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## **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**

**6 March 2024**

### **Update on the delivery of the two-year improvement programme 2023-25 to assist the delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-25 and preparation for Care Quality Commission Assurance of Adult Social Care**

**Report by Director of Adults and Health (DASS) and Assistant Director – Improvement and Assurance**

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#### **Summary**

On 22 November 2023 the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC) considered a report that set out the detail of the first iteration of Adult Social Care's self-assessment in preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance. Within that self-assessment document were a number of areas for improvement, which had been identified for delivery as part of the directorate's two-year improvement programme. The delivery of this programme is being supported by the council's transformation fund, which was agreed in January 2023. It was agreed that regular updates would be presented to update on progress.

As set out in the previous report, the programme is being delivered during a period of significant challenge, which includes the need to support our NHS partners in the facilitation of discharging patients from hospital, as well as manage increased demand for adult social care. Workforce recruitment and retention issues remain key for the council, as well as independent and voluntary sector providers, with the fragility in the care market together with increasing prices across the whole care sector.

Ongoing management oversight of the capacity required has been planned and resourced for the improvement programme during the remainder of 2023/24 and throughout 2024/25, with the procurement of Roretti Ltd to provide external capacity to support delivery, up until 30 June 2025.

#### **Focus for Scrutiny**

The Committee is asked to consider the update on the delivery of the two-year improvement programme.

#### **Key Lines of Enquiry include:**

Key areas for the committee to consider and comment on are:

1. The progress made to date within each of the improvement programme workstreams, taking into consideration the Council's strategic ambitions and the complexities currently facing adult social care.

2. The linkages with the content of the updated iteration of the adult social care [self-assessment](#) recently considered and discussed by the Committee in November, and whether the Committees feedback has been adequately addressed in the latest version;
3. How the committee intends to discharge its scrutiny responsibility to support service improvement by identifying specific parts of the improvement programme for future scrutiny, if required.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

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## **Background and Context**

### **1. Strategic focus for Adults' Social Care**

#### **National Policy**

- 1.1 An Innovation and Improvement Unit has been established within the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) to develop and define clear priorities which make person-centred care and support a reality for people who use services across adult social care. The Council in partnership with East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council has submitted an expression of interest for funding from the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF), which provides a total of £42.6m nationally in grant funding over 2023 to 2024 (£20m) and 2024 to 2025 (£22.6m), to support innovation in adult social care across England. The allocation across Sussex is £1,201,750 and will be used to fund projects to digitalise the carers pathway and increase the use of mainstream technology for carers, as well as support to expand the provision of shared lives carers schemes over the next two financial years.
- 1.2 In respect of other areas of adult social care reform, charging reform remains on pause following the Chancellor's 2022 Autumn budget statement. Although the introduction of a 'fair rate for care', as well as allowing self-funders to ask their local authority to arrange care on their behalf together with access to the 'fair rate of care' is delayed, work is continuing to enable people to access our services through improved online self-assessment tools, that will help manage the increasing demand for assessments we are currently facing as well as provide a more responsive and timely service to our customers.

#### **Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance and Self-Assessment**

- 1.3 The first iteration of the West Sussex Adult Social Care (ASC) self-assessment in preparation for CQC assurance was prepared last year and reviewed by the Committee in November 2023. The self-assessment sets out areas which the service is proud of and areas for improvement, which are included in this report as part of the two-year improvement

programme. The self-assessment is being regularly updated as the improvement programme progresses, as well as adding further examples of good practice and relevant data. The self-assessment now has a dedicated webpage, to improve accessibility and to enable real time updates.

- 1.4 The service has utilised the offer from the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services (ADASS) to engage an ADASS associate – Teresa Bell, a former Director of Adult Social Services - to carry out an external review of the self-assessment report as well as meeting several members of frontline staff and partners through interviews and focus groups during December 2023 and January 2024, as part of preparations for CQC’s assurance visit.
- 1.5 The Adults Departmental Leadership Team (DLT) received feedback on 7 February 2023, which provided DLT with significant assurance that the areas to be proud of and areas to improve, as reflected in the self-assessment, resonated with staff and partners, with no significant gaps identified. However, there were suggested improvements and additions that have now, or will be, included in the next iteration of the self-assessment document, these include:
  - Clearer descriptions of Quality Assurance processes, particularly in the Commissioning area – what we hope to look like
  - Further examples of what we do well and those things that result in positive outcomes for individuals
  - Greater emphasis and expansion on the positive role and work of the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Information Group (QASIG), and more broadly the good work of Safeguarding
  - Delays in fee payments to adult social care providers, detailing the issue and plans to address
  - Social Value, particularly within procurement. Link provided to the social value framework
  - Planned improvement for greater availability and accessibility of meaningful data, including the development of PowerBI dashboards to enable management oversight of a customer’s journey and the development of a Mental Health Needs Assessment which will inform future service planning.
  - An acknowledgement of the narrative used by staff and partners reflecting on previous relationships and behaviours and its impact upon the service. The recognition by staff that current leadership is enabling ongoing culture change.
- 1.6 These accompany a number of other updates that have been made to the latest iteration of the self-assessment document since November 2023, which are summarised as follows:
  - Additions from the delivery partner and key strategic and operational staff including more context around the adult social care strategy and foundation work to date (programme management support, governance, commissioning, market sustainability, partnerships and collaboration)
  - Some sentence reformatting for better readability and explanations where terms might not be clear to the lay person

- Consistency of frequent terms such as 'adult services' and expansion of any acronyms in first use
- Some additional/changed wording to the areas we are most proud of and areas for improvement for greater clarity about what we are saying
- Addition of staff comments from the survey – these have been added in areas of assessment, information and advice, diversity and inclusion, co-production, partnership working, transitions, safeguarding and leadership.
- The addition and explanation of the Council's performance monitoring and reporting in the opening section to align with the Performance and Resources Report
- The addition and explanation of the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)
- Recently available ASCOF benchmarking data, specifically, satisfaction of West Sussex provided care and support, those in receipt of Direct Payments, those in contact with secondary mental health services living independently and in employment, ease of access to information, choice and control, and, where our percentages are lower than the England average, the work we are doing to address this
- Addition of the 'we statements' as set out in the CQC assurance framework
- Updated population statistics and data, updated budget figures for 2024/25
- Link to the latest Local Account 2022/23
- Addition of information on Integrated Community Teams and partnership working with the NHS
- Updates on plans to improve and ease hospital discharge pressures – such as the mental health hospital social work discharge team pilot, and the Home First service
- Local data to evidence the effectiveness of certain services, such as reablement and technology enabled care.
- Further information provided on 'Making Safeguarding Personal'
- Evidence of our effective approaches to partnership working, such as the Learning Disability Mortality Reviews (LeDeR) process
- Council Pulse survey results from September 2023 and plans to address those People Framework KPIs that have seen a decline in performance
- Additional context and narrative about assessment waiting times
- Detailing the projects where DHSC Accelerating Reform Fund monies will be used to scale up digital support to carers and promote the Shared Lives Carers Scheme across the Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB) footprint.

1.7 Having undertaken and announced the outcome of five pilot assessments last year, notification of formal assessments began in December 2023. It is expected that nine weeks' notice will be given ahead of assurance visits, with local authorities expected to complete an information return, providing evidence within 38 categories, which includes a completed self-assessment. The CQC expects to complete all initial formal assessments for all local authorities within two years, so by the end of 2025.

## **Adult Social Care Strategy (2022-25)**

- 1.8 Work to deliver the 'we will' commitments in the Adult Social Care Strategy (2022-25) and support the delivery of all aspects of our Council Plan (2021-25) is central to the changes and improvements that are required. Opportunities to co-design and co-produce with customers and partners is included as part of the directorate's ongoing programme.

## **2. Adult Social Care Improvement Programme 2023-25 update**

- 2.1 Work delivered throughout 2022/23 and early 2023/24 supported by transformation funding provided the foundation for the further improvements and service development planned within the programme, as detailed in the previous report to HASC. The improvement programme is using these foundations to design models of care and support that are focused on meeting the needs of people who need adult social care support.
- 2.2 Based on the work to date, the programme has been split into the following workstreams, which include strategic commissioning; practice and operations; finance and systems; workforce and organisational development; performance and insight; and systems partnership working. Communications and change, and CQC assurance readiness are included as overarching workstreams. The delivery of these workstreams continues to be overseen by the Adults Portfolio Board – Improvement and Assurance, chaired by the Assistant Director – Improvement and Assurance, with all DLT members represented.
- 2.3 An internal audit of the improvement programme undertaken in December 2023 and January 2024 has concluded an opinion of substantial assurance, where a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of the objectives in the area audited, which included:
- A robust and effective governance framework is in place, with roles and responsibilities clearly defined, resulting in appropriate oversight and monitoring arrangements including executive leadership and Members where applicable.
  - The programme and its projects are appropriately planned, required resources are effectively identified and secured, and relevant risks identified and managed appropriately.
  - There is effective stakeholder engagement throughout the programme's lifecycle.
  - The Programme and its projects align with the Council's strategic objectives.
- 2.4 As a result, there are no management actions recommended.
- 2.5 Key elements of the work that has been delivered to date, since the last update to HASC on 22 November 2023, are summarised in the following paragraphs.

## Improvement Programme Design Principles

- 2.6 To support the delivery of the improvement programme, a set of design principles have been co-produced with people that the council supports, their family and friend carers, voluntary and community sector partners and Adults' Services. The design principles are as follows:
1. **Simple** - People tell their story only once; there are a minimum number of steps in a process; the way we work is straightforward for people who access services; all communication is clear.
  2. **People centred** – There is a focus on the whole person - their strengths, needs, interests, family and friend networks and connections to the wider community.
  3. **Supporting choice and control** - People are empowered to take the level of control they choose; choice is actively offered, both within and beyond adult social care services.
  4. **Inclusion and tackling inequalities** - Diversity is respected and valued; equality and inclusion are promoted in all that we do.
  5. **Connected** – Teams across the council work together and with wider public services, social care providers and the voluntary and community sector, to improve care and support.
  6. **Empowered with technology** - Digital and technology supports people to live well.
  7. **With data in mind** - Quality data informs decision making and people have a clear understanding of, and control over, their data.
  8. **Early support** - Assets in the community are utilised and people can get early and flexible support.
- 2.7 As individual projects progress, if required, a design panel will be convened, which will include stakeholders and representatives dependent on the area of work, to consider any proposals against these principles. Panel discussions and decisions will be recorded to identify any common themes and to inform ongoing service developments.

## Strategic Commissioning Workstream

- 2.8 An overarching Adult Social Care Commissioning Strategy has been drafted and agreed, subject to any minor amendments. Work has commenced to develop market position statements (MPS) for Older People's bed-based care - with a co-production session with providers being held - and Day Care and Extra Care Housing MPS chapters being drafted.
- 2.9 The chief executives of the Council and NHS Sussex have agreed to progress a review of the current section 75 agreements between the Sussex ICB and the council. A scoping paper has been developed to outline the scale of the work required. As the current agreement ends in March 2024, a 12-month extension will be applied to manage a safe and smooth transfer of functions from 1 April 2025.
- 2.10 Preparation for piloting Individual Service Funds (ISFs) has been ongoing with the development of the service delivery model and independent

support planning model, with agreements, guidance and specifications drafted. A formal decision in relation to the implementation of pilots will be considered in the next couple of months.

### **Practice and Operations Workstream**

- 2.11 Two joint Transitions protocols have been developed and published, covering how young people with different support needs transfer from children's to adult social care by clearly setting out the key roles and responsibilities of different teams at different points in a young person's journey. One relates to young people with disabilities and the other for young people with mental health issues. The protocols are the result of ongoing processes that have improved knowledge and built mutual understanding between children's and adult social care teams.
- 2.12 Review of core guidance on training to ensure that it is aligned to strength-based working has begun. Dedicated review teams continue working to ensure our strategic objectives are being fulfilled, in accordance with statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, with an increased focus on those receiving care through council managed budgets and those in higher cost placements.

### **Finance and Systems Workstream**

- 2.13 To optimise utilisation of all commissioned beds by the Council, which are paid for regardless of occupancy i.e., Shaw, a new bed booking system, which allows the Combined Placement and Sourcing Team to schedule bookings for when a bed becomes available, went live on 20 December 2023. The system allows staff to search for availability by geographical area or placement type across all block provision. The provider is able to access the system directly to confirm where a provisional booking has been made to confirm their acceptance of that booking. If a booking is unsuitable then the provider can make it available again for another booking to occur. When a placement becomes available then the provider can update the system in real time. This process will facilitate a more efficient management of block contracts and reduce the number of placements commissioned outside of block contract arrangements.

### **Workforce and Organisational Development Workstream**

- 2.14 The first iteration of Adults Workforce Strategy and action plan up until March 2024 has been agreed by the Adults leadership team. Work has continued with the appointed provider to deliver training to contribute to the development of the council's commissioning workforce, across People and Communities commissioning teams with 78 staff receiving the training so far.

### **Performance and Insight Workstream**

- 2.15 Microsoft Power BI dashboards for phase 1 of the project have been built, tested and a full roll out has been completed. Phase 1 has focussed on building a core Adult Social Care (ASC)-Dataset which will be utilised for

internal and external reporting, providing 'one version' of the truth. The new ASC Performance Dashboard (PowerBI) is designed to show the customer journey and outcomes in line with the agreed business processes, providing managers with information on 'open' or 'work in progress,' timeliness and completed work, with phase 1 concentrating on the contact and assessment pathways. Phase 2 is underway with specifications currently being built and tested, with a planned go-live date at the end of February/early March 2024, which will focus on reviews and safeguarding pathways. Early feedback from the Phase 1 training has been positive and is already helping staff to identify cases that require action, either to move on through the pathway or to data cleanse where work steps have not been completed accurately. This work will improve data quality, access to live performance management and case data, and ultimately improve confidence in performance data both internally and externally.

2.16 A revised process for the financial authorisation of care packages has been designed and is currently being implemented.

### **System and Partnership Working Workstream**

2.17 Engagement with staff continues to progress the intermediate care project with a system wide plenary held bringing system leaders together to discuss and understand analytical work so far, alongside the findings and proposals from Professor John Bolton to develop key themes and principles for any new ways of working.

2.18 Procurement of additional domiciliary care and care home capacity has been completed with additional hospital discharge services in place as well as additional staffing.

### **Changes to the programme**

2.19 Due to uncertainty and risk within adult social care, it is recognised that there will be a need throughout the programme to re-focus the content over the two-year period.

2.20 Since the last report to HASC in November 2023, the customer journey workstream has evolved into a cross-cutting area underpinning all workstreams in the programme. The customers' voice is an integral part of each of the design principle themes, as set out in point 2.6, and will be used in all change projects and improvement activities going forward. The Programme does not now require a standalone Customer Journey workstream but will provide the necessary expertise to support workstreams/projects on applying the design principles approach, as appropriate. Existing governance will also assure the customer voice drives improvements.

2.21 The Committee was previously updated that work to explore the role of Directly Provided Services to address a specific gap identified within provision for a relatively small but increasing number of adults with high and complex needs had been paused due to strategic discussions around the service long term plans for this service. As a result of these discussions,



a piece of work to review and analyse previous review work undertaken, in terms of what is required for the future, has begun and will report to the Adults Portfolio Board – Improvement and Assurance in March 2024.

### **3. Risk implications and mitigations**

- 3.1 Significant risks remain in the demand for adult social care and the waiting times for assessment and service provision that are ongoing. The management of these are crucial to ensure that the County Council is fulfilling its statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, especially with upcoming CQC assurance. Mitigations continue to be in place to address some of the risks in the short term, however the recruitment of good quality locum social workers is an ongoing risk for the delivery of financial savings in respect of undertaking reviews across operational teams.
- 3.2 As reported in the Performance and Resources Report for Quarter 3, data quality and reliability in Mosaic continues to present a risk to the Adults budget and ability to forecast accurately. Although progress continues to be made in addressing processing backlogs, Mosaic does not yet show an accurate record of customer numbers or care costs. Financial management framework improvements are included within the Adults improvement programme, however, due to the current pressures in relation to the Adults budget, an interim solution to mitigate this risk will be required, ahead of longer term planned improvements as part of the improvement programme.
- 3.3 The success of the improvement programme is also dependent on activities undertaken outside of the directorate, in particular the delivery of the financial assessment improvement programme. Potential impacts will be managed and monitored in partnership with corporate finance, to ensure that there are no significant impacts on the delivery of either programme.
- 3.4 Resources deployed to support the use of Government initiatives, such as the Market Sustainability Improvement Fund for example, are the same as those which are currently delivering the programmes of work as detailed in the report and therefore, there is an ongoing risk that key strategic actions may not be delivered.
- 3.5 While strong progress has been made over the past two years, the work involved to deliver savings, prepare for inspection and ASC reform, and deliver business as usual remains significant. It is crucial that the programme of work to improve adult social care in West Sussex continues to support the wider progress that the organisation has made in the past three years.

### **4. Contribution to achieving our Climate Change Strategy**

- 4.1 Through the change opportunities afforded by proposed new models, new services and service redesigns within Adults and Health, we will contribute fully to the corporate ambitions on climate change, to be a net zero carbon organisation by 2030 and transforming how we work.

4.2 Climate Change has been embedded in all project documentation managed by the Programme Management Office and reviewed by the Adult Social Care Portfolio Board.

## **5. Finance**

5.1 The Council's net budget for adult social care in 2024/25 is approximately £264m, which has risen by 28% over the last five years. Around 95% of this relates to the cost of funding the social care needs of approximately 8,500 residents who meet the national eligibility criteria in the Care Act. The Council has also committed £8m of additional funding to deliver the improvement programme over two years.

## **6. Policy Alignment and Compliance**

6.1 The improvement programme will assist in the delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategy which sets out five priorities to guide the future development of adult social care services within the context of the Council Plan.

## **7. Our Council Plan**

7.1 Developed from the County Council's reset plan in 2020/21, 'Our Council Plan 2021-2025' sets out the council's priorities over the next four years and the outcomes to achieve for people who live and work in West Sussex. The focus is on four priorities, which are:

- Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations
- A sustainable and prosperous economy
- Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential
- Making the best use of resources

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no legal implications.

## **9. Equality Duty and human rights assessment**

9.1 The service is on a journey to move from an Equality Act compliance focus to one which embodies inclusion and truly person-centered services and support. Key decisions taken include an assessment of any equality implications of proposals and how, if necessary, these will be mitigated for people with protected characteristics. The long-standing Adults' Services, Customer and Carer Group, the Minorities Health and Social Care Group and the Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards meet regularly and serve as critical friends to the service.

## **10. Public Health**

10.1 Adult Services works in close partnership with Public Health and the voluntary and community sector and other partner agencies to increase the

range of options open to people to support their wellbeing, as well as reaching people earlier before they require adult social care services.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Self-Assessment – link to follow