

Assistant to the Executive – Adult Services and Public Health (12 month Review)

Primary departmental Links: Principal link to Adults' Health and Care with engagement across all departments of the County Council, as required. Additionally, links to partner organisations, as well as service user representative groups are key to this role, as determined by the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health.

Key outcomes:

The essence of the role is to help co-ordinate political engagement and to provide political advice and support to the County Council in its work to fulfil adult social care and public health statutory responsibilities as set out in the following primary pieces of legislation:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Mental Health Act 1983
- The National Health Service Act 2006
- The Health and Social Care Act 2012.

The need for robust and effective political engagement is critical as the Department seeks to manage ongoing demand and cost pressures, embrace the potential offered by new technology, and respond and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Navigating these challenges and opportunities within an increasingly complex partnership landscape is central to ensuring the County Council continues to deliver positive outcomes for Hampshire's adult population, including some of our most vulnerable residents. This post will provide capacity to support political engagement on these areas within the County Council, across Sectors (particularly the NHS and Voluntary and Community Sector) and with Hampshire's communities.

Key Functional Areas:

- To support the Executive Member in the discharge of their statutory role for all areas relating to social care for adults including: older people, people with physical disability, people with learning disability, people with mental health support needs, carers and ancillary services – as well as a broad duty relating to safeguarding adults.

Leadership development

In keeping with the ethos of the Department, and good practice, the Assistant to the Executive Member has sought to invest in their own political leadership development and grow their knowledge of Adults' Health and Care and Public Health functions. This includes attendance of LGA Leadership Essentials courses - Effective Cabinet Member (September 2021) and Adult Social Care Programme (November 2021).

The Assistant to the Executive Member will also be attending the NCASC Conference with Cllr Fairhurst in November this year.

- To support the Executive Member in carrying out their public health remit, including: work to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in Hampshire, commissioned services that support residents from birth to adulthood, public health leadership to NHS commissioners and work to protect residents from infections, outbreaks and other hazards, such as chemicals.

Public Health and Wellbeing

The Assistant to the Executive Member supported the Executive Member in providing political leadership as the Department, and wider organisation, has continued to respond to Covid-19 outbreaks and the ongoing impact of Covid on Hampshire's communities. This has included Deputising for the Executive Member on the Local Outbreak Management Board.

One of the key impacts of the pandemic response and sustained periods of social isolation is loneliness. The Assistant to the Executive Member has driven innovative in responding to this challenge among Hampshire's older populations through proposing and championing a Hampshire 'chatty café style' project [Now officially called 'Chat About', and about to be launched in October 2022.]. The Assistant to the Executive Member is working with the Member Champion for Mental Health and Mental Health staff to create the necessary framework and materials and establish pilots in their respective areas, with a view to this being rolled out across Hampshire, and to develop a 'pack' to help other Councillors or community groups to establish 'Chat About' venues in their areas. Both the Assistant to and the Executive Member also met with Canon Tess, Winchester Cathedral, to explore the potential for local churches to help find volunteers to support the initiative.

- To support the development of, and maintain political links with, key partner organisations such as other local authorities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, NHS organisations, health and care providers and Voluntary and Community Sector bodies.
- Assist in maintaining and developing partnership arrangements, engagement and communication with key local community and service-user led organisations. This includes ensuring positive engagement and support for key agendas, including co-production and user engagement and *Making Safeguarding Personal*.

Strengthening partnerships and co-production

A key focus during 2021-22 has been strengthening the voice of service users, their families, carers and wider communities in the co-production of health and care services. This has been achieved through providing leadership to, and strengthening, service user led organisations.

The Assistant to the Executive Member is co-chair of the Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership Board (HLDPB) and as part of this role, they have steered the HLDPB towards a new format, designed and co-produced by those with learning disabilities. The structure and balance of the Board is considerably changed, strengthening the voice of people who use learning disability services. Former Local Implementation Groups (LIGs) have been disbanded and superseded by working

groups, which have a more detailed focus on topics of relevance, such as health and care, communications, carers etc. This case study of this work can be seen via [Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership Board | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

As co-chair of the Hampshire Autism Partnership Board (HAPB), the Assistant to the Executive Member (alongside co-chair Margaret White and the Board Co-ordinator) is undertaking work to review the HAPB Autism Strategy. This follows publication of a new National Autism Strategy in July 2021. The review will be achieved via six Task and Finish groups which have been created to engage widely on, and develop, the necessary content.

- Participate in the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board, working with partners to safeguard adults, and deputise for the Executive Member as appropriate – recognising the role does not have an Executive function.
- Assist the Executive Member, Leader and wider Cabinet colleagues in making representations as appropriate on areas of regional and national policy development including, for example, anticipated health and care reforms.

The Assistant to the Executive Member will be attending the Conservative Conference in October and will make representations at meetings and fringes re ASC & PH issues to MPs where possible. The Assistant to the Executive Member has also asked questions of those standing for PM at recent leadership hustings about the Fair Cost of Care.

- Assist the Executive Member as required to communicate the County Council's position with regards to health and social care matters, as agreed through established corporate communication processes and channels.

HCC representative/Governor on Southern Health Foundation Trust and recently attended first Board meeting (to be formally ratified at the October Decision Day) – meeting planned with Director of Public Health to discuss this new role on Southern Health Foundation Trust, and how we can best work with them as partners to best serve our residents.]

Communication and representation

The Assistant to the Executive Member regularly attended the Executive Member Decision Days and other key Boards, briefings and meetings alongside, or on behalf of, the Executive Member. These included regular attendance at Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee, Health and Wellbeing Board and Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

An important aspect of the role has also been to communicate and uphold the County Council's position to key stakeholders and communities. An example of this is the visit to Winchester Beacon (homelessness and mental health support) with the Executive Member to meet and speak with residents and staff as part of the Adult Social Care Savings Programme to 2023 consultation. This visit was undertaken to understand further the service being offered and provide reassurance that feedback would inform any decisions made on savings proposals.

Celebrating success

Visits to several of the Extra Care Units across Hampshire have also been undertaken, including Nightingale Lodge in Romsey and Spinnaker View in Gosport, to see how they are working and to talk with residents and staff. This included a visit to the new Living Well Hub attached to Nightingale, as a more recent example of how the county is providing day support to older residents and their carers. Attendance at a 'turf-cutting' event at the new Extra Care in New Milton is also planned shortly plus visits to other nursing and residential homes and the Hampshire Equipment Services hub.

A particularly enjoyable part of the role is to join with staff and wider stakeholders to celebrate those who have gone above and beyond in their service of individuals and the public. Both the Assistant to the Executive Member and Executive Member recently attended the 2022 Carers' Awards at the Great Hall.

- Support the Executive Member in areas of policy development as instructed. This may include, but not be limited to:
 - Learning and applying lessons from Covid-19.
 - Further development of the County Council's strategic partnership arrangements with Health.
 - Safeguarding Adults.
 - Strengthening the voice of service users, their families, carers and wider communities in the co-design and development of health and care services.

Contrary to the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health, the Assistant to the Executive is not a statutory role and the post does not carry Executive decision-making powers. However, importantly, it does provide political support and advice to the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health and, as required, to the Leader and other Executive Members.

Scale of financial gearing/ impact of work undertaken:

The role encompasses a broad range of statutory services spanning both Adult Social Care services and Public Health functions. This includes circa 3,500 directly employed staff and many tens of thousands more staff operating across some 1,000+ partner and provider services.

The Department has a gross revenue budget of some £520m in 2021/22, which continues to come under increasing demand and cost pressures. The Department faces a further £40.6m shortfall by 2022-23 which must be met on top of the £99.034m required savings between 2017-2021. This role will play an important part in supporting the County Council's interface with its stakeholders and the public to ensure that decisions on what the Department can and cannot provide in the future are informed by the views of residents and service users. This applies equally to engagement on new ways of working, as the County Council seeks to maximise the positive innovations galvanised by the pandemic.

This report demonstrates that since its introduction, the Assistant to the Executive Member role has made a significant impact in supporting and strengthening political

leadership and the engagement of residents and communities in the Department's work and Member decision making. This will be increasingly important over the months ahead and in light of the significant financial and operational challenges that the Department, and wider County Council, now faces.

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