

Recommendations



Practical approach toolkit: Ensuring providers have a voice at the table

These recommendations are designed for organisations responsible for bringing adult social care providers into local or national planning discussions. This includes Chambers of Commerce, Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) teams, local authorities, care associations, workforce partnerships, and any organisation acting as a convenor between adult social care providers and wider skills or economic-planning structures.

They are based on proven practice and lessons learned from the Kent and Medway LSIP's approach to securing meaningful, consistent provider engagement. Each recommendation reflects methods that helped build trust, surface practical workforce insight, and involve providers in shaping realistic and locally relevant solutions.

For further detail, refer to the building blocks outlined in the toolkit.

At the end of these recommendations, you'll find a list of resources to support implementation.

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Engage adult social care providers early so regional skills activity is shaped by real front line insight, genuine relationships and a shared understanding of local workforce challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Start with open conversations to understand everyday pressures and priorities.■ Use simple evidence to show why their voice matters.■ Share how early insight shapes decisions and next steps.			
Action			

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Ensure adult social care is visible from the start of the process so its needs and opportunities are clearly recognised within wider skills planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explain why adult social care is different from health care and needs its own focus. ■ Highlight local roles, pathways and progression stories. ■ Use adult social care language and examples in all early materials. 			

Action

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Plan engagement around adult social care provider capacity to make it easy and worthwhile for busy front line leaders to be involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoid peak periods and long meetings. ■ Use short, focused sessions that give providers something immediately useful – such as practical insight, clear next steps, or quick wins – so they feel their time is worthwhile. ■ Offer flexible ways for providers to contribute, both in person and remotely. 			

Action			

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Plan the delivery work early so there's time for ideas to be translated into clear, practical actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Agree roles with clear aims and responsibilities before launching activities. ■ Share simple time lines that outline what will happen when. ■ Keep plans realistic and closely linked to provider needs. 			

Action

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use funding to support practical activity, strengthen participation and remove barriers that prevent providers engaging in regional skills work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cover small costs such as venues or refreshments. ■ Enable backfill or protected time where possible. ■ Keep asks light-touch and proportionate to provider capacity. 			

Action

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Prioritise low cost, scalable approaches that help many providers take part without heavy operational or financial demands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use shared events and joint sessions rather than multiple small meetings. ■ Provide ready to use materials and templates. ■ Build activities that can be repeated easily each year. 			

Action

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Make participation easier for smaller providers by keeping communication, processes and expectations simple and predictable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer one clear point of contact for questions. ■ Share short guides explaining how to get involved. ■ Ensure activities work for organisations with very limited time. 			

Action

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Work closely with trusted sector bodies to strengthen reach, build credibility and ensure engagement reflects real adult social care experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use existing networks such as registered manager groups, ensuring you speak to frontline managers dealing with everyday issues. ■ Co-plan messages and activities with sector specialists. ■ Ask partners to help explain the purpose and value of involvement. 			

Action
Empty space for action items

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use familiar networks and communication channels so providers hear about opportunities quickly and feel comfortable joining in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share updates through routes providers already use. ■ Attend established meetings instead of creating new ones. ■ Use simple, friendly and practical messaging so adult social care providers can immediately see the relevance and value of taking part. 			

Action

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Co-create solutions with providers so actions are realistic, meaningful and clearly shaped by lived experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invite providers to steer topics and priorities. ■ Check ideas with them before moving to delivery. ■ Share quick updates showing what has changed because of their input. 			

Action

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use clear, light-touch governance to guide and oversee the delivery of engagement activity and workforce actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set simple structures for oversight and decision making. ■ Provide short, regular progress updates. ■ Use feedback to adjust plans quickly where needed. 			

Action

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Establish simple, repeatable routines to show ongoing progress, demonstrate value, and keep providers engaged over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use short reporting cycles to keep momentum. ■ Make it easy for providers to see progress – by sharing regular updates, showing what actions have been completed, and highlighting key themes openly and transparently. ■ Share early wins to build confidence. 			
Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Bring people together through well timed events and discussions that encourage shared learning, problem solving and practical collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Run sector-led sessions with clear, relevant topics. ■ Invite a balanced mix of provider voices. ■ Show how insights from each session shape the next steps. 			
Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Plan for long term engagement by embedding simple, repeatable processes that make collaboration part of everyday regional skills activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set recurring sessions and touch points that providers can rely on. ■ Create shared resources that can be used across the region. ■ Keep roles and responsibilities stable where possible. 			

Action

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Design engagement models that work for all provider sizes so that participation remains inclusive, achievable and meaningful year after year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer options that require minimal preparation. ■ Use formats that work both for large and small services. ■ Provide flexible ways to stay involved over time. 			

Action

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Measure what truly matters to providers, focusing on workforce impact, practical improvements and the quality of ongoing collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Track engagement that leads to clear actions. ■ Capture changes that make work easier for providers. ■ Share simple summaries of what has improved. 			

Action

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Encourage cross sector learning to help providers explore ideas, innovations and approaches that strengthen their workforce and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use shared events to compare challenges and solutions. ■ Highlight practical examples that others can adopt. ■ Promote collaboration between different service types. 			

Action

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Raise awareness of adult social care careers by offering meaningful, realistic insights into roles, progression and the purpose of the work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use sessions that show real practice and real people. ■ Share stories (from providers or partners) that highlight professional growth and help raise the profile of the sector. ■ Work with partners to raise the profile of the sector. 			
Action			

Further support

- [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set \(ASC-WDS\)/Workforce Intelligence reports](#) – Use workforce data to evidence the case for change, and identify issues, opportunities and risks.
- [Skills for Care area support](#) – Get support from dedicated locality managers on areas including workforce development, planning, wellbeing, recruitment and retention, service integration, signposting to local networks and events.
- [Local networks](#) – Join a peer support network for adult social care providers, including frontline managers, deputy managers, learning and development leads, CEOs etc.
- [Induction](#) – Use this comprehensive induction toolkit for social care employers, which offers structured checklists, role-specific guidance, and inclusive best-practice resources to effectively onboard new starters.
- [Developing your workforce](#) – Visit this comprehensive online hub which offers free wellbeing resources – including guidance, peer support frameworks, and resilience-building materials – alongside funded learning opportunities like fully covered courses and CPD for adult social care staff.
- [The Care Workforce Pathway](#) – Develop your workforce with clear roles and career progression.