
Report to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

11 January 2023

Delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-2025 – ‘The life you want to lead’

Report by Director of Adults and Health (DASS)

Summary

To support the delivery of all aspects of our Council Plan (2021-2025) the Cabinet agreed the Adult Social Care Strategy (2022-25) in February 2022, which is attached as Appendix A. The strategy was co-designed with County Council staff, partners, customers, and carers across the county. Titled ‘The life you want to lead’, the strategy articulates the direction of travel for adult social care from the perspective of those who receive services. It puts customers at the heart of changes and improvements that are required over the next three years.

The report sets out how the delivery of the strategy has been mapped into all aspects of the 2022/23 Adults and Health business plan and how this will continue into 2023/24 and future years.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to scrutinise the planned delivery of the strategy, as set out in the report and consider whether the activities identified meet the commitments set out in the strategy.

Key Lines of Enquiry include:

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

1. The activities identified that have already delivered against the commitments as set out in the strategy.
2. The planned activities identified to meet the commitments set out in the strategy.
3. Identify any areas for consideration for future scrutiny or any areas to highlight to the Cabinet Member.

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

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Adults and Health directorate has a £215.876m revenue budget for 2022/23 to deliver Adults' Services in West Sussex. This budget funds a wide range of activities to help those who are older or living with disability or physical or mental illness live independently and stay safe and well. Over 12,000 people receive a service provided or commissioned by Adults' Services. This includes over 4,000 people under 65 years and over 8,000 over 65 years.
- 1.2 To support the delivery of all aspects of our Council Plan (2021-2025) the Cabinet agreed the Adult Social Care Strategy (2022-25) in February 2022, which is attached as Appendix A. The strategy was co-designed with County Council staff, partners, customers, and carers across the county. Titled 'The life you want to lead', the strategy articulates the direction of travel for adult social care from the perspective of those who receive our services. It puts customers at the heart of changes and improvements that are required over the next three years. Work to deliver the 'we will' commitments has been mapped into all aspects of the 2022/23 Adults and Health business plan and will continue into 2023/24 and future years.
- 1.3 The strategy sets out five priority areas which will continue to guide decisions for prioritising areas of improvement and how the Adult Social Care (ASC) budget is spent. These priority areas are as follows:
- **Building relationships and connections** – supporting families and friends to access support and tackle social isolation; join-up services which put relations at the centre; increase opportunities for wider social networks
 - **Empowerment** – putting people at the centre of care; make sure people have the right information and advice when they need it; access to paid work; ensure collaborative and timely decision making of frontline staff
 - **Home** – supporting people to live well in their own home for longer; increase the use of alternative accommodation models such as extra care; help young people to move out of the family home in a planned way
 - **Addressing gaps** – to include the shortage of care workers; gaps in understanding and support for autistic adults and people with an acquired brain injury; transition from Children's to Adults' Services; support people to plan for the cost of care
 - **Inclusion and tackling inequalities** – inclusion for people facing multiple disadvantage; understanding and improving access to services for diverse communities; promoting digital inclusion and the use of assisted technology
- 1.4 These priorities are at the forefront of the programmes/projects that are set out in this report, as well as ongoing business as usual activities. The strategy is set to be delivered over the next few years, with some integral programmes currently in design phase. The timescale of the strategy may need to be extended due to the significance of the programme of work to deliver.
- 1.5 Based on commitments set out in the strategy, a narrative has been produced, which will be used to communicate the vision for the directorate with the wider membership of the County Council, staff, partners and customers, as follows:

We deliver adult social care and support to more than 12,000 residents across West Sussex each year. 'The life you want to lead' is our strategy for delivering adult social care until 2025. The strategy supports the delivery of the priorities identified in Our Council Plan. People across West Sussex helped design our strategy, which guides our decisions on making the best use of resources and delivers a series of 'we will' statements based on what people have told us is important to them.

Relationships between family and friends, the cared for and carers has the biggest impact on peoples' lives. People want to be involved in the decisions about their care and support; to have a place they can call home and feel supported to be safe and comfortable; to feel they are listened to and respected; and for their diversity to be valued.

Where people are eligible for care and support from us, we will support them to lead independent fulfilled lives, helping them to live in their own homes for as long as possible. We will ensure access to our services are clear and transparent and that we promote inclusion, tackle inequalities, listen-and offer advice and information, providing and commissioning services and support, as well as ensuring young people in their transition to adulthood continue to feel supported.

We will also support people early, helping to prevent their needs from escalating, as well as keeping vulnerable adults safe. We will achieve this by taking a robust, personalised, strength-based approach in our practice that promotes wellbeing.

Together with our partners, we will manage the significant challenges that adult social care is facing now and in the longer term, both locally and nationally, ensuring we are there to help those in the greatest need of care and support.

2 Proposal details

Delivery

- 2.1 A number of activities have delivered against the commitments set out in the strategy, as detailed in the following paragraphs.
- 2.2 The focussed review of current social care packages has allowed teams to embed further a **strength-based approach to practice** which emphasises it being client led and understanding people's self-determination and wishes, with a focus on future outcomes and the strengths that people possess. The following case study gives an example of the success of this process in terms of strategic outcomes:

S has a progressive condition and had a care package that included three daily hour-long care calls.

At their review in June, S and their partner said that the care package did not fully meet their needs and they found it intrusive.

The social worker put S's partner in touch with local social prescribers who supported them to get out in the local community and join a local bridge club. A referral was made for a device that could locate them if they had a fall. This

meant they could go for lunch in town and walk the dog. The social worker then arranged for an occupational therapist to visit.

The occupational therapist worked with the couple to enable S to be moved by their partner without the need for complex equipment or support from carers.

The process was guided by the outcomes S and their partner wanted to achieve and was based on building their capabilities and strengths.

As the changes were working well S wanted to reduce the number of daily care calls, and this was trialled. The occupational therapist supported them during this period and explained additional options for better accessibility and safety within their home.

Owing to the success of the trial, the couple decided to stop the care and support they had been receiving as they could now manage these tasks themselves. Their quality of life has significantly improved and they no longer require funded care support from the council.

- 2.3 Over the past year, in Partnership with Arun District Council, Mid Sussex District Council, Eldon Housing Association and Housing 21, there have been 2 new **Extra Care Housing Services** open in East Grinstead and Eastergate. The developments have provided an additional 108 units of Extra Care Housing to vulnerable adults in West Sussex, of these 29 are shared equity and 78 affordable rent. Work is ongoing to develop further Extra Care Schemes across the county; currently a new service is being developed in Worthing with Worthing Borough Council and Specialist Support Housing. This will see a renovation of an ex sheltered scheme that will provide 20 units of Extra Care Housing and will be the first scheme to accept Adults of 18+ who require care and accommodation. The aim is to complete the renovation by July 2023.
- 2.4 Adult Social Care staff and customers held a Directly Provided Services **Co-production** Event in support of people and organisations working together to share influence, skills and experience to design, deliver and monitor care services and projects. This event provided an opportunity to showcase and celebrate many of the Social Care co-production projects over the last year as well as facilitate networking and future planning, which included a newly designed **co-production toolkit for staff** to utilise. The toolkit was pulled together to generate a collective understanding of what co-production and co-design is; when to do it; and tips on how to do it well. The aim was two-fold, to develop a core group of staff from across Adults' Services who shared a collective understanding of what involving people in a meaningful way really means and how to do it in practice; and to create a tool which wider staff could use to help them to start to think about co-production and co-design. Financial assessment customer information booklets have also been co-designed with members of the Adults' Services Customer & Carer Group, voluntary and community sector colleagues which included, Aldingbourne Trust and Impact Advocacy working with service users and self-advocates.
- 2.5 To address **workforce gaps**, ten new internationally recruited social workers have started work with the County Council. All the recruits are qualified Social workers in their own countries and have been registered with Social Work England to practice in the UK, all bringing a wealth of social work experience especially in strength based practice. Work has begun to fill some of the County Council's Occupational Therapy staff vacancies.

- 2.6 Current programmes and strategies have been aligned to the 'we will' statements including an update to the Changing Futures Programme, which is a Sussex-wide system change programme focussing on improving systems and services for people experiencing multiple disadvantage, funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities until March 2024 and has been aligned to the 'we will' statement around people facing multiple disadvantage, within the inclusion and tackling inequalities priority. Progress against the Carers' Strategy has been aligned to families and close support networks, within the building relationships and connections priority.

Planned delivery

- 2.7 As set out in 1.4, the strategy is set to be delivered over the next few years, with some integral programmes currently in design phase. The timescale of the strategy may need to be extended due to the significance of the programme of work to deliver. The following paragraphs outline key pieces of work being progressed in 2022/23 and into 2023/24 to deliver the priorities set out in the strategy.
- 2.8 **Co-production** is at the heart of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2022/25 and work continues to embed a co-production approach across the directorate. Co-production is a core part of ongoing projects, including access to Adult Social Care. Long standing groups such as the Adults' Services Customer and Carer Group, the Minorities Health & Social Care Group and Learning Disabilities and Autism Partnership Boards, which are key routes for co-production, are also being strengthened. In addition, productive relations are strengthening with the voluntary and community sector (VCSE) through the VCSE Collaboration Board, which was established as part of the Adult Social Care Strategy development. A co-production practitioners' group to engage partners through projects and programmes has also been established. In addition, a forum chaired by the Director with key adult social care providers has been developed, to ensure ongoing dialogue and work in partnership to support a challenged provider market in West Sussex.
- 2.9 The Director of Adults and Health and Director of Children, Young People and Learning are joint sponsors of a programme to improve **transition processes** and planning pathways between Children's and Adults' services, improving the joined-up approach between operational teams supporting those with diagnosed physical and learning disabilities and young people with mental health issues. A plan to deliver a new model for children with disabilities has a gateway review in March/April 2023, with planned final implementation of a new model by September 2023. The success of the programme will be measured in terms of the numbers of children transitioning to adult support who are identified at a developmentally appropriate stage, involved in planning for their adulthood in a meaningful and strengths-based way, so they can transition into adult social care with minimal disruption.
- 2.10 As set out in 2.2, work is ongoing to embed further a **strength-based approach to practice** which emphasises it being client led and understanding people's self-determination and wishes, with a focus on future outcomes and the strengths that people possess. This approach is integral to the delivery of the strategy, especially priorities around building relationships and connections; empowerment; and home. Recent reviews carried out demonstrate how people

can benefit from innovative solutions to their care needs. This can also free up capacity for much needed packages of care and support for other people who require it, making an efficient use of the capacity available within the market. Feedback from customers, their families and staff who are carrying out the reviews has been very positive, as per the case study set out earlier in the report.

- 2.11 The effective **commissioning of services** underpins the principles and priorities in the strategy. The following bullet points set out the key pieces of work that are being progressed:
- As a result of the discussions with individuals, as set out in the previous paragraph, providers may see changes in customers' care plans. The Council is very mindful of the business operating models used and therefore, is working closely with providers to look at ways they can support people to live independently and provide truly person-centred care.
 - A draft Market Sustainability Plan has been developed in collaboration with local providers and was submitted to the Department for Health and Social Care on 14 October 2022. This sets out a draft local strategy for West Sussex over the next three years (2022-25) and demonstrates the timescales for moving towards a sustainable fee rate as well as strategic planning for any changes in provision required in response to local need.
 - The County Council has two commissioning section 75 agreements with the Integrated Care System (ICS). The first is specific to the joint commissioning of adult learning disabilities (LD), working age mental health and children's community health (including emotional wellbeing and mental health) and the second relates to the use of the Better Care Fund. These arrangements are of significant strategic importance to the County Council and ICS because of the scope and nature of services commissioned, the high value spend and the partnership arrangements required to ensure effective strategy, planning and delivery. The Section 75 agreement in relation to the joint commissioning of adult LD, working age mental health and children's community health (including emotional wellbeing and mental health), has been in place since 2015 and is currently being reviewed with the intention that it will be replaced with a new agreement rather than extended from 1 April 2024.
- 2.12 A programme to redesign **access** to Adult Social Care will deliver aspects of the strategy but will also address the continued rising demand from residents for Adult Social Care support either via community networks or directly from the County Council. There is a range of contributory factors, not least an increasing and more diverse population, improving life expectancy and range of complex health, social and mental health needs. As set out in the strategy, the County Council should be supporting people to find appropriate solutions to meet their needs where positive impact is demonstrated by diversion away from formal care, whilst achieving good outcomes wherever possible. This will also help support preparation for social care reform in terms of information, advice and guidance. Therefore, the overarching aims of the programme are to:
- Meet statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 to Prevent, Reduce and Delay
 - Improve access to appropriate Adult Social Care services at the appropriate time
 - Improve access by the use of clear, transparent and high-quality information delivered consistently via effective use of the web, online, telephony and face to face channels.

- 2.13 Phase 1 of the programme that will run up to 31 March 2023 initially has a focus on developing a clearer understanding of the current service provision in terms of processes, customer journeys, data and opportunities for improvement.
- 2.14 Actions in respect of the **financial assessment improvement plan**, as reported to the Committee in September 2022, continue between operational finance and adult social care. Significant progress has been made in automating the financial assessment process for the 2023/34 financial year with the preparation for introduction of the Financial Batch Update System (FABU). This will enable the uplift of benefit information for customers to be completed as soon as the new benefit rates are in place in April leading to more timely notification of the re-assessed contribution and less demand on customers to provide benefit documentation.
- 2.15 In addition, improvements continue to be made in updating financial assessment information in communications to customers with priority being given to sending information in advance of any requirements or changes that are needed. Key developments to digital working including better use of electronic communications and improvements to web landing pages to provide clarity to customers of the process that are underway.

3 Challenges in delivering the strategy

- 3.1 A strength-based approach to practice, as set out previously in the report, is more time consuming to undertake and is having an impact on the numbers waiting for assessment and review. Challenges in capacity in both the provider market and the internal Combined Sourcing and Placement Team – who source care – is impacting on those waiting for a service to start, including those waiting to be discharged from hospital, who have been assessed as having an eligible social care need.
- 3.2 Providers are facing significant challenges, particularly in relation to workforce and cost pressures. In the last eight months there have been seven provider closures/hand backs. Four of these were care homes for older people representing a loss of 97 beds from the market. Two were domiciliary care agencies for older people, one of which was bought by another provider enabling people's care to continue, the other agency closed completely and their customers' care was sought from other agencies. The remaining provider was a care home for people with a learning disability representing a loss of 14 beds from the market. In total 104 customers have been impacted by these closures and hand backs. All customers were moved to new services and operationally learning has been captured which will help the service manage any closures in the future.
- 3.3 As across the country, the Council is experiencing social care workforce pressures. As of 31 October 2022, the vacancy gap for qualified social workers and occupational therapists, who carry out social care assessments, was 15.6% (based on agreed establishment). This is a reduced position as normally happens this time of year following the intake of newly qualified social workers and in addition this autumn the international recruitment starts over the summer months. £2m in the County Council's 2022/23 budget, was used to

fund an increase in pay and reward for the whole of the qualified staff group, to ensure the Council is seen as a competitive employer.

- 3.4 Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of adult social care were phased out from 2010. The Health and Care Act 2022 confirmed that CQC would resume its regulatory assurance role of adult social care. The CQC intend to start carrying out inspections in 2023. At this moment in time there is no indicative schedule of when individual authorities will be inspected and the final approach and methodology has yet to be published. 'Getting ready for assurance' work is ongoing, which aligns closely to the CQC themes and quality statements, subject to any minor changes from CQC. A member development day is planned in March 2023 to provide all members with a focussed session on the assurance process.
- 3.5 Work with the NHS Sussex to agree place-based priorities for transformation, including developing a model for integrated community health and social care services is ongoing and a Sussex wide strategy was approved in December 2022. It should be noted that the resources are those that are currently delivering the activities as detailed in the report and therefore, there is a risk that delivery of key strategic actions may be impacted.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Adults' budget is in a challenging position in 2022/23. The main explanations for this are the extent of the changes that are necessary to deliver a savings target of £15.8m and the consequences of the challenges as set out in the previous section. Although good progress continues to be made, it is expected that there will be a shortfall, as reported in Performance and Finance Report for quarter two, £7.6m is reported 'at significant risk' and £5m reported 'at risk'. This pressure will be mitigated through a combination of one off opportunities across the budget, so no overspending is forecast in 2022/23. In all cases plans have been prepared which should enable target savings to be secured in the fullness of time. The focus is on ensuring that a maximum amount will be realised by 1 April 2023 to minimise the level of mitigation that becomes necessary in 2023/24.
- 4.2 Consistent with that position and the ambitions on which the strategy is based, the County Council is planning an increase in funding for the Adults' budget in 2023/24. This is intended to recognise the impact of demography as well as the implications of current inflation levels on provider costs. That includes the National Living Wage, where the main hourly rate will rise by 9.7% to £10.42 per hour from 1 April 2023.
- 4.3 Alongside this, Government will be making 'available to local authorities to help meet the current pressures in social care' much of the funding that it had earmarked for the cost of the adult social care reforms which have been delayed to October 2025. Although full guidance remains awaited, in 2023/24 grants with a value of £10.6m will be coming into the Adults' budget, of which £8.4m represents new money.
- 4.4 The spending of these grants will be planned alongside the growth that the County Council will be allocating. As an indication, Government recognises that adult social care needs more funding, these resources are welcome. However, they fall significantly short of the increases for which groups like the Local

Government Association and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services have called, especially as elements of them are expected to be used to fund additional activity, particularly in support of hospital discharges. It is also important to note that use of the Adult Social Care Relative Needs Formula as the distribution mechanism disadvantages most of the South East, because it is heavily influenced by measures of deprivation rather than the factors which drive cost pressure in this area of the country.

5 Performance

- 5.1 In line with Our Council Plan outcome to 'provide support to people when they need it', even with ongoing demand for Adult Social Care (ASC), key performance indicators (KPI) in relation to the percentage of contacts to adult social care that progress to a social care assessment has remained with the target set and reflects the impact that interventions are having throughout the customer journey by meeting people's needs through information and advice as well as the provision of preventative services. It is acknowledged that the current learning disability employment rate is low however, performance is expected to improve for quarter 3 to around 3% due to a recent data check that identified an additional 50 eligible individuals in paid employment, although this cannot be confirmed until the system upgrade issues have been resolved. An increase in eligible referrals is required to maintain this improvement, which will be supported by officers within commissioning.
- 5.2 As part of corporate planning for the refresh of the Our Council Plan in early 2023, ASC KPIs have been reviewed by the ASC leadership team to ensure that they are the right ones to reflect progress against the commitments set out in the plan as well as the Adult Social Care Strategy. New KPIs are being developed for future years including a new measure in respect of the proportion of adults with a learning disability who live on their own or with family Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measure proposed to be added for 2023/24. The Committee will continue to monitor adult social care performance as part of its scrutiny of the quarterly Performance and Finance Report.
- 5.3 Statutory Performance reporting for Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework will currently remain unchanged for 2023/24, although a full review of the framework is in progress and a draft update is expected to be released at the end of January 2023. The main change – and challenge – for 2023/24 is the mandatory requirement to submit client level data on a quarterly basis to the Department for Health and Social Care. It is hoped that in time this dataset will replace the submission of other annual statutory returns, reducing the burdens on local authorities and enabling data sharing with local health networks. However, it is not clear on how this will be achieved, the links to the ASCOF refresh and the use of this dataset to inform future CQC assurance.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-25 – 'The life you want to lead'

Background papers

None