

**MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY TASK & FINISH GROUP:
RECRUITMENT & RETENTION OF SOCIAL WORKERS**

WEDNESDAY 16TH JANUARY 2017 AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Green (Chair), Councillors; Keens, Rowlands and J. Taylor.

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS: Councillors: N. Ayub and Hussain

SUPPORT OFFICERS / ADVISORS:

- Angela Claridge – Service Director, HR and Monitoring Officer
- Tony Fitzgerald – Project Manager, Transformation & Technology
- Matt Hussey – Democracy and Scrutiny Officer – LBC
- Maud O’Leary - Service Director, Adult Social Care
- Sally Rowe – Corporate Director, People
- Kate Savenko – Project Officer, Transformation Team

PUBLIC/ INTEREST GROUPS REPRESENTATIVES:

None this time

		ACTION
01.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)	
	Resolved: Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Franks and Rivers.	
02.	DRAFT CONSULTATION SUMMARY (REF: 4.1)	
	<p>Farah Ismail, Senior Consultation Officer submitted the draft consultation summary and requested that the final consultation report be submitted to the February meeting. The key point identified was that Children & Learning staff got a better recruitment and retention allowance compared to Adult social Services Staff and received better recognition for their roles i.e. the perception that their role was more difficult, more sensitive as it involved children, more stressful etc. Therefore, it was felt they were more valued by the organisation.</p> <p>The emerging themes identified so far were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay – lower than neighbouring authorities, disparity in pay and allowances between permanent staff and agency/locums, disparity in pay and benefits amongst different departments (Adult Social 	

	<p>Care and Children and Learning).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Facilities – close, safe and convenient parking provision for visiting staff. • Challenging case/workloads – impact on service delivery and staffs stress, health and wellbeing. • Strong team/colleague support • Recognition and feeling valued by the organisation – good within team but poor as an organisation • Career opportunities, progression, training and development • LBC Services Infrastructure – office space, hot-desking, staffing, admin support tools. <p>Furth more, Occupational Therapists felt undervalued, underpaid and invisible at senior management level, and Social Care Assessors felt they undertook the same work as Social Workers but did not receive the rewards or recognition.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Report (Ref: 4.1) be noted.</p>	
03.	DRAFT TASK & FINISH GROUP REPORT PART 1 – SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL’S STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (REF: 7)	
	<p>Members had before them the first draft Final Report, for the purpose of agreeing the basic structure and the potential to ask officers to firm up on data previously supplied.</p> <p>The Chair commented that she would like confirmation on the baseline data to be used for Vacancy, Turnover and Agency Rates and the amount of overspend was needed. She went on to request that Tony Fitzgerald, Project Manager, Transformation & Technology supply this information.</p> <p>Sally Rowe, Corporate Director, People commented that some of the figures outlined in the draft report were not accurate.</p> <p>Angela Claridge, Service Director, HR and Monitoring Officer replied the figures used in the draft report were those submitted by officers in the evidence gathering from H.R. She added that the data was changing on a daily basis.</p> <p>Maud O’Leary, Service Director, Adult Social Care commented that Adult Social Care were recruiting on a daily basis, which made it difficult to get the correct figures. She added that before Christmas, four new social workers had</p>	

	<p>been recruited in Adult Social Care, unfortunately nearly all had now rejected the offer by Luton due to better offers from other authorities.</p> <p>The Chair replied that the data used would need to be based on a 'snap shot' in time and that figures around turnover rate was more important.</p> <p>Sally Rowe, Corporate Director, People added that Bedford Borough Council had recruited 19 Social Workers the previous week. This would have a knock-on effect for Luton who were already struggling to recruit. She went on to say that the introduction of I.R 35 would help reduce the number of agency staff as it would encourage them to become permanent members of staff. She added that in regards to pay, Social Workers in Children Social Care were paid extremely well, and this was a big issue as Adult Social Care were paid less because of a different market supplement. A way of addressing this disparity would be to bring them in line with Children Social Care.</p> <p>Maud O'Leary, Service Director, Adult Social Care replied that the claw back from the reduced number of agency staff could be used to bring both social workers in Adults and Children's Social Care in line.</p> <p>Sally Rowe, Corporate Director, People commented that parking was a real issue for social workers as they needed a car to undertake their duties across the town. Also staff accommodation was an issue as hot desking was not a suitable working environment for social workers. This had been highlighted as an issue in a recent Ofsted Report</p> <p>Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 7) be noted.</p> <p>(ii) That the Project Manager, Transformation & Technology be instructed to collate final metrics for Vacancy, Turnover and Agency Rates</p>	
	(NOTE: The meeting ended at 7.50pm)	