

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

Question by Ian Chittenden to Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

In January's Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, it was revealed that there has been a 24% drop in apprenticeship starts in Kent since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy. This means that there are fewer opportunities for young people looking to enter the workplace today than there were prior to the introduction of the levy back in April 2017. One of the proposals to tackle this issue stated that KCC would use some of its apprenticeship levy funding to help pay for the training of apprentices aged 16 to 24 who are from a disadvantaged background or in employment without training. Would the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education please advise on what measures the council plans to enact which will ensure that those young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are successfully reached? Within the response, please specify the timescales that are being worked towards.

Answer

It is disappointing to note that there has been a 24% drop in Apprenticeship training starts in Kent since the introduction of the levy albeit that this is less than the national rate of 41%. However, the Authority has and continues to invest in the development of apprenticeship programmes to maximise the opportunities for as many individuals across the County as possible and specifically for those from disadvantaged backgrounds by;

1. Working with the Care Leaver Service and Kent Supported Employment teams to maximise opportunities and support for those young people from a disadvantaged background and those with a disability, into employment in KCC. Comprehensive advice and guidance for KCC managers and staff is being produced and will be promoted; this will include offering proactive support from Personal advisors in the Care Leaver team and interventions from KSE.
2. Officers in The Education People (TEP) continuing to raise awareness / promote Apprenticeships with SMEs, Guilds, training providers and other professional bodies to encourage recruitment and training for apprentices aged 16-24 from a disadvantaged background and young people currently in a job without training.
3. Officers in TEP will continue to work with young people aged 16 – 24 across the county to increase the uptake of apprenticeship training from 4840 training starts in 2017/2018 to:
 - Year 1 2019/2020 – 5700 starts
 - Year 2 2020/2021 – 7000 starts
4. Developing capacity to share the KCC levy with the wider Kent community, including; SMEs, supply chain partners, commissioned services, 3rd sector and non KCC Schools with the aim of improving knowledge & skills in the wider Kent workforce, will

enable opportunities to fund training for apprentices aged 16-24 from a disadvantaged backgrounds and young people currently in a job without training.

Additionally, general support continues as follows;

5. Working with the Skills & Employability team in TEP to maximise opportunities in KCC schools through events, helplines & support, targeted communication, ApprenticeKent website and interview preparation support. Additionally, Q&A sessions, presentations and one to one information meetings are also offered .
6. Undertaking targeted activity to support and encourage KCC staff aged 16 – 24 into apprenticeship training; currently in the year April 2018–Jan 2019 50% of staff accessing training are in this age group. Additionally, 83% of this cohort are new to recruits to KCC.
7. Working with internal KCC Business units to identify development opportunities that will support the progression and talent management in all Directorates for both new and existing staff.

We will continue to take every available opportunity to support all who could benefit from an Apprenticeship along with specific and targeted activity towards individuals that might otherwise be omitted for whatever reason. Our approach is very flexible and I know officers would be very happy to receive any further suggestions for groups and other activities that could be adopted in our pursuit of maximizing Apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship levy.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

Question by Liz Hurst to Graham Gibbens,
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

I have had concerns raised to me regarding transfer of care from QEQM, resulting in bed blocking, when other care provision is not put into place quickly enough and the patient remains on the ward. Please could the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health advise how we can facilitate the transfer of patients from hospital to care at home, in a quicker and more orderly fashion?

Answer

I want to assure Mrs Hurst that at present there are no reportable social care delays at the QEQM hospital. The multi-agency discharge teams work closely with the individual, their family and the hospital to ensure that a timely move from hospital to the person's home is completed as soon as possible. It is in everyone's best interest this is completed in a timely and orderly fashion.

There are several ways in which adult social care can facilitate this, depending on the need and wishes of the individual who has been deemed by the hospital as medically fit for discharge.

Older People & Physical Disability staff in the Short-term pathway team work with health colleagues. This team focus on the discharge pathways to support people to return home. The prime aim is 'own bed is best' looking to wrap care services around people in their own homes.

Individuals are also given the opportunity to move from hospital to a different setting either community hospitals or independent sector beds. When a person is assessed to this requirement this enables the individual and their family to make informed decisions about how their future needs can be met as well as an opportunity for further recovery and rehabilitation. These beds are sometimes described as step down beds. The provision supporting this pathway has recently increased through the winter monies funding creating more capacity and this will ensure a quicker move from the acute beds in the hospitals to people returning to their own home with the right support.

If it is evident a person requires long term placement immediately from the acute setting, this does take time as the Local Authority (LA) has statutory responsibilities to fulfil. If their needs have been assessed as requiring a particular type of accommodation the person must have the right to choose between different providers of that type of accommodation. In these circumstances delays may occur, which is why we ensure every opportunity is explored with the individual and their family to engage in the short-term pathway services which offers a quicker and more timely transfer, either to a step-down bed or to their own home for further assessments to finalise any longer term support needs.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

**Question by Martin Whybrow to Mike Whiting,
Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste**

When will KCC adopt more ambitious targets for municipal and Household Waste Recycling Centre recycling and composting, and when are we likely to see tangible benefits from closer working with district and borough councils, including addressing the current zero recycling from some residential multi-occupancy properties in the county?"

To clarify - The targets referred to in the question are the WM01 and WM03 performance indicators on the risk register (see papers for Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 26 March). These are clear targets for both municipal and HWRC waste recycling and composting.

Answer

The target of just under 70% is set by KCC for recycling levels at HWRCs and by comparison with some neighbouring authorities is an ambitious target. There are no statutory targets set by DEFRA, however the targets set for our contractors must be achievable and specific.

The latest data shows that KCC is achieving just above our 70% target, which is commendable when compared with some of our neighbouring Authorities, whose published achievement is between 43% – 55%.

The remaining 30% is generally bulky or residual waste that is recycled to create energy. Members will be delighted to know that the statistics recently produced by DEFRA show the Kent Council County has the lowest recorded landfill rates of any County Disposal Authority at just 1% - typically this is for asbestos that can only be treated by deep burial.

Levels of kerbside recycling by waste collection authorities is rising by 1% per year and is at 43%, the highest level recorded. Members may recall that County has developed a new way of working with the ten Authorities which is promoting higher levels of recycling.

Recently, new Inter Authority Agreements have been agreed between us and districts and boroughs that reward performance through sharing the financial benefits of increased recycling. This new policy approach has already seen benefits in Gravesham, for example, where recycling has increased by 5% over recent years.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

Question by Sue Chandler to Graham Gibbens,
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Could the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health provide details of how Kent County Council have been involved in the development of Harmonia Village in Dover?

Answer

The Harmonia Village Hub is a joint project between East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) and the Health and Europe Centre (UK). The Health and Europe Centre is supported by KCC and the Board is chaired by Mr Geoff Lymer.

The Harmonia Village Hub provides an opportunity to do something different to support people living with dementia that compliments and enhances existing services and organisations in Dover. To establish what that “something” might be, the Harmonia Village project team wanted to start by challenging their assumptions about what the system is like for people living and working with dementia now.

Funding for the project was secured as part of the Community Areas of Sustainable Care And Dementia Excellence in Europe (CSCADE) project which is funded by the EU Interreg 2 Seas programme 2014-2020 (co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund).

The Harmonia Village Hub is a core element of the CASCAD E project and will provide longer term and short-term respite care for people living with dementia which will fully engage with the local community. The wider project will be the basis for sharing research results, expertise and knowledge in dementia care for the future.

Other partners to the project include Medway Community Healthcare CIC (UK); Canterbury Christ Church University (UK); ZorgSaam (Netherlands); HZ University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands); Emmaus Elderly Care (Belgium); Flemish Expertise Centre on Dementia (Belgium); Residential Care Holy Heart (Belgium) and the University of Lille (France).

Although Kent County Council has not been involved in the development of the project, staff from the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate have provided Dementia Friendly Training to the Harmonia Village Team. Kent County Council is also involved, of course, through the Health and Europe Centre (UK).

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

**Question by Ida Linfield to Mike Whiting,
Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste**

In March last year I drew the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste's attention to the potential dangers of young children having to cross the A257, the Littlebourne Road in Canterbury, to get to school.

Barely a month later, on 26 April, an 11-year-old boy was knocked down and seriously injured - precisely at the crossing location I had identified. I now know that the problems of this dangerous crossing had already been raised with KCC well before I was elected and there have been other accidents here before. Despite this, to date KCC has done nothing. Indeed, when I met with the Cabinet Member in June last year, he agreed that a crossing is needed.

To this year; last month I asked twice at the council meeting if the budget for 2019-2020 includes money for this crossing but I got no answer. It really is a small amount in terms of the overall budget. Now that the Cabinet Member has had time to look at the books, can he please tell me if next year's budget does include money to fund this safety critical crossing?

Answer

KCC officers have had recent meetings and correspondence with Ida Lingfield and the professional and technical view is that an additional crossing along the A257 is not required. There will be a new pedestrian crossing built in the vicinity of the Wemyss Way junction as part of the approved development at Howe Barracks. In addition, a pedestrian crossing was installed near the Villiers Road junction less than 4 years ago. This means that there will be 3 signalised pedestrian crossings within an 850-metre section of the A257; as such a fourth at the location suggested is seen to be unnecessary.

As discussed with the Local Member in February, there could be a crossing if planners would agree to amendments to the Howe Barracks ecology corner but there are various matters which make deliverability very difficult. The main issue being the lack of any highway verge or footway on the northern side of Littlebourne Road (on the Barracks site). There is currently a green / ecology corridor along the northern side of the A251 which has to be provided by Taylor Wimpey as a condition of its approved planning permission for the Howe Barracks site. The verge is steeply banked which would make construction of a crossing and footway connection more difficult as additional land would be required. Planning permission will be required to make any alterations, cutting or construction for the necessary footway through the ecology corridor. The first action from the meeting was for Ida Lingfield to contact Canterbury City Council planning department to enquire as to whether planning permission for the cutting into the ecology corridor would likely be achievable. If planning permission is not achievable then it would not be possible to deliver / construct a fourth crossing along the Littlebourne Road A257 between Villiers Road and Wemyss Way.

Supplementary Data – if asked about crash data

Crash data for this location within the last five years (up to 30.09.2018) shows there have been three incidents, one of which was the incident on 26 April involving the young boy. The other two were rear shunts).

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

Question by Rob Bird to Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

Homelessness is a desperate situation for those affected and a blight on our society. There is a clear duty on local authorities to prevent homelessness where possible and to ensure that homeless persons are provided with suitable accommodation. It is very regrettable that the County Council's new Housing Related Support service has resulted in the closure of the Trinity Foyer in Maidstone, putting close to 50 vulnerable young persons at risk of becoming homeless. The Cabinet Member has previously advised of efforts being made to accommodate these persons. Can he now confirm that all former residents of the Trinity Foyer have been found suitable accommodation?

Answer

KCC's Housing Related Support service underwent an extensive re-design, approved by the relevant Cabinet Committees, last autumn. This sought to improve support for those to whom the County Council has statutory responsibilities, reduce the use of unregulated accommodation and achieve better value for money by reducing expensive spot purchases. This led to a competitive tender process in October 2018 and the award of contracts for 2 new services to provide support to people vulnerable to homelessness.

The new services include one for young people, focused on supporting Children in Care, Care Leavers (up to the age of 25) and homeless 16/17-year olds. The other service is to support adults who are vulnerable to homelessness. These services represent an investment of around £30million over the next 4 years to provide secure, safe and appropriate accommodation and support to some of the most vulnerable residents in Kent.

The Trinity Foyer scheme in Maidstone has been one of the most complicated arrangements to change during this process. This is partly because the support providers did not wish to continue providing young people's support services from Trinity Foyer. Trinity is a large building with high numbers of vulnerable young people living together, which can sometimes increase vulnerability. This has resulted in the need for urgent rehousing of the young people in Trinity and KCC is focused on this happening in a safe and stable way.

Those who meet the eligibility criteria for the new Young Person's service will receive on-going support from the prime provider Look Ahead from 1st April 2019. With regard to the remaining young people at the scheme, adult services have been working to identify alternative suitable accommodation. Some of these young people are ready to move into independent living; others will require on-going support from the 18plus homelessness support service, and the adult prime provider is working to source them suitable accommodation with support.

For any young people where there is a need for them to stay at Trinity until suitable accommodation is found, they will be able to stay for a short period from 1st April 2019 while this is resolved.

This process continues to put young people's needs first and while many young people have started to move already, arrangements are now in place so that all young people can move when the right accommodation is found for them.

COUNTY COUNCIL**Thursday 21 March 2019****Question by Dan Daley to Graham Gibbens,
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health**

London Fire Brigade published a report on 4 February which found that of 177 care homes visited, 57% of these failed to meet adequate fire safety standards. Failures included deficient fire risk assessments, poorly maintained fire doors, lack of staff available to implement emergency plans, and inadequate training for staff and managers. Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health please outline what actions are being taken to ensure that Kent does not find itself in the same situation as London, and that satisfactory safety standards are being met within all care homes in which KCC places clients?

Answer

The Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS) are the regulator of fire safety standards in the industry and they actively monitor the care market to ensure mandatory regulatory standards are met. This has increased in recent years since the Grenfell disaster, with KFRS setting up specific forums and training for the Care sector in Kent, including care homes, Extra Care services and Supported Living. They continue to offer hands-on support to the sector. Further information can be found via this link: <http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/your-safety/business-safety/safer-care/>

Kent County Council (KCC) work with KFRS around the monitoring of standards in Kent's care homes through contract review and monitoring processes. A key part of this monitoring includes Health & Safety and Fire Safety. Specific questions on Fire Safety are asked of all care home providers, including checks on fire safety monitoring paperwork, equipment servicing and checks, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS), evacuation procedures, risk assessments and visual inspections of firefighting equipment, evacuation procedures and signage to ensure it is clear and appropriate around a care home.

KCC Commissioners work closely with local KFRS support services and know who and how to refer homes in to KFRS for either support, or highlighting concerns to KFRS prompting announced or unannounced inspections on providers.

KFRS publicise any improvement or enforcement notices issued on Care Home providers. They are at this stage only obliged to inform the Care Quality Commission (CQC) of issues found in care homes as another regulatory body, however KCC actively monitors the publicised notices from KFRS so it can gauge the risk in the market and if necessary, follow up with contract monitoring processes to ensure the safety of our clients. This may include the placing of restrictions/suspensions on a provider for failing to meet the required regulatory requirements.

KCC offer training on fire safety to its Commissioners as well as other aspects of health & safety on its Delta Learning platform. This includes Statutory Requirements in relation to Fire Safety 2019, Fire Safety Awareness and Fire Safety Essentials. KCC Commissioners have also partaken in the same KFRS training events providers have attended, so are aware of current issues, case studies and what the providers responsibilities are.

Other activities conducted by KCC Commissioners includes:

- Checking fire doors for on any obvious physical deficits e.g. holes, lack of intumescent strips.
- Confirming the training of staff including that all staff have participated in on-site evacuation training.
- Check that Fire risk assessments are in place, current and undertaken by a 'suitably trained' person.
- Check PEEPS are in place and current

In the future KCC will continue to monitor Fire Safety as part of their Care Home monitoring responsibilities and this will feed directly into our risk monitoring processes. This will be completed in conjunction with our KFRS and CQC partners.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

Question by Trudy Dean to Mike Whiting,
Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste

Tonbridge and Malling's Local Plan contains a proposal for a new development of 900 houses on Broadwater Farm, as an extension to Kings Hill where Kent County Council is the major landowner/ Partner in Liberty Property Trust UK. Could the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste explain what part Kent County Council has played in the development of this proposal and in his answer will he please state:

- a) what the County Council policy is with regard to access arrangements to new developments of this size;
- b) what the County Council policy is with regard to the spacing of any new access onto the West Malling bypass, Ashton Way, between the proposed access opposite West Malling station and Tower View;
- c) whether KCC promoted or supported the new access route which runs right through the centre of the New Barns and Broadwater Conservation Area;
- d) what the financial consequences would be for the developer of requiring a highly desirable internal vehicular access between Broadwater and Kings Hill; and
- e) explain why Liberty Trust applied for Planning Consent for up to 500 houses on five Kings Hill sites, which unhelpfully were not submitted as part of the Local Plan Call for Sites, but just shortly before the closure of the Local Plan consultation, and will therefore be considered as additional to the Local Plan housing figures, already set at a higher construction rate than at any time before.

Answer

As per the advice given by the monitoring officer, there are commercial issues which prevent me from answering your question in full. I have asked my office to arrange a meeting with you and the relevant officers to discuss these.

However, I can confirm that County Council policy in respect of question a) is published in the Kent Design Guide and is in accordance with the Manual for Streets, published by the Government.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2019

Question by Sarah Hamilton to Graham Gibbens,
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Given we know health inequalities are widening in line with national trends (particularly for the most deprived communities). Would the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health please reassure me how we are dealing with this going forward particularly in the case of Mental Illness, and those who are most vulnerable in our communities?

Answer

Health inequalities have been widening in England since 2010-2012 and the greater burden of ill-health due to health inequalities is straining national and local economies. Narrowing gaps in life expectancy is a focus of the Industrial Strategy, of the Department for Health and Social Care's vision for prevention and the NHS Long Term Plan and these should provide opportunities to address local health inequalities.

We know that some areas of Kent are amongst the 10% most deprived areas of the country. These include some areas in Thanet, Swale, Shepway, Dover, Maidstone, Dartford and Gravesham.

There are five main ways I would like to reassure you that we are progressing plans to reduce health inequalities in Kent in both physical and mental health:

1. The Kent Mind the Gap health inequalities strategy is being re-written and will be the key item at the Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee later this year. A whole council place-based health and wellbeing pilot will be instituted to respond to data in three of the most deprived communities in Kent. There will be a focus on mental wellbeing and social isolation.
2. The Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) programme for prevention will focus on those conditions that we know contribute to the gap in healthy life expectancy such as cancer, cardiovascular disease and mental disorders. Areas of priority action for the Prevention Workstream include reducing smoking in pregnancy, addressing unhealthy weight and improving alcohol treatment and recovery.
3. Kent has an extensive programme for Suicide Prevention and KCC are leading this work alongside colleagues from the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP). One focus of the programme for 2019 will be tackling harm in vulnerable groups, including those living in the areas of greatest deprivation. Currently the suicide prevention innovation fund has awarded funding to community programmes in areas of greatest need.
4. The programme for children's transformation for 0-25 years has a focus on vulnerable places and people. Examples of this work are the Headstart programme, the focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences informing all front-line services, and targeting of health visitors/ school nursing and perinatal

mental health services for people with high needs. There is also a strong focus on the key period of life -9 months to 3 years.

5. In addition, there are a number of projects with the Health and Europe Centre which address health inequalities. Of particular note are the projects on perinatal mental health and the Community Men's Sheds network across Kent.