changes to the eligibility criteria and delays in the assessment process.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Linda Leach, Cabinet Member Adult Services 		Briefing on key priorities and questions from the panel.
24 March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed changes to charges for non - residential services (pre-decision scrutiny) • Better Care Fund - update on publication of national guidance. • Emergency Planning Response (exempt) 	<p>Helen Winfield, Head of Community Financial Support</p> <p>David Watts, Director of Adults Services</p> <p>John Denley, Director of Public Health</p>	The Council has the right to charge for adult social care and support under the Care Act 2014 for people who request the Council arrange their care and support.

Potential Future Items: -

- Youth Violence Scrutiny Review – Cllr Ahmed to brief panel on key findings and recommendations.
- Invite David Jamieson or representative of Police and Crime Commissioner to brief panel

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